Abstract of thesis entitled

**Enacting Educational Spaces:
A Landscape Portrait of Privatization in Cambodia**

Submitted by

William Charles Brehm

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Educational privatization has received increasing scholarly attention in recent decades. In much of this work, educational privatization is viewed as the outcomes of certain government policies or as the result of the influences of education businesses in school systems. My study of one community in Cambodia builds on this work by focusing on the ways privatization has been enacted by *individuals* through their social relations: the situated practices of interactions and interrelations among them.

In Cambodia, the history of social upheavals throughout the 20th Century, which resulted in a large share of education costs paid by households and international aid, provides an instructive arena for exploring the diverse ways in which individuals enact educational privatization. I begin by studying individuals through the method of portraiture. I situate six portraits of individuals, each of whom occupies a different role in society, in terms of the ways in which they are contextualized in time (through their biographies) and space (through their social relations).

By focusing on each individual's social relations within specific times and places, I extend the method of portraiture. The addition of the extended case study and the use of morphogenesis as an analytical approach to social change show the intersection between space, place, and time within each portrait. The combination of the multiple portraits creates a relational sense among the individuals, together constructing a portrait of Cambodia's educational landscape in one specific location. I call this a landscape portrait.

The landscape portrait combines Henri Lefebvre's spatial triad — perceived, conceived, and lived spaces — with his concept of "lived time" to theorize educational privatization as a collection of processes and practices in everyday life.

"Perceived spaces" are different situated practices of socio-economic processes by individuals who use and create space. I map these perceived spaces beyond mainstream schooling and include private places of education, such as fee-based private tutoring classes, NGO schools, churches, and pagodas. "Conceived spaces," which are representations of space in the minds of individuals, consist of discursive knowledge related to neoliberalism, human capital theory, and the notion of progress, as well as ideas related to inequality, social injustice, and corruption. These ideological conceptions are represented in each individual's ideal plan for education. "Lived spaces" emerge from perceived and conceived spaces, and help people make sense of their lives and choices through the promulgation of desires and myths. Across the six portraits, the desire for education is depicted as an individual endeavor where one must do anything and everything to obtain as much of it as possible.

My work develops the literature on educational privatization by offering a spatial and temporal analysis of the forces shaping the behavior of individuals and their social relations in a specific context. This analysis shows how educational privatization is not only a process of government policy but also a social practice. The everyday lives of individuals are therefore seen as playing an integral role in enacting spaces of educational privatization.

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by

William Charles Brehm
B.A., M.Ed., Lehigh University (USA)

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at the University of Hong Kong

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*In loving memory of Lucille Velarde Brehm, 1920-2015*

Every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not the sitter. The sitter is merely an accident, the occasion. It is not he who is revealed by the painter; it is rather the painter, who on the coloured canvas, reveals himself. The reason I will not exhibit this picture is that I am afraid that I have shown in it the secret of my soul.

— Oscar Wilde (1891, p. 23)

But what is so striking about crises is not so much the wholesale reconfiguration of physical landscapes, but dramatic changes in ways of thought and understanding, of institutions and dominant ideologies, of political allegiances and processes, of political subjectivities, of technologies and organizational forms, of social relations, of the cultural customs and tastes that inform daily life.

— David Harvey (2014, p. 11)
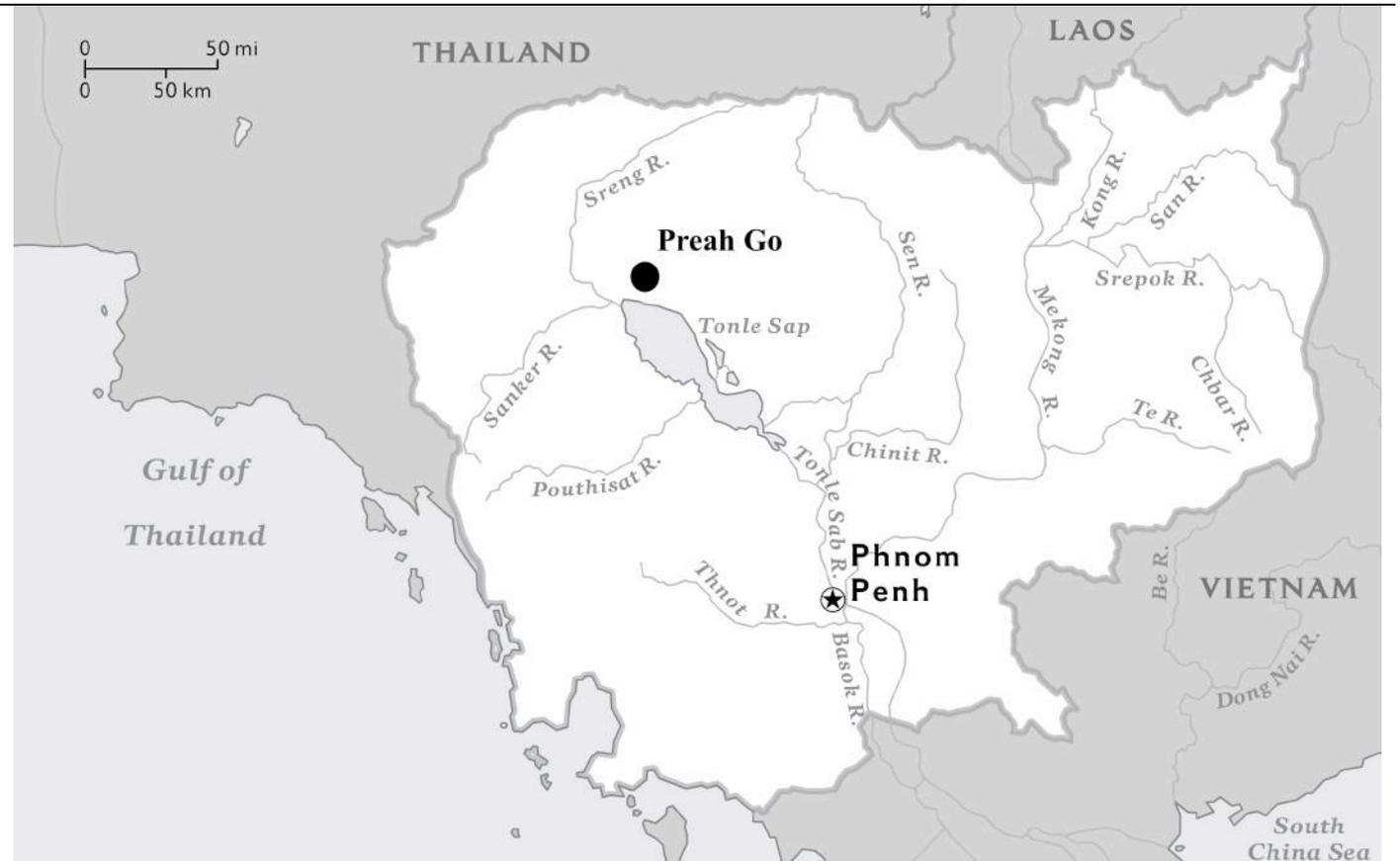
Map of Cambodia

Declaration

I declare that this thesis represents my own work, expect where acknowledgement is made. The writing contained within has not been previously included in a thesis or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma, or other qualifications.

Signed _____

William C. Brehm

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Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BBU	Build Bright University
CGDK	Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea
CFS	Child Friendly Schools
CNIS	Cambodian National Institute of Statistics
CNRP	Cambodian National Rescue Party
COMFREL	Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia
CPP	Cambodian People's Party
DOE	Department of Education
ESAF	Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility
FUNCINPEC	National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KPNLF	Khmer People's National Liberation Front
KUFNS	Khmer United Front of National Salvation
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports
NEP	NGO Education Partnership
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAP	Priority Action Program
PB	Program Based [budget]
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking Survey
POE	Provincial Office of Education
PRGF	Poverty Reduction Growth Facility
PRK	People's Republic of Kampuchea
RFA	Radio Free Asia
SSC	School Support Committee
SRP	Sam Rainsy Party
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFDD	World Faiths Development Dialogue

Introduction

1.1 Welcome to the Kingdom of Wonder

"What are those students doing?" I asked my Cambodian colleague. We were walking to our office inside a public school on the outskirts of Siem Reap, a city in the northwest of Cambodia known for its tourism industry. It was mid-October 2010, public school had just started on the first of the month, and I, two months earlier, had recently moved to the "Kingdom of Wonder," Cambodia's trademarked slogan that alludes to the country's magnificent temples of the Angkorian period (9th to 14^{h} century). I had been employed to oversee the Child Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative of an international Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). I had no idea that my seemingly innocent question would take me nearly five years to answer in the form of this thesis.

My question was about a group of children I saw walking towards a classroom who were not dressed in the standard school uniform that Cambodian students were required to wear. Instead of the distinctive dark blue slacks or skirts and white button-down tops that students normally wore, these students were dressed in acid-washed jeans, t-shirts covered in popular culture logos such as Facebook and Angry Birds, and intricately decorated baseball caps. The students had a distinctive style, but they certainly did not fit the image I had had in my mind of the typical Cambodian student. Why were these students walking into a public school classroom dressed like that?

"They are going to private tutoring," my colleague casually answered.

Private tutoring, I would learn, takes many forms in Cambodia. The group of students I witnessed walking into a public school classroom were going to take the most common form called regular private tutoring (*rien kuo thoeumda*). In regular private tutoring, students attend extra classes taught by their mainstream school teachers in subjects such as Mathematics, Khmer language, Chemistry and Physics. These classes cover content on the national curriculum and are typically held inside public school classrooms not being used for mainstream school students at the time. Not all public school students attend private tutoring, because a small fee is required; and not all

public school teachers conduct private tutoring. Some teachers do not do so for personal reasons (e.g., they choose to spend their off-hours with their families) or because they teach a subject with little demand by students. Those teachers that do teach private tutoring set and collect fees on a daily (roughly between 500 and 1,000 Riel, or US¢13 and US¢25) or monthly (roughly 20,000 Riel, or US$5) basis. The fees change by grade level (more expensive in higher grades) and school location (more expensive in urban schools), but some teachers allow children from poor families to attend for free. In some cases, NGOs, such as the one I had been working for at the time, provide money to students so they can attend regular private tutoring classes. Many NGOs refer to these cash payments as a form of "scholarship."

The Cambodian system of education had been relatively new to me in 2010. My first trip to Cambodia was almost one year earlier, in November 2009. As part of my master's degree program, I had been tasked with writing about an NGO's activities in education and had to offer recommendations for improvement. One of the unexpected outcomes was that the NGO I researched offered me a job after graduation. I moved to Cambodia with almost no knowledge of the country or its education system. Five years later, I realized that the Kingdom of Wonder was not just about the famous Angkor Wat but could also be about the seamless combination of public and private spaces of learning that had piqued my interest in 2010.

The NGO hired me to ensure that its partner public schools implemented CFS, which was a set of international modalities written by UNICEF in 1999 that aimed to create schools focused on students. This may seem like an odd goal (are not *all* schools necessarily focused on students?), but the general principles of CFS — such as, schools that are inclusive of all children, provide safe learning environments, and are well-resourced — made sense to me in the Cambodian context where over half of primary school-aged girls and 14 per cent of boys did not complete Grade 6 in 2001 (World Bank, online data) and many classrooms visibly lacked materials such as chalk, textbooks, and desks. Cambodia, similar to many so-called "developing countries" around the world, embraced UNICEF's modalities through a national policy, which was adopted in 2004. The focus of Cambodia's CFS policy, however, was limited to primary school (grades 1 through 6). By 2009 it had become apparent (at least to me and my classmates in my master's program) that lower secondary schools (grades 7 through 9) had been neglected by the policy. The NGO, we

recommended, should create an initiative to develop a CFS model for the post-primary level.

Months after I had asked my colleague about the students, it occurred to me that private tutoring inside public schools challenged the very idea of CFS. Those students I originally had inquired about were going to *pay* for extra lessons from their *public* school teacher for content they were *supposed* to learn in mainstream school. The fee excluded some children from a part of the schooling experience that many people told me was necessary. Private tutoring was perceived as necessary because the number of classroom contact hours during a typical week was not enough to cover the content on the curriculum. The exclusion of some students from this *private* learning space seemed to undermine the goal of inclusion within the CFS framework. It also showed the limitations to clearly defined and separate notions of "public" and "private."

What amazed me most about my first introduction to private tutoring was the casual acceptance of it inside public school by my colleague's answer. This private space of learning was not out of the ordinary and in fact most people I spoke with at that time said private tutoring was good for the education system. Not only did private tutoring give students additional time to learn concepts, complete practice problems, and review lessons that they were unable to cover during mainstream school hours, but also it provided a source of additional money to teachers who were known to have low salaries.

From my American-centric mind-set, private tutoring challenged the value and purpose of a public education system. That is, the ability for the government to offer a quality education to *all* students, regardless of socio-economic class, was eroded by a system of private tutoring that was generally perceived to be an essential part of education but was nevertheless exclusive by its very nature. It seemed odd, in other words, to read and learn about Cambodia rebuilding and strengthening its public education system through new polices and initiatives such as CFS while simultaneously witnessing a private space of education thrive. My Cambodian colleagues and the many teachers I worked with, however, held the exact opposite opinion: private tutoring and mainstream schooling complemented each other; they were two parts of the same system of education. It was for this reason, in 2012, that my co-authors and I used the term "hybrid education" (Brehm, Silova & Tuot, 2012) to define Cambodia's education system in a report for the Open Society Institute (now

Open Society Foundations). In this sense, the borders between private tutoring and public schooling were blurred, challenging the sharpness of distinctions between "public" and "private" in some categorizations and analyses.

The question "what are those children doing" stuck with me. I could not stop wondering about it, but the NGO for which I worked did not see the need to address the question. Each time I mentioned my concerns about the issue, my foreign bosses responded by lauding the additional learning time provided by tutoring as a sign that children wanted to learn. Private tutoring, in this perspective, did not pose a challenge to public schooling but rather identified committed students. This was a different perspective than that expressed by the Cambodians with whom I spoke. Whereas the Cambodian teachers saw tutoring as an essential part of mainstream schooling, my foreign bosses saw it as a sign of eager students looking to learn content beyond mainstream schooling. Although different, the two perspectives converged on an acceptance of private tutoring without critically engaging its connection to inequality, student achievement, or social justice. Additionally, the two perspectives did not clarify the unusual pairing of government policies that intended to increase the financial contributions by the government to public schools with the reliance of household financing for private tutoring that was deemed an essential part of the mainstream schooling experience.

Although there is some truth in the perspective that understands private tutoring as a positive contribution to a student's learning and a necessary part of the education system, I was uncomfortable accepting without criticism a private space of learning that was not inclusive for all students. The Cambodian teachers' perspective seemed too narrow in that it did not see any difference between private tutoring and public school, and my bosses' perspective seemed too embracing of an exclusionary space of education as beneficial to families, children, and society.

Embracing private tutoring without question did not situate the phenomenon inside the larger political economy of Cambodia. Nor did such an uncritical view connect private tutoring to other domains of Cambodian society such as the pagoda[1] or local government, or provide a historical account as to why exactly private tutoring even existed in the first place. Moreover, uncritically accepting private tutoring glossed over the messy issue of NGOs using foreign money to provide scholarships to

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[1] Pagodas are Buddhist temples.

Cambodian students to attend private tutoring, which had backwash effects on public schooling. Was this not perpetuating a system of private education that necessarily discriminated against children who could not attend? Also, the two perspectives — those of my bosses and the Cambodian teachers — I had heard so often did not represent some of the other important actors in an education system such as parents, students, and teachers.

By the end of 2010, the answer my colleague provided to my original question about the group of students I saw walking into a classroom seemed inadequate, and the prospect of further exploring private tutoring was limited given the workplace resistance I faced. I wanted to understand private tutoring in more detail, so I decided to leave my position with the NGO and embark on a research project funded by the Open Society Institute. Over the next 18 months, I collaborated with a group of researchers on a project that explored the social justice issues that emerged from a system of hybrid education. This project offered many valuable insights. For example, we found that students who go to private tutoring earn higher grades in public school than those who do not, justifying the common perception of a difference in intelligence and motivation between poor and rich students.

Although my collaborators and I focused neither on the relationship of private tutoring to other social domains nor on the history of tutoring, we did link the practice of private tutoring to the concept of educational privatization. In particular, we argued that through private tutoring educational delivery, financing and management shifted away from governmental control to individual, private control (of teachers). Private tutoring we concluded was within the scope of privatization, broadening the process beyond its typical conception of education reforms such as standardization of curricula, decentralization, or national assessments and international testing (e.g., Apple, 2006, 2009; Dale, 2000; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Robertson, 2007; Torres, 2009).

This project opened my eyes to the important role private tutoring played in the social relations among students, teachers, and parents — the "grassroots levels" of privatization (Brehm, Silova & Tuot, 2012, p. 7). Social relations in this sense consisted of the ways in which students, teachers, and parents interacted with each other through private tutoring. These social relations, which were enacted by individuals, constructed a social system (or structure) that defined normative behavior. Contained within these various social relations were thus particular

formations of socio-cultural and political economic realities. These were always visible to some degree — after all, that group of students in casual garb behaved differently from the average student in mainstream school — but I had not registered the significance. I saw but did not understand the different social relations being acted out by the differently-dressed students.

The new insights from my 2012 study were the impetus for continuing my education. At the University of Hong Kong, I had time to reflect on my experiences in Cambodia and embark on a new project, which resulted in this thesis. In general, the original intention of my thesis research sought to understand where private tutoring came from, why, and to what effect. It was meant to shine a light on the practices of privatization at the grassroots level, something missing in much of the literature. I also wanted to understand how people negotiated the public and private spaces of education. In other words, I wanted to understand the processes of negotiation that happen when there are multiple places of learning present in a system of education. It seemed to me that I needed to examine closely the social relations within and beyond the education system. It is to this idea that I turn to in the next section.

1.2 Social relations in education

In order to understand what those children were doing that day in mid-October 2010, I believed I needed to look at what constituted the grassroots level of privatization — the social relations between students, teachers, and parents. I first noticed the complicated set of relations that students, teachers, and parents experience inside the Cambodian education system when Sok Vandy[2], mother of a Grade 9 student, told me this:

> My child wanted to go to private tutoring. Although we did not have enough money, she still went to study [extra lessons] and owed her teacher for months. When I earned money, I paid off the debt. The teacher did not mind (quoted in Brehm, Silova & Tuot, 2012 p. 31).

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[2] Vandy's name, like all personal names in this thesis (other than those in academic references, public life, etc.), has been changed to protect her identity. The name of the village has also been changed.

Vandy lived with her husband and three children in Preah Go village, about 10 kilometers north of Siem Reap, Cambodia and about an hour's drive to the Thai border. Vandy and her husband worked in the non-formal sector of the economy, finding temporary work in the rice fields during harvesting season and laying bricks in the city of Siem Reap when the occasion arose. To say money was tight would be an understatement.

Vandy's daughter understood the importance of attending private tutoring lessons. Without it, she was likely to score poorly on school and national examinations, which would consequently prevent her from moving on to Grade 10, the start of upper secondary school. Entering a debt relationship with her teacher was preferable to not attending the extra lessons. As an observer of social phenomena, this gave me pause because of the power imbalances inherent between debtors and creditors, which was not a typical relation in public school.

Private tutoring was the phenomenon that initially brought me to research the school in Vandy's village. The reasons students attend these classes can be to finish lessons teachers did not complete during the four or five hour school day; practice additional example problems to remediate or enhance mainstream lessons; or prepare for school examinations. Much of this sounded familiar to my experience growing up in New Jersey, USA: I had attended private tutoring lessons in second grade to improve my reading skills because mainstream schooling was not sufficient. Years later as a college student, I taught SAT examination preparation courses during summer holidays to students from Taiwan who wanted to enroll in American universities.

Yet, my experience with private tutoring was wholly different to that of Vandy's daughter in one fundamental way: my mainstream school teacher did not also tutor me after school hours. This particular circumstance led Stephen Heyneman to comment that there "is a thin line distinguishing an investment in learning and an investment in the result of that learning" (Heyneman, 2011, p. 185). What I discovered in Cambodia was that there were other, more sinister reasons students attended private tutoring lessons. Some teachers who could not live on their low government salary coerced students to attend and pay for extra lessons or face consequences such as corporal punishment or lower grades in mainstream school. Other times students paid teachers for answer keys for upcoming examinations. Walter Dawson (2009) labeled these reasons the "tricks of the teacher": some teachers

"tricked" students into attending private tutoring by threatening them with lower grades or physical punishment. Taken together, there seemed to be a complex set of relations between students and teachers born out of the wider political economy of education that differed between public and private spaces of schooling.

Originally, I intended my PhD research to describe the scope of private tutoring (which subjects are taught, what is the cost of one lesson, and how many students attend private tutoring?), its impact on school grades (do students who attend private tutoring score higher on examinations than those who do not?) and possible issues of educational justice from such a reliance on private tutoring (what happens when some children cannot attend private tutoring because they cannot afford it or do not have the time to attend?). After reflecting on stories such as Vandy's, my attention turned to the effects of the private costs of education on the social relations inside a school system. In particular, I was interested in the way in which social relations of power worked in and through the blurred boundaries between public schooling and private tutoring. What did it mean for Vandy's daughter to engage in a debt relationship with her public school teacher in order to attend a private space of learning? How did she navigate between her desires to learn with her ability to afford such learning? What happened between her friends and neighbors who perhaps knew of the debt arrangement made with the teacher? I realized that within Cambodia, like in many other countries, households must navigate the educational experience of their children through both public and private markets, which often results in enacting multiple formations of social relations at different times that typically alter the way in which power works inside social systems.

It is not only the costs of private tutoring lessons that families such as Vandy's face within the Cambodia education system. Bray and Bunly (2005) compiled a list of typical household costs that included registration and record books, uniforms and equipment, learning materials, tests and examinations, transport, and pocket money. While I was living in Cambodia, I realized that money could be extracted from nearly every situation or opportunity inside school. In a sense, everything was — or seemed to be — for sale. Taken together, households paid a large share of school costs, which caused a burden to families such as Vandy's that struggled to earn enough money simply to buy food every day. Therefore, if I wanted to understand the private spaces of education, I had to broaden my focus from private tutoring to all private transactions.

It is this phenomenon — the need for households to finance education privately — that my thesis attempts to understand. Household financing is connected to but different from community financing (see e.g. Bray 1996b; Bray & Lillis 1988). Whereas community financing aims to, but certainly does not always, benefit the community at large, household financing, for the most part, provides individual benefits to the children within that household. An example of community financing is money contributed by many households for the construction of school desks. This financing can theoretically benefit all children in a community as multiple generations of students pass through the classrooms containing the desks. By comparison, an example of household financing is paying for private tutoring, which provides additional learning time to the student who paid. The concept of household financing becomes even more interesting inside an education system such as Cambodia's that has, for the last 20 years, attempted to increase the role of the government in the education system. Despite various attempts at developing public school, private tutoring continues to thrive and demands households to make large financial contributions. How then do different people within an education system respond to the private costs of education? What happens to the relationships between people in society, such as Vandy, her daughter, and her teacher, when education services and goods must be purchased individually? Does the reliance on private finance for public education change how individuals understand themselves?

These questions do not exist in a vacuum. As David Harvey's quote in the frontispiece of the thesis makes clear, historical events shape not only physical landscapes but also social and psychological ones. In other words, the social relations in and through educational finance are constructed in social domains other than education and have a history that shape contemporary manifestations. This is particularly prevalent during times of crises and social upheaval. Therefore, in order to understand the social relations enacted in an education system, it is important to track down, empirically, the traces between local practices and wider socio-economic processes of change.

1.3 Crisis and changing landscapes

Cambodia is no stranger to crises. The crisis commonly associated with this small Southeast Asian nation is that of the genocidal[3] regime of Democratic Kampuchea, typically referred to as Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge. Another crisis often overshadowed by, and certainly not as severe as the former, is that of the unprecedented international experiment in political and economic reforms in the early 1990s by the United Nations (Doyle, Johnstone & Orr, 1997). This latter "crisis" (perhaps closer to a shock or transition) was managed by the United Nations Transitional Authority of Cambodia (UNTAC) and dramatically changed the physical as well as political, economic, and sociocultural landscapes of the country. Myriad forces drove these transformations, and the emergent consequences have shaped contemporary society.

One of the most dramatic areas of social change that marked the transition from socialism to democracy, which was the goal of UNTAC, was the pursuit of macroeconomic liberalization and privatization (commonly referred to as "neoliberalism"). The effort to liberalize the Cambodian economy formally began on May 6, 1994 under the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF I) program supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and later continued through the IMF ESAF II/Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF) program begun on October 22, 1999 (de Zamaroczy & Sa, 2002 p. 5). These programs introduced laws to regulate banks, financial institutions, foreign exchange and the value-added tax. On January 1, 2002, Cambodia officially accepted the IMF's general obligations of members outlined in Article VIII, which voluntarily bind national governments to keep current accounts free from restrictions and to maintain a unified exchange-rate system. The macroeconomic policy reforms signaled Cambodia's integration into the global economy of market capitalism after years of socialist experimentation.

Economic liberalization and privatization changed the education sector in important ways. The most notable change occurred in the higher education sector where private institutions began to proliferate in the 1990s after the national government adopted new laws that allowed non-public institutions to open. By 2013, there were twice as many private universities as public ones (Sen & Ros, 2013). In

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[3] Since many ethnic Khmers were killed, some scholars have described the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge period as an "autogenocide" (for example, Vittal, 2001).

addition, many public universities began admitting fee-paying students alongside scholarship students (Williams, Kitamura & Zimmerman, 2012). Williams, Kitamura, and Zimmerman (2012) grouped "fee-paying courses…offered by national universities, whose tuition is free in principle" under the heading of privatization (p. 18). This form of cost sharing is considered educational privatization because public universities rely on the revenue generated by user fees instead of government subsidies alone.

At the school level, the main privatization policy took the form of school-based management techniques, which were actually conceived as part of the process to decentralize educational authority to local actors. School based management gave communities control over the direction and funding of local schools, hence a transfer of power from a central ministry to local school communities. Comprised of a group of elected individuals in the community, School Support Committees (SSC), as they are called in Cambodia, were designed with the intention that local residents could monitor and raise funds for the school in more effective ways than the national government. Shoraku (2008) situated SSCs inside the ideas of decentralization and cost-sharing and pointed out the policy that "prohibits schools from requiring parents to make private contributions" (p. 12). Instead, SSCs were intended to be ways through which community financing could thrive.

In actual practice, however, SSCs resulted not only in community but also in household financing for education. Individual households were required to contribute money for their *own* children's education, not the education of the *entire* community. In this way, *actually existing* decentralization practices inside communities became a central process through which privatization took root in the school systems. Others scholars researching school based management in diverse contexts have situated committees, such as SSCs, inside educational reforms aimed at privatization (see Leithwood & Menzies, 1998, p. 331). Verger, Novelli and Altinyelken (2012) went so far as to labeled the school based management promoted by the World Bank and USAID in Central America as a form of "de-facto privatization" because the discourse of increased community participation inside schools resulted in greater acceptance of neoliberal reforms that emphasized individual household financing to education (see also, Edwards & Klees, 2012).

The social reality of relying on household financing for social services has had a long history in Cambodia. In the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge, communities were

left to rebuild the various social services without the support of the national government. The Khmer Rouge regime had destroyed most state institutions — e.g., education, religious, and monetary — so the government that came to power in 1979 simply could not provide the social services demanded at the local level (Clayton, 2000). Pagodas became central community gathering spaces that raised money for road repair and educational development, goods that benefited the entire community (WFDD, 2012). With the liberalization of the economy in the 1990s and new actors working in international development, the system of community financing for social services morphed into a system that privileged individual household finance. The more a family could spend on their own children became more important than supporting a public education system for the entire community.

The emergence of privatization within education during and after the UNTAC period can therefore be summed up along three general lines. First, the financing of education continued to rely on community (and household) contributions, something that dovetailed with a longer history of educational finance in the post-Khmer Rouge period. Second, the management of educational services was devolved from control by the central government to one overseen by local committees. The intention was that local communities could better meet local needs than the central ministry. Third, the provision of education, particularly at the tertiary level, would be opened to private actors. At the primary and secondary school level, this primarily took the form of private tutoring.

This is not to say that since the 1990s the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MoEYS) embraced an agenda of privatization at the expense of policies that promoted public education. In fact, MoEYS adopted education policies that had aimed, at least in theory, to strength mainstream schools. Financing was a primary way in which public schooling was advanced. This was done primarily through the Program Based (PB) budget, which was a policy that attempted to increase the funding and decision-making power inside local schools, and the elimination of enrollment fees. In turn, this policy aimed to reduce the financial burden of education on households.

The interesting aspect in the Cambodian context is that privatization emerged within local schools *despite* the efforts by the government to increase public funding. Additionally, there were no clear national polices advancing an agenda of privatization inside primary and secondary schools like there were in higher

education. Yet, practices of privatization took root through government policies that intended to create systems of community financing and bolster public education management and governance. Households began to expect individual returns on their educational investment. These returns were most clearly found in private tutoring, which provided direct benefits to individual students (e.g., more time to study and prepare for examinations) and individual teachers (e.g., a supplement to their salaries). Privatization as a result became pervasive inside society and began to occur not as a process of policy creation and implementation but primarily as a(n) (inter)personal process within social relations. In other words, there was not a dichotomous conception between "public" and "private" but rather a blending of the two across the many spaces of education. It is for this reason that to study privatization inside Cambodia requires one to examine the social relations enacted by students, teachers, and parents and the ways in which the power dynamics are changed and altered across the different spaces of education.

Privatization thus emerged through household financing of school, constructing a particular landscape of education. This landscape, however, was part of a larger social landscape, connecting to other institutions such as the pagoda, the international community through the influence of NGOs, and political legacies of governance from colonialism, socialism, and democracy. The crisis of the Khmer Rouge followed by the crisis of UNTAC brought about a reconfiguration of the social order. A new landscape emerged, which had historical legacies dictating action, thought, and behavior.

1.4 Studying social change and its impact on contemporary society

Educational privatization is often examined as part of government policy reforms. This "top-down" approach focuses on particular government policies such as the school-based management approach to decentralization or the introduction of a higher education Accreditation Committee of Cambodia that spurred the growth of private universities. It also focuses on the amount of recurrent expenditures spent on education by national governments and new policy schemes in national development plans, such as outsourcing the publication and printing of textbooks to private companies.

The top-down perspective conceptualizes the structure of educational privatization as deriving from government policies and a network of actors pursuing agendas that foster privatization, sometimes unknowingly (e.g., Burch, 2009a). The latter includes not only international agencies such as the World Bank and UNESCO but also private companies (e.g., Pearson, Inc.) and civil society organization. All of these actors participate and advance different (neoliberal) agendas in global educational reforms. Each of the actors has agency in policy creation, but at the school level, actors are mostly *affected* by privatization through the changes to school management, funding, and operations. The processes of privatization, in other words, are constituted by macro structures conceived and implemented by (inter)national actors, which then affect local actors, such as teachers and students.

An alternative way to understand the structures of privatization and the agency of those involved in the process is through social relations, a "bottom-up" approach. Although this dichotomy between top-down and bottom-up is artificial, the separation is helpful in showing different foci and underlying assumptions about the way in which social structures and human agency function. In the bottom-up perspective, the social relations of actors enact spaces of education where practices of privatization manifest. This is not to suggest that the aggregation of individuals constitutes social structure, as neoclassical economic thinking would have it (see Keen, 2011, p. 19). Rather, this approach acknowledges the subtle interplay between social structures and heterogeneous agents, and their simultaneous constitution of each other: agents operate within social structures while at the same time constructing and modifying them through their social relations with other agents (Archer, 2012; Giddens, 1979). This approach also acknowledges the local histories through which privatization processes are mediated.

But what exactly are the relationships between the changing structural reality from educational privatization and the enactment of educational space by people? This is the broad question my thesis seeks to answer in one specific setting. I not only want to empirically describe students' actions, such as those I saw in mid-October 2010, but also situate their practices in a historical understanding of the social change that had occurred in Cambodia. In this way, I add both a spatial and temporal dimension to the study of educational privatization but looking at how education as a space is produced by individual actions and produces individuals. In order to do so, I examine the Cambodian education system from 1993 until 2014, or roughly a 20-year

period, to understand how various political, economic and sociocultural transformations have impacted the social relations among people, and how people have enacted educational space where privatization can be found. This is achieved through in-depth, qualitative studies of six people, looking at their histories, biographies, and social relations, in one community, called Preah Go, who each occupy a different social position within the education system and society. Collectively these portraits offer a window into the social landscape of contemporary Cambodia, which includes but is not limited to the system of education. I call this a "landscape portrait" of educational privatization.

1.5 Road map ahead

Going forward, the thesis has three parts. The first part unpacks the theoretical underpinnings of my argument (chapter 2); the temporal lens through which I view history (chapter 3); and the methods by which I chose to answer my research questions (chapter 4). Throughout Part I, I return to the original example of the students wearing non-public school attire inside public school. I unpack this seemingly inconsequential moment into its complexity, revealing multiple spatial and temporal dimensions. These insights set the stage for my findings, which are presented in Part II. Part II consists of six chapters (5 through 10), each of which provides a portrait of a different actor in the Preah Go community. The last section is the conclusion (chapter 11), which pulls together the findings of the six portraits and relates them back my research questions and theoretical framework.

In Chapter 2, I present different ways in which educational privatization and private tutoring have been theorized. I expand on the theoretical frameworks used to understand educational privatization by incorporating the concept of social relations. Social relations is defined as the lived experiences of individuals situated in relation to society, its socio-economic processes, as well as its cultural practices. In order to understand the process of privatization through social relations, I employ a critical spatial lens based on the work of Henri Lefebvre (1947; 1974).

In Chapter 3, a temporal dimension is added to the concept of spatial production outlined in the previous chapter. This dimension combines multiple conceptions of time — both linear and non-linear — into one as a way to overcome seemingly neutral portrayals of history and the subjective experiences in historicism.

The chapter proceeds by detailing, and subsequently critiquing, a linear reading of history in modern Cambodia from independence to liberal democracy. Then, the chapter looks at three moments in history by unpacking three situated practices. This chapter not only outlines the way in which I incorporate time into my theoretical framework but also details relevant historical context that will be elaborated on in the findings.

In Chapter 4, I detail my methodological approach to study social relations as well as my data collection practices, techniques, and shortcomings. My methodology begins with Lawrence-Lightfoot's (2005) qualitative research approach called "portraiture" and develops it using the extended case study (Burawoy, 1998) and Archer's (2010a) analytical approach to social change. I use Lawrence-Lightfoot's techniques to understand the life story of my research participants while critically reflecting on my own subjectivity in the process. I build on her work by combining it with the extended case study as a way to blend both inductive and deductive approaches to theory. The six portraits combined offer a landscape portrait into the ways in which social relations enact educational spaces where practices of privatization can be found in the Cambodian context.

In Chapter 5, the portrait of Botum Chenda, a teacher at the Preah Go lower secondary school, explores the public and private spaces of mainstream schooling. Chenda's portrait shows the value and purpose of tutoring from a teacher's perspective, and reveals the different social relations that are enacted in private tutoring and government school. By following a group of Grade 7 students into both spaces, I uncover slight differences in teacher and student interaction.

In Chapter 6, educational privatization moves out of mainstream schooling and into an NGO school operated by Mean Sokhem. Sokhem is an educational entrepreneur who moved to Preah Go to open a school that teaches English and Computer skills. His life story showcases the complex process of balancing pedagogical goals with financial management. Sokhem's school, Wish For Cambodia, relies on foreign volunteers and donations. The precarious nature of donations forces Sokhem to make compromises to student learning in order to keep his school solvent.

In Chapter 7, educational privatization is connected to another social domain, the pagoda. Through the portrait of Khemera Sambath, the head of the Preah Go pagoda committee, privatization extends beyond the school. Sambath is in charge of raising money for the pagoda, and he sells various goods inside the pagoda under the

banner that individuals can earn good deeds. Through Sambath's biography, the social changes making practices of privatization necessary add complexity to the similar process happening inside the realm of education.

In Chapter 8, another social domain is explored. In this case, it is the local site of government. The portrait of Noreaksey Pheakdei offers a window into the politics of opposition inside the Preah Go commune council. In particular, Pheakdei offers insight into the concept of corruption inside government as well as schools, implicating the role of NGOs in political largess disguised as development aid.

In Chapter 9, the portrait of Rotha Serey, a town elder in Preah Go, looks at the history of education through his biography. This long-term perspective offers a way to understand the common perception of progress in educational development since the Khmer Rouge period. The concept of progress discussed through Serey is in direct contrast to Pheakdei's frustration with politics from Chapter 8.

The last portrait, in Chapter 10, is of a parent named Tina Punthea. She is a mother of four children who has to navigate the many spaces of learning for her children. She is poor, so her choices are limited. Her life story speaks across the five previous portraits, highlighting the cultural, political, and economic social relations that are enacted in spaces of public and private educational services. Punthea goes to extraordinary lengths to support her children's education, and the portrait concludes by focusing on one extreme way.

The conclusion of the thesis in Chapter 11 combines the previous six portraits into a landscape portrait of educational privatization. In this way, my specific research questions are answered, as is my original question when I first asked, "What are those children doing?". I look at where private tutoring emerged and to what effect on the social relations of individuals in Preah Go. The conclusion also highlights the value of studying privatization on the individual level through social relations (instead of government policies) and states my contributions to the field of knowledge.

Part I

Chapter 2
Spatializing Educational Privatization

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I recounted the circumstances that brought me to Cambodia and piqued my interest in educational privatization. I was particularly concerned with social relations between teachers, students, and parents that I believed were problematic. The impetus for this thesis was therefore to understand the particular social relations that emerge within a public education system dependent on private sources of funding, be they from households, NGOs, or other sources. I set out, in other words, to understand the full complexity of the group of students wearing jeans and t-shirts who were on their way to (pay for) private tutoring classes inside the mainstream school where I had worked, as well as Vandy's casual acceptance of entering into a debt relationship — a particular power relation — with her child's teacher.

In this chapter, I unpack the concept of social relations in order to understand its role in educational privatization viewed as a pervasive set of (inter)personal behaviors and interactions. In Chapter 1, I introduced the concept of social relations, relating it specifically to notions of power. In this chapter, I situate the concept of social relations within a framework based on theoretical insights from critical geography (see Banergee-Guha, 2002). I recognize that labels such as "critical geography" may be problematic because they can exclude some scholars and their work with which I am working through or include other scholars and their work to which I make no reference. Moreover, labels can give the impression that the scholars grouped together do not disagree and are rather homogenous in their thinking. In fact, many scholars working within critical geography disagree with each other to a greater or lesser extent, resulting in a multiplicity of approaches that have developed over time. With these caveats in mind, social relations from a critical geography perspective can generally be defined as the lived experiences of individuals situated in relation to society. Embedded within them are socio-economic and cultural processes. In short, the interactions among people construct society and are simultaneously constructed by it.

With this notion of social relations in mind, the main theoretical insight shared among the scholars employed in this thesis is that social space is a socially constructed, ever-becoming concept (Harvey, 1982, 1985, 2006; Lefebvre, 1974; Massey, 1994, 2005; Soja, 1980, 1996). Edward W. Soja (1980, p. 208) captured the constructivist sensibilities shared across scholars up to that time when he stated that: "the structure of organized space is not a separate structure within its own autonomous laws of construction and transformation. …It represents instead, a dialectically defined component of the general relations of production, relations which are simultaneously social and spatial." This "socio-spatial dialectic" provides the theoretical groundwork for understanding space as an active mechanism where "ideas are produced, humans are created and labour, histories are constructed and minds are made" (Robertson, 2010, p. 17). In other words, social space constitutes and is constituted by individuals.

The study of educational privatization has seen a nascent use of spatial theories. Steven J. Ball (2012), for instance, used spatial network theory to understand the diverse networks of global education businesses participating in policy making, and Susan L. Robertson (2010) applied a critical spatial lens to the processes of privatization (namely, decentralization and markets) affecting educational governance. My work builds on these approaches to education by exploring the everyday practices and social relations of a group of diverse actors within one education system. This approach primarily uses the work of Henri Lefebvre, who focused on the everyday life of individuals to understand capitalist social relations, the destruction of the quality of human life in capitalist systems, and the search for concrete alternative utopias:

> 'The familiar is not necessarily the known,' said Hegel. Let us go farther and say that it is in the most familiar things that the unknown — not the mysterious — is at its richest, and that this rich content of life is still beyond our empty, darkling consciousness, inhabited as it is by impostors, and gorged with the forms of Pure Reason, with myths and their illusory poetry. (Lefebvre, 1947, p. 132)

For Lefebvre (1947), the focus of everyday life revealed the intersection of "illusion and truth, power and helplessness; the intersection of the sector man controls and the sector he does not" (p. 40). He was interested neither in following the path to knowledge through the application of "pure reason" from a Cartesian philosophy of

science nor in "conceiving of space and time as *a priori* absolute categories, structuring all experience" (Elden, 2004, p. 187) from a Kantian philosophy of science. Rather, he was interested in how "(social) space is a (social) product" from a humanist perspective on the forefront of artistic avant-gardes (Lefebvre, 1974, p. 26). Shields (2005) argued it was Lefebvre's "deeply humanistic interest in alienation" that tied his work together: "It is not technological progress, the absence of war, or ease of life, or even length of life, but the chance for a *fully lived life* that is the measure of a civilsation" (p.2).

Applying this focus to education, a focus on everyday life — the social practices, subjective perspectives, and bodily emotions — of individuals can illuminate the ways in which educational space is enacted where practices of privatization can be found. This includes, for example, the way in which students pay for private tutoring classes or the different teaching methods used by teachers in mainstream schooling, private tutoring classes, or NGO schools. These various actions signal particular ways in which social space is produced and used. These actions also point to social formations producing space and individuals' conceptions of space. Spatializing research on educational privatization from this (bottom up) perspective is different from but complementary to the focus on educational governance or global education policy using a critical spatial lens. My conceptual framework is thus based on a critical spatial lens that studies privatization within the everyday life of educational practice. It is in this way that I attempt to spatialize and temporalize educational privatization as constructed through the everyday practices and social relations of individuals. I call this phenomenon the enactment of educational spaces.

The chapter proceeds in three parts. In the first part, I review the various conceptualizations of educational privatization. This review shows that thinking of privatization as socially constructed spaces has received little attention to date. In the second part, I turn to the theoretical concept of space, looking at the various ontologies and epistemologies of space using a critical spatial lens. In the third part, I bring together research on educational privatization with a version of critical geography in order to develop a theoretical framework with which to study the social relations emerging from educational privatization in one Cambodian community. The concluding section returns to my experiences in Cambodia, and sets up a discussion for studying social relations in the following chapter.

2.2 Educational privatization

In an edited volume on educational privatization and social justice, Ian Macpherson, Susan Robertson, and Geoffrey Walford (2014), brought together a collection of case studies from Asia and Africa that provide empirical evidence of the scale, scope, and diffusion of educational privatization into many aspects of education (from policymaking to provision). The cases showed that the education sectors in these locations had opened up to profit-making motives by private actors, and learners across these diverse contexts had been conceptualized to varying degrees as consumers.

The editors pointed out that issues of privatization were not new. Nevertheless, they argued that the intensity of privatization in public education had become more acute since the 1980s and therefore demanded attention. Their point suggests that the process (or processes) of privatization can ebb and flow across historical time, dependent on national and global political economic formations. A similar point had been made 20 years earlier. Mark Bray (1994), in his reply to William K. Cummings and Abby Riddell's (1994) article on alternative policies for the finance, control, and delivery of basic education, drew attention to the fact that there is a complex range of possibilities — a continuum of sorts — between privatization and publicization[4]:

> At one extreme private schools with no government funding or controls may exist, and at the other extreme government schools with full government funding and control may exist. However, between these extremes private institutions may receive varying amounts of public funding and be subject to varying degrees of control; and government institutions may supplement their

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[4] In my reading of Bray (1994), privatization is a collection of processes whereby private actors/institutions increasingly fund, provide, and regulate certain (social) services to a population. Publicization, by contrast, is a collection of processes whereby *public* actors/institutions increasingly fund, provide, and regulate services. The latter can be thought of as a strengthening of government service provision. Embedded within these concepts are conceptualizations of both "public" and "private" that do not necessarily translate across all contexts. Although "public" is typically framed as government institutions and "private" as non-public institutions, in practice the borders between these two concepts are often blurred (as the Cambodian case illustrates). This is the value of Bray's implied continuum of privatization and publicization: It is possible (and perhaps even common) for processes of privatization and publicization to happen simultaneously in specific contexts.

resources through fees and other means, and may have varying degrees of autonomy. (Bray, 1994, p. 820)

The range of possibilities between privatization and publicization that Bray laid out is a useful aid, helping to situate the various processes of privatization not only in relation to each other but also in comparison to the processes of publicization. In the two decades since Bray's (1994) reply, a plethora of empirical evidence on educational privatization has been produced. Examining these findings in more detail reveals a diverse array of privatization processes that would likely have been inconceivable in scope and scale in 1994.

The starting point for the increased processes of privatization, to which Macpherson, Robertson, and Walford (2014) allude, is the fact that education is potentially a profitable business. That most children around the world attend some form of schooling means large sums of money circulate through the education sector in order to provide the necessary goods and services. IBIS Capital (2013) estimated that in 2012 global expenditures on education reached US$4.4 trillion. Moreover, the market for e-learning services (i.e., content creation, management systems, and distribution providers) stood at US$91 billion in 2012 and was projected to have a compound annual growth rate of 23 percent through 2017. By comparison, the S&P 500, which is a collection of 500 large US publicly traded companies, had a compound annual growth rate of 6.6 percent between 1964 and 2013 (Krejca, 2014), suggesting that e-learning is a potentially profitable investment.

The educational privatization to which IBIS Capital refers in its investment report is a departure from the historic connection between school systems and the state. Since the mid-1800s education in Western Europe and North America has been organized gradually at the behest of the state in the form of mass schooling and paid for through the collection of taxes (Boli, Ramirez, & Meyer, 1985). Similar versions of this type of schooling supported by the state spread to nations worldwide through various international interventions (e.g., colonialism), education development efforts (e.g., through the World Bank), and global multinational frameworks (e.g., the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights). In Cambodia, mass schooling was imported by the French during the colonial period, and had to co-exist and combine with an education system that historically relied on monks who taught religious and moral principles to boys inside pagodas. Today many schools in Cambodia are located next

to and sometimes inside pagodas. (In chapter 4, I will go into more detail on the history of education in Cambodia.)

In recent years, there has been a trend for state governments to adopt various privatization schemes in order to pay for parts of public education.[5] In some cases, state governments allow private entities to operate public schools. In other cases, privatization has emerged not because of state government's desire to privatize, but rather as a consequence of the state's inability to provide public education. Nevertheless, variations of privatization within public schools exist worldwide. For example, the architects of the charter school movement in America hoped to improve quality through increasing choice and accountability (Dempster, 2013), low-fee private schools in India enrolled students where the government had been unable (Srivastava, 2013; see also, Tooley & Dixon, 2006), the rapid growth of shadow education in East Asia prepared students for high-stake examinations (Bray & Lykins, 2012) and the introduction of school fees for tertiary education in Africa shared education costs with students and their families (Varghese, 2004). Notwithstanding their differences in content or context, these varied schemes and trends may be broadly considered part of the privatization of public education movement. This movement includes a range of private actors, which IBIS Capital captured a sampling of in its investment report (see figure 2.1).

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[5] There have similarly been various governmental schemes advancing publicization through, for example, the PAP in Cambodia, which provided subsides to schools (see Bray & Bunly, 2005).

Figure 2.1 Sample of e-learning industry players (source: IBIS Capital, 2013, p. 29)

Ball and Youdell (2007) unpacked some of the ways in which public schools are being privatized by categorizing reforms into endogenous and exogenous privatization:

> The first form of privatisation [is endogenous], where the public sector is asked to behave more like the private sector, is widespread and well established. The second form of privatization [is exogenous], where the private sector moves into public education, is a newer but rapidly growing form of privatisation. These forms of privatisation are not mutually-exclusive and are often inter-related, indeed, exogenous privatisation is often made possible by prior endogenous forms (Ball & Youdell, 2007, p. 13).

In other publications, Ball (2007, 2012) makes a similar distinction found in his work with Youdell (2007) between endogenous and exogenous privatization. He distinguishes between privatization "in" and privatization "of" education. The former refers to "the many and complex ways in which the mentality of the business world has been injected into education, such that it operates like a competitive market, with choice, marketing managers, branding, data on student performance as proxies of quality and so on" (Macpherson, Robertson & Walford, 2014, p. 14). Privatization *in* education is similar to the definition of endogenous privatization, and is often connected to neoliberalism through situated practices (e.g., Pérez-Milans, 2015a). The

latter refers to the "range of ways in which what was once public-sector activity…have now been outsourced to the private sector through tendering, consultancies, joint ventures or new forms of financing (Macpherson, Robertson & Walford, 2014, p. 15). Privatization *of* education is similar to exogenous privatization.

One example of privatization *of* and *in* education is the World Trade Organization's (WTO) classification of education as a tradable good that can be bought and sold like any other commodity between nations within the framework of most favored nation status (Robertson, Bonal & Dale, 2002). This classification not only allows for exogenous privatization by allowing bi-lateral trade agreements in educational content, management systems, and delivery providers (i.e., the highest growth area found in the IBIS Capital investment report), but also sets a discursive tone for endogenous privatization by connecting education to other commodity industries. This discursive tone can be found in much educational policy. For example, some London public schools have a language policy that mandates compulsory Mandarin classes because of the language's perceived economic value in the global economy (Pérez-Milans, 2015b).

The logic of privatization is seen by its advocates as an effective and cost efficient way to administer and deliver education to a nation-state's youth. Opponents of privatization of education cite a host of inequalities and inefficiencies that result from the reliance on private markets in public education. Although there is a lively debate in the research literature (e.g., the back and forth between Tooley, Dixon & Gomathi [2007], Sarangapani & Winch [2010] and Tooley, Dixon & Gomathi [2010]), a growing number of governments are embracing the logic of privatization to pay for and administer public education.

The general outcome of educational privatization is the changing role of the nation-state from service provider to service regulator of mass schooling and the increased logic of the market inside the space of schooling. Despite mixed evidence of privatization reforms leading to increased student achievement (Zimmer et al., 2009) or of equity issues between rich and poor students, there is the rise of charter schools in America, free schools in Britain, low-fee private schools in India, and Pearson Education operating worldwide. Although the world is not at the extreme of total privatization as is evidenced by the fact that state governments still allocate large sums of money to public education, the array of privatization processes and private actors in education certainly suggests that the contemporary manifestation of

privatization has moved towards the privatization end on the privatization-publicization continuum implied by Bray (1994) over 20 years ago.

Private tutoring is part of the complicated terrain of the privatization of public education (Bray, 2011, p. 60). It could be considered another way in which the private sector is moving into schooling activities once provided by public schools (that is, part of exogenous privatization). If this were the case, however, the rise of private tutoring would have coincided with a *decrease* in the provision of public school as students began attending private tutoring classes in lieu of mainstream schooling. This has not been the case. In fact, private tutoring often relies on mainstream schooling, sometimes having backwash effects on it (Bray, 2009; Bray & Lykins, 2012). In Cambodia, for instance, public school teachers tutor their own students, which affect grades in mainstream school (Brehm, Silova & Tuot, 2012). The industry of private tutoring is growing, as well. Researchers from Deloitte estimated that the value of the after-school tutoring industry in China, for instance, would expand from US$19.4 billion to US$32.5 billion between 2009 and 2014 (Chen, Li & Rask, 2012, p. 7).

Private tutoring is therefore neither wholly exogenous nor endogenous privatization. It is, instead, an example of a site of learning that takes place in non-public institutions, similar to private schools. For this reason, I situate private tutoring within the concept of privatization as a form of the "private means of knowledge production." The private means of knowledge production is a type of privatization whereby students increasingly need to (for whatever reason) attend extra fee-based schooling in conjunction with mainstream schooling. This form of privatization, as will be discussed below, not only occurs through private tutoring but also through the rise of NGO schools. Although this form of privatization relies on public schooling (e.g., curricular content in private tutoring is partly determined by mainstream schooling) and may or may not create new knowledge in students, it is nevertheless a separate place of education that relies on the private means of households (i.e., household's spare financial capacity to afford additional education, awareness of the different locations outside of mainstream schooling where education can take place, etc.).

2.2.1 A typology of educational privatization

The previous examples of educational privatization form a loose typology. By combining the work of Ball and Youdell (2007) with that of Bray (2011), educational

privatization can be classified into three areas: endogenous, exogenous, and private means of knowledge production.

Endogenous privatization is the growing *logic* of privatization used to manage schools. Occurring internally within school systems, the goal is to hand over educational decision making from the state to local private actors in order to increase efficiencies. Years earlier, a similar process was referred to by Meyer and Rowan (1978) as a form of institutionalization of "schooling for corporate society." Schooling is understood as a bureaucratic organization that is based on rules, standards, and classifications. This is privatization *in* education that Ball (2007, 2012) referred to.

Exogenous privatization is a *market* for commodities sold by private companies and purchased by public school systems and/or students. This is, in other words, external actors coming into the space of public education in order to make a profit. Private companies see public schooling as a large sector of consumers previously off-limits to businesses interests. As state governments seek ways to reduce spending on education or increase revenues from education, exogenous privatization increases. Through this process, public schools begin outsourcing services previously provided by state governments to the private sector or find creative ways to generate funds through advertising inside schools. This includes outsourcing janitorial and cafeteria services, privatizing textbook publishing, and sponsoring sport fields by athletic companies. There are many ways to generate a profit within school, and the ways to do so will likely increase as states search for new revenue streams. This is the privatization *of* education to which Ball (2007, 2012) referred.

The *private means of knowledge production* suggests there are private enterprises that offer students ways to learn outside of mainstream school. These are captured by a collection of actors grouped under the heading of "distribution" in Figure 2.1. These can be whole schools operating privately or companies that provide supplementary services to students. Regardless of whether knowledge is actually created in these non-public locations, the idea of "knowledge production" in this sense is being differentiated from mainstream, public schooling, and includes educational entrepreneurs who are actively trying to re-design the mode of delivery of education (e.g., free online university courses through websites such as Coursera). In addition, the private means of knowledge production includes the shadow system of

education that is increasingly becoming important for a child's education (Bray & Lykins, 2012). Within the private means of knowledge production, some enterprises have a business model based on user fees to earn a profit (e.g., for-profit schools); others operate as non-profit, private entities that charge fees and collect donations (e.g., many of the private universities in America); and still others offer free education and earn revenue through advertising or contracts with universities.

In the Cambodian context, each category of the typology of educational privatization can be filled in. There is endogenous privatization at the local level in the form of the SSC, which are the parent-teacher organizations designed to help administer and operate local schools. Although these committees, which are required by MoEYS, are part of decentralization processes to increase community participation, they nevertheless act as "de facto privatization" (Verger, Novelli & Altinyelken, 2012) because they embody neoliberal ideals. Edwards and Klees (2012) argued that school based management is based on neoliberal principles of efficiency, accountability and competition. Committees such as SSCs "involve significant participation" of community members, but "in practice, school councils usually lack resources and the decision-making of these entities is restricted" (p. 64). Notwithstanding the benefits of increased community involvement in school, the committees often result in managerialism whereby selected (sometimes elected) members of a community organize and manage various school activities; a focus on financial efficiency and accountability is recommended by MoEYS; and the creation of yearly performance indicators is often discussed in meetings. The SSC, therefore, is a mechanism through which privatization emerges in mainstream public schools. As a result of the SSC policy, public schools begin to operate in ways similar to private businesses.

There is also exogenous privatization coming from NGOs working within selected schools as well as MoEYS outsourcing some of its educational goods and services. NGOs, the local community, and the Cambodian diaspora often provide private funding from sources other than the government to develop and provide, for example, infrastructure in schools, teacher training outside of the standards set by MoEYS, and teacher bonuses. In 2012, 247 schools, or 2.2 percent of the total, were reported to be working with NGOs, and 1,592 schools, or 14.4 percent of total schools, were receiving funds from sources other than MoEYS (de Jong, Theavy &

Conochie, 2013). In addition, MoEYS is considering privatizing its textbook production and curriculum design.

The last form of privatization, the private means of knowledge production, is not only visible through the pervasive system of private tutoring, but also through the growing number of private schools and centers that provide all types of private education services. There are different types of private tutoring in Cambodia. The most common type is "regular private tutoring" (*rien kuo thoeumda*), which is fee-based tutoring in classes taught by mainstream school teachers. It is considered "regular" (*thoeumda*) because it focuses on the mainstream curriculum and resembles mainstream classes (i.e. class sizes and layouts are similar to ones in mainstream schooling). A less common form is "special private tutoring" (*rien kuo pises*), which covers individual or small group classes taught by a tutor who may or may not be a student's mainstream school teacher. These classes cost much more than regular private tutoring classes. In addition, some students have the option of attending and paying for "private tutoring during holidays" (*rien kuo pel vissmakkal*). These are classes conducted in school or at a teacher's home, and are held by a student's current or future teacher when mainstream schooling is not in session. The last type of private tutoring, which appears to be a growing phenomenon especially in city centres, is "private tutoring at private school" (*rien kuo nov sala akchoan*). This type of private tutoring covers tutoring classes of various sorts, held by non-mainstream school teachers outside public school buildings, and for some cost. The word "school" in this type of tutoring takes on a broad meaning from registered tutoring centres as businesses to make-shift classrooms inside university students' homes or apartments. In my previous research (Brehm, Silova & Tuot, 2012), nearly 60 percent of surveyed students attended regular private tutoring. Although this sample of students was confined to six schools in one district (including the schools in Preah Go), it nevertheless tells a similar story to what other research studies have found: 87 percent of surveyed lower secondary school (grades 7-9) teachers were found to engage in private tutoring (Benveniste, Marshall & Araujo, 2008, p. 58) and 47 percent of surveyed parents stated that they paid for private tutoring lessons either inside or outside of school (Ang & Conochie, 2013). Private tutoring is a common feature in the Cambodian education system.

Private schooling also contributes to the private means of knowledge production. Although there is little data available on the scope of private schooling in

primary and secondary school in Cambodia, one estimate by UNICEF suggests 2 percent of primary enrollment comes from private schools. When broken down by location, about 15 percent of urban enrolment is due to private schooling. UNICEF compiled data from 2011 to show the variation in private enrollment based on the districts that have the highest private enrolment rates (figure 2.2).
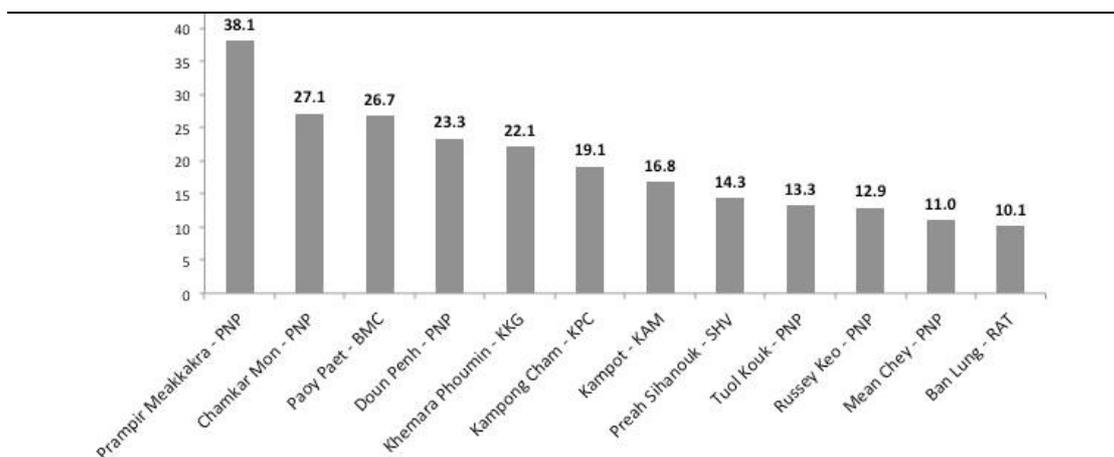
Figure 2.2: Enrolment rate in private primary schools, % of total enrolment (top 12 districts) (Source: Ang & Conochie, 2013).

The typology of educational privatization outlined in this section provides a useful way to understand the way in which the research literature has dealt with the phenomenon. The general conceptualization of the processes of privatization is in their manifestation from government policies (or lack of policies) that enable or prohibit a marketplace where private providers can operate. Researchers have been interested in issues of social justice (does a privatized education system exclude certain categories of children?) and quality (what is the private school premium compared to public school?). There has also been a focus on the changes in management and governance structures whereby public institutions begin to operate more like private companies. To a lesser degree, there has been the insight that students have been conceptualized by education businesses as customers.

What has not fully been developed is the effect on the everyday life of individuals from an education system that is experiencing various processes of privatization. A spatial analysis is a particularly useful intervention in the study of educational privatization because many new physical spaces of learning have emerged, from charter schools to private tutoring to low-fee private schools. But if space is socially constructed, then greater insights can be learned beyond the

additional physical spaces of learning. Before detailing what a spatial analysis of educational privatization might entail, I turn in the next section to critical spatial geography, which will provide the conceptual language needed to spatialize educational privatization.

2.3 A critical spatial lens

The concept of space is not new in the social sciences, but a critical spatial lens has arguably been absent from much of the conceptual grammar of the sociology of education (Robertson, 2010). One way to understand critical geography is to compare it to the dominant conceptualization of space prevailing in social science research. Beech and Larsen (2014) labeled the dominant conceptualization of space the "spatial empire of the mind" and defined it as consisting of a space-place binary: "global/space is defined as being 'out there,' influencing local places that receive, modify, or resist these influences" (p. 85). In this perspective, space is an abstract concept made up of flows and movement with no borders where external forces influence and change local, concrete places. These places can be physically located on a map and named, while space is elusive and amorphous. The "spatial empire of the mind" is found in much of the work on globalization. In this work, globalization is like space — elusive, amorphous, borderless, and external — and affects local places.

As a result of the space-place or global-local binary, space is privileged over place. Beech and Larsen (2014) ask why the study of space has led to concepts such as spatiality and spatialization but the study of place has not brought "similar attention to…the 'placial,' and 'placiality' (terms that have yet to be used in research about places)" (p. 80). They argue that such a binary conceptualization of space and place have resulted in grand narratives of globalization that focus on domination (by the "West," "North," or "first world") and resistance (by the "East", "South" or "third world"). The space-place binary also sees a one-directional path from space to place, from the global to the local. As a result of this binary, the global and local are represented as relating to different realms that require different epistemologies. In other words, the local and the global need to be studied using different tools and methods.

An alternative approach to spatial thinking, Beech and Larsen (2014) argued, is through "spatial theories [that] emphasize the relational and productive capacity of

new spatial thinking" (p. 82). Instead of conceptualizing space and place as a binary, "new spatial thinking" makes possible the conceptualization of space and place as relational and co-constitutive. Places are the locations where situated practices occur and spaces are constituted by interrelations of individuals and their social relations. As places change, so do spaces. As spaces change, so do places. From this conceptualization, "space and place can be seen as a set of relations among people, groups and institutions…from this perspective, space and place are understood as open and related systems that are always in construction, never finished, and permanently changing as they relate to other places" (Beech & Larsen, 2014, p. 82). "New spatial thinking" conceptualizes the global as found in the local, and the local in the global. Beech and Larsen (2014) go further by arguing "for an ontological shift to viewing space and place not simply as objects of study, but within a conceptual framework that focuses on networks, interconnections, and movements within and between them, as well as their productive capacity to produce and shape knowledge, identities, and human subjectivities" (p. 90). This call for new spatial thinking is detailed in this section. Below I outline different ontologies and epistemologies of space using critical spatial geography and then focus on the concepts of enactment and social relations.

2.3.1 Ontologies of space

What is space? This seemingly simple question has multiple answers. One answer is that space is a neutral container filled with objects. This container of space lives in the minds of mathematicians and philosophers or is lived in the sensory and practical experiences of people. Space, from this perspective, is a passive container unable to act on the subjects who fill or define it. For instance, the geometrical shape of a triangle is space defined by angles and surfaces situated within a (three-dimensional) Cartesian coordinate system. Similarly, the space of work is where a subject goes to labor. This space may smell or look a certain way and be filled with people different from the space of home, but it fundamentally does not act back on the individual; rather, it is simply a container where human action occurs and certain sensory dynamics are present.

Another answer, one in line with a critical spatial geography, is that space is actively produced and produces. It is a not neutral or passive space, awaiting the actions by humans, but rather an active and political space that shapes and is shaped

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by humans. It is, in short, a social space. Lefebvre (1974) theorized that social space "subsumes things produced; and encompasses their relationships in their coexistence and simultaneity — their (relative) order and their/or their disorder. It is the outcome of a sequence or set of operations, and thus cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object" (p. 73). This conceptualization of space combines physical space (i.e., the sensory and practical experiences of people), mental space (i.e., the logical abstractions by philosophers or mathematicians), and social space (i.e., "the space of social practice, the space occupied by sensory phenomena, including products of the imagination such as projects and projections, symbols and utopias" [Lefebvre, 1974, p. 11-12]). Soja (1989) concisely captured the differences yet interdependencies of physical, mental, and social spaces that Lefebvre first conceptualized:

> As socially produced space, spatiality can be distinguished from the physical space of material nature and the mental space of cognition and representation, each of which is used and incorporated into the social construction of spatiality but cannot be conceptualized as its equivalent (p. 120).

Space as a social product is not the end of the answer, however. Other scholars of critical geography have advanced Lefebvre's notion of social space. Doreen Massey (1994), for instance, theorized that space is a form of power and that it is connected to social relations. Massey defined space as "constructed out of the multiplicity of social relations across all spatial scales, from the global reach of finance and telecommunications through the geography of the tentacles of national political power, to the social relations within the town, the settlement, the household and the workplace" (p. 4).

In summary, the ontology of space from a critical spatial lens makes three assumptions: "space is social and real; that spaces are social relations stretched out; and that space is socially produced" (Robertson, 2010, p. 15). I make the same assumptions in my research and now turn to the epistemology of space found within Lefebvre's work.

2.3.2 Epistemologies of space

How can space be known? Many scholars (e.g., Harvey, 1990; Hernes, 2004; Robertson, 2010; Spicer & Taylor, 2004; Watkins, 2005) working through Lefebvre's theory of social space have identified three conceptualizations — perceived space,

conceived space, and lived space — that when combined constitute space. These three conceptualizations combine to form the social space that Lefebvre contrasted with physical and mental space.

Perceived space refers to the physical and experiential understandings of space by people. It is "an all-too-material" space that includes "every physical movement of employees: their opening doors, sipping coffee, and etc." (Zhang, 2006 p. 221). Likewise, perceived space consists of the physical activities inside schools: the opening of textbooks, the taking of notes, or the pedagogy of the teacher. Perceived space is the outfit worn by students in mainstream schooling compared to private tutoring. These practices, however, are situated in a particular time and embodied within these actions is a politics. For instance, the students I saw walking to private tutoring class in October 2010 were those students willing and able to pay for extra classes. Absent among those students were children of families too poor to afford extra lessons. The politics embodied within these situated practices defined who was able to attend extra lessons when, and how. Moreover, these physical practices pointed out the political reality of teachers who are underpaid. In this way, the physical actions in perceived space were situated within the socio-economic processes of a given history.

Conceived spaces are representations of space. This includes the discursive and scientific knowledge that form ideologies but which are represented in physical forms. Here the physical forms within a space convey certain ideas and knowledge at a moment in time. Studying history, then, can reveal changes to conceived space not only in ideological content but also physical forms. Zhang (2006) labeled conceived space "an abstract space of pure mathematical figures and verbal messages – manifested in the design of offices, organisational rules and symbols, and so on" (p. 221). Related to education, conceived space is, for example, the institutional rules and symbols that populate classrooms: the idea of CFS from Chapter 1, which represented an international ideology on quality education and which was manifested in physical forms with the introduction of group work and the incorporation of the community into the management of the school. The ideologies and their representations in the physical world change across time. This will be seen in the case of Cambodia in Chapter 4, where different historical moments resulted in different conceived spaces of education.

Lived space, or representational space, is the passive space which individuals inhabit and through which particular ideas form. Lived space overlays physical space, creating a realm of desire and myths of objects. Lived space is where people make sense of their world and imagine and feel. It is a space of subjectivity and human experience (Watkins, 2005). Lived space is a space that emerges out of both perceived space and conceived space. In the educational context, lived space is the feeling of despair I found among students who did not attend private tutoring. The poor students with whom I spoke with desired attending private tutoring but since they could not afford it ended up seeing themselves as inferior to the students who could attend. This lived space combines the perceived and conceived spaces but cannot be reduced to either.

These three conceptualizations of space — perceived, conceived, and lived — form a spatial triad in Lefebvre's spatial theory (figure 2.3). Lefebvre himself called these conceptualizations "the three moments of social space" (1974, p. 40). The idea of a "moment," has been traced in Lefebvre's work to mean "the attempt to achieve the total realization of a possibility" (Elden, 2004, p. 172). In other words, all three moments are required to understand social space at a given historical moment. The goal of the triad is to see "the spatial practice of a society … revealed through the deciphering of its space" (Lefebvre, 1974, p. 38).
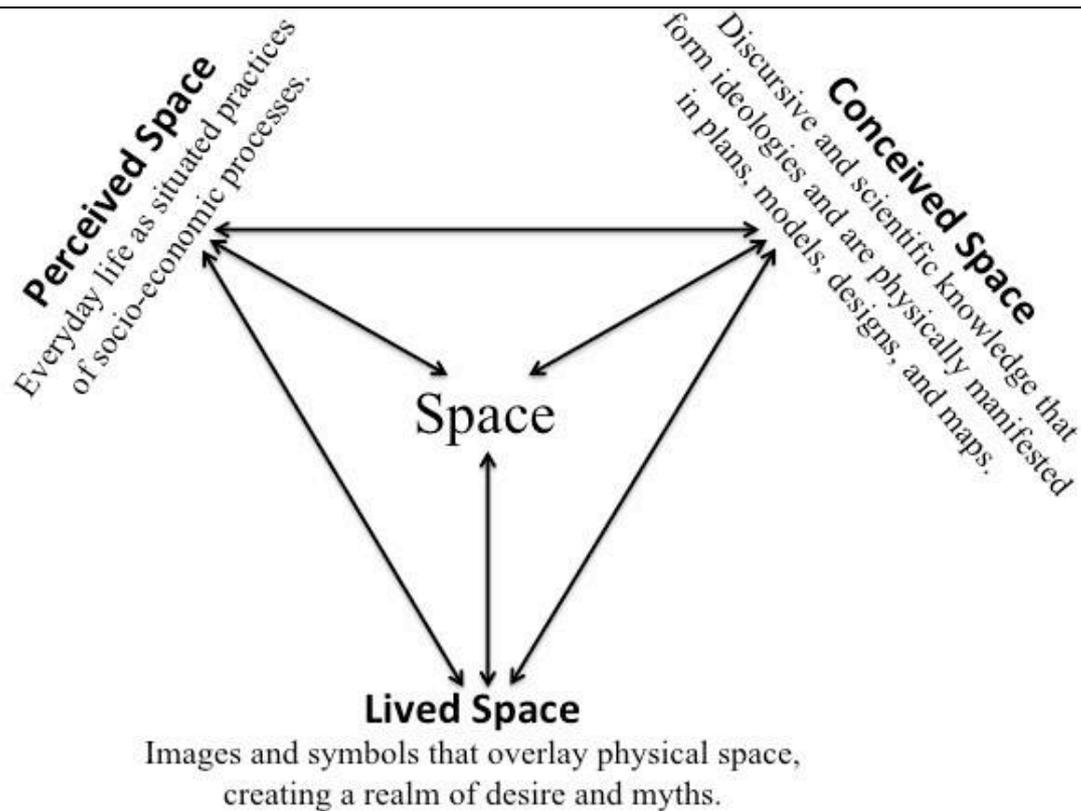
Figure 2.3 Lefebvre's spatial triad (adapted from Milgrom, 2008, p. 270).

2.3.3 The spatial triad and social relations

Social space implies individuals are produced through their interaction with other individuals within and through physical spaces and practices. Doreen Massey (1994) made the explicit connection between Lefebvre's work and the notion of social relations. Broadly construed, social relations are the lived experiences of an individual situated in relation to other members in society, its socio-economic processes, as well as its cultural practices. Such a conceptualization sees the construction of an individual's identity and the subsequent social relations among people in society as co-constitutive: the socio-cultural (e.g., gender, racial, and ethnic identities) and political-historical (e.g., class, governance, ethical manifestations) determinants within society construct and are constructed by individuals, institutions, and their interactions. But this is not to say there is only one set of social relations with static determinants across time and space.

In an abstract sense, social relations are a process in motion, ever emerging as societies grow and interact with other and increasingly more societies. This process depends on variable power dynamics, a variety of interests, capricious commitments, divergent purposes, and different influences among individuals and institutions.

Within the context of globalization (both historical and contemporary), social relations within one place are partly determined by — and also determine — the social relations in another. The mobility and movement of people, ideas, and money (i.e., Appadurai's [1996] notion of "scapes") are important to consider in the formation/construction of social relations.

Social relations are an important part of Lefebvre's spatial triad. For Lefebvre, social theory is needed to "analyse not things in space but space itself, with a view of uncovering the social relationships embedded in it" (Lefebvre, 1974, p. 89). The social relationships, or social relations, are an integral piece of a spatial analysis. Lefebvre was primarily interested in capitalist social relations, those that are produced through forms of exchange and the division of labor and result in a particular alienation in relation to the Other. He saw the socio-economic processes of capitalism as giving roles to individuals in society. He wrote, "A role is not a role. It is social life, an inherent part of it. What is faked in one sense is what is the essential, the most precious, the human, in another" (Lefebvre, 1947, p. 15). Social roles have a productive function: they are actions that are performed or enacted despite the fact that they may be faked. The performer may actually disagree with the role enacted, but nevertheless participates in social life through the actions and interactions demanded by the role.

The performativity of social roles within the spatial triad demands a focus on the everyday actions of individuals within their social networks. Lefebvre (1947) made this point when he looked at socialism inside the USSR:

> Socialism (the new society, the new life) can only be defined concretely on the level of everyday life, as a system of changes in what can be called lived experience. Now, half a century of historical upheavals have taught us that everyday relations between men — 'lived experience' — change more slowly than the structure of the State. And in a different way, at a different rate. Thus in the history of societies modification in the different sectors take place unevenly, some ahead of their times, others lagging behind. (p. 49)

Lefebvre's insight pointed to the need to understand political-economic moments and formations not only through an analysis of the state but also — and perhaps more importantly — through the "lived experience" of people living within different political economic social formations. He also recognized that the "everyday relations between men [and women]" change slowly — more slowly than state formations —

suggesting that historical social formations have legacies lasting into the present. Beech and Larsen (2014) made a similar point of everyday enactments of social reality:

> …places have a performative aspect. Spaces and places are shaped by social practices, since the ways humans inhabit a place, the ways in which they experience it, and the meaning they attach to that place partly defines what that place is. But at the same time social practices are structured and produced by their spatial context" (p. 82).

By "spatial context," Beech and Larsen point to historical formations of social life in places that previously defined social roles. This creates social practices that combine past historical legacies with new social roles — "the memories [people] hold about these places through the traces left behind" (p. 86). The various positions of individuals in society thus "tend to reproduce and/or challenge existing configurations" (Robertson, 2010, p. 20) of society. It is through an exploration of the enactment of everyday life where the spatial context (i.e., the spatial triad) and historical legacies of different political and economic formations can be studied. It is this approach that I apply in my study. In the next section, I combine a critical spatial lens with educational privatization.

2.4 Towards a spatial turn in educational privatization?

Beech and Larsen (2014) called for "the mapping of the global field of education through the construction of new cartographies of connections" (p. 91). I take this call for a spatial turn seriously, and develop one such "cartography" by using Lefebvre's work on everyday life as a window into understanding the spatialization of educational privatization. Similar to Lefebvre's insistence that the study of socialism requires working through the "lived experience" of people, I too insist that the study of educational privatization must be located at the level of "lived experiences" of individuals within schooling systems.[6] This is not to say that studies of educational privatization at the state level (i.e., policy analyses) are not helpful. Indeed, such studies are valuable in so far as they reveal the different discursive regimes of privatization being mapped onto physical spaces. But studying educational

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[6] Anthropologists have been studying lived experiences across different subfields for decades (for an overview related to education, see Pérez-Milans, 2015c).

privatization would be incomplete without a focus on the social relations of individuals at the local level. At this level physical space is altered and social space is produced.

Educational privatization can be understood using the spatial triad. There is a conceived space of privatization that purports certain logics and strategies in discursive terms such as "efficiency" and "choice." These ideological forms manifest physically in school buildings and classroom organization/practice. For instance, the notion of educational choice underpins much of the push for the charter school movement in the USA. This rhetoric turns into a physical reality when public schools are closed in order to allow charter schools to open. This has happened in cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, and New Orleans (Uetricht, 2014). For instance, Lipman and Haines (2007) show the education reforms in Chicago schools as a "contest … essentially over who will live in the city, who will benefit from its growth and development, and who will get to participate in the fundamental decisions affecting economic and social life" (p. 495). In other words, educational privatization deeply impacts the physical space of schooling. Inside the classroom, discourses that emphasize technology as a way to improve education have resulted in such physical manifestations as the One Laptop per Child project, which aimed to provide laptops to children in so-called least developed countries.

There is also a perceived space of educational privatization. This space includes a wide variety of social practices, from evaluating teachers based on student examination results to the use of English based instruction in non-English speaking countries. In these daily, routine practices, which may seem "normal" to those experiencing them, are insights into the larger political economy encompassing education. English medium instruction, for example, often relates to the hope that students will participate in the "global" economy where English skills are needed. In my experiences in Cambodia, for instance, many students wanted to learn English because it would enable them to find work in the growing tourist economy in Siem Reap.

Lastly, there is a lived space of educational privatization, made up of the signs and symbols in physical space that affect human subjectivity. These include such things as the social aesthetics of elite private schools that actually produce class affinities (Fahey, Prosser, & Shaw, 2015) or the clothing worn by that group of students that first caught my eye. The wearing of everyday clothes inside school

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grounds symbolized the difference between public schooling and private tutoring. The visible difference between the group of students wearing everyday clothes and the public school students wearing school uniforms, acted as a visual sign of educational privatization. Some on-looking students likely desired to be inside school grounds wearing jeans instead of the official school uniform. Similar ideas have been developed in low-fee private schools in India, where Srivastava (2006) argues that individuals acquire "mental models" of proper schooling through the environment around them, participation in various institutions, and their own history. In other words, the signs and symbols in the physical space affects students, changing the way in which they think about and see themselves.

Obviously this is a cursory look at the spatial triad of educational privatization. Full understanding of the spatialization of educational privatization requires an in-depth look at the everyday lives of individuals enacting different roles in a particular education system. Moreover, these "lived experiences" must be situated within the historical formation of the contemporary political economy in that place. It is this task that the findings outlined in Part II of this thesis attempt to fulfill. For now, it is important to see how a critical spatial lens can be applied to the study of educational privatization.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I combined the study of educational privatization with the study of critical spatial geography. The combination — the use of a critical spatial lens in the study of education — can be summed up in six propositions (figure 2.4):

1. Social relations are *latent in space* and reproduced through systems such as education;
2. Education spaces are a product;
3. Education spaces are *produced*;
4. *Education spaces are polymorphic*;
5. *Education* spaces are dynamic geometries of power and social relations; and
6. Education spaces and subjectivities are the outcome of a dialectical interaction.

Figure 2.4: Six propositions of a critical spatial lens in educational studies (Source: Robertson, 2010, p. 22)

Through the work of Henri Lefebvre's spatial triad that combined perceived, conceived, and lived space, I outlined an approach to study the everyday life experiences of individuals as a way to spatialize educational privatization. In this way, I extend the work on educational privatization employing spatial theories (e.g., Ball, 2012; Robertson, 2010) by focusing on the ways in which space is produced and produces at local levels. Whereas Ball (2012) and Robertson (2010) were focused on educational privatization at the level of governance and policymaking, my approach, begins with the lived experiences of teachers, parents, and students within a situated context. This particular approach requires historical analyses to understand the changing spatial formations, including social roles, in society as well as empirical research on the contemporary signs and symbols affecting individual subjectivity.

Using a critical spatial lens enables me to understand the group of students I saw walking to their private tutoring class in greater detail than my previous studies have allowed. Whereas my previous work focused on participation rates in private tutoring and grade differentials between students who attend and do not attend extra classes, a critical spatial approach allows me to situate the students' practices inside the concept of spatial production and the resultant subjectivities that are produced. The small details of the outfits worn or the missing textbooks in private tutoring class become the very productive mechanisms through which contemporary society is created. That group of students, in other words, is both re-producing a social system that emerged through history while also producing the social system in new ways.

With this theoretical understanding in mind, the next task is to outline a method of study that connects to the spatial triad. In the next chapter, I turn to studying social relations through the combination of the method of portraiture and the extended case study.

Chapter 3
Everyday Moments and Traces of History

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a critical spatial lens was applied to the study of educational privatization. In particular, the everyday actions of individuals and their social relations were theorized as productive forces constructing educational spaces. Privatization, in other words, could be studied by looking at how people enacted educational space just as much as governmental policies (or lack there of) advanced processes of privatization. The value of examining everyday life was found in the ability to interpret a seemingly inconsequential action or relation within an infinitely complex social event.

In this chapter, a temporal dimension is added to the spatialization of educational privatization. The production of space does not happen in the absence of time. Space and time intersect in unique ways in everyday life. They come together in the complex ways in which individuals succumb to or control biological time (e.g., the school day conditions when children can eat to satisfy their hunger); in the ways in which individuals understand themselves in relation to their own histories; and in the traces of past events into contemporary moments. As Lefebvre (1974) maintained, lived spaces "have their source in history — in the history of a people as well as in the history of each individual belonging to that people" (p. 43). The unpacking of the temporal therefore sheds light on particular formations of social relations in contemporary moments.

Using a historical lens begins with the proposition that the temporal dimension is plural, similar to the way in which the spatial consists of perceived, conceived, and lived spaces. There is biological time as measured by bodily processes; modern time as measured on a clock; and lived time as experienced by individuals. Each temporal conceptualization is important yet problematic. Biological time is cyclical, but can be manipulated through political and economic formations, which, for instance, dictate working hours for teachers. Modern time is linear, but verges on the teleological in that there is a defined origin and end point. Lived time is experiential, but creates

subjective portrayals of history (Shields, 2005, p. 59). It is the combination of *times* that encapsulates the temporal dimension, or what Lefebvre referred to as "total time" (see Elden, 2004, p. 153).

The multiplicity of temporalities is an idea that Lefebvre advanced in his theory on the production of space and in his analytical approach called "rhythmanalysis."[7] For Lefebvre, there were both linear and non-linear conceptions of time. There was "history as a field of knowledge…[and] historical reality, or 'historicity'" (1966, p. 17). History as a field of knowledge takes a linear conception of time. Historical periods are placed on a continuum, fragmenting time through (academically) conceived boundaries. "Historicity" is a non-linear conception of time. It combines the cyclical biological time of individuals with the lived time that emerges out of social relations. Historicity emerges out of the everyday actions of individuals, and is the "process by which man [or woman] is formed, what he [or she] produces (in the broadest and strongest sense) by himself [or herself], through his [or her] practical activity" (1966, p. 17). In this way, Lefebvre's notion of historicity is similar to historicism (Stewart, 1995).

In chapter 2, I introduced the spatial dimensions of everyday life. Here I turn to the temporal dimension. Everyday life is "everyday" precisely because it consists of ordinary and banal actions that are continuously repeated. In this repetition of action exists a cyclical notion of time similar to the seasons. For instance, that group of students I saw walking to private tutoring probably did so routinely, at the same clock time each day or few days. Yet through repetitive actions, change occurs. Although repetition implies an event that is the same as one that happened previously, an outcome of repetition is a changed social order. As the students attended each subsequent class of private tutoring in repetition over the semester, they gained more knowledge, advanced through more of the curriculum, and thus changed their — and their peers' — educational experience. Lefebvre (1970) pointed out this paradox through rhythm in music: "the generation of difference through repetition" (p. 85). Rhythm occurs precisely because time is manipulated through different tempos. Listeners live time as they hear different musical rhythms, constructing social spaces

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[7] Rhythmanalysis is an important analytical approach in Lefebvre's work. Although I will not use this approach in this thesis for reasons outlined in Chapter 4, such an approach has been advanced in educational research by Middleton (2013).

partly out of the temporal manipulations of the musician. Similarly, the students' lived time constructs temporal moments where changes occur that are different from but connected to the linear conception of time where these students are seen as progressing through each grade towards graduation.

This seemingly abstract concept of multiple times is valuable when looking at history and historicism. Influenced by both Nietzche and Proust, Lefebvre's concept of lived time is "polyvalent and more contradictory than that of philosophy. Lived time allows memory and art" (Lefebvre quoted in Elder, 2004, p. 175). In the flash of a moment, lived time appears in the mind of an individual as the confluence of past, present and future.[8] There is no beginning and no end. As Elden (2004) noted about Lefebvre's notion of lived time: "new cycles are born from previous ones; and … time is shot through with repetition" (p. 196).

One way in which lived time is understood is through the study of moments. Moments are "instances of dramatic change and disruptions to everyday routine" (Elden, 2004, p. 170).[9] Lefebvre (1961) maintained that there is an infinite list of moments, including love, rest, and knowledge: "The 'moment'," Lefebvre argued, "thus conceived of has its memory and specific time" (quoted in Elden, Lebas & Kofman, 2003, p. 174). The moment is a lived space in a lived time. It points to an alternative social possibility than the one routinely experienced by situated practices in situated political economies. The actions and emotions of individuals in moments, therefore, provide both a critique of everyday life and point to alternative possibilities.

Using these ideas of a multiplicity of temporalities, this chapter unfolds by detailing the history and historicity of Cambodia. In the next section, a linear tracing of history is detailed. Different periods of history are sketched along a continuum that can be measured by clocks and calendars. Traces of certain historical periods follow into subsequent periods. This section details the history of Cambodia as a field of

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[8] The confluence of past, present, and future in one lived moment is similar to Walter Benjamin's metaphor of society as a constellation and Theodor W. Adorno's constellational approach to social research. Prosser (2014) argued both Benjamin and Adorno disputed the "idea of linear historical time…exposing the illusion of history as a force for positive outcomes…" (p. 280). It should be said that Benjamin's ideas prefigured both Lefebvre and Adorno, who were contemporaries of each other.

[9] This conception is similar to Foucault's (1969) archeological approach to time where thought and knowledge were theorized as being governed by rules, so reading time required "digging" through changes in discursive regimes that limited/defined knowledge. Lefebvre was likely influenced by Foucault's work on time (Elden, 2004).

knowledge. In the following section, three moments of historicity — or lived time — are detailed, using a non-linear conception of time. The moments include the reliance on household financing in education; the use of memorization as a pedagogical device; and the arrival of neoliberal ideologies in Cambodia. Each of these moments is connected to the students I first witnessed going to private tutoring class or Sok Vandy's debt relationship with her child's teacher.

Combining both linear and non-linear approaches to history adds a temporal dimension to educational privatization, primarily through the way in which social relations simultaneously combine multiple conceptions of time. History and moments of historicity are not exhaustive; rather this chapter provides an example of the historical through a critical spatial lens and provides relevant context related to privatization and Cambodia that will be further explored in Part II of the dissertation.

3.2 The linear tracing of history

It has become commonplace to write of Cambodia's modern history in terms such as "cursed" and "crisis" (see e.g. Ayers, 2000; Brinkley, 2011). This reading of history has its place, given the country experienced nearly 100 years of colonialism followed by decades of social unrest that resulted in genocide. Within less than 50 years between 1953 and 1998, Cambodia went through five distinct transitions, each with its own legacies and historical configurations of different political economies. These periods can be categorized as (1) royalism (1953-1970), (2) republicanism (1970-1975), (3) Maoism (1975-1979), (4) socialism (1979-1990), and (5) liberal democracy (1991-present). None of these categories perfectly defines each period, but the dates generally demarcate the duration of each political formation.

In this section, I draw on the work of a collection of historians and political theorists — David Chandler (2008), Michael Haas (1991a, 1991b), Stephen Heder (2004), Ben Kiernan (2002), and Michael Vickery (1984, 2010) — to detail each of these periods. This list of scholars already points to one of the problems with this conceptualization of linear history in the Cambodian context: each of the authors is a white male, like myself, detailing a history of a foreign land. There is a noticeable lack of Cambodian historians. This is not to say that there are no Cambodian historians; there are indeed. But many of these historians base their work on one or more of the scholars listed (see Vickery, 2010). Moreover, some of the writers who

many not base their work on the listed scholars do not write in English, making the material inaccessible to me. Nevertheless, the scholars listed here are the most influential historians of Cambodia. There are also hidden problems with this list of scholars, mainly that there are disagreements among them. These disagreements indicate that the recounting of history is never neutral.

3.2.1 Royalism

Cambodia gained independence from France under Prince Sihanouk in 1953. He transitioned the country from French colonialism (Cambodia was technically a protectorate) to royalist control until 1970. The French originally installed Sihanouk as king of Cambodia in 1941 when King Sisowath Monivong died. At the age of 18, Sihanouk was selected over his father, Norodom Suramarit, to the throne in hopes that he would be loyal to French interests even in a growing environment of Cambodian nationalism. Two years after independence in 1955, Sihanouk abdicated the throne in favor of his father so he could become Prime Minister of the newly established *Sangkum Reastr Niyum* (People's Socialist Community), the governing body of Cambodia.

Many historians like to describe Sihanouk as a mercurial statesman. When his father died in 1960, Sihanouk took the title "the prince who was formally King," and unilaterally declared himself Prime Minister for life. (He would regain the title of King in 1993 until 2004 when he abdicated the throne for a second time to his son, Norodom Sihamoni.) While Prime Minister, Sihanouk participated in the formation of the non-aligned movement[10], which was a group of countries that sided neither with the Soviet Union's sphere of influence nor with the United States' during the Cold War. He formed ties with North Korea and China, and allowed the North Vietnamese to set up bases in eastern Cambodia in order to facilitate the transfer of arms from China to the Viet Cong in South Vietnam. Sihanouk's geopolitical maneuvering fueled the growing disunity in the country, which was made up of various anti-colonial, independent, and socialist movements. His alienation of the political left in the *Sangkum*, for instance, pushed people into the Khmer Rouge movement, which

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[10] The non-aligned movement was an international organization formed in 1955 at the Bandung Conference in Indonesia. Countries including Yugoslavia, Egypt, India, and Indonesia came together to stay neutral during the Cold War, not aligning with either of the two superpowers (the Soviet Union or the United States).

had been a growing socialist movement in rural parts of Cambodia through the 1950s and 1960s. Additionally, the implicit support of North Vietnam by allowing China to send military aid through Cambodia turned America from an ally in the 1950s and early 1960s into an adversary by the late 1960s.

3.2.2 Republicanism

Caught up in the Cold War geopolitics by trying to stay neutral among superpowers, Sihanouk's government was eventually overthrown by Lon Nol (1970-1975). Lon Nol was a general supported by Washington who considered him a "republican." Lon Nol's *coup d'état* brought him to power, but he was generally perceived as an illegitimate military leader in the eyes of most Cambodians, because he did not have the backing of the royal family. He was also known to participate in corrupt practices such as arms smuggling. He could not unify the country, maintaining most of his support in Phnom Penh and provincial capitals.

In various rural areas of the country, different ideas, mainly royalist yearnings or socialist cravings were more widely accepted than the republicanism of the Phnom Penh government ruled by Lon Nol. The socialist ideologies in rural Cambodia were supported by a growing group of French-educated Khmer intellectuals who were teaching in schools. Among these educators was Saloth Sar, who would later take the name of Pol Pot. While the sentiments of the population were being divided along royalist, socialist, and republican lines, Lon Nol allowed Washington to bomb parts of the Ho Chi Minh trail that cut through Cambodia, killing hundreds of thousands of Cambodians in the process.[11] The aim of these bombings was to eliminate the North Vietnamese camps set up during Sihanouk's rule. This was the beginning of the social unrest that would trouble modern Cambodia for the next four decades.

3.2.3 Maoism

As the country slipped further into chaos in the early 1970s, a new socialist leader, who considered himself a Maoist, began to build popular support in the countryside while Lon Nol held the capital, Phnom Penh. After being ousted as Prime Minister,

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[11] The Ho Chi Minh trail (1959-1975) was a strategic route from North Vietnam to South Vietnam, running through Laos and Cambodia. It allowed troops and military support to flow from North Vietnam to the Viet Cong in South Vietnam, who were fighting the South Vietnamese government and the United States.

Sihanouk aligned himself with the rural Khmer Rouge movement as a means to regain power. His action brought many royalists into the rural socialist movement. Sihanouk's decision would come back to haunt him when, just a few years after his allegiance to the movement, he was imprisoned in the Royal Palace by the Khmer Rouge.

Using Prince Sihanouk to rally support for an anti-republican (and anti-foreigner) grassroots movement, Pol Pot quickly came to power, ruling along Maoist lines between 1975-1979. Intended to create an agrarian utopia inside Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge, as the group was commonly known, became suspicious of all outsiders. This led to internal divisions and mistrust among leaders, fracturing the Khmer Rouge into various group. As mistrust grew, Pol Pot attempted to eliminate all non-conforming opinions through a genocide that claimed the lives of nearly 25 percent of the population (roughly 2 million people, including those massacred during the United States' bombing). After the massive loss of life and the internal fracture, the Khmer Rouge easily fell to Heng Sarim and Hun Sen's army of Khmer Rouge defectors who re-grouped and found support in Vietnam.

3.2.4 Socialism

Although there continued to be a Khmer Rouge stronghold in northern Cambodia after the liberation (sometimes referred to as "occupation") of Cambodia by Vietnamese backed former Khmer Rouge soldiers, the governments of Heng Sarim and then later Hun Sen came to power in a country that was all but destroyed. When Heng Sarim came to power, currency had been eliminated and the Kingdom itself was in shambles; Sihanouk was dethroned and imprisoned for most of the Khmer Rouge period. Rebuilding a functioning government out of nothing was a monumental task. Between 1979 and 1989, for various geopolitical reasons, no foreign power except for the Vietnamese government in Hanoi (with the support of the government of the Soviet Union) offered aid to Cambodia. The main reason for limited access to aid was that the Western powers saw the Vietnamese assistance of Heng Sarim and Hun Sen as the spread of communism, not liberation from the cruelty of the Khmer Rouge. Washington believed Hanoi was adding insult to injury: The North Vietnamese army had not only defeated the military of a Superpower in 1975 but also was able to expand its communist reach into neighboring Cambodia by 1980. As a result of Washington's disapproval of Hanoi's support of Cambodia, throughout the 1980s,

Cambodia's seat at the United Nations was filled by a collation of opposition groups residing in northern Cambodia along the Thai border, including the remnants of the Khmer Rouge. Washington, its allies, and foes of the Soviet Union supported these groups figuratively as well as militarily and monetarily. This alliance included Beijing, adding to its improving relations with Washington since the late 1960s.

Near the end of the 1980s, the Cambodia "problem" — a term the international community used to describe the country "invaded" by Vietnam with support of the Soviet Union — was nearing a resolution after years of political gridlock. Western powers found an agreeable path towards multi-party democracy, one advanced by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The solution centered on a United Nations (UN) mission on a scale unseen in history. The UN entered Cambodia in the early 1990s for two years, administering complete control of the country. Even the flag was re-designed colored UN-blue with a white image of Cambodia on the front. The purpose of this nearly US$2 billion effort was to remove the Hun Sen government (seen as a proxy for Vietnamese and Soviet interests) and to administer free and fair elections in the country in 1993 in order to make a liberal democracy.

3.2.5 Liberal democracy

Cambodia's transition to liberal democracy was part of larger geopolitical movements after the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. These transitions across much of the post-Soviet Union were often spoken about with "triumphant accounts about the monumental replacement of the Soviet system by Western political, economic, and social institutions, reflecting the principles of market economy, democratic pluralism, and human rights" (Silova, 2010, p. 4-5). Although Cambodia was not a member of the Soviet Union, it was an exemplar of these transitions and their failures from socialism to liberalism in the 1990s. Like in post-Soviet countries, adopting Western, liberal state governing institutions did not go as smoothly as the UN had hoped in Cambodia. By the mid-1990s, the UN rarely used UNTAC, the body through which Western, liberal state interventions occurred between 1990 and 1992, as an example of successful liberal internationalism like it did earlier.

Cambodia's problems with liberal democracy began almost immediately after the 1993 elections when no party won enough seats to form a majority in the

government. Assembling a ruling coalition was difficult, especially for Hun Sen who had been head of state since 1985. His Cambodian People's Party (CPP) administered government at all levels. Even the civil service within local government was politicized, meaning the CPP controlled the day-to-day operations of governing. This ensured the CPP would maintain power after the elections regardless of the coalition formed. In 1997 the coalition government, which oxymoronically had co-prime ministers, fell apart and Hun Sen re-took full power over the country, adopting state-capitalism practices similar to China while using the rhetoric of democracy. He has been in power ever since.

3.2.6 Disagreements and limitations

This quick and admittedly brushed view of the modern history of Cambodia based on English language historical accounts written by non-Cambodians conceptualized time as chronological. Each period was told in a static manner, chronicling events from past until present. This conceptualization of time is useful in so far as it details past events in separate periods that are easily understood. However, such an approach to time is problematic because it repeats what are thought to be historical truths.

There are in fact serious disagreements among the scholars I used to construct the historical overview presented in this section. One classic example is the number of deaths during the Khmer Rouge. Michael Vickery (1984) argued that the commonly reported number of 1 to 2 million deaths was incorrect: "It is simply impossible to take the generally accepted population figure for April 1975, the population alive today, demographically acceptable birth rates, and project an extermination figure of 1-2,000,000" (p. 188). In his analysis, Vickery (1984, p. 187) calculated 740,800 deaths occurred as a result of the Khmer Rouge. Ben Kiernan (2002), by contrast, sampled a group of survivors in the 1980s to determine the death toll. By asking each survivor the number of deaths in his or her family, Kiernan calculated that the death toll was closer to 1.5 million people (p. 456). This was similar to Steve Heder's estimate that 1.6 million people died, using similar techniques based on survivor interviews (see Kiernan, 2002, p. 459).

Although the disagreements over the number of dead during the Khmer Rouge are interesting, they are mainly about methodological differences in calculation. Political disagreements, however, show the limits of chronological history more clearly. When scholars bring agendas to their historical work, how can there be an

impartial reading of history as a field of knowledge? In one on-going feud, Michael Vickery (2010) claimed that Steve Heder was an apologist for American interests. Writing in 1992, Vickery maintained that Heder "produced several studies sympathetic to the Cambodian chauvinist view of the danger of an expansionist Viet Nam" (Vickery, 2010, p. 392). In this view, Vietnam was an expansionist country that needed to be stopped.

This charge needs to be put in context. What the United States government described as the fall of Saigon in 1975 marked the end of its war in South Vietnam. The South Vietnamese government supported by Washington since 1955 had been dismantled by the North Vietnamese army hours after the last US Marines left the county. Less than four years later, Vietnamese military forces helped to overthrow the Khmer Rouge, offering assistance to the newly established Phnom Penh government, which remained in power until 1989.

In Heder's American perspective, the Vietnamese military was not *overthrowing* the brutal regime of the Khmer Rouge, as had been argued by scholars such as Vickery. Rather, it was an *invasion* of Cambodia by the Vietnamese military with the intention of spreading communism. Heder's line of argument was not straight forward, since the Khmer Rouge was typically viewed as already being communist. How could communism be spreading to Cambodia when it already was communist? Heder provided historical evidence of the connection between the Khmer Rouge and the communist movement in North Vietnam (Heder, 2004). He argued that the Khmer Rouge leaders wanted to be better communists than their Vietnamese counter parts, taking extreme positions that ultimately led to their demise. When the Vietnamese military entered Cambodia, it was not to overthrow the Khmer Rouge regime; the regime was already falling apart on its own. Rather, the Vietnamese government strategically calculated the timing of the invasion of Cambodia to take advantage of the internal weaknesses of the Khmer Rouge in order to spread (its version of) communism to new areas. Vickery alleged Heder provided the "expert" opinion needed by the United States State Department to blame communist Vietnam for invading Cambodia. Heder's argument was powerful inside Washington where support towards anti-Vietnamese rebels, including the ousted Pol Pot who was living in Northern Cambodia, increased in the 1980s. Indeed, throughout the 1980s, the United Nations recognized as legitimate the Coalition Government of Democratic

Kampuchea, which included the Khmer Rouge and was supported by the United States.

Vickery's allegations make clear the problematic role that historical narratives can take: in whose interest is a seemingly teleological understanding of history being presented in neutral terms? Much of the funding of Heder's work, for instance, came from the United States State Department, and Heder helped shape Washington's view on Cambodia through numerous editorials, reports, and congressional hearings. The feud between Vickery and Heder begs the question: Is it even possible to obtain a "true" history without political agendas? My answer to this question is no, forcing me to confront my own political agenda. I admit I find more critical value in Vickery's work than from Heder's. In Vickery's work I am challenged to see the multiple sides of history and historiography. Patriotism does not blind his historical analyses, allowing him to place blame on Washington's role in the tumultuous 20th Century in Southeast Asia. My reading of Cambodian history is therefore based more on the work of Vickery than of Heder, and my political choices of selecting historical sources on Cambodia result, admittedly, in a biased reading. Nevertheless, the inherent problems in the chronological approach to history are (partially) overcome by incorporating non-linear conceptions of time in the use of history, to which I turn in the next section.

3.3 Three moments of lived time

An alternative approach to chronological time in history is lived time through the study of moments. Lived time is non-linear. It is made up of moments where past, present, and future combine into one time as interpreted by an individual. In this way, lived time embraces the political nature of historical accounts unlike chronological time, which attempts to be neutral. In this section, I look at three moments and read history through each of them. Traces of history are found in each moment, so it is important to unpack the full meaning of each moment. These moments specifically focus on issues related to privatization. Countless other moments will not be addressed. The purpose of these moments is both to show a different conceptualization of time in history while also providing context to educational privatization. Just as chronological time had limitations in the political agendas

embedded within different historical narratives, so does lived time have limitations in the historicism in each moment that can slip into determinism.

3.3.1 The moment of household financing

When Sok Vandy told me she entered into a debt relationship with her child's teacher in order to afford private tutoring, she was indicating a social reality that, to her, was banal and routine. But in this moment, the past traces of the history of the need for households to finance education came together with her desire for a future in which her child would earn a high salary. In that present moment, lived time constructed an experience that embodied both the historical and the possible, yet it occurred in a present moment and relied on particular social relations between her, her child, and her child's teacher.

The past in this moment includes a long history of household financing of education. Vandy personally experienced much of this history, making the idea of borrowing money from a teacher to pay for education seems like a normal action. The beginning of household financing dates from the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge. After decades of armed conflict, which resulted in the elimination (by either death or migration) of an estimated 80 percent of teachers by 1979 and a disproportionate youth demographic, "thousands of schools arose throughout the country, often built by members of the community served by the facility" (Clayton, 2000, p. 113). Although communities came together to construct schools, households were required to contribute funding, which quickly moved from schooling for community interest to schooling for self-interest.

Schools organized, operated, and funded by local communities were necessary in the wake of the Khmer Rouge because the central authority, the then-Ministry of Education, was in its infancy and the country had not had a viable education system for nearly four years. The local community therefore needed to organize schooling efforts because the central government could not. An informant in Clayton's (2000) research who was involved in the initial organization of the Ministry stated as much: "We [the Ministry of Education] wanted the provinces to rely on themselves to open schools, even though no one had any books" (p. 111).

Originally, communities collected money from households to build local education systems (school buildings, classroom desks, etc.). This was part of the government's decentralization efforts. Eventually, however, individual household

contributions began to support the education of their own children more than their contributions supported the entire community. In 1997, the balance between household and government financing to education was nearly 80 percent by households and nearly 20 percent by government (Bray, 1999, p. 47).[12] The household contributions were spent on such items as schools fees, uniforms, school improvement, schoolbooks, and school supplies and materials. Some of these costs, such as school improvement, could be considered community financing because all children in the community shared the item's benefit. Other costs such school uniforms or registration fees, could be considered household financing because only a household's children received the benefit. The household financing of education for self-interest is precisely where privatization emerges in the situated practices of individuals. This primarily occurred through private tutoring, whereby households (and not communities) paid teachers directly for additional help for their children.

The rise of household expenditures to education unequally benefit children based on socio-economic status.[13] Not all household expenditures, however, contribute to inequality in the same way. Although costs for items such as school uniforms may not provide a greater benefit to rich families, poor families must spend a larger share of total household income to afford school uniforms. In 1997, poor families were estimated to have spent 36 percent of household expenditures on school uniforms compared to 17 percent by rich families (Bray, 1999, p. 53-54). Private tutoring, however, is a household expenditure that does provide varying degrees of benefit based on affordability. The more a student can pay, the greater benefit he or she can receive. For instance, a student who can afford special private tutoring will likely gain more than a student who can only afford regular private tutoring. It is not surprising therefore to find in 1997 that the richest families spent 19 percent of

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[12] To put this in perspective, a 1996 study comparing household and government expenditures on education in nine Asian countries ranked Cambodia highest in terms of household costs relative to government expenditures (Bray, 1996a, p. 32).

[13] The issue of socio-economic status opens the possibility of engaging with class theory vis-à-vis educational privatization. The theoretical insights regarding class by Henri Lefebvre would be a valuable entry point for such an analysis. Marx heavily influenced Lefebvre, after all, and Lefebvre's spatial analyses often focused on class issues in urban and rural communities. Although I did not use this particular aspect of Lefebvre's work, it would be a valuable addition to landscape portraiture. A more direct connection to the concept of class and class relations would move the spatialization of educational privatization further in the direction of a politics of space.

household expenditures in primary school on private tutoring, while the poorest families only spent 1 percent (Bray & Bunly, 2005, p. 53). Tutoring expenditures increase as a child advances to higher grades and are more expensive in urban than rural areas (Bray & Bunly, 2005, p. 49).

Household expenditures on private tutoring have increased since Bray's (1999) study despite the overall decrease of household expenditures on education. This signals the complexity of the publicization—privatization continuum: despite noticeable movements towards publicization there can be simultaneous advances of privatization. This is one reason why looking at the everyday practices of individuals can complement studies of educational privatization derived from national policies. In 2004, households contributed fewer than 60 percent of education costs (Bray & Bunly, 2005 p. 67). This reduction was primarily an outcome of the government's introduction of the Priority Action Program (PAP), which provided funds directly to schools and teachers (World Bank, 2005, p. 72-73). Despite the total share of household expenditures decreasing relative to government expenditures, a 2007 study by the NGO Education Partnership collected data that showed household expenditures on private tutoring increasing compared to Bray and Bunly's (2005) data. NEP (2007) collected data from four provinces in Grade 1 through 9. Based on this data (NEP, 2007, p. 17, 25), household expenditures on private tutoring in primary school averaged nearly 19 percent. Although this data included both urban and rural households and did not differentiate by socio-economic status, it nevertheless showed the costs of private tutoring taking up a larger percentage of household expenditures than both the poorest and richest households from Bray and Bunly's (2005) study.

Vandy experienced this environment of increased government support of education coupled with rising household costs to private tutoring. Despite the efforts to increase the government's contribution to schooling and reduce the burden on households, the practice of private tutoring became commonplace and an expected obligation by households who could afford it. It became banal and routine, part of the everyday experience of school. The practice endured and partly defined the situational logics[14] of households vis-à-vis the education system. It made sense, in other words, for Vandy to enter into a debt with her child's teacher to pay for private tutoring.

These developments in household financing need to be situated within the

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[14] Situational logics can be defined as a form of agency that perpetuates the status quo.

international trend in educational development known as "decentralization" (Bray, 1996b; Bray & Lillis, 1988; for Cambodia see, Crowley-Thorogood, 2010). A 1998 UNESCO document articulated one goal of decentralization: "Decentralization is advocated to make the *community* responsible for the basic education of *its people* and eventually build a sense of ownership of the educational arrangements made to extend basic education to the different clientele groups" (p.138; my emphasis). In this sense, decision-making power over "educational arrangements" (e.g., curricular content, education funding, school development, etc.) shifted from a central authority, such as a national ministry of education, to communities serviced by a school. In the Cambodian context, decentralization reforms resulted in individual households taking ownership of the educational arrangements for their own children, not the entire community. This occurred in part through the system of private tutoring where households paid for their children to attend additional lessons. These financial contributions from households have been found to increase student achievement (Nguon, 2012). Rather than benefiting the community at large, household contributions to education positively affected the educational outcomes for their children. Household financing thus became a process of privatization because it, unlike community financing of education, individualized the value, purpose, and outcomes of education.

As households became primarily responsible for funding their children's education, there was a space for international aid to fund the development of local public schools (see figure 3.1). Bray (1999) reported that assistance to schools from NGOs expanded from US$1 million in 1992 to US$36 million in 1996 (p. 26-27). In 2011, the Cooperation Committee of Cambodia recorded a total of 3,492 NGOs operating throughout the country (reported in Bandyopadhyay & Khus, 2013, p. 668). Initially, NGOs built school buildings and provided needed materials to schools such as textbooks and furniture. Other NGOs took on the role of capacity development. These NGOs did not provide direct material assistance to schools but rather provided training to teachers, principals, and community members. Whatever the focus, NGOs worked with or inside public, mainstream schools, thus complementing the government's development efforts. As I learned first hand when I first started working in Cambodia, however, some of the NGO assistance is provided directly to families in the form of scholarships in order for them to afford private tutoring costs.
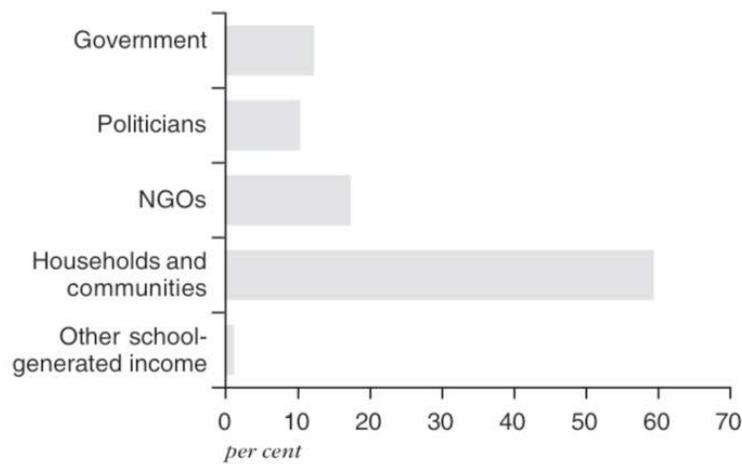
Figure 3.1: Resource inputs to primary education (approximate proportions, 1997). (Source, Bray, 1999, p. 42).

The contemporary moment of household financing of schooling that Vandy lives through is comprised of diverse private spaces of education. There are private schools, private tutoring, and NGO schools. Private schools (*rien kuo nov sala akchoan*) are typically small, for-profit businesses, focusing on tutoring foreign languages, information technology, or any other skill considered valuable for the job market. In rural areas, these educational enterprises are commonly run out of the homes of particularly skilled residents and are typically not registered with local authorities. There also large private schools, ranging from medium-fee schools (costing approximately US$1,200/year) to elite private schools (costing approximately US$20,000/year) offering curricula such as the International Baccalaureate. Private tutoring, which was detailed in Chapter 2, is another private space of learning where Vandy spends money. NGO schools, which can be free of charge, hire their own teachers, have their own customs and norms, and build their own school buildings. Since these schools do not necessarily follow the national curriculum, they are more closely related to private schools.

The proliferation of educational services has created a labyrinth of public, private, and hybrid spaces of learning available, although limited by geography and economics, from which households may choose. Vandy's choice to send her children to private tutoring, even if it meant owing the teacher money, captures this complex history of schooling. In the contemporary moment, any number of services can be purchased or obtained free of charge in order to construct an individualized educational experience.

3.3.2 The moment away from memorization

When I first saw that group of students heading towards their private tutoring class, I walked over to watch once class had begun. I peered into the classroom through the barred windows. The students were working together, and the teacher was walking around the class providing students with individual attention. My observations were interrupted by the sound of students loudly repeating a lesson in the classroom next door where government school was taking place. I peered into that classroom and immediately noticed the difference in classroom organization and teacher pedagogy. Students repeated in unison the words written on the board as the teacher stood at the front. It became clear that the two spaces of learning — private tutoring and government school — were different beyond the clothes worn by students. I realized that private tutoring signaled a different moment than the normal routine in government school. Private tutoring was a moment away from memorization, which had become a common practice in education. In other words, the private tutoring class I watched was a lived time that simultaneously occurred with a different lived time represented by mainstream government school where memorization was a preferred pedagogy.

Scholars locate the emergence of memorization and rote learning in Cambodia in the study of Theravāda Buddhism, a religion that stretches across much of Southeast Asia, by boys in pagoda schools. The scholars date the emergence to around 500 AD (Reimer, 2012, p. 180). Anne Ruth Hansen (2007) considered rote learning a central feature in "the traditional form of monastic training…in Khmer monasteries" (p. 89). This "manuscript culture" style of learning included the recitation and rote memorization of Pali texts, which were often copied onto palm leaves by Khmer monks while studying in Siam (present day Thailand). In this way, the spread of Theravāda Buddhism was partly a process of educational transfer across borders.

Pagoda schools and their preferred pedagogy were not static across time. There have been evolutions, changes, and (failed) attempts at reform. One of the first documented changes in educational practice began in the 1850s after King Ang Duong was installed as ruler of Cambodia by Siam following a period of regional conflict and unrest. Hansen (2007) argued that the coronation of Ang Duong began a period of Buddhist renovation that became a central impetus for the Buddhist

modernization project and attempted to change commonplace pedagogical practices. In the early 1900s, Khmer monks who led the modernization movement believed that rote learning did not result in an understanding of the text. Indeed, pro-modernizing Khmer monks, such as Chuon Nath and Huot That,

> reacted against the pedagogical tradition of rote memorization and recitation of texts, instead emphasizing the translation and interpretation of texts and sermons between Pali and the vernacular, so that both monks and laypersons not only took part in a performance of texts, but more important, understood the content of what was being read, preached, or recited (Hansen, 2007, p. 101).

Although pedagogical innovations away from rote memorization can be traced to Khmer monks who studied in Bangkok in the late 1800s[15], the reform efforts made notable progress when they dovetailed with the modernization efforts of French colonialism. This can be seen in the work of French colonial scholars of Indochina who helped reform the Cambodian system of pagoda schools in the second decade of the 20th century. These scholars also emphasized pedagogical practices other than memorization. However, unlike the Khmer monks who believed that modern pedagogies should be used to overcome the moral degeneration they saw in society, French scholars justified the reforms using notions of rationality and the scientific method, which had been popular themes since the European Enlightenment (1650s-1780s; Hansen, 2007, p. 130). For instance, Louis Finot, the founder of the *École française d'Extrême-Orient* (the French School of the Far East) in Paris, observed in a 1918 report on the Pali School in Phnom Penh, using pejorative language common to the era:

> If you ask a student at the *École de Pali* how Buddhism envisages the origin of the universe and of life, the nature of mental operations, transmigration, the sacred, salvation, et cetera…[his] response will be furnished by the Canon that

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[15] Hansen (2007) cited the biography of a Khmer monk named Deb-U who, while studying in Bangkok, "experienced a brilliant illumination… [because] monks who were his teachers supplied their students with thorough and detailed explanations" (pp. 89-90). His experience of studying in Cambodia in the 1800s, by contrast, was far different: "most [Khmer] teachers at that time were unable to provide their students with explanations that would allow them to gain clear or deep comprehension, or to illuminate all subjects. Most often, their teaching consisted merely of having students repeat after them as they recited the scriptures" (cited in Hansen, 2007, p. 89).

he has been made to study, but without giving him any comprehensive idea of what it contains. It is essential to liberate the students from this perpetual recitation of texts that only encourages memorization, at the cost of thinking, and thus aggravates the original tendency of the native mentality (Finot cited in Hansen, 2007, p. 136-137).

For Finot, rote learning continued "the native mentality," which could be ameliorated through modern educational practices. Reform was thus justified morally and scientifically. Although the Khmer monks trying to reform pedagogical practices had different aims than Finot, they shared a common interest in the means of those reforms. However, the educational reforms instituted in the early 1900s by Louis Finot, and pro-modernization Monks such as Chuon Nath, Huot That, and others were unable to be successfully replicated after Cambodian independence from the French in 1953.

After having claimed self-rule from the French in 1946, King Sihanouk embarked on a campaign to increase educational access by building more schools, hiring more teachers, and enrolling more students. Kiernan (1985) offered a look at the changes from the 1920s to the 1940s, claiming "there were 160 modern primary schools with 10,000 pupils by 1925…but even by 1944, when 80,000 [pupils] were attending modern primary schools, only about 500 pupils per year completed their primary education" (p. xiii). Deighton (1971) also reported various educational statistics showing the continued rapid enrollments between the 1950s and 1960s:

> By the late 1960s, more than one million children enrolled in primary education as compared with about 0.6 million in 1960 and 0.13 million in 1950. From 1950 to 1965 the number of females enrolled at the primary level grew from 9 per cent to 39 percent. The number of teachers and schools has expanded commensurately from 1950 to 1964. (p. 579)

By the 1960s, the government was spending over 20 percent of its recurrent budget on education, far larger than proportions in the 1990s and 2000s (Dy, 2004; see also Brehm, Silova & Tuot, 2012). Despite an increase in funding, schools were mainly located in urban centers; the illiteracy rate was not declining; and employment opportunities for graduates were rare (Ayres, 1999; Chandler, 1991; Duggan, 1996). By 1955, reservations emerged that were similar to the ones levied on the traditional form of monastic teaching by the pro-modernization monks and colonial

administrators. A report prepared by Bilodeau and colleagues (1955, p. 21) for UNESCO on compulsory education in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam observed,

> [Pupils] learnt to read the Buddhist sacred texts…and copied out the written characters. In actual fact, the texts were learnt by heart, as a result of endless repetition, and the pupils were quite incapable of reading the words separately. A Cambodian boy leaving the school had his memory stocked with edifying passages, but could neither read [nor] write.

Memorization and rote learning continue to dominate pedagogical practices, despite the best efforts of Western aid agencies. In her study of UNESCO's CFS, which combines a set of modalities that emphasize student-centered learning instead of teacher-centered learning (i.e., a strategy away from rote learning), Reimer (2012) found similar patterns of repetition, recitation, and memorization that I found when I first started working in Cambodia. It was common in Reimer's public school classroom observations to see "students stand and individually read aloud a designated portion of the textbook; usually the same passage is read 3-4 times consecutively by different students each time; or the whole class is instructed to read the same text aloud 1-2-3 times in unison" (p. 393). Although Reimer noted that "memorisation, rote learning, and repetition are valuable learning methods and especially in combination with other instructional modes" (p. 392), she concluded that "there seems to be little content beyond descriptive knowledge, facts, and simple information…little is added or taken from it, and there is virtually no synthesis, analysis, or application to real-life daily situation/s or the national context" (pp. 395-396). This echoed Bilodeau and colleagues' (1955) findings nearly 60 years earlier: "The entire body of knowledge and habits to be instilled into children during their primary school years must be reconsidered in the light of existing conditions in Cambodia itself. The final curriculum is thus bound to differ appreciably from that of Western countries" (p. 49).

Despite the many efforts to reform pedagogical practices in the name of modernization since the early 1900s, rote learning continues to play a central role in educational process. Rote learning in mainstream schooling is a common practice that most youth experience, despite the efforts of reform by the modernization movement led by monks in the early 1900s and UNESCO in the 21st Century. Nevertheless the contemporary moment away from memorization is found in the private tutoring

classes where students work in groups and teachers provide individual attention. This change in routine practice was clearly visible as I stood outside both classrooms. Applying a historical lens to pedagogical memorization showed how profound the moment in lived time was in the private tutoring class. Moreover, the lived time in private tutoring, which signaled an alternative pedagogical possibility, was separated by a thin wall from another, different lived time in government school where repetition of past pedagogical practices was occurring at the same moment in chronological time.

3.3.3 The moment of neoliberalization

The group of students attending private tutoring and Sok Vandy's ways of finding money to send her children to school contain traces of other, non-educational related historical events. These everyday actions — borrowing money from teachers for school and attending private tutoring — comprise part of the privatization of education in Cambodia, which has a larger political economic history. Embedded in these actions is the national and global political economic formation known as neoliberalism. It is here, through the study of lived time, that the state and international institutions hold power in the construction of certain situated practices. In order to unpack these moments to see neoliberalism at work, I must return to the history of Cambodia post-Khmer Rouge.

During the ten-year period Vietnam rebuilt the Cambodian state, called the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), the Western bloc (the United States and its allies) debated the exact way in which Cambodia could re-enter the international community as a legitimate state. This was known, I have suggested earlier, as the "Cambodia problem." Essentially, the goal of the Western bloc was to undermine the Soviet-funded, Vietnamese-supported PRK government in Phnom Penh because it was seen as illegitimate in the Western international order (Haas, 1991a). This was achieved through new alliances that were made in order to stop what was believed to be communist expansionism in Cambodia. Washington, after a rapprochement with Beijing that culminated in formal diplomatic ties in 1979, informally allied with China by sending military and monetary aid to the Khmer Rouge, which maintained a stronghold in parts of northern Cambodia and in a few of the UN sponsored refugee camps in Thailand. Haas (1991b) called this alliance a "Faustian pact" because it brought together countries with opposing ideologies, one of which was known to have

committed genocide. Washington also supported the creation of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) by former Prime Minister Son Sann, who had fled to Paris during the years of the Khmer Rouge but was previously a close ally of the United States in the 1960s. In addition to the Khmer Rouge and the KPNLF, King Sihanouk, at the request of ASEAN, set up the FUNCINPEC party (the *Front Uni National pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique, et Coopératif*, or National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia), which was administered from outside of Cambodia similar to KPNLF. These three opposition parties comprised the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK), which was the recognized government of Cambodia by the United Nations between 1982 and 1990.

Foreshadowing the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Vietnamese abruptly withdrew from Cambodia in September 1989, much earlier than its 25-year agreement stipulated. This left a power vacuum in Cambodia. Four factions were vying for power, which was a situation different from countries that similarly had received support from the Soviet Union: "unlike most post-cold war conflicts, neither ethnic nor tribal hatreds drove [the conflict in Cambodia]. Rather it was a simple struggle for political power by different factions" (Heininger, 1994, p. 67). As Chandler pointed out (2008), these factions were competing over three different visions of order in Cambodia: royalism (represented by FUNCINPEC), parliamentarianism (represented by KPNLF), and socialism (represented by the PRK and the Khmer Rouge, although they represented different versions).

The Western powers saw a post-Vietnam Cambodia as an opportunity to showcase to the world the positive effects that liberal peace building could have on former socialist countries (Curtis, 1998). The international community thought its intervention could create a Cambodia ordered along the vision of parliamentarianism or at least royalism, but certainly not socialism. The "Cambodia problem" was finally resolved with the signing of the Paris Peace Accords in 1991. These accords brought a new beginning to the four factions in Cambodia. Parliamentarianism was the settled upon form of government. Free and fair elections were to be held by 1993 and security would be restored to Cambodia. The hope was that the peace accords would

stabilize the CPP led by Hun Sen[16], Sihanouk's FUNCINPEC party, the Khmer Rouge, and the KPNLF.

The international mechanism designed to bring liberal democracy to Cambodia was UNTAC. UNTAC had a "revolutionary" and "unprecedented" mandate to remodel Cambodia as a Western state (Lizee, 2000). It was a "paradigm-setting multi-dimensional operation" of a kind the world had never seen, consisting of peace-making, peace-keeping, and peace-building operations (Doyle, Johnstone & Orr, 1997, p. 2). UNTAC "sought to establish overall command of the Cambodian socio-political and economic infrastructure by taking control of seven components": human rights, electoral, military, civil administration, police, repatriation, and rehabilitation (Richmond & Franks, 2007, p. 28). The operations of UNTAC, which have been described as having been implemented "clumsily" (Heikkila & Peycam, 2010, p. 302), brought into Cambodia close to 20,000 personnel, primarily within the military component, and the discourse of human rights. The two-year operation was estimated to cost nearly US$2 billion, including US$806 million for expatriate salaries, US$235 million for land and accommodation, and US$158 million for transportation (Curtis, 1993). The 1993 elections that marked the conclusion of UNTAC were marred by irregularities and problems, foreshowing the problems ahead.[17] The elections held in 1993 reportedly witnessed a 90 percent participation rate. This was championed by the United Nations as a successful conclusion to UNTAC. However Hun Sen, who had ruled the country since 1985, refused to let go of power even though his party only won 38 percent compared to FUNCINPEC's 45 percent of the vote. With no majority winner, the UN-backed solution to this dilemma was to have dual prime ministers. The peculiar separation of power did not stop at the top, but was performed in every ministry, creating an overly bureaucratic structure where equal numbers of FUNCINPEC and CPP members presided over all levels of government (Curtis, 1998).

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[16] The CPP emerged out of the Paris peace talks. Previously, Hun Sen was part of the Khmer United Front of National Salvation (KUFNS), which helped the Vietnamese overthrow the Khmer Rouge in 1979. Once in power, the KUFNS established the PRK and eventually changed its name to the Solidarity Front for National Construction and Defense. After 1991, however, Hun Sen had to form a new political party in order to appease the Western powers involved in the peace talks. This was creative diplomacy par excellence: Hun Sen's party changed in name only.

[17] For example, the Khmer Rouge pulled out of the elections at the last minute and advocated a boycott of the elections.

In the immediate years following the 1993 elections, problems continued. A constitution was drafted and passed, but the voice of citizens was not included (Curtis, 1998, p. 29). Many laws were drafted and put through the parliamentary process, but citizens felt disconnected from the elite process. Richmond and Franks (2007, p. 40) quoted a former UNTAC force commander who commented:

> laws in Cambodia are made at the whim of the controlling elite rather than the legislature and justice does not exist for the large majority of Cambodians. The opposition exercises its privilege at the discretion of the executive rather than by the law as it does in liberal democracies.

Violence also continued, as the Khmer Rouge and the other political parties continued to arm themselves via Chinese and American aid. After FUNCINPEC's attempted coup in 1997,[18] Hun Sen was able to consolidate power.[19]

UNTAC also had profound economic effects (Berdal & Leifer, 1996). The large injection of foreign currency had destabilizing effects on the economy and society, resulting in an "artificial boom created by the relative wealth of its staff" (Richmond & Franks, 2007, p. 42) and an increase in HIV/AIDS and prostitution (Curtis, 1993). In the end, although UNTAC was often described as mechanism to bring peace and usher in an era of capitalism and democracy, "the elections were intended not so much to introduce democracy as to create a legitimate and thus diplomatically recognizable government" (David Ashely, cited in Vickery, 2007, p. 6). In other words, it was a multi-billion dollar face-saving mission that would result in a diplomatically agreeable way for the international recognition of the government in Phnom Penh, which had been in power since 1979 but internationally isolated because of its ties with the Soviet Union and Vietnam.

The re-engineering of Cambodia was influenced by neoliberal economics. Neoliberalism is the "ideology that advocates the dominance of a competition-driven market model" (Farmer, 2005, p. 5). Individuals are believed to be rational decision makers, trying to maximize economic and material benefits. Governments supporting

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[18] Similar to the debate over Vietnamese "liberation" or "invasion," the 1997 coup is also debated. Some (i.e., pro-Western scholars/advocates) believe it was the CPP under Hun Sen that initiated the coup. Others believe it was inspired by FUNCINPEC. See Vickery (2010) for the full controversy.

[19] In 2013, Hun Sen's CPP party saw its lowest election victory at the national level. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

neoliberalism tend to try to reduce government intervention in the market, which is believed to be better off with as few regulations as possible. The major proponents of neoliberalism in the 1990s were the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, both major players in Cambodia's rehabilitation, especially after the 1998 elections when Hun Sen's complete control on power was seen as a new period of stability in the country (Curtis, 1998).

The neoliberal policy reforms began as early as 1992 in Cambodia. Richmond and Franks (2007) detailed the 1992 IMF plan for an "economic stabilization programme, designed to cut capital and social spending" (p. 33). This was followed by a structural adjustment loan. These reforms were "designed to stimulate market reforms" (Richmond & Franks, 2007, p. 33). The IMF program, the ESAF I, was formally adopted in 1994. By 1995, these structural adjustment policies resulted in a reduction in personnel of "the country's public administration by 20 percent" (Curtis, 1998, p. 25).

Neoliberalism as externally imposed needs to be tempered with the internal dynamics embracing and furthering such political economic structures. Springer (2011) argued that the Cambodian elite embraced the externally imposed neoliberalism in the 1990s as a way to further their political power by connecting to historical formations of power. For instance, the patronage system that has long been found in Cambodia was not displaced but actually strengthened by neoliberal reforms (Slocomb, 2010). As Springer (2011, p. 2558) noted,

> High-ranking government officials may have adopted a neoliberal configuration in Cambodia due to its latent potential to provide them not only with enrichment, but also with the ability to control the monetary channels of privatization and investment in such a way that only those connected to their systems of patronage stand to receive any direct benefit.

Instances of government officials using the patronage system to enrich themselves through privatization have been found in the sale of soil to Singapore (Global Witness, 2009; see also Global Witness, 2010) and the private ownership of farmland and fisheries (De Lopez, 2002). These cases are examples of "neoliberalism with Cambodian characteristics" (Springer, 2011, p. 2565). They are, in other words, instances of global political economic formations being enacted in local environments.

How then does neoliberalism with Cambodian characteristics affect the everyday life of people who are not high-ranking officials in positions of power able to control national and international businesses? One way has been the reliance on informal fees paid by individuals to people in positions who provide social services (teachers, police officers, health workers, etc.). Individuals pay various fees to a person in some position of power who provides some sort of protection or service, thus connecting to the historical "web of patronage and clientship" (Toomer et al, 2011, p. 19). Ebeling (2008) found that 70 percent of the population pays an informal fee everyday. These fees often go to police officers, school teachers, and doctors. These types of social positions provide needed services (safety, education, and health) to individuals, who thus see an informal fee as a necessary payment. The patron-client relationship (or actually existing formations of neoliberalization) is exactly what Sok Vandy and that group of students walking to private tutoring was enacting. They were clients of a teacher who provided patronage within the educational system — more knowledge, better grades, etcetera. In this way, the lived time in each of those moments — private tutoring and entering a debt relationship with a teacher — included traces of a history beyond the individual and in fact represented situated practices of particular political economies.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, a temporal dimension was added to the spatialization of educational privatization. This temporal dimension included multiple conceptions of time, namely a chronological ordering of time (a "modern time") and a non-linear conception of time found in the moments of social experience (a "lived time"). By problematizing each conception of time, thereby problematizing both linear versions of history and historicism, I showed how a "total time," or the combination of multiple conceptions of time, could provide a temporal dimension in studies using a critical spatial lens.

Although biological time was not a central focus in this chapter, the effect of time on the body was implicitly addressed. The linear conception of history showed the different political economic formations across time that had had various impacts on the human body. One notable impact on bodily time was during the Khmer Rouge when forced work and starvation were common. Moreover, the psychological effects from the Khmer Rouge period have had devastating bodily effects on the population,

and have lasted into the present. These psychological effects impact social relations in so far as communities that only four decades ago were brutalized continue to live together. It is likely that in some cases, community members who killed other community members continue to live amongst survivors. The way in which this impacts social life is difficult to discern, but it is important to keep in mind when trying to understand the social relations of a certain group of people.

Chapters 2 and 3 have outlined a particular way to think about educational privatization. Chapter 2 detailed the production of educational spaces as a social event and this chapter added the importance of history (or time) into the framework. Combined, the two chapters have outlined particular ways to think about educational privatization as being enacted by individuals in situated practices and times, which actually produce new formations of spatiotemporal social reality. The enactment of educational privatization in this approach is thus unique to the situated spaces and times found in my empirical research. In the next chapter, I turn to the method of study employed in my empirical research that uses these theoretical conceptualizations.

Chapter 4

Studying Social Relations with Landscape Portraiture

4.1 Introduction

In order to explore the social relations constituting the perceived, conceived, and lived spaces of education where the processes of privatization unfold in diverse ways, I employ the method of portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983, 2005; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Portraiture enables me to understand the experiences of a group of diverse individuals who each occupy a distinct role in society. In Part II of the dissertation, I present six portraits of individuals who live in the same socio-institutional space as a way to explore the enactment of educational space. The portraits focus on each person's social relations and experiences, as they understood them and as interpreted by me. Although the individuals did not necessarily know or interact with one another on a daily basis, the similarities (and differences) that emerge across the portraits helps determine particular themes within the social relations of individuals who enact educational spaces.

In an effort to overcome some of the limitations of portraiture (described in section 4.7), I also employ the method of the extended case study (Burawoy, 1998). The extended case study allows me to situate the six individuals within the larger political economic processes impacting the socio-institutional space. This method also enables me to take the emergent findings — the themes in my data that resulted from analysis — from the six portraits and relate them back to my theoretical framework (chapters 2 and 3). In this way, the actions and interactions of particular individuals are situated within a larger spatial theory of educational privatization. This seeks to overcome the limitation of individualizing each portrait in an a-theoretical manner.

The combination of portraiture and the extended case study shows the complex ways in which educational spaces are constituted and negotiated beyond one individual. The individuals provide the findings for each portrait, but the material practices across each portrait are situated within a larger context and compared to my theoretical framework. Taken as a collection, the portraits constitute, what I call, a "landscape portrait" of educational privatization — a whole (landscape) that cannot be reduced to its individual parts (portraits). In other words, the extended case study

stretches the frame of each portrait to include the larger landscape in which the portrait — as well as the other portraits — is located.

This mode of analysis is based on a morphogenetic approach to social change (Archer, 1982, 2010a, 2010b, 2012). This particular analytical approach allows me to understand the social changes that resulted in particular enactments of educational space where practices of privatization were found. This approach conceptualizes social change as occurring through the complex interaction of social structure and human agency, but understands them as ontologically distinct. Using this approach overcomes some of the problems that have been identified with spatial theory, namely the conceptualization of structure and agency as simultaneously constituted. It also allows for an analytical approach that carefully incorporates chronological time, which balances the lived time of each participant's (subjective) biography. As such, the construction of each portrait situated his or her biography into the social structures at a given time in order to make sense of the possible agency enacted during his or her lifetime. Although my goal was not to expand the morphogenetic approach, its use proved a valuable addition to landscape portraiture.

I begin the chapter by situating my research design amongst Ball (2012) and Burch's (2009a; 2009b) studies on educational privatization, indicating my connection to and extension of their work. These two scholars are selected as comparative cases because they represent different research traditions (i.e., spatial network theory and new institutional theory) that both take a critical approach to the study of educational privatization. With this positioning, I then review the study of individuals (and social relations) in comparative and international education. The approach I take extends the work previously undertaken by a collection of scholars through the use of critical spatial geography. After situating my self amongst scholars of educational privatization and within the field of comparative and international education, I outline in detail the concept of landscape portraiture, focusing on the combination of portraiture with the extended case study. The chapter then turns to the particular data collection processes and techniques I used, followed by my use of the analytical approach of morphogenesis. Before concluding the chapter, I review the limitations of my methodology, setting the stage for the portraits in Part II.

4.2 Research design and questions

The research design and questions guiding my thesis begin with — and subsequently extend — the work of Stephen J. Ball and Patricia Burch. Both scholars have situated contemporary global education policy within the framework of "the logic of the market that assumes that business strategies can and should transfer to education" (Burch, 2009b). Whereas Burch (2009a) analyzed global education policy from an institutional level by looking at the effects of "new privatization" (Burch's phrase) on "the role of broader cultural norms in influencing organization and behaviour" (p. 10) as a result of the No Child Left Behind policy in the United States, Ball (2012) examined global education policies, mainly in the United Kingdom, that were neoliberal in design by combining network analysis with ethnography of education businesses. Ball was concerned with "the increasing role of business, social enterprise and philanthropy in education service delivery and education policy, and the concomitant emergence of new forms of 'network' governance" (p. 1). Both scholars' critical yet careful methods and analysis attempted to make visible the "invisible…processes of privatization of state education and their effects on and in schools, colleges and universities" (Ball, 2010, p. 229).

Burch and Ball addressed the topic of the privatization of public education from slightly different methodological traditions. Burch's method was "multi-dimensional" (Ball, 2010, p. 230) because it employed a range of data collection techniques (i.e. interviews, case studies, and document analysis) with a group of diverse stakeholders at different levels of policy formation and implementation. For instance, she interviewed senior staff members of various (trans)national corporations working within the education sector, analyzed financial documents of those corporations, and then performed case studies of particular interventions within the "new privatization" policy menu inside school districts, speaking with teachers and students. She was concerned specifically with the institution of schooling within an epoch of increased private provision of educational services in the USA. Ball, meanwhile, drew a complex network of actors connected to each other within the field of education. His methods centered on content analysis from websites and videos as well as interviews with key informants of businesses and philanthropies in the education sector.

Taken together, Ball and Burch's approaches represent two different ways to critically analyze educational privatization. Both are situated within longstanding traditions in social science. Burch falls within institutional theorists, particularly neo-institutionalism, or what she calls new institutionalism (Meyer & Rowan, 2006). Institutional theory looks at the processes of institutionalization (i.e., the rules and structures of society reflected in practices and polices of schools) and the structural isomorphism (i.e., convergence of policies and practices) of organizations working or operating in similar environments. Burch added a critical approach to new institutional theory by injecting a sense of agency, which is often missing in neo-institutional approaches to education phenomenon (Carney, Rappleye & Silova, 2012). She argued in her approach "individuals and organization carry, reinterpret, reinforce, challenge, adapt, and submit to [institutional] trends" (Burch, 2009a, p. 19).

By contrast, Ball (2012) used a critical approach based on spatial network theory (see Beech & Larsen, 2014). His analysis was self-situated within the "mobility turn" (Urry, 2003, p. 157) of the social sciences. There has been, Ball suggested, "a broad set of epistemological and ontological shifts across political science, sociology, and social geography which involve a lessening of interest in social structures, and an increasing emphasis on flows and mobilities…that is, a focus on the 'spatializing' of social relations, on travel and other forms of movement and other transnational interactions and forms of sociality" (Ball, 2012, p. 5). From this perspective, the effects of globalization on students and teachers are as much a part of his discussion as are the neoliberal logics and policies he explored inside businesses and governments.

Although different, the work of both scholars opens the possibility for further studies, for which they themselves advocated. Burch (2009a) wrote that much more "in-depth qualitative research is needed in order to examine the interplay between local practice, government policy and corporate activity" (p. 128), and Ball began his book with "a plea for more research so that we [the academic community] might be a little clearer about what we think" (p. xiii) on the topic of educational privatization. He later suggested that, while his book had mapped the network of many (and primarily the main) actors in one space of educational privatization, "the aesthetic of the network" he portrayed "fails to convey the activities of networking" (p. 144). That is to say, he had not been able to qualitatively describe the actions and motivations of the actors within the "edu-businesses" he mapped. Likewise, Forsey's (2010) biggest

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complaint about Burch's book was the absence of the construction of markets and society from the people she interviewed:

> We get occasional glimpses of these people through snippets of conversation, but rarely do we get a sense of how people make policies and the ways that markets are oh-so human in their construction. (Forsey, 2010, p. 239)

My approach is to build on the work of Burch and Ball by starting with the individual actors within the many spaces of education where privatization unfolds. The research design looks at individuals at the local level and distills the social relations constructing the many spaces of education where privatization emerges. This type of research design is visualized in Figure 4.1. In this figure, the dots represent individuals and the circle around them represents their historical and material context or environment, including their social relations with other individuals. Some of the individuals' contexts overlap, suggesting a physical relationship between two or more participants, while some do not, suggesting that they do not in fact share a physical relationship with other research participants. The point of these contexts — some overlapping and others not — is to represent that the collection of individuals investigated in this thesis does not capture all types of people in the community. There are likely other people who play other roles than those captured in this dissertation. In this sense, the empty spaces in Figure 4.1 represent the absent individuals in my research design. Nevertheless, partial representation can provide valuable insights. Indeed, when the portraits (the dot and its circle in figure 4.1) are combined together a landscape portrait emerges that includes the present portraits as well as the absent actors.

The individuals that are the main research subjects in this thesis include six types of actors. In Table 4.1, the six types of actors are briefly sketched, and their full portraits are found in Part II of the dissertation. Each actor is categorized into a different social role or position. These roles emerged as important from my previous work in various communities in Cambodia between 2009 and 2012. I do not claim to have captured all types of roles or social positions in society, nor do I claim that the individuals selected represent the entire category they are placed within. One noticeable absence in my selection is that of a student. My reasons for purposely excluding a student, as well as my selection process for each category, are explained

in Section 3.5. For now, it is important to understand that my methodology began where Ball and Burch ended: individuals occupying different roles in society.

Central Portrait

The portrait's historical material environment/ context
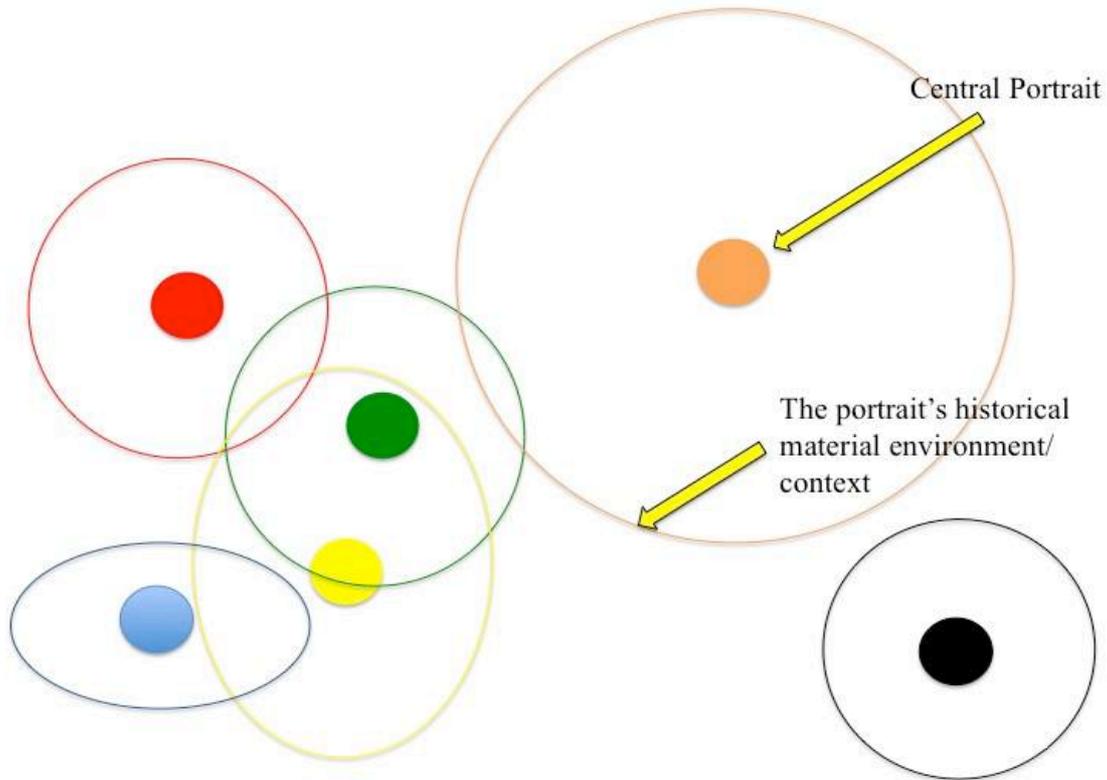
Figure 4.1 Visualization of research design

Table 4.1: Type of actors

The Teacher:
A public school teacher who also teaches private tutoring.
The NGO School Director:
An entrepreneur who manages the educational and business operations of an NGO school.
The Pagoda Committee Member:
A former teacher who has managed the pagoda committee, a powerful social body, for 25 years.
The Government Official:
A government official who navigates the politics of international aid and government largess.
The Town Elder:
A father and grandfather who experienced all forms of education in the community since the 1950s.

The Parent:
A parent who struggles to afford the different spaces of education for her children.

The research design employed in this research provides the "oh-so human" part of educational markets and explores the "networking" practices of individuals, thus extending both Burch and Ball's work. Although confined to a different geographic context than either Burch or Ball's research projects, this qualitative research in Cambodia helps, however modestly, in the understating of how social relations are "negotiated and reorganized in the ongoing flow of institutional life" (Levinson & Sutton, 2001, p. 1-2). In other words, I address Forsey's critique of Burch's work by offering, "deeper, richer, thicker portraits of those involved" (Forsey, 2010, p. 240) in the processes of educational privatization.

In particular, the specific research questions my thesis explores are:

1. How have individuals living in the same socio-institutional space enacted educational privatization?
2. What are the perceived, conceived, and lived spaces of education where privatization unfolds?

My research takes as its focus a global phenomenon within education (that is, educational privatization) in an attempt to understand the daily activities that constitute the relations between particular people in society and are informed by an education system that relies in part on the private provision of education. In other words, I am interested in "the 'apparently mundane practice' through which the global is produced" (Larner, 2003, p. 511 cited in Ball, 2012, p. 5). Through such a method, I am able, as Jessop, Brenner, and Jones (2008) urged, to produce an account of "historically specific geographies of social relations" (p. 392). Exactly how individuals and their social relations can be studied is the focus of the next section.

4.3 Studying social relations

Although there is no consensus on the ways in which individuals and their social relations are organized in social life, the specific conceptualization a researcher employs leads to particular research methods. The different ways to research individuals fall into two broad categories: vertically or horizontally structured. The vertically structured approach differentiates among different levels of society — at the bottom is the individual (the micro level), somewhere in the middle is the nation-state (the meso level), and at the top is the global (the macro level). Within this approach, a

range of theoretical perspectives explain social reality: on one end, higher levels determine lower levels, while on the other end the aggregation of lower levels constitutes the upper levels. The vertically structured approach is powerful because it clearly connects global processes to lower levels of interaction (or vice-versa).

The "horizontal" approach, by contrast, conceptualizes individuals and institutions within various spaces as networked with equal importance in the enactment of social relations. In this approach, uneven power dynamics among individuals or institutions are explored, and the vertical division between the global and local is seen as artificial. The global and local are not two different levels, as the vertical approach would have it; rather, they co-constitute each other. Beech and Larsen (2014, p. 84) make this point by asking, "Why not think of places as related but not nested within one another?" The macro level, in other words, is related to the micro-level but is not necessarily embedded within it. This is a powerful approach because it embraces the ideas of networks, mobility, and non-linear processes. Ball (2012) and Burch (2009a) represent these divergent approaches.

The vertically structured approach of social reality is the epistemology Burch used in her study of privatizing public education in the United States. She separated the phenomenon of privatization into different levels, beginning at the global level of transnational corporations working in education, moving to the policy level of national governments, and then to the school level where "new privatization" programs were implemented. The assumption in her research was that the higher levels constituted the lower levels, and consequently led her to a particular methodology that traced forms of "new privatization" from their creation at the top level inside businesses and governments down to their implementation at the school level.

The linear structure conceptualized and used by Burch is well established in the field of comparative and international education. One recent manifestation has been labeled the "vertical case study" (Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006), which aims to simultaneously and comparatively analyze the micro and macro-levels of educational systems. It strives to situate local action and interpretation within a broader cultural, historical, and political investigation. Unlike Burch, however, Vavrus and Bartlett (2006) aimed neither to explain individual action by global forces nor global forces through individual action. They took a mixed approach, similar to Bray (2004), who pointed out "patterns at lower levels in education systems are shaped by patterns at

higher levels, and vice versa" (Bray, 2004, p. 240). The connection between Bray's methodological approach and Vavrus and Bartlett's vertical case study is a good entry point into studies of privatization such as Burch's.

Vertical case studies are "a means of comparing knowledge claims among actors with different social locations in a vertically-bounded analysis" (Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006, p. 96). This conceptualization of a vertical case study fits within the methodological traditions of Bray and Thomas (1995) who proposed a multi-level cube as a way to classify and/or conduct comparisons (figure 4.2). Indeed, Vavrus and Bartlett (2006, p. 96) suggested they drew "inspiration, yet [departed], from Bray and Thomas's work on multilevel analyses (1995)."
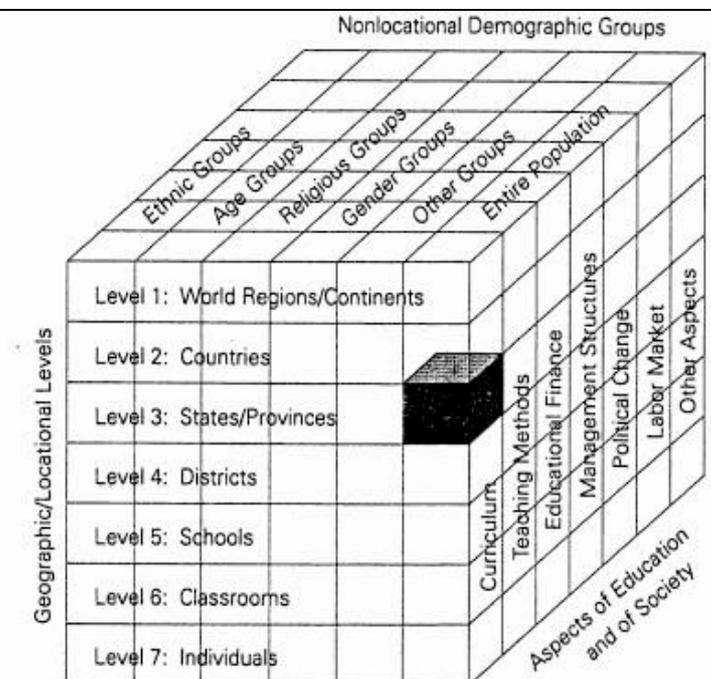
Figure 4.2: The Bray & Thomas "cube" for comparative education analyses (Source: Bray & Thomas, 1995, p. 475)

Within this methodological tradition, the various levels in society are examined holistically by structuring them within one system. The value of structurally organizing "studies on the upper levels of the hierarchy (i.e., state/province, country, and world-region) is that they can offer general frameworks within which to place the more specific details of particular settings" (Bray & Thomas, 1995, p. 487). Thus, researchers are able to make sense out of the tricky and complex phenomena they investigate, preventing them from being overwhelmed "with masses of particularistic detail," by identifying "broad economic conditions, political structures, cultural

traditions, and forms of educational organization and administration that influence how much of what type of education is provided for different sectors of society" (Bray & Thomas, 1995, p. 487).

Within this method, researchers need to account for local level realities of education while working up through the system of education at all levels. Using the example of literacy, Vavrus and Bartlett (2006) claimed policy makers often use cross-national studies (that is, the use of studies that only look at one level of education systems across many countries) without considering the contested local realities of the meaning of literacy:

> In such circumstances, efforts to study literacy solely from a quantitative perspective, which is often necessary to conduct cross-national studies, means that scholars are using incomparable data. Indeed, rich case studies of literacy have demonstrated that the meaning and politics of literacy vary radically in different contexts and that the potential opportunities afforded by literacy are profoundly constrained by locally-relevant social, political, and economic structures and power relations. (p. 97)

Bray and Thomas (1995) also used the example of literacy in their work a decade earlier in order to make a similar argument. They suggested a more robust way of studying literacy would be through the "shading of many cells within the cube"; in other words, a multi-level analysis that was both qualitative and quantitative was needed to create an accurate picture of literacy. Vavrus and Bartlett pointed out the limited use of local realities in national and international education policy; Bray and Thomas (1995, p. 487) did so as well:

> The weakness of such work, however, is that the broad generalizations obscure the features that distinguish one region, school, or pupil from another. Macro-level studies cannot recognize individual differences, or account for the importance of those differences in educational events. Moreover, while it is useful in some contexts to group countries into categories labelled more developed or less developed, or by continent or world-region, in other contexts this grouping may be problematic.

Vavrus and Bartlett proposed the vertical case study could generalize findings by balancing universalism and relativism while also maintaining validity of knowledge. Their approach balanced universalism and relativism by making general claims while also recognizing local context without abandoning efforts to generalize. Validity was

achieved because they had supposedly developed "depth through the study of a discipline alongside the study of a language and the history of a region" (p. 101). This resulted in a "thorough understanding of the particular at each level and to analyze how these understandings produce similar and different interpretations of the policy, problem, or phenomenon under study" (p. 99). In other words, "the primary purpose of a vertical case study is to promote comparison among levels rather than across states" (p. 99). It was the responsibility of the researcher to actually understand the context and details at each level in the analysis.

Although the vertical case study does not move the epistemological debates in comparative education in any new direction since Bray and Thomas (1995) proposed a "cube" as a valuable way of comparison, it does highlight the ability for case studies to be generalized. Vavrus and Bartlett do not think single-level case studies can be generalized without taking a structuralist approach that links the findings to the larger systems and structures in society though a multi-level analysis.

An alternative approach to the Bray and Thomas cube or the vertical case study of Vavrus and Barlett, which underpins the methodology of Burch's work, can be found in the work of Ball's (2012) analysis of the policy networks within the United Kingdom education sector. In this work, individuals were conceptualized as networked: instead of society structured vertically from global to local, Ball saw society in terms of mobilities and used "the network" as a "connective tissue which joins up and provides some durability to these distant and fleeting forms of social interaction" (p. 5). This allowed him to see education policy "being 'done' in new locations, on different scales, [and] by new actors and organizations" (p. 4), thus moving beyond methodological nationalism (Dale & Robertson, 2009), which focuses on policy being done only at the level of the nation-state. In this sense, Ball saw social relations as horizontally constituted among a diversity of actors instead of vertically by actors within particular structures.[20]

Such a methodology is within the tradition of a "postparadigm," which is "indicated by a preference among some theorists for concentrating less on elegant

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[20] Ball (2012) did, nevertheless, recognize the problems of seeing social relations as organized horizontally: "I also take heed of Jessop, Brenner et al.'s (2008, p. 391-92) warning against what they call network-centrism, that is a 'one-sided focus on horizontal, rhizomatic, topological and transversal interconnections of networks, frictionless spaces of flows, and accelerating mobilities'—the construction of a 'flat ontology'" (p.5).

theoretical visions of order, and more on the micropatterns of disorder" (Marcus & Fischer, 1986, p. 8). With new forms of communication and interaction through virtual and electronic mediums, Ball was particularly interested in what Bray and Thomas (1995) warned researchers against: "masses of particularistic detail" of the network under investigation. Neatly placing data into various levels of a cube is exactly what Ball was trying to avoid in order to construct networks where actors traverse different spaces — global, national, and local — at different times, or simultaneously.

Ball's focus was on particular individuals and institutions within the network of "edu-business" in order to describe the "circulatory systems that connect and interpenetrate 'local' policy regimes" (Peck & Tickell, 2003, p. 229). These individuals and institutions in the network are situated within a neoliberal paradigm to allow for an understanding of how such a paradigm works. In particular, Ball provided a detailed study of a part of "the new global geometry of power" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 172) that makes policies advancing educational privatization possible. Ball was interested neither in following policies down a linear path from global to local nor in his ability to generalize his findings to all "edu-businesses"; rather he was interested in identifying "the actors in these networks, their power and capacities, and the ways through which they exercise their power through association within networks and relationships" (Dicken, Kelly & Yeung, 2001, p. 93). Such an analysis illuminates a part of the emergent power dynamics on a global scale within the sector of education.

Although the individuals and institutions outlined in Ball's network analysis are limited by particular spatial and temporal boundaries and therefore cannot be generalized to all spaces and universalized to all times, they do reveal power dynamics at work in a particular setting of neoliberal global education policy. The formations of power within such a network are of value to other researchers of global education policy. Arguably, the power formations may be missed when social relations are understood vertically because power is often seen to reside at the top echelons of global structures and not within local communities. It is therefore valuable to conceptualize social relations as horizontally organized in order to design research methods that can understand the power dynamics constructed within a system of educational privatization.

My study takes the horizontal approach to the study of social relations. Through a group of individuals, I explored the interactions of everyday social life that enact different spaces of education where privatization emerges. In this way, the study of privatization does not trace a set of education policies at the global or national level down to the individual level. Instead, I conceptualize the processes of privatization as an enactment of social relations. The ways in which individuals negotiate these spaces and the cultural, political, and economic dimensions of their actions not only describe everyday moments of lived space but also constitute the national and global forces making processes of privatization possible. In the next section, I look in more detail the method I call landscape portraiture.

4.4 Landscape portraiture

Studying social relations requires an in-depth look at individuals in their social reality. This is no easy task. For generations, researchers have relied on artistic methods to represent social reality (e.g., Dewey, 1934; James, 1904; Rampersod, 1976). Clifford Geertz (1973), for instance, sought "thick description" (p. 6) through the "researcher's constructions of other people's constructions of what they are up to" (p. 9). This double construction of social life — marked by the subjectivity of both research participant and researcher — is an inherent feature in ethnographic research. It is impossible to eliminate the subjectivity that the researcher brings to understanding social reality as enacted or described by a research participant. Objectively representing the social reality of an individual based on their sometimes-flawed perspectives and opinions is an impossible task. Geertz, therefore, argued that such a task, marked by the impossibility of anthropologists to accurately and objectively interpret human interaction and behavior, results in the writing of "fictions" (p. 15). These fictions are not a sign of poor scholarship, but rather an inherent (and celebratory) feature of such studies: "the line between the mode of representation and substantive content is as undrawable in cultural analysis as it is in painting" (p. 16).

In the metaphor of social science research as painting, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot's approach of portraiture makes an important contribution. Portraiture, she said:

> blurs the boundaries of aesthetics and empiricism in an effort to capture the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experience and organizational

life. Portraitists seek to record and interpret the perspective and experience of the people they are studying, documenting their voices and their visions — their authority, knowledge, and wisdom (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. xv).

Portraiture recognizes the lessons of past generations of ethnographers and anthropologists. Portraiture embraces "ethnographic objectives and techniques even as it rewrites both the form and function of traditional case studies" (Davis, 2003, p. 199). Portraits do not seek full representation of social reality but rather a "selection of some aspect of — or angle on — reality that would transform our vision of the whole" (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997 p. 5). In other words, by looking at a part of social reality interpreted through the researcher, new understandings of the whole of social reality emerge. This is different than the vertical approach to the study of social reality outlined in the previous section where researchers aim to generalize across cases in terms of statistically represented samples. I explore the issue of generalizability in more detail in Section 4.7.

Portraits are written "life drawings" (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983, p. 11) that try to capture the "essence" of a subject by listening for stories. Portraiture requires the combination of rigorous practices of interviews and observations with aesthetics in terms of the final product — the written portrait. It is a method that blends "aesthetic sensibilities and empirical rigor," recognizing the ethical, moral, and problematic role of the portraitist in the construction of a portrait (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005, p. 6). Description is developed through watching, listening to, and interacting with an individual over a sustained period of time. Featherstone (1989) described the task of the portraitist as tracing "the line of a story set in a historical context, placing the actors in a long-running moral and political drama" (p. 375).

In order to capture the "richness, complexity, and dimensionality of human experience in social and cultural context," (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997 p. 3), Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis's (1997) methodological approach to portraiture posits that it is a form of both inquiry and intervention. As a form of inquiry, it is inductive rather than deductive. Similar to grounded theory, findings emerge from the portrait and meaning is negotiated between the subject of the portrait and the portraitist him or herself.

The portrait focuses on context, voice, relationships, and emergent themes. Context relates to both the historical and political construction of the location of the research as well as the personal context of the portraitist. Voice "is what makes

individual researchers see what they see and include or leave out what they choose to in a portrait" (Davis, 2003, p. 206). The voice of the research participant is heard throughout a portrait, but the researcher determines the content of that voice seen in the final product. This bias signals that the researcher's voice is as prominent in the portrait as the subject of the portrait. It is, as the quote by Oscar Wilde in the frontispiece of this thesis makes clear, "Every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not the sitter."

This form of inquiry requires close relationships with research participants. The research participant's level of comfort and ability to open up depends on the relationship he or she has with the researcher. In this way, portraiture requires the researcher to build relationships over time, carefully and methodically structuring questions in ways that are not off-putting. The researcher him or herself has to open up to the research participant in order to build trust. Portraiture also looks for emergent themes across the modes of data collection in order to make sense of the social reality of the portrait. Overall, a portrait is not an objective account of an individual but a subjectively constructed, aesthetic account of an individual through the perspective of the portraitist.

As intervention, the close relationship between participant and researcher requires an ethical responsibility. Lawrence-Lightfoot (1997, p. 11) warned: "In the process of creating portraits, we enter people's lives, build relationships, engage in discourse, make an imprint…and leave." For this reason it is important that the portraitist not document failure but rather portray the goodness of the subject in the portrait. This does not mean imposing a conception of "good" on the research participant, but rather the portraitist tries to understand the actor's perspective on goodness, even if that is in terms of failure. In order to do so, the portraitist aims to understand "how people, cultures, and organizations negotiate those extremes [i.e., strength and vulnerability, virtue and evil] in an effort to establish the precarious balance between them" (p. 9).

The goal of the portraitist is usually to create an aesthetic whole. Similar to a quilt, the aesthetic whole of a written portrait carefully weaves together the themes that emerge through the collection of empirical data, using interviews and observations. These themes are negotiated between researcher and research participant over the course of the data collection and then finally written into the portrait. The aesthetic whole is carefully constructed to consider voice and metaphor,

signs and symbols, language and pace. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) provided a list of questions portraitists must ask themselves to scrutinize their work (table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Questions to scrutinize written portraits
1. Has contextual information been included as clarifying introduction to and edifying backdrop throughout the portrait?
2. Has voice been sufficiently revealed and modulated so that it will inform but not distort the interpretation presented in the portrait?
3. Have relationships been respected and faith kept with the actors on the scene throughout the shaping of the final whole?
4. Do the identified emergent themes resonate throughout the language and culture of the actors on the site and do they adequately scaffold the interpretation present in the portrait?

Source: Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 265

Portraiture offers a powerful way into the study of individuals and their social relations through a phenomenological paradigm. However, the uses of portraiture have had limited engagement with social theory. Although Davis (2003) claimed that portraiture functions as "inductive reasoning…[in order to] generate theory," many of the studies using portraiture have combined it with other theoretical frameworks. For instance, Chapman (2005) combined critical race theory with portraiture to construct a portrait of a school in a historically segregated community. Critical race theory provided Chapman a framework through which power and privilege could be explained. Similarly, critical race theory provided to Lynn (2006) a way in which to understand the intersection of gender and race through a portrait of a male teacher. The portraits by Chapman and Lynn indicate that portraiture finds additional purchase by incorporating a deductive approach to theory. That is to say, theoretical perspectives previously developed in the academy can help make sense of the theoretical insights that emerged specific to the phenomenon under investigation in the portrait.

In an attempt to blend inductive and deductive approaches to theory, I combined the method of portraiture with the extended case study. Such a combination allows portraiture to generate theory through emergent findings but relates those findings to the "academic theory" — such as critical race theory, or, in my case, critical spatial geography — through a formal process, as the extended case study

demands. In the next subsection, I expand on the methodology of portraiture by including a deductive element to the method.

4.4.1 On the extended case study

The extended case study as a method of social science research derives from the Manchester School of social anthropology (Epstein, 1958; Garbett, 1970; Gluckman, 1958, 1961a, 1961b, 1964; Mitchell, 1956, 1983; Van Velsen, 1960, 1964, 1967). The goal of the method is to research and document what people actually do, not what they should do, by "dwelling in" theory to map "the road to knowledge" (Burawoy, 1998, p. 5). In order to accomplish this task, case studies as they are originally conceived are extended in "time" (Gluckman, 1958) and in "theory" (Burawoy, 1998). This means that a researcher, using different data collection techniques such as observation and interviews, "revisits" (Burawoy, 2009, p. 246; see also Burawoy, 2003) the same site under investigation multiple times over the course of the study (i.e., an extension in time) and then, during the analysis stage of the research project, expands upon existing theoretical understandings of the phenomenon of interest with the findings from the study (i.e., an extension in theory). This longitudinal-cum-ethnographic-type study allows the researcher to observe and interpret social patterns and slight changes within particular sites over time and then revise theoretical models and structures of various phenomena. The themes within the findings of the case studies emerge based on the researcher's interpretation during the data collection process (an inductive approach), and then are related back to theory previously generated (a deductive approach).

The extended case study is different from methods such as grounded theory or portraiture that, although also rely (or can rely) on a number of case studies, try to find new, general theories of social phenomena across cases. The extended case study, by contrast, attempts to revise existing theory, not create new ones. Whereas grounded theory is "inductive generalization" that seeks "out common patterns among diverse cases so that context can be discounted," the extended case study "deploys a different comparative strategy, tracing the source of small differences to external forces" (Burawoy, 1998, p. 19). The researcher using extended case studies seeks not "confirmations but refutations" of academic theories in order to "deepen that theory" (Burawoy, 1998, p. 16). After all, "science proceeds," Burawoy (2009) suggested, "by correcting falsehoods rather than by capturing final truths" (p. 247).

The extended case study is thus a method that seeks to understand the relationship between local (what Burawoy called "small differences") and global processes (what Burawoy called "external forces"). This is not to say that the purpose of the extended case study is to show local realities overcoming global pressures — to show, for instance, global pressures for privatization being embraced or resisted by local actors. Rather, the extended case study aims to explain the global/local dialectic in relational terms — global forces make and are made by local situated practices.

Unpacking the global/local dialectic requires a close connection between theory and methods. Burawoy (2009, p. 249) made this point by suggesting that "from the beginning method is inextricably bound up with theory; it cannot operate without theory." As such, Burawoy (1998) explained that the methods of extended case study research are in constant dialogue between participant and observer; local and "extralocal" processes and forces; and between "folk" (Burawoy, 1998, p. 7) and academic theorization. Through this process, researchers transcend the micro/macro, global/local binaries that see social transformation as linear and homogenous (Carney, Rappleye & Silova, 2012; Tag, 2010).

The extended case study is a comparative method. By "causally" connecting (Burawoy, 1998) the different cases (a spatial difference) with data collected at different times (a temporal difference), the extended case study does not seek a "general law" or new theory. Rather, it lets "each case work in its connection to other cases" in an attempt to elaborate on existing theories (Burawoy, 1998, p. 19). The extended case study is thus comparative because multiple cases are put in relation to each other and then the emergent "folk theory" is compared to the "academic theory."

The combination of academic theory and folk theory is important. Academic theory is the "presuppositions, questions, and frameworks [that the researcher brings to the field], but that they are more like prisms than templates and they are emergent rather than fixed" (Burawoy, 1998, p. 11). Once in the field, the researcher relates cases together where data was collected continuously over a certain time in order to construct contextually specific theorizations of the phenomenon under investigation. These "folk" theories are then compared to and put into dialogue with the academic theory during the analysis stage, thus extending the case not only in time but also in theory. In other words, the extended case method offers a way to blend inductive and deductive analysis.

Portraiture and the extended case study share common strategies but diverge in important ways. The common strategies include the use of interviews and observations to generate theory, what Burawoy (1998) called "folk theory." This is an inductive approach to emergent findings. Themes are allowed to emerge through data collection. Additionally, both methods require a deep engagement with research participants, usually over an extended period of time. Similar issues of building relationships and trust between research participant and researcher are found in both methods.

The differences include the use of deductive and/or inductive analyses, the use of single or multiple cases, and attention or not to the aesthetics of the final product. In general, both the extended case study and portraiture generate "folk theory." However, while portraiture stops after generating a theory, the extended case study relates the emergent theory back to an "academic theory." This difference is important and was in fact corrected by some studies employing portraiture. Although the creators of portraiture aimed for inductive analysis, some of the scholars who have employed the approach made sense of the emergent findings in previously established theories (see Chapman, 2005 or Lynn, 2006 who both used portraiture to generate findings that spoke back to critical race theory). This suggests that the blending of inductive and deductive analysis in the extended case study is an important feature missing in the method of portraiture as originally proposed.

The second difference is the use of single or multiple cases. The original approach to portraiture focused on a single case (see Chapman, 2005; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983; Lynn 2006). For instance, Lawrence-Lightfoot (1997) wrote, "the portraitist is very interested in the single case because she believes that embedded in it the reader will discover resonant universal themes" (p. 14). However, there are examples when multiple cases have been used. Davis (2003), for instance, acknowledged, "ultimately a series of portraits on the same subject…can be analysed through a comparison of emergent themes with an eye to a clearer vision of a field" (Davis, 2003, p. 212). Indeed Lawrence-Lightfoot's (2000) book on the concept of respect included six portraits of different actors who each "reveal[ed] one crucial dimension of the term" (p. 11). Whereas the method of portraiture can be used for single or multiple cases, the extended case study demands the use of multiple cases.

The third difference is the focus on the aesthetic whole. Unlike the extended case study, portraiture fully accepts the inability to represent social reality and instead

embraces aesthetics as a way to artfully represent one angle of social reality. The role of the researcher in the process of data collection and analysis is foregrounded in portraiture: the biases and subjectivity brought by the researcher are embraced in portraiture to a greater extent than the extended case study.

When used together, the divergent approaches of portraiture and the extended case study complement each other. Therefore, I begin with portraiture, but develop it using the extended case study by including multiple portraits and the blending of inductive and deductive approaches to theory. I term this combination "landscape portraiture." Landscape portraiture weaves together multiple portraits which themselves have been carefully constructed. The result is not a detailed painting of an individual but rather a detailed painting of a landscape in which the many individuals find themselves.[21] The landscape, however, requires an understanding of the "academic theory" — in this case, Lefebvre's spatial triad and lived time — and its interrelation to the "folk theory," which is generated through the themes that emerged from data collection. Theory connects the emergent themes through each portrait into a larger fabric of social life as observed, described, and theorized by other social researchers. In this way, extending the view of the portrait brings into perspective the landscape where that portrait is positioned as well as other people connected to that person. With this method in mind, I now turn to my data collection procedures.

4.5 Data collection

The data collection procedures of this study focus on the specifics of creating the six portraits of different actors positioned within the system of education in the Preah Go community. In this section, I detail the site of research, research participants, the methods used to collect data, and the timeline for data collection. The appendices at

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[21] Putting this research method in terms of paintings, the landscape portrait is more like the *Netherlandish Proverbs*, a 1559 oil paining by Pieter Bruegel the Elder depicting many different actions occurring simultaneously, than like the portrait of Cardinal Bentivoglio, painted by Sir Anthony Van Dyck in 1623, that shows one individual surrounded by objects in a room. I am aware it is problematic to use an example from the Western (Dutch) cannon of art to explain landscape portraiture in Cambodia, and I do so reservedly. My point is that these two paintings offer a clear illustration of the differences between portraiture and landscape portraiture.

the end of the thesis provide more detail on guiding questions used for each phase of data collection, specific timelines, and participant consent forms.

4.5.1 Site of research

The site of research is Preah Go commune[22], home to roughly 8,000 residents. Preah Go is located in the north west of Cambodia, outside of Siem Reap city. Its close proximity to Siem Reap city makes it semi-rural: although most residents farm, many benefit from the tourist economy in the more populous city center. Some residents travel to Siem Reap city each day for work (as construction workers, hotel maids, tour guides, etc.) while others sell their produce or products there. In addition, Preah Go is a commune where many NGOs operate. As it is close to the city, Preah Go is an ideal site for NGOs: staff members can live and work in the city where services such as power and internet are reliable and they can seek foreign donations from the large numbers of tourists who pass through Siem Reap. Although these NGOs are mostly based in Siem Reap, they distribute aid or operate programs in Preah Go (and other communities) that are considered (rightly or wrongly) rural and therefore in need of services more than people living in urban areas where social services such as schools and hospitals are considered higher quality. There are also NGOs operating in a permanent capacity in Preah Go, including two NGO schools (Wish for Cambodia, which will be detailed in Chapter 6, and Sustainable Help School), a Christian Church operated by missionaries from Korea, and an orphanage. There are also two government primary schools and one lower secondary school serving the children in the commune, the latter of which is detailed in Chapter 5.

I commenced work with this commune, specifically the lower secondary school, in 2011. As a monitoring and evaluation officer of an NGO based in Siem Reap but working in Preah Go, I was introduced to many people in the community. In addition, I conducted research on private tutoring in the commune while working at the NGO. Over 18 months, my presence inside the commune became commonplace and my name was known by many of the government officials, principals, and teachers. The trust I built inside the school and community enabled me to propose a

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[22] A commune is the second smallest administrative unit in Cambodia. (The smallest is a village.) There are 12 villages that comprise the Preah Go commune. See footnote 32 for additional information.

research study that engaged on a personal level with individuals. My history with this commune also enabled me to engage in an extended case study. Without this trust, I would not have been able to engage six people over an extended period of time. I am aware that an extension in time usually occurs over years, not weeks. The data collection process in this research took a matter of months, which does not fulfill the extension in time as conceptualized by Burawoy. Nevertheless, my previous work in Preah Go since 2011 has allowed me to see and experience the changes in the community from educational privatization, even if I did not conduct interviews with the same research participants over that period. Additionally, the trust I gained in the community allowed me to obtain approval from the commune office to conduct my thesis research.

4.5.2 The six participants

The six portraits are each situated around a central actor. This is not to suggest that these six participants represent all of the types of actors within the educational network within Preah Go. Taking heed of Burawoy's (1998) suggestion that researchers should "maximize variation within the field through constant comparison, searching for extreme cases in what is called 'theoretical' sampling" (p. 25), I worked with a group of actors who occupied central social positions that I discovered were important during my time working in the education system.

Perhaps the most notable absence from my group of participants is a student. A student was purposely not selected based on the assumption that most educational decisions regarding educational funding, curricular content, and teaching are made without student input. Moreover, working with a student would have required a far greater disruptive intervention than with the six adults in my study: children must attend between four to five hours of public schooling each day followed by additional hours of private tutoring and extra lessons. When not learning, many children have to help their parents on the farm or take care of the household. My intervention would have greatly disrupted a child's life (and the lives of other students).

Although I had reasons for not including a student initially, I came to realize the importance of the situated practices of a student during the data analysis stage. The students with whom I interacted showed me how educational decisions are often left in their hands. Parents do not always have the time or knowledge to make educational choices, and in fact students are sometimes in better positions (i.e., better

informed about alternatives) to make educational choices. Students typically take money from their parents and head off to school to spend that money as they see fit. It became clear that students have a tremendous amount of purchasing power in education, which ultimately drives the education economy. In addition, the main social relation where educational privatization emerges is between students and teachers. Although I got a sense of this relation in my classroom observations and my conversations with each interviewee, it would have been beneficial to interview at least one student to unpack the relation's complexities in more depth.

Despite my exclusion of students in the group of portraits, I did interact with children (most of whom were students) when I worked with the other participants. Although I did not work with one student specifically, all participants either worked with students or had children. During many of my interviews, children sat close by, occasionally offering their insight into my various questions. I also observed students/children during the data collection process as I moved beyond the central focus of the actor to his or her context. In particular, when I observed the teaching of both a government school teacher and NGO school teacher, I witnessed many students in their material practices within the environment of school, namely their relationship with the teachers. These observations are included in my portraits, specifically in Chapters 5 and 6.

Selecting the research participants for each portrait was challenging, and biased by both my own background and the individuals' willingness to participate. I first recruited participants through the local authority (i.e., the commune council, which will be detailed in chapter 8) who not only gave permission for the study to take place in the village but also informed potential research subjects of the research and its implications. I also recruited participants through the SSC, which is a parent-teacher organization inside the school. Since I lived in Hong Kong at the time of recruitment, This Life Cambodia, an NGO that works in Preah Go and the organization for which I worked in 2011, managed the process. Through this process, staff members at This Life Cambodia compiled a list of possible candidates for each portrait. In December 2013, I traveled to Cambodia to review the list and meet the potential candidates.

In order to select the six participants, I created inclusion criteria for each type of actor. All participants had to be Cambodian citizens, residents of the Preah Go, and over 18 years of age. In addition there were specific criteria for each type of actor: (i)

parents had to send their children to the local school and to private tutoring classes; (ii) teachers had to work in Preah Go and conduct private tutoring; (iii) the local government official had to work on education policy (broadly defined to include working with NGOs who provide educational aid) in Preah Go; (iv) the NGO school employee had to earn his salary from delivering educational services to children in Preah Go; (v) the town elder had to be over 50 years old, have children, and have lived in the village since the end of the Khmer Rouge period (circa 1979); and (vi) the pagoda committee member had to be involved in pagoda and educational life in the commune. I aimed for gender balance across the six portraits, but was only able to find two willing female participants.

During my December 2013 trip to Siem Reap, I first arranged a meeting with the different candidates to determine if they were willing to participate. During these informal meetings, I was particularly concerned to see if there was a general rapport between the participant and me. The informal interviews helped me select one research participant in each category that was likely to participate over the four-month study. During these informal interviews, I looked for people with interesting stories, a vocal opinion about education, and a willingness to allow me to follow and interview them over 14 days spaced out over four months. Since my method was a big intervention into the life of the research subjects, much of the determination centered on the potential research subjects' general willingness and excitement to participate in the project.

Selecting the participants took longer than originally expected. Many teachers did not want me to observe them teaching. Parents often said they were too busy to let me into their lives. One NGO school director first asked his assistant to work with me and then said I could not work in the school at all. Although the pagoda committee member was happy to be involved in the project, the original plan was to work with a monk who actually provided some form of non-formal education. Such practices no longer exist in Preah Go, so my plan had to be revised. Moreover, I was not allowed to select a government official; rather, one was assigned me to. In the end, after three weeks I successfully selected each participant, who scheduled a time to meet me on my first round of data collection in early 2014.

4.5.3 Research tools

The main tools of data collection for my study were in depth interviews and observations over two rounds of data collection. The first round took place in February 2014 and the second round took place in April/May 2014.

The interview is more than a stimulus; it is an intervention into the life of each research participant. It is unreliable to a certain degree because each interviewee interpreted my questions differently because of his or her situation (Burawoy, 1998). Through engaging with each interviewee for an extended amount of time and participating in his or her daily life, however, I began to understand the "tacit knowledge" that might not have come out in the interview. I allowed the participants to "tell their own story" (Burawoy, 1998, p. 13), in their own language (Khmer) and offer their own narrative (Mishler, 1986). However, as I returned to interview each actor over the course of the data collection, I focused on past statements or stories to help construct a narrative. In this way, I created interview guides before each interview, but let the conversation develop organically, as determined by the participant but guided by me. One way of encouraging participants to tell their own stories was to provide alternative ways of understanding: "the usefulness of making statements that you know your respondent will disagree with" (Ball, 1994, p. 112). In addition, I showed participants videos on different topics to begin conversations. This allowed the participant to talk about topics other than themselves or education specifically. I also organized my interviews to begin with "easy" questions about their own biographies before moving into the "harder" questions about their opinions on the social injustice or inequality they might have seen in the community (see appendix A, B and C).

I interviewed each participant for a total of two weeks. Before the first interview, I obtained and audio-recorded each participant's verbal informed consent (see appendix D), on a model that had been approved by the University of Hong Kong. The interview guidelines for the first round of data collection were formatively created (see appendix A). After each day of interviews, I wrote up notes and outlined the next day's questions. For the second round of interviews, I was able to read through past transcripts and notes to outline the questions for the entire week (see appendix B and C). Nevertheless, the interviews were not identical because I followed different strands of thoughts from each participant.

In total I conducted 35 hours of interviews during the first round of data collection and 24 hours during the second round. The reason for the difference between the first and second round was based on the parent being unavailable during the second round of data collection. Also, some interviews were longer than others. Short interviews mainly occurred because some participants, such as the NGO director, could not devote too much time to my interviews. Other times long interviews occurred because I was not efficient in managing the interviews at the beginning. This was the case for the government official who was my first interview. The total amount of interview time for each participant was: 18 hours for the government official; 12 hours for the town elder; 8 hours for the teacher; 11 hours for the pagoda committee member; 5 hours for the NGO director; and 5 hours for the parent.

I also observed and took photos and videos of the selected actors and informally interviewed important people in the central actors' social environments. For instance, I spoke with the town elder's children and grandchild as well as a few of the teachers and foreign volunteers at the NGO school. Formal observations of the participants totaled over 30 hours, but I spent countless hours in the school or around the town over the course of the data collection and during my previous research between 2011 and 2012. For instance, during my formal observations I followed the government official to a political rally. I also attended multiple SSCs meetings in 2011 that informed my understanding of the Preah Go lower secondary school. The formal observations for this research study included 4 hours and 30 minutes with the government official; 3 hours with the town elder; 10 hours and 30 minutes with the teacher; 2 hours and 30 minutes with the pagoda committee member; 8 hours with the NGO director; and 2 hours with the parent. The main sites of observation were thus in government school, private tutoring, and the NGO school. I did also observe the parent, pagoda committee member, town elder, and government official, but these findings did not play a central role in the construction of the portrait, as in the case of the NGO school director or teacher.

All the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and translated. I hired a research assistant to join me during interviews in order to translate between the interviewee and me. Although I spoke Khmer at an intermediate level, I wanted to ensure I was able to understand everything the participant said by having a translator present at each interview. This likely reduced the trust and comfort level of the participant, but it

was a needed intervention in order to have more meaningful conversations (with a more mature vocabulary). I also hired two individuals in addition to my assistant field researcher to transcribe and translate the recorded interviews. These assistants first transcribed the audio recording into written Khmer text. They then took the Khmer text and translated it into an English text. Both documents were sent to me, and I used the English text to analyze data. The Khmer texts were consulted after I had selected certain English passages for inclusion in the final portrait to ensure accurate translation.

The data collection tools allowed me to observe each portrait in his or her own context, conduct in-depth interviews with each person, and situate them inside their local environments. By returning to each site under investigation multiple times (five times during each round of data collection), I was able to learn from all the cases holistically along the way, constructing additional questions and themes to explore.

4.5.4 Research timeline

The timeline of the study was based on spending one week with each participant two times over a year for a total of 14 days with each participant (10 days of which were used for formal interviews). The timeline was separated into six stages. The data collection stages were separated by time to type field notes, translate and transcribe interviews, and prepare for the next stage of data collection. This was particularly important because, in line with the extended case study, the data obtained from the first stage guided the questions and observation schedule in the second stage. There was also a four-month preparation period that was used to locate participants, obtain their consent, and train research assistants. The full timeline is outlined in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Timeline for research study

Stage	Dates	Achievements
Stage 1	October 1, 2013 – January 31, 2014	• Obtained permission from the commune to conduct research. • Recruited and selected research participants. • Trained research assistants in data collection techniques.
Stage 2	February 1, 2014 – March 8, 2014	• Spent one week with each participant. • Explored their biographies and histories.

Stage 3	March 9, 2014 – April 27, 2014	• Translated and transcribed interviews. • Typed field notes. • Developed specific questions for each participant for next stage of data collection.
Stage 4	April 28, 2014 – May 24, 2014	• Spent one week with each participant. • Explored their environment in depth.
Stage 5	May 24, 2014 – November 27, 2014	• Translated and transcribed all interviews. • Typed field notes.
Stage 6	November 28, 2014 – May 15, 2015	• Analyzed data and wrote dissertation

4.6 Data analysis

Data analysis consisted of letting findings emerge through the data and then comparing the emergent themes to my theoretical framework. In order to analyze the transcripts from each interview, I first constructed a timeline for each participant's life story as it was described to me. This allowed me to understand the biography of the participant using the temporal conceptualization of "modern" time, which was outlined in Chapter 3. The construction of each timeline was based on the morphogenetic approach to social change (Archer, 2010a).

The morphogenetic approach to social change examines the dynamic interaction between structure and agency over time. This is an important analytical approach for a critical spatial lens because history and context are central to the morphogenetic approach. Archer (1982) explained, "the broader context conditions the environment of actors whose responses then transform the environment with which the context subsequently has to deal, the two jointly generating further elaboration as well as changes in one another" (Archer, 1982, p. 476). Archer pointed to an insight shared among critical spatial geographers: Individuals are constantly constructing society, and society is constantly shaping individuals. The challenge is studying this dynamic process occurring over time.

The morphogenetic approach studies the co-constitution of society and individuals by privileging chronological time. This is a slightly different approach than structuration theory (Giddens, 1979), which is a commonly used theoretical

approach in critical spatial research (Urry, 2000; see also, Larsen & Beech, 2014). Structuration theory recognizes the same theoretical proposition as that of the morphogenetic approach — i.e., the co-constitution of structure and agency — but takes a different approach to time. In structuration theory, the constitution of structure and agency are assumed to occur at the same time. Structures and agency share "temporal simultaneity" (Willmott, 2002, p. 39). Archer and her colleagues advanced structuration theory by using a temporal dimension that insisted structures and agency are constituted at *different* (chronological) times.

Unlike structuration theory or the space-place approach advanced by Larsen and Beech (2014), the morphogenetic approach allows for the analysis of structure and agency at different time intervals, even though the two are interrelated, interconnected, and co-constitutive. By purposefully separating structure and agency, the researcher is able "to examine their interplay in order to account for the structuring and restructuring of the social order" (Archer, 2010b, p. 275). This analytical approach begins with the assumption that some social structure necessarily comes before agency. Agency, nevertheless, can transform social structures. Archer (2010b) represented this approach in Figure 4.3, where "structural conditioning" comes before "social interaction" and results in either "structural reproduction" (i.e., social stasis) or "structural elaboration" (i.e., social change). Time is chronologically represented from "T_1" until "T_4." This approach creates a synchronic moment in an otherwise diachronic environment.
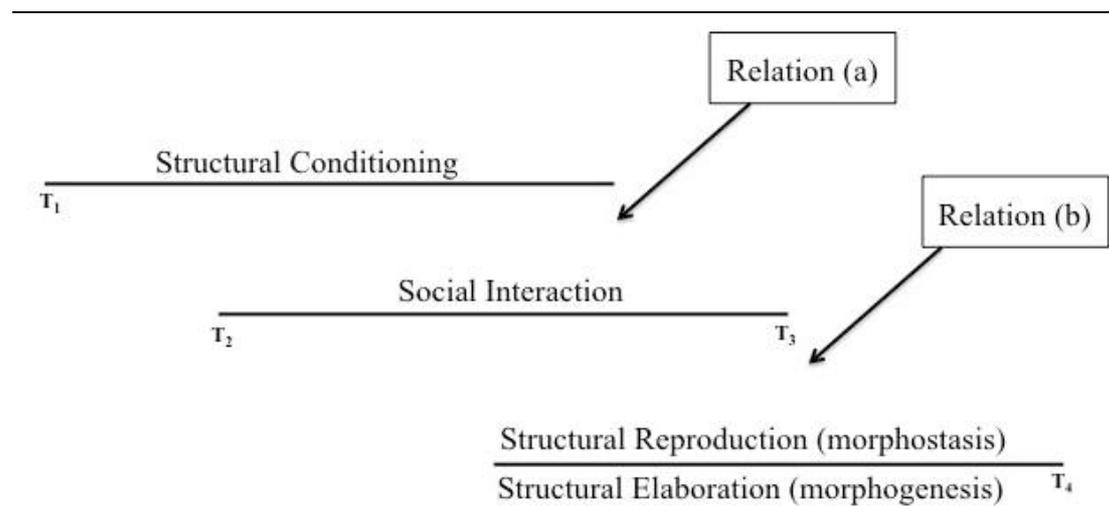
Figure 4.3 The morphogenetic sequence (Source: Archer, 2010b, p. 275)

Since the morphogenetic approach assumes social structures are ontologically distinct

from agency and assumes their constitution at different temporal moments, it is necessary to understand the "structural conditioning" that comes before agency. The "social interaction" is where agency occurs, typically through social relations and conditioned by the structural conditioning. The result of social interaction can be structural reproduction of the social order (i.e., "morphostasis") or social change through structural elaboration (i.e., "morphogenesis"). In both cases, a new structure results where future agency occurs. The new or reproduced social structure at T_4 becomes the structural conditioning at T_1 in the next sequence. This is how the morphogenetic approach opens for analysis the cycle of events and actions that relationally constitute the structures and spaces in which subjects act, a cycle which would otherwise remain analytically inaccessible.

In terms of this dissertation, the morphogenetic approach is useful because it provides a manner in which to examine the dynamics of each research participant over chronological time. I was able to construct moments in time to analyze the changes within the social structures conditioning actors and the actor's ability to change social structures. I was first tasked with identifying the structural conditions that constrain and enable each participant's agency; second, with unpacking the social interaction and processes through actors' attempts to change those structural conditions; and third, what the outcome of the process of change or non-change was. Analyzing the transcripts in this manner created an in-depth understanding of each participant's biography while also exposing important themes. What conditioned each participant was valuable information. In what ways they changed over time was another important area for themes to emerge. For instance, the pagoda committee member, who will be detailed in Chapter 7, was conditioned in capitalist relations as a boy whose father owned a boat rental business. The social interaction of the Khmer Rouge changed society, but the pagoda committee member was nevertheless able to retain his social standing in society in the post-Khmer Rouge period. In this way, the structural conditioning produced a level of morphostasis even through social dislocations caused by the Khmer Rouge regime.

The findings and themes that emerged from each participant were then written into narratives that focused on the aesthetic whole. The aesthetic whole incorporated the other temporal dimensions outlined in Chapter 3 — biological time and lived time — thus complementing the morphogenetic approach that focuses on chronological time. Although I was able to construct biographies of each individual across

chronological time using the morphogenetic approach, I also had to understand how each participant historicized the contemporary moment. What traces of their history were most influential in their present life (in their perspective)? What type of historicism did each person construct to make sense of his or her contemporary actions? The answers to these questions constructed a notion of lived time, which was found, to different extents, in each portrait. In each portrait, therefore, the emergent stories from the interviews were used to bring the reader into the life of the participant. Sometimes these stories had nothing to do with education. Other times, the portraits spanned a long historical period in order to reveal some of the historical structural conditions. Some, although not all, of the portraits were put in dialogue with various academic theories, representing an extension in theory beyond the emergent theories within each portrait.

The concluding chapter acts as the "continual revision" (Burawoy, 1998, p. 16) of the academic theoretical understanding of individuals enacting social relations where educational privatization unfolds compared to the "folk theory" that emerged across the six portraits. In this way, the extended case method helped "discover multiple processes, interests, and identities" (Burawoy, 1998, p. 6) contained in each portrait. Through this analytical approach that combined the spatial theory of Lefebvre outlined in Chapter 2 and 3 with the use of the morphogenetic approach to social change, I was able to understand the context of each research participant, his or her history, and place the participant's agency within the broader social structure, trying to understand how the actor changes and is changed by society.

4.7 Limitations of study

This research has four major limitations. The first is my ability to generalize from one extended case, comprised of six portraits, to other cases. The value of my research is partly in its ability to have general relevance to educational privatization (see Gomm, Hammersley & Foster, 2000). This type of generalization is closely connected to theory and is considered "analytic generalization" (Yin, 2003) because the data that emerge from my study were used to reinterpret and reexamine existing concepts. In other words, the development of theory I make through landscape portraiture is a starting point for future case studies. This is similar to Carless's (2013) single case study research that he said was used to "generate issues for further exploration" (p.

90). After all, one of the purposes of qualitative research is to produce the material needed to think about and with the "mega concepts" of the social sciences (Geertz, 1973). Or, as Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) explained, "The portraitist is very interested in the single case because she or he believes that embedded in it, the reader will discover resonant universal themes" (p. 13). In this way, my research will "generate both unique and universal understandings" (Simons, 1996, p. 225) in that the case will focus specifically within the Cambodian context but can be considered general for its relationship to theory. For these reasons, a single case comprising multiple portraits is sufficient.

The second is the trustworthiness of the individuals with whom I researched. How do I know I have not simply selected and reported on individuals who are fabricating their stories? This is a serious possibility within this type of research. In order to prevent this possibility occurring as much as possible, I have taken a set of precautionary measures. First, I specifically selected Preah Go as the site of research because of my previous experience working in it. This gives me credibility and respect in the village, which might have helped reduce fabricated stories. Second, I designed the research to be extended in time (although, admittedly, not as long as Burawoy might have meant in his extended case study approach), which allowed me to visit each individual multiple times over the duration of field research. In effect, this provided time to analyze data between interviews, identifying possible areas of concern with the previous interview. In the follow up interviews, I was able to interrogate past responses to fully verify them. Third, the individual actors of central importance were not the only source of information for their portraits. I also used secondary interviews and observations of the central actor's context, which triangulated the trustworthiness of my findings as they emerged.

The third limitation is what English (2000) called the "politics of vision" within the method of portraiture. This is the potential problem of the researcher simply creating a story instead of listening to stories. This is similar to the notion of "ontological politics," whereby the researcher creates a social reality out of the methods employed, questions asked, and the stories told in the final product (Law & Urry, 2004). In this limitation, the researcher *sees* what he or she wants to see. This is a serious problem; if the researcher excuses his or her professional responsibility to skepticism as well as moral and ethical responsibilities towards those being researched, he or she has failed to construct vivid *and* accurate portraits. Nevertheless,

Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) explained that listening *for* stories is the point of portraiture, and argued the possibility that some researchers may be unsuccessful at balancing listening and creating the story is common in all research methods. Some researchers are inevitably unsuccessful at properly implementing any research method. In order to overcome this limitation, I understand the role of the portraitist (i.e., researcher) is to scrutinize the data "carefully, searching for the story line that emerges from the material" (p. 10), and not one that simply molds the story I wanted to see. Moreover, "the shaping hand of the investigator is counterbalanced by the skepticism and scrutiny that is the signature of good research" (p. 11). This was primarily accomplished through continuous dialogue with my advisors, writing and re-writing the portraits to achieve a valuable aesthetic whole. In the end, however, I understand that my portraits reflect more about me than the subject of the portrait.

Last, various power imbalances during the research might have biased or skewed some of the findings. Based on Tuhiwai Smith's (1999) concept of "indigenous research," I recognize the limitations and power relations inherent in a white, male, middle-class, professional-class American researching individuals and communities in Cambodia. As such, I could have fallen into a trap similar to the one Margaret Mead did when she decontextualized Samoans in order to critique hegemonic western thought (see Marcus, 1998, p. 38). To overcome this limitation, I worked through an NGO that has a history with the community under investigation. I also worked with Cambodian research assistants, with whom I had previous working experiences. The research assistants and the NGO built my credibility among the villagers, and hopefully limited the power imbalance that was inevitably present in this type of work. One consequence of working with a research assistant was the potential conflict of interest between the research assistant providing full independent judgment countered with his dependence on my financial assistance. To mitigate this potential conflict, I included the research assistants in each stage of research. I communicated with them between data collection rounds in order to listen to their thoughts and concerns.

4.8 Conclusion

The methods of this research start where Burch (2009a) and Ball (2012) left off: with the individual actors within education systems that experience privatization. I want to

understand how individuals negotiate their social relations within uneven power dynamics that are caused by local and global processes. I begin with the actors within spaces of educational privatization and then move outwards to understand their context. Collectively, the actors reveal the complex dynamics of privatization through situated practices.

The actual method of this study is the combination of portraiture with the extended case study, or what I call "landscape portraiture." The six portraits focus on different types of actors within the education network within one community in Cambodia. The portraits are extended in time because I collected data twice during the data collection. The individual portraits are also extended in theory because the emergent findings within each are related and put into dialogue with different academic theories. Then, in the conclusion chapter, the six portraits are collectively put in dialogue with the theory of social relations presented in Chapter 2.

The theoretical and methodological approach taken in this research uses a critical spatial lens to examine educational privatization. The everyday moments of life are explored through six different people. These moments constitute the educational spaces where privatization unfolds. But these moments occur within pre-existing social structures, change them over time, and include different traces of history into the present. In the next section of this dissertation, I employ these methods to critically engage with the enactment of educational privatization. Each individual provides a different perspective on history and the contemporary moment. Collectively these individuals make a landscape portrait of educational privatization.

Part II

Chapter 5

The Business of Teaching

5.1 Introduction

The entrance to Calmette Hospital in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia about 300 kilometers south of Preah Go, is a foreboding black box of shiny stone (image 5.1). Compared to the small motorbikes and tuk-tuk taxis racing down Monivong Boulevard, Calmette's entrance emits a sense of wealth, protection, and calm.

Image 5.1 The entrance to Calmette Hospital (photo by John C. Friend-Pereira)

Botum Chenda, a secondary school teacher in Preah Go, took her ill mother to Calmette in 2004. "We went to the hospital," Chenda recounted to me during my two weeks interviewing and shadowing her activities in school, "a public hospital, which has two gates."

Calmette has not always been a public hospital. When it was established in 1950, the hospital was private and serviced the wealthy in Phnom Penh (Wright, 1999). Even after the Vietnamese army overthrew the Khmer Rouge and the hospital was re-established (and re-named "Revolution Hospital"), 90 percent of its clients were high-ranking officials in 1989. Today the legacy of private care continues; the renowned hospital offers two tiers of service: Class A for fee-paying patients and Class B for fee-free patients (Lim, 2007).

When Chenda walked into the hospital with her mother, she had to choose between the two tiers of service. Her mother had fallen ill with a serious heart aliment in Siem Reap, and was advised by doctors in the provincial hospital to make the 300-kilometer trip south to Phnom Penh. The doctors in Siem Reap thought Calmette was Chenda's mother's best chance at survival. Chenda quickly sold a few cows and some of the family's land, and then made the difficult trip to the capital with her mother. The decision between public and private service provision was stark when Chenda entered Calmette Hospital:

> One gate is for the public services and another one where the private services are provided. For the public services, they are not provided everyday. For example, it's closed on Saturday. But my mother had a serious illness and we couldn't wait to use the public service, so we needed to use the private service, [in] which we had to pay for everything.

Unable to wait, Chenda was forced to choose Class A services for her mother. The hospital room cost US$40 per day, nearly 40 times the daily income of an average Cambodian in 2004 (World Bank, online Atlas data). Compared to the public room, Chenda said, "The private room was more comfortable because it had an air-conditioner and if we wanted to visit the patient, we needed to change clothes to prevent virus transmission. In addition, the patient was provided with more care from the doctor." In that moment, Chenda believed better care came with the high cost, but the inseparable connection between cost and care also had consequences.

In private hospital, Chenda was required to pay for services before they were administered. When she learned her mother needed an operation on her heart, she was unable to afford the cost. Out of money and reluctant to borrow more at high interest rates from the loan agencies set up next to the hospital, she resigned herself to the fact that private care was unaffordable. "Finally," she said, "we decided to send her back

home although her illness was still serious." Back at the provincial hospital in Siem Reap, Chenda's mother saw a doctor who, she said, "gave her a simple medicine which would never help her, and then she became weaker and weaker. She finally died."

Chenda's experience of medical care in Cambodia highlights the differences between public and private provision of social services. At 18 years old, Chenda did not know how to navigate the multiple medical spaces of health care and did not have the money to make different choices. Her opportunities were limited to public healthcare service provision, which were underfunded and under-resourced but which nevertheless occupied the same buildings and used the same doctors as private, Class A services.

As a teacher 10 years later, Chenda participates in another social service sector defined by multiple spaces of the public and private. Unlike the health sector, Chenda is able to navigate these spaces because of her intimate knowledge of schooling. In this chapter, the portrait of Chenda reveals the complex reality of schooling and the main form through which privatization enters the education system in Cambodia: private tutoring. I first detail the differences between public and private spaces of teaching from a pedagogical point of view. Then, I examine the different social relations that are constructed in the different spaces between teacher and student. Although the students and teacher are the same in both spaces (unlike the hospital environment where patients occupy only one space of public or private services), their relations to each other change depending on which space is occupied. I conclude by discussing the complex navigation teachers and students must undertake when a free market forms inside a government school.

5.2 Different spaces of teaching

Chenda became a teacher of Chemistry and Physics in 2007, two years after graduating from Grade 12. She received her basic education in Preah Go, only having to travel to Siem Reap City for upper secondary school (grades 10-12). After graduating from teacher-training college, she taught lower secondary school (grades 7-9) for four years in a school not too far outside the Preah Go community, but eventually was re-assigned to teach in her home village at the very school she had attended as a child. When I interviewed Chenda in 2014, she worked as a public

school teacher 25 hours per week and earned 528,000 Riel (US$132) per month. Her government salary is 1.6 times the average monthly salary of the gross national income in 2013, which was about US$79 (World Bank, online data). In addition to her government salary, she also earned approximately 800,000 Riel (US$200) per month from various student fees. Chenda's government salary combined with the student fees she collects makes her overall monthly salary over four times the national average gross national income. The largest fee students paid to her was for private tutoring lessons (*rien kuo thoeumda*), which she taught 16 hours each week. Chenda explained the purpose of private tutoring in Extract 5.1.

Extract 5.1 "…they want me to repeat again…"	
William:	Can you teach all of the lessons [in government class] or do you need to finish the lessons in private tutoring?
Chenda:	No. All of the lessons are set by the ministry, so we need to divide the hours in order to finish and make a plan to finish the lessons and the exercises. In private class, we just redo the lessons or exercises in order to rehearse [students'] ability and when I finish a lesson, I want them to do the exercise or whatever I plan.
William:	This means you finish the curriculum on time and just repeat it again in private tutoring.
Chenda:	For those who study in private class, they want me to repeat again, to make them remember well. Yes, it is like a review.
William:	So, the reason you do private tutoring is because you want more time?
Chenda:	Yes. In the public curriculum, there are only two hours per week [to teach chemistry], so we can only teach the theory.

In Extract 5.1, Chenda acknowledged three important points. First, MoEYS sets regulations on teaching hours that all teachers must follow and determines what students must learn. Students must learn the material in the government-created textbooks in the time allocated for each subject. Chenda acknowledged that teachers finish the textbook each year by saying, "we need to divide the hours in order to finish and make a plan to finish the lessons and the exercises." Sometimes, however, there is a mismatch between hours allocated by the government and the ability for teachers to teach the subject content in the textbook to the quality they deem appropriate. For

instance, students in lower secondary school (grades 7 to 9) are required to attend six lessons of science each week (MoEYS, 2004). Science includes the subjects of Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Earth and Environmental Studies. Lessons are required to run 50 minutes. When Chenda said, "there are only two hours per week," she is referring to the regulation and division of science subjects taught in the Preah Go lower secondary school. Students take two lessons (approximately two hours) of Chemistry, two lessons of Physics, and one lesson each of Biology and Earth and Environmental Studies. (The latter two subjects do not have a designated teacher in Preah Go, so the lessons often go unfulfilled.) Chenda's use of the word "only" suggests she thinks more time is needed to teach weekly lessons in Chemistry outlined in the textbook.

Second, the use of private tutoring is, in Chenda's perspective, a space where lessons can be repeated to students. Not only are private tutoring classes a "review" for some students who genuinely do not understand the content, but also the extra time allows Chenda to teach at the pace she is otherwise unable to go given the time restrictions in government school. Whereas students attend only two lessons of Chemistry in government schooling, they can take five or six private tutoring lessons in the same week. These additional lessons are essential for Chenda to slow down content delivery and work with students at a pace she believes is more conducive to learning. For students who do not attend private tutoring lessons, Chenda quickly moves to new content during government school in order to finish the mandated curriculum at the expense of some students' ability to comprehend the subject matter.

Third, Chenda made the point that classes in government school focus on the theory of a lesson. Her point was that in government school classes, concepts and terms of a particular lesson (i.e., the "theory") are explained by reading the textbook aloud. The exercise problems (*Lomhat)* that accompany each lesson in the textbook are completed in government school class, but often without explanation. The exercise problems are repeated at a slower pace in the private tutoring classes, and additional exercises from outside the national textbook are provided.

Chenda's explanation of the different spaces of teaching in Extract 5.1 mainly focused on the inadequate supply of certain subjects. When it comes to science subjects, the national curriculum does not provide enough time to cover the curricular content sufficiently, and therefore the reason for private tutoring.

There is, however, also a demand side. Students demand private tutoring classes for different reasons. Chenda acknowledged three different reasons in our conversations. First, some students do not understand subject matter and have a genuine desire to learn. These students attend private tutoring lessons because, as Chenda stated in Extract 5.1, "they want me to repeat again, to make them remember well." Second, there are also students who attend private tutoring because it is a customary practice in the education system. In other words, students follow fellow students into private tutoring. Chenda explained this sort of deliberate imitation:

> People see the surrounding environment: they see people who have education, get a good job and can help their family. Meanwhile, they look at themselves as farmers living with difficulties, so they started to think that education could make people's lives better despite not being rich.

In this case, Chenda highlighted the differences between rich and poor families who spend different amounts of money on education. When poor families see other families increase their wealth, they believe it is educational attainment that is the main reason for financial success. As such, some families encourage their children to attend additional education such as private tutoring lessons as a way to catch up with their "richer" neighbors.

The third and most controversial reason students demand private tutoring is the ability to secure better grades in government school. Chenda captured this delicate reality at the end of our two weeks together after I asked her directly about this possibility (extract 5.2).

Extract 5.2 "…I never allow them to cheat during the exam."	
William:	During private tutoring, do you ever teach exam problems that you're going to give on the monthly exam?
Chenda:	It's not always like that. We teach about this or that and set similar exercises for their exam. The exam is about the lessons, which most students can understand well. If we take other exercises and our students don't understand, it's useless. It's said that teachers should bring the exam papers to teach their students. Maybe there are some teachers taking the exam papers to teach so it seems that students in that class know nothing from the lessons. But for the exercises that I teach today, my students will still be able to do them tomorrow. Although I set similar exercises with similar techniques, students can still do them. But for teachers who teach only for the exam,

their students won't be able to deal with the exercises if we don't allow them to see the answer sheet. During the exam, these kinds of teachers usually allow their students to cheat, so students who study private tutoring with them have answer sheets to see but those who don't study in their private tutoring class will have nothing to see. I think it's not good to do like this. Although I teach my students and tell them some keys for the exam, I never allow them to cheat during the exam. If they cheat in the exam and get caught, I will give them a zero.

Although she disagrees with the practice, Chenda recognized that some teachers provide answer sheets to examinations in private tutoring. The possibility of this advantage partly drives the demand for private tutoring. Even though Chenda does not allow cheating, she still provides students "some keys for the exam" in private tutoring, enticing some students to attend private tutoring for this benefit. Such a reality highlights the difficult balance Chenda must reach between the need for private tutoring because of the inadequacies of government schooling (i.e., not enough time to teach Chemistry) and the demand for private tutoring as a way for students to reap an advantage on examinations. This dilemma plays out in the different social relations between teacher and students in the different, overlapping spaces of schooling. Before looking at that however, it is important to look at learning inside government school and private tutoring classes to see how education is provided. In the next two sub-sections, I look at government classes and private tutoring classes taught by Chenda. Although the students and teacher are the same in both spaces, there are differences.

5.2.1 Teaching in government class

Chenda waited outside the classroom of class 7B until all students were inside and standing. Class began at 7:40 in the morning. All of the students' sandals were lined in neat rows outside the classroom. When Chenda walked in, the students, wearing the official school uniform of a white shirt and blue trousers or skirts, greeted her with a traditional *Sampeah*, placing their palms together at eyebrow level, and said, "*Chumreab Sour, Neak Krou*" ("Hello, teacher"). The students remained standing as Chenda walked around the room to see who was absent and inspected each student's uniform. As Chenda walked around the room I noticed, next to the whiteboard, the list of the top students (all female) in the class, and was reminded of the system of ranking and competition at the heart of the schooling experience, both for students who compete for grades and teachers who are evaluated by student success. These

students were competing against each other and their actions inside government class were part of the complex process of student and teacher evaluations.

Chenda began the class by reviewing the previous day's lesson. The subject was physics and the lesson covered the equation E=pt, which deals with energy, power, and time. There were 47 students in class: 25 boys and 22 girls. Chenda was a trained teacher: she commanded the room when she spoke, rotated between girls and boys when asking questions, walked around the room, and made eye contact with students. In the beginning, the students were focused, quiet, and attentive.

Students were asked to keep their textbooks closed as Chenda reviewed the lesson. Chenda asked individual students questions, and they stood to answer. Some students were asked to go to the board to write sentences from the textbook Chenda had opened. Other students were asked to read out loud parts from Chenda's textbook. Others were asked to write the proofs to the example problems on the board. For such a full classroom, Chenda was able to manage, control, and involve most students. At another time, she asked if "0.4" was the same as "0.400." It was a good question, and when most students said the same, she said "but one is 4 and the other is 400." Students had to give a reason for their answer instead of a simple "yes" or "no." One student stood up and answered Chenda's question correctly. There was a formality to Chenda's class where students were expected to participate in a calm, orderly manner.

Image 5.2 Government school taught by Chenda

When it was time for a new lesson, students opened their textbooks and Chenda selected individual students to stand up and read different passages. This was the "theory" portion of the lesson. Students stood up and read a sentence or two. Then another stood to do the same, switching between boy and girl. The words that were not understood, mostly technical words, Chenda wrote on the board (image 5.2). She then carefully defined each of them, drawing various diagrams on the board. It was through these terms that she taught the lesson, asking students "does this turn the electricity on or off?" This was her mode of teaching. There were no example problems given, just an introduction to the concept.

Students started packing up and getting ready to go with 20 minutes of class remaining. Chenda asked them to sit again, which they did. Students were out of the door before 8:30. Before they left, Chenda reminded her students to attend private tutoring if they did not understand the lesson. Class was dismissed and Chenda quickly left too. After I left the room, I found Chenda standing in the school administration room, which acts as a teacher lounge between classes. A student came up to her and handed her a bottle of water.

5.2.2 Teaching in private tutoring class

Chenda teaches private tutoring when she does not have to teach government school. Since students attend government school in shifts in the Preah Go lower secondary school (meaning that one group of students attend in the morning from 7:00 am until 12:00 pm and another group of students attend from 1:00 pm until 5:00 pm), there is ample time to hold private tutoring classes when students are not scheduled to attend mainstream school. The scheduling of Chenda's private tutoring classes takes place before each semester in consultation with the principal who designs the mainstream teaching schedule. When I observed Chenda, she taught government school Monday and Friday, leaving Tuesday through Thursday as well as Saturday for tutoring. Since she holds classes inside the mainstream school, she starts her private tutoring classes around the same time as government school or whenever there is an empty classroom, which sometimes occurs before or after mainstream school.

On this occasion, at 7:30 am, Chenda entered the room used for private tutoring, which is in an auxiliary building inside the Preah Go lower secondary school grounds and was built by an international NGO. Students were talking, having fun,

and playing around when Chenda entered. The students had been waiting since 7 am, when government school officially began for first-shift students, and used the time to socialize with friends. These children would attend multiple private tutoring lessons in the morning before starting mainstream school in the afternoon. Chenda usually runs home to have breakfast between her Grade 9 tutoring class, which takes place between 6:00 and 7:00 am, and her Grade 7 tutoring class, which begins whenever she returns to school.

I was sitting in the back of the Grade 7 chemistry private tutoring class, waiting for Chenda with the students. I counted the students as I waited: 23 girls and 14 boys. This was 10 fewer students than the government class described above and the boy-girl ratio was reversed: more girls attended private tutoring than boys. The students in this class were pooled from the four government classes of chemistry. Chenda teaches 160 Grade 7 students in government school. With 37 students sitting in the classroom with me, less than a quarter of all students attended chemistry private tutoring. Although this is typical for chemistry Chenda assured me during one of my conversations with her, other, more popular subjects such as Mathematics or Khmer language have a much larger percent of students attending. Why this happens depends on a number of factors: the difficulty of subject content, the quality of teacher, the grading standards by teacher, and the weighted importance of the subject on national exams (e.g., mathematics count for 200 points while chemistry counts for 50 points on national exams).

As students waited for Chenda, I noticed some of the surface differences between government school and private tutoring classes. Students did not sweep the room like they did before government school classes, and, as such, sandals were always worn inside the classroom. As a private class, there is no required uniform, so students could wear what they liked. No Cambodian flag or placard of the royal family hung on the wall like in government school classrooms. In fact, the walls were completely bare. Students sat at desks in red and blue plastic chairs unlike government school where two-person wooden benches are attached to each desk. These differences in materiality signaled to me competing spatial practices that defined each place of education.

When Chenda arrived, students continued to talk and play. Unlike government school, students did not greet Chenda with a *Sampeah* when she walked into the classroom. The formality of government school was gone. Chenda spent some time

chatting with different groups of students before starting class. In one instance, I overheard Chenda discussing a new bracelet worn by a female student. Chenda seemed to have a friendly relationship with students in private tutoring unlike government school where rules, regulations, and formality defined the actions by student and teacher.

Chenda eventually made her way to the white board and, using markers purchased by herself, split the board into three sections by drawing two lines from top-to-bottom of the board (image 5.3). The right side of the board was used to list equations students might need during the lesson. The left side of the board was where Chenda wrote out the questions of each example problem. The middle of the board was used to solve each example problem, one by one. This configuration occurred in every private tutoring class I observed but only occasionally in the government school classes I observed.

It took some time to get the attention of students, but when Chenda began, she reviewed the previous day's lessons, focusing on the equations discussed in government school. She then defined each part of the equation as she wrote it on the right hand side of the board. This was mainly done in lecture form, a verbal review of the lesson. There were no textbooks on the student's tables, only notebooks. Students were copying from the board while Chenda reviewed the lesson.

Image 5.3 Private tutoring taught by Chenda

During this portion of the private tutoring lesson, some students were very attentive. Others students, however, continued to chat and play around. This was especially the case for students who joined the class late, a practice that seldom occurred in government school. All of this commotion was happening without any repercussion from Chenda, which was in stark contrast to government school where rule and order defined good student conduct and participation.

After the review, Chenda started with example problems. These problems did not seem to come from the textbook, but rather were created by her. Chenda carried a sheet of white paper in her hand that had the various example problems she was planning to teach that day. After writing the problem on the board, the students were supposed to copy it into their notebooks. Chenda walked around the classroom to make sure students did in fact copy the examples from the board. Some students continued to play around, but they straightened up when Chenda walked past.

One group of boys needed to be separated because they were fooling around too much, hitting and kicking each other in a playful manner. Chenda moved one of the boys to the far side of the desk, which did not seem to help much; I saw one boy reach his leg to give one last kick after Chenda turned her back. This sort of behavior was absent in government school.

Chenda checked each student's notebook, and the students were asked to work on the problem. Some students did so individually while others worked in small groups. Unlike government school, there was no designated way for students to participate in private tutoring. Students asked many questions during this time, sometimes shouting out to Chenda their various concerns. Such an action would not be allowed in government school. Students did not raise their hands or stand when speaking to the teacher. Chenda walked around the room to answer each student's question. After a few minutes, Chenda returned to the board and solved the problem for the students. They copied the work from the board and paid attention to her method of solving the problem. She explained each part of the problem as she went along.

For the next equation, she used a similar pedagogy. She first reviewed a second equation, which was written on the right hand side of the board, and asked students for input along the way. She then wrote two example problems in the middle of the board and asked students — one boy and one girl — to come to the board and

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answer them. While the boy was at the center of the board answering the question, Chenda wrote the next long form question on the left hand side of the board. The students repeated what they had done before: copy the example from the board and begin solving it by themselves or in small groups. Chenda walked around the classroom providing individual guidance before going back to the board to solve the problem in front of the whole class.

While Chenda was solving the second problem on the board, a female student began walking around class collecting 500 Riel (approximately US¢13) from each student (image 5.4). After Chenda finished the example, students were told to copy it. At the end of the class, Chenda left the classroom first, and I never saw her pick up the money from the student.

The way in which Chenda teaches government school compared with private tutoring reveals different participation frameworks. Students are required to behave and act in different ways in the two spaces. One important difference that emerged during my observations was the difference in relationship Chenda had with the students in public and private space. In the next section, I turn to the different relationships in government school and private tutoring to unpack the complex set of social relations found in the education system.

Image 5.4 Money collection in private tutoring

5.3 Changing relations with students

I spent a lot of time discussing my classroom observations with Chenda. I was taken by the differences in the ways in which she treated students in public and private spaces of education and in the ways in which students treated her. She explained to me the differences between the two spaces:

> In private tutoring, students think that they pay money for their studies and there are no classroom rules. So it's their freedom if they want to study, they come but if they don't want to study, they can go. We cannot blame them for not attending private tutoring class. But in public school, we have school discipline, which requires them to follow. And they don't pay for studying in public school, but they have to listen to the teacher.

In this passage, Chenda highlighted a central difference between the two spaces I observed: in public school, there are certain accepted rituals and customs, such as standing when the teacher comes in or being quiet throughout the lesson, that are stricter than and different to the ritual and customs in private tutoring where some students talked through lessons and arrived late. One set of everyday practices that differ between the two spaces is the participation framework, which was described in the previous section. In public school, students participated when Chenda called on them, and they stood to answer the questions while the other students sat quietly. In contrast, in private tutoring, students participated in ways they deemed fit. Some students shouted out to Chenda while others raised their hands. Some worked in groups, while other did so alone. Sometimes students volunteered to answer a question at the board while other times Chenda selected students. The different participation frameworks that emerged in both spaces show how Chenda and students enacted different sets of social relations. Such a finding highlights an area for future research to systematically compare the participation frameworks in both spaces. Of interest in this thesis, however, is the finding that social relations between Chenda and her students *changed* in the two spaces.

The different types of social relations enacted in the two spaces are the focus of this section. Chenda suggested in the quote above that the payment for private tutoring class gives students freedom to act in ways that are unacceptable in public school, where strict rules are set by MoEYS. The act of payment sets in motion a certain social relation between student and teacher. The act of payment, in this sense,

constructs a relationship between teacher and student that is akin a market relation: Students pay for a service and the teacher provides it.

The market relation is based on a mutual benefit through exchange. Teachers earn additional money by exchanging their time to teach extra classes. Similarly, students receive additional instruction by exchanging money to attend extra classes. The market relation can produce large benefits, both economically and educationally. Indeed, Chenda earns more money from private tutoring than from government school in a typical month and the weekly hours a class devotes to chemistry are more than double in private tutoring than in government school. Since the market relation of private tutoring is voluntary, Chenda takes pains not to dissuade students from attending her private tutoring classes. She cannot be as strict in private tutoring as she is in government class for instance. Chenda must find the appropriate balance between delivering enough content to make students want to continue to attend and pay for extra lessons and acting in ways that are inviting, friendly, and welcoming to students who are spending additional time and money at school.

There is another benefit students see in the market relation with teachers. That is, in return for payment, some students expect additional help on monthly, semester, and final examinations. This can range from benign forms such as examination preparation to extreme forms such as bribes paid for answers. Chenda made this clear when she told me about making her own examinations:

> If the exam paper is made by the ministry, it will be difficult for students to predict which lessons will appear in their exam, so they try hard to review the lessons. But if the exam paper is made by their teachers, they won't study hard because sometimes they go study private tutoring and get the answer keys just a few days before the exam.

The relation where teachers trade examination answers for money is difficult to observe, and is not likely a common interaction. I never observed Chenda participating in such a relation. Nevertheless, this type of relation is also a market relation in that students and teachers participate in exchange in hopes of benefiting – students with higher grades and teachers with additional money. This specific market relation requires either a student to ask a teacher for answers or a teacher to initiate the deal with students. Both such actions run the risk of the other person disagreeing with the illicit behavior, and likely takes place out of sight of other students,

principals, and researchers such as myself. However, the more benign version of examination preparation by teachers who make the examinations is likely prevalent among teachers who tutor. Even Chenda admitted to such a practice during the weeks leading up to an examination. Examination preparation is another way to entice students to attend private tutoring classes; students believe the teacher will use example-problems given in private tutoring on the examination or that teachers will provide possible topics in private tutoring that will be tested in government school. Chenda made this clear by telling me a hypothetical situation of another non-government school teacher offering physics tutoring in the village:

> If I teach physics in government school, and there is another teacher who teaches physics at private tutoring, my students won't go with that teacher; they come study with me because they expect to get answers from me before the exam and I will give them good marks.

The benefit of providing examination answers in exchange for income is also valuable to teachers; however, the relation goes beyond the understanding of market relations to increase personal wealth. At first I thought the student-teacher relationship inside private tutoring was purely a market relation, but I later learned through my conversations with Chenda of other relations between teacher and students and teacher and community. For example, there is a political relation between students and teachers who must navigate an evaluation system based on examination scores:

> Teachers will always help their students because if lots of students fail the exam, it's the teacher's fault. But the teachers don't usually tell everything on the exam; they just tell some points for students to learn.

Teachers are under pressure from the principal and district offices of education to obtain certain levels of student passing. In efforts to comply with the evaluation system, some teachers ensure their students pass the exam by providing answers, preparation, or both to their students. In effect, teachers participate in a political relation with their students, what has been termed a form of "collusion" (see Perez-Milans, 2015b), not for financial gain but as a form of survival in an evaluation system based on student testing and ranking. Students collude with teachers because they are ranked against their peers each month, which the bulletin board listing the top

students gently reminds the class, and some examinations, such as Grades 9 and 12, act as the single barrier to advancement or graduation.

Making matters even more complicated, when I asked Chenda if she ever exchanged good grades for money, she replied by emphasizing the feeling of blame inside the Preah Go community: "I don't do that because I dislike that. And students will talk about this behind [a teacher's] back, and the information will spread out. And the community will complain to the school." Chenda lives in Preah Go and wants to be a seen as a respected teacher in the community. Families in Preah Go may perceive Chenda as being selfish and interested in money if she based private tutoring on market relations alone. Chenda therefore has to emphasize the educational value of private tutoring over the personal economic value of a fee-based tutoring space. It is for this reason that she allows some students to attend private tutoring for free and uses a proxy to collect money in the class. This is a social relation that forms between students and teacher that is based on historical understandings of the correct ways a teacher should treat students. In Chenda's own account, the relationship between student and teacher is based on familial connections: "We [students and teachers] live in the same community and I treat my students like my children, nieces and nephews." Treating a student in a similar way to a family member centers on notions of love and respect: "I want to be equal with love and don't want to hear that I like only highly educated students and not low ones or like only those who study in private tutoring and not in public school."

Worrying about the community's reaction to Chenda's actions in school and dealing with the evaluation mechanisms in the education system complicates the idea of private tutoring as being based on a market relation alone, although this type of relation is certainly present between teacher and student. The types of social relations between student and teacher include economic, political, and cultural forms. These forms play out in certain ways inside private tutoring and are also enacted in other ways in government school.

Chenda must navigate the various social relations demanded in a system of public school and private tutoring classes. Private tutoring provides extra income to Chenda, allows her additional time to prepare students for examinations, and gives students more educational time. Chenda likes to emphasize her desire to give children more education through private tutoring while downplaying the fees. On top of this she attempts to entice students into her private tutoring classes by providing some

examination preparation, being friendly to students, and using pedagogies that are individualized. She even announces her private tutoring classes to students during government school. These are in stark contrast to her relations with students in government school where exams are given but never discussed, fear of the teacher is culturally expected, and teacher-centered pedagogies dominate.

5.4 Conclusion

In a system of education where private tutoring is commonly practiced, teachers must navigate a complex set of relations between students, community, and government. These complexities derive from the logics associated with the market entering government school. Much like the hospital services Chenda had to navigate when her mother fell ill, the education system depends on one's ability to pay informal fees and participate in both public and private spaces of learning. This reality results in different situated practices of learning in the two spaces as well as constructs particular social relations between teacher and student.

This chapter looked inside the public and private spaces of learning and saw how public space is governed by strict rules and a sense of formality. Students behave in formal ways where they participate in a set of cultural relations that display great respect towards teachers. The private space, by contrast, is marked by informality, playfulness, and student-centered pedagogies. In a sense, the fee required to attend private tutoring gave students the freedom to act as they please, without fear of Chenda imposing strict rules. The differences in student participation in the two spaces of learning exemplify these differences. Different cultural values underpin and define what is appropriate in each space, who can participate, and how. In turn, what is defined as "good" and "bad" behavior in each space is constrained by the logic of public and private space. These logics play out in the different social relations that emerge in the two environments.

There were multiple relations that emerged in the education system. The starting point was the clear market relation that comes when students pay fees directly to teachers for private tutoring. In such a relation, Chenda was friendlier to students in private tutoring than in government school, and used pedagogies that were student centered. These were used as a way to entice students to attend her fee-based extra classes. However, there were other sets of relations that emerged from a public system

that relies on private service provision. There were certain political and cultural relations. Politically, teacher and students participated in a form of collusion to overcome the education evaluation system and, culturally, teachers felt a familial obligation to students in their own community, which encouraged them to offer free services to some students in the private space.

Chenda's experience as a teacher who tutors her own students exemplified the blurring between public and private spaces of learning. When a mainstream education system requires students to participate in private spaces of learning, complex sets of actions and social relations emerge that teachers must carefully navigate. The schooling system therefore is not clearly defined between the two systems, one public and the other private. Instead, the two spaces of learning overlap and blur together.

The situated practices and social relations between private tutoring and government school is the main form of educational privatization. However, there are other types of privatization occurring in Cambodian education. In the next chapter, the rise of NGO schools highlights another area of privatization that adds complexity to the social relations discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 6

The rise of NGO schools

6.1 Introduction

When I entered the school grounds of Wish For Cambodia, I came across a large field where students played. Looking beyond the litter, the school's grounds were quite picturesque with large coconut trees and rice fields encircling it. The school consisted of two buildings (image 6.1): the director's office and a building of five classrooms. The director's office stood alone, but there was a concrete foundation close by, for what, I had learned during my two weeks visiting the school, was to become a library.

Image 6.1 Director's office (center) with school building (left, back) and future site of library (right, front).

The classrooms were located in a long, rectangular building. The walls were concrete, as were the floors, and the windows in each classroom were covered in wood lattice painted red at the front and yellow at the back. There were shutters on each window and a large blue metal door for each room. The red metal roof and the absence of full

walls between classrooms created an environment where noise traveled and bounced, causing a din when the five classrooms were full.

Inside each classroom, paintings of houses and animals, handprints and smiley faces covered the walls in bright colors. It looked as if children, adults, and foreigners were responsible for the paintings, as some were of higher quality than others and occasionally contained Chinese or Japanese script. There were also motivational sayings painted on the walls, reading, for example, "aim high and try hard," "be the change you want to be in the world," and, most peculiarly, "stars can't shine without darkness" (image 6.2, right side). Given its placement inside a school, the latter phrase suggested that to be educated requires a relational understanding to those who are *un*educated. On the outside of the classroom building, one side had the names of the school and director overlaying a giant elephant; the other side showcased a painting of the earth with the names of various volunteer groups who support the school through donations or volunteer teaching. The school had a "global" feel to it and, in fact, donations from abroad were its primary source of income.

Image 6.2 Inside a classroom

Started in 2009, Wish For Cambodia is an educational enterprise that provides 290 children with free English, computer, and dance lessons. It is not a formal school

teaching a complete curriculum of Mathematics, Science, Khmer language, and History. Rather, it is a supplementary education enterprise — sometimes called an NGO school — that caters to children who attend mainstream, government schooling but, for various reasons, attend additional classes at Wish For Cambodia. (Two other NGO schools also operate in the Preah Go community.) Wish For Cambodia operates three shifts to accommodate the mainstream school schedules of most learners: Morning, afternoon, and evening. When children are not in mainstream school, they have the option of attending classes at Wish For Cambodia. Older children or young adults who work during the day typically attend the evening sessions, while primary school-aged children (approximately 6 to 12 years of age, but sometimes older) attend either the morning or afternoon sessions. The students rotate sessions each month in line with their mainstream school shifts.

Wish For Cambodia is the brainchild of Mean Sokhem, who acts as the school's director, teacher, teacher-trainer, volunteer coordinator, and fundraiser. Sokhem is a 31-year old father of three children who moved to the Preah Go community in order to open the school. At first the school charged students a small fee to cover operation costs (mainly to pay the salary of Sokhem), but since 2011 the school became a non-profit organization that has relied on donations from abroad and increased its teaching staff to nine. The school is Sokhem's main livelihood, but his salary fluctuates with donations. Salaries of other teachers, I learned, do not fluctuate, suggesting that Sokhem sometimes reduces his salary in order to pay the school's staff of nine.

On the first day I met Sokhem, he was awaiting my translator and me in his office (image 6.3). He had just finished a meeting with a group of foreigners who were going either to donate money or to send foreign volunteers to the school, or perhaps both. I was impressed with Sokhem's ability to manage such diverse activities; immediately after his time with me, he was going to teach an English class. All of our conversations took place in his office, some lasting close to an hour and others a mere 15-minutes. Sokhem was very busy, but he always found time to sit and answer my questions. He also allowed me to observe the various classes being held.

Unlike other interviews, my translator was not needed because Sokhem proudly insisted I conduct each interview in English. As some of his quotes will reveal below, his English sentences can at times be riddled with mistakes, as is

common for most second-language speakers. Nevertheless, I do not alter his sentences beyond adding words in brackets for clarity or the occasional footnote.

Image 6.3 Sokhem's office

I was mainly interested in the emergence of NGO schools and their placement among existing institutions of education, namely public mainstream schooling and private tutoring. During the first interview, Sokhem differentiated between his non-formal school enterprise and the government public school system. While sitting on red-plastic chairs at a wooden table in his office, Sokhem explained to me the purpose of his school, loudly speaking over the noisy ceiling fan overhead:

Extract 6.1 "…English is also the most important thing…"	
William:	What role do [NGO schools] play in education today?
Sokhem:	Because right now, my role is also just education in English and also with a computer and also teaching the children how to dance and how to do any bracelets or something because I think that this one is just a skill not related to other education like [that offered by the] Ministry of Youth and Education.
William:	So you see yourself as teaching skills?

Sokhem:	Yes.
William:	And so why is that important?
Sokhem:	Because you know like English is also the most important thing because English is also an international language so everyone works because, though I'm working, I just working through my English language so that causes English is also the most important. Every time we are interviewing we have to interview in English. Even though in Siem Reap, if you want to work in the restaurant and you want to get a high paid, we have to know how to speak English well, so English is all the most important thing. And one more [thing]: Computer. Computer is also the most important thing. If someone doesn't know how to use computer, it's very hard for them because when we are working they use computer to use in the office or something like that so computer is also one of important things.

In Extract 6.1, Sokhem indicated that through the preparation of skills deemed valuable for a tourist-based economy (i.e., English and computer skills), he hoped to offer children a way out from a life of subsistence farming, which is the most common occupation among Preah Go residents. (The 2010 commune database indicates that eighty percent of households farm.) Although the Cambodian National Institute of Statistics (CNIS, 2010) reported Cambodia's unemployment rate is one of the lowest in the region, hovering at 1.6 percent in 2010, the reality for most people is a feeling of being trapped. They feel trapped in the sense of being dependent on subsistence farming, which does not offer a steady wage, depends on the vagaries of seasons, and has no clear path of upward mobility, but is nevertheless considered "employment" for accounting purposes. Indeed, the CNIS report found that 82.5 percent of workers nation-wide were in "vulnerable employment," meaning "unpaid family workers and own-account workers" (p. 25). In other words, most people rely on subsistence farming, which does not offer the protection of the types of jobs for which Sokhem was training students.

Sokhem, who grew up farming, understands the wish by many youth who dream of working in an air-conditioned building in the city center instead of picking and planting rice under the hot Cambodian sun. Skills in English and computer literacy, Sokhem believes, will provide employment opportunities for the next generation of Cambodians — skills he did not learn from public school growing up.

Sokhem's desire to use education as a way out of poverty and his reliance on foreign donations and volunteers is a common feature in the privatization of education in Cambodia. It extends the discussion of public and private spaces of learning in Chapter 5 by highlighting an area that does not blur the lines between public and private schooling such as private tutoring. Instead, the rise of NGO schools shows a thoroughly private space of learning that students must navigate alongside the public-private mainstream system. Moreover, the rise of NGO schools highlights the displacement of household costs for education from local residents who receive education to global philanthropic networks who aid education in so-called "developing countries." The place of household financing of education, in other words, is stretched geographically because of NGO schools. Through Sokhem's story, I will show how NGO schools emerged as a feature of educational privatization. In the sections that follow, I outline Sokhem's personal biography and his story of starting a school enterprise. This outline offers an entry point into understanding the most recent phase of the longer history of household financing of education as a form of privatization, which was discussed in Chapter 3. Of interest here is the particular history that gave rise to NGO schools, especially Sokhem's agency in his pursuit of forming Wish For Cambodia, and the emergent situational logics and vested interests that structure this feature of the contemporary education system. Many of Sokhem's ideas on education cannot be separated from his educational experience when the national public education system was in its infancy and the growing reliance of international aid altered the valorization of particular skills (e.g., from the Russian to English language). One way to read Sokhem's history is to see him as running from his historical experience of public schooling, which was marked by limited classroom materials, violent teachers, and prohibitive school fees, and, in the process, forming an uneasy dependency on foreign volunteers and donations as he tries to fund his educational venture. The on-going negotiation Sokhem makes between the means of international intervention and the ends of creating a better system of education than he experienced growing up is the main focus of this chapter.

In the sections that follow, I explore how household financing of education has created an avenue for the privatization of education and the struggles this creates for educators. The second section looks inside Wish For Cambodia to reveal a complex system of school financing from abroad and the emergence of privatization in the form of practices and social relations. By focusing on the pedagogical practices

used at Wish For Cambodia in comparison to public, mainstream schooling as well as private tutoring classes, it becomes apparent that the history of household financing of education in which I situate Wish For Cambodia is, in fact, more personalized in Sokhem's perspective. Wish For Cambodia must be understood as an active response by Sokhem to alter educational practices he experienced in his childhood during mainstream public schooling. The third section explores the dilemma Sokhem faces by relying on foreign donations to fund Wish For Cambodia. It becomes apparent that Sokhem compromises some of his educational goals to meet the financial pressures of educating 290 children for free.

6.2 Pedagogical practices and the social relations inside Wish For Cambodia

It was February 2014 when I first started observing Sokhem's classes. In total, I observed seven of his classes between February and May 2014. Sitting in the back row of the classroom, I followed each 50-minute lesson, audio recording the entire lesson, video taping some segments, and taking the occasional photograph. I also observed three classes taught by foreign volunteers and three classes taught by Khmer teachers other than Sokhem.

Sokhem rarely used Khmer when he taught English classes. When he did speak in Khmer, it was either to clarify a homework assignment (e.g., over a long holiday weekend, students had to write the first eight months of the year *five* times each instead of the typical *three* times) or to explain why he had to end class early (e.g., he once had a meeting with a donor), which happened a few times. During Computer classes, Sokhem spoke almost exclusively in Khmer, save for the technical words that are uncommon in Khmer vernacular (e.g., "applications" or "Klavaro"[23]). By contrast, the other Khmer teachers I observed spoke to students almost entirely in Khmer, only using English when reading from the textbook or answering an example problem. At the opposite extreme, foreign volunteers spoke only English (or Japanese, in one instance), using the occasional *arkoun* ("thank you") or other simple Khmer phrases. When volunteers taught, there was always a Khmer teacher in the room who

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[23] Klavaro is a typing program installed on the One Laptop Per Child computers used at Wish For Cambodia.

translated instructions to the students (except in the case of the Japanese-medium classes where no Wish For Cambodia teacher could translate).

Sitting through the seven classes, I noticed a general class arrangement, which I always compared to the government school classes and regular private tutoring lessons (*rien kuo thoeumda*) I had also observed and which are descried in Chapter 5. The average class size I observed at Wish For Cambodia was about twenty children, ranging in age from six to nine years old. (I did not observe evening classes of the older students.) Students sat two-by-two in three columns of wooden desks, similar to the government school classes I observed. Typically less than half of the students were boys, which was similar to the private tutoring lessons. In government school classes, by contrast, boys typically outnumbered girls. In Wish For Cambodia, most students wore the school's T-shirt, an informal uniform of sorts. Some wore the T-shirt with jeans while others had on the bottom half of their public school uniform (blue slacks for boys; blue skirts for girls). Still other students wore clothes that were neither the public school uniform nor Wish For Cambodia's T-shirt, resembling the diverse attire I commonly saw students wear in private tutoring classes. Unlike public school but similar to private tutoring, however, all of the students wore sandals *inside* the classroom and there was no framed picture of the King, the King's father, and the Queen mother high above the whiteboard. These slight differences suggested Wish For Cambodia had its own set of customs and standard practices for students to follow that were most similar to private tutoring where sandals were worn inside the classroom and the royal portraits were not hung on the walls. Like private tutoring lessons, there was a feeling of informality inside these classes compared to government school classes. In addition, the absence of Cambodian national symbols, as are typically found in government school classrooms, and the abundance of "global" images (e.g., wall paintings of the Earth, sayings in multiple languages, and the names of foreign volunteers) emphasized the international feel of the school despite being located in semi-rural Cambodia.

During my observations, it quickly became apparent that Sokhem had a particular style of teaching. Here I will highlight one representative instance. Standing at the front of the classroom, Sokhem was teaching a beginner English class. The day before, he had taught the first four months of the year, so he began this day's lessons with a review. The first four months were written on the whiteboard. Sokhem pointed to and spelled each word. "Januarys is spelled J-A-N-U-A-R-Y," Sokhem called out.

For some words such as January, Sokhem unconsciously added an extra "s" to the end, constructing mistaken plurals that sound odd to a native English speaker. The students, some standing up and holding onto their wooden desks, responded in unison, repeating—some shouting—the entire phrase as Sokhem pointed to each word written on the whiteboard, "Januarys is spelled J-A-N-U-A-R-Y."

After reviewing the first four months of the year, Sokhem replaced selected letters in each word with an underline. Students knew instantly that they would have to fill in the blanks. Up went the hands, pointing one figure to the ceiling, and shouting "teacher" or "*loak krou,*" in an effort to persuade Sokhem to call on them. Although Sokhem told the students to close their notebooks before he erased some of the letters on the whiteboard, a few kept their books open on their laps in order to check one last time which letter needed to be written before going up to the board.

Other Khmer teachers used similar styles. This made sense since Sokhem trains the teachers and the teachers are all former students of Wish For Cambodia. But subtle differences were apparent in the teaching styles. Whereas Sokhem gave each student a chance at the board to answer a practice problem, repeating problems if necessary, other Khmer teachers would stop a lesson once all of the practice problems were completed. Also, when a student answered incorrectly at, for example, filling in missing letters at the board, Sokhem would ask the entire class if the answer provided was correct. If it were not, another student would come up to try an answer while the former student sat down. Little attention was draw to the student who answered incorrectly. In other classes, however, students who answered incorrectly had to stand at the front of the room until another student gave the correct answer. In one extreme example, there were four students standing at the front of the room who provided incorrect answers while trying to spell one of the following words: Above, accident, ache, airport, and animal. As the four students stood at the board waiting for the correct answer, two boys began to laugh and play with each other. At one point, the larger of the two boys lifted the other upside down. The teacher did not like this, so asked the two boys to approach his desk and stick out their hands. The teacher then administered two quick blows to the hands of each boy using a long, thin piece of bamboo. This sort of punishment was uncommon in most of my observations, but I did witness it once in a private tutoring lesson by Chenda.

During my conversations with Sokhem, I was able to probe into the pedagogy used at Wish For Cambodia. I was initially struck by the differences I noticed

between the government school classes I had been observing, where reading out of a textbook was standard practice, and the classes at Wish For Cambodia where students were constantly at the board answering questions.

Extract 6.2 "We have to repeat the lessons…"	
William:	Is there a difference between the pedagogy of government school and that used in Wish For Cambodia?
Sokhem:	Actually, very different.
William:	How is it different?
Sokhem:	You know I used to study at the government school, the difference like the government school they [do] not take care all the students.
William:	What do you mean they don't take care of the students?
Sokhem:	They don't take care because they just take care about the students if the students understand or don't understand. They don't take care about that. And they have to follow about the curriculum that the government gives to them but in here we are not follow any curriculum about the school. If example, we are teaching the lessons to the students but if [some] students still don't understand, we have to repeat the lessons again so we really need about the quality but we don't need about the quantity because sometimes, if they are failed or something like that, we have to let them to repeat. We have to repeat the lessons—repeat and repeat—and after that the students understand, we can go to another lesson.

In Sokhem's somewhat convoluted formulation, the government school teachers are bound by a national curriculum that limits the quality of learning because of the pressure to finish the curriculum. In Sokhem's perspective, public school teachers are concerned mainly with completing the required tasks ("quantity" in Sokhem's words) without a concern for whether students understand the content or not ("quality" in Sokhem's words). By contrast, Sokhem emphasizes the concept of repetition, as I witnessed myself during the classroom observations. Although each Khmer teacher at Wish For Cambodia had unique pedagogical nuances, they all shared Sokhem's notion of repetition. Exercises were repeated one after the other in order to drill

various groups of words into the students' minds. When I asked Sokhem "where do you think [the practice of repetition] comes from?" he responded by saying,

> Mostly, we are doing this culture since we was a child so that causes if we don't do that maybe very hard for the students to control about their selves how to read the words because many Khmer cultures, they are very shy so we let them do that in order to make them more brave and more stronger—do not afraid for anyone.

Sokhem's answer of "culture" as a reason for repetition suggests there are standard practices in education that have endured through history. Indeed, the concept of repetition has a long history in Cambodia, which was outlined in Chapter 3. Sokhem's emphasis on repetition and understanding, although reflecting this history of pedagogical practices, actually has a personal resonance in his own biography. It is *his* history that has caused him to employ specific practices at Wish For Cambodia, not a clear recognition of a cultural history dating to 500 AD.

Sokhem grew up in a rapidly changing educational environment in the post-Khmer Rouge period. He was born in 1981, two years after the collapse of Democratic Kampuchea, commonly called Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge. In those first 20 years of his life, he witnessed drastic changes as Cambodian society attempted to rebuild after decades of unrest, war, and auto/genocide. The most notable change Sokhem experienced was the transition from a Soviet-supported, Vietnamese-backed government in the 1980s to a free-market, Western-aided government in the 1990s (see Clayton, 2000).

At nine years old, Sokhem started school in 1990, and experienced extreme changes inside the public school system. He was one of the last groups of students to learn using textbooks that were translated by the Vietnamese. A picture of King Sihanouk and the Kingdom of Cambodia flag, which was introduced in 1993, would eventually replace the picture of Lenin that hung in his classrooms. Moreover, English would eventually replace the value of speaking Russian and Vietnamese.

As a child, Sokhem did not understand these larger, macro political-economic transitions. For him, what stuck out were everyday, situated experiences, which upon reflection he was able to evaluate during our conversations. The school Sokhem attended was dilapidated, similar to many rural schools at the time. "During that time," he recalled, "the room [was] very bad because the roof [was] leaking and

making noises." He remembered that in primary school the teachers were absent so often that they would only finish half of the textbook, which was—and is—considered the curriculum. The teachers had been absent, he now understood, because at the time, with government salaries so low, most had to farm to survive. When I spoke with Sokhem, he told me of teachers who had asked students to help them farm during harvesting time. Since this was a way to impress a teacher, Sokhem often volunteered. He also remembered having to pay bribes and fees of all sorts simply to complete his education. In fact, Sokhem told me that he now believes the reason he did not pass the Grade 9 and Grade 12 national examinations on his first attempt was because he did not pay bribes to the examination proctors, who did not report cheating students who paid the bribes. During his second attempt on the examinations, he paid the proctors and passed.

When I asked Sokhem to reflect on how his childhood influenced his motivation to start his own educational enterprise, he said that his goal for Wish For Cambodia was to "change every activity of my old teachers." He remembered how teachers would teach "for one hour" and then let students play, sending them home at 11 o'clock. Some teachers would return home during the lunch break and drink rice wine, a common, cheap alcoholic beverage in rural parts of Cambodia. The drunken teachers would return to school to teach the afternoon shift and "make violence" with the students, "always angry with the children." Violence, unfortunately, was not exclusive to teachers who had had a liquid lunch; other teachers would make students hit their heads on the classroom door when an incorrect answer was given. In general, he believed teachers did not "care about the students even though they [got a] salary from the government." These were formative moments in Sokhem's image of teachers. "Because I see…the bad activities of the teachers," he recalled, "I [didn't] want to be a teacher [when I grew up]."

As life would have it, however, Sokhem did end up becoming a teacher. For him, the school he started and the teachers he hired were going to be different from the government school he remembered. The school would have "one mission [in regards to] education in the community….to help the poor people in the community," something the government had failed to do in his opinion. He instituted pedagogical practices that focused on student comprehension and teacher quality instead of the need to finish a textbook in a certain amount of time. Moreover, earning money was not the main goal for his venture or his teachers. He wanted to create a school that

was different from the education system in which he had grown up. Nevertheless, he still needed to fund the venture, which is the topic I turn to in the next section.

6.3 Volunteer-tourism and the business of NGO schools

Although the purpose of Wish For Cambodia is based on a moral issue that emerged from Sokhem's personal history in education, practical issues that Sokhem manages require him to make comprises. The biggest issue facing Sokhem is funding. Sokhem has experimented with different ways to fund his school, from fees to donations to profit generating activities. When he originally started the school with a group of friends after graduating from university, he charged fees. This is the common form of household financing whereby the user of the service pays a fee directly to the school. In these cases, the financing for the NGO school came from members of the local community. When this venture failed because too few students attended to make the business sustainable, he started a school on his own, which turned into Wish For Cambodia. He decided to make the school fee-free in 2011 after speaking with an international donor who convinced him to rely on foreign donations. (Giving up fees was a pre-condition for this donor to begin funding Wish For Cambodia.) This change in business model altered which households financed education in his NGO school from local residents in Preah Go to international donors. No longer did users of Sokhem's educational service pay the fee but rather the fee was displaced to foreign households who felt compelled to donate money to support the school. In this way, the financing of the school was not located in the same place; school financing was globalized. Sokhem is currently experimenting with selling bracelets made by students as a way to generate income, which is a movement away from household financing all together and instead entails a for-profit business model. In the last financing model, Sokhem would sell bracelets for money, which would then be used to finance Wish For Cambodia. No longer would foreign households give money for the education of Preah Go residents but rather would give money in exchange for a bracelet.

With each funding attempt, Sokhem has had to make comprises with his pedagogical goals. Charging fees limits access; making bracelets takes learning time away from students; and relying on volunteers alters his preferred pedagogical

practices as outlined in the previous section. This last compromise will be the focus of this section, as volunteers are Sokhem's main source of funding.

Sokhem relies on funding that comes in part from a growing trend in international development called "volunteer tourism" (Sin, 2010; Wearing, 2001). This is the practice where tourists not only sightsee while traveling abroad, but also spend time volunteering.[24] In many cases, tourists-cum-volunteers spend large amounts of money to have experiences such as building water wells or teaching English classes. The rise of volunteer tourism has altered the ways in which households finance education. The households that are paying for the operations of Wish For Cambodia have moved geographically despite the school's permanent location in Preah Go.

Sokhem finds volunteers through volunteer tourist companies that locate potential volunteers worldwide and then sends profiles to Sokhem for him to select. Volunteers located this way pay the company for the experience. None of the money is passed on to Wish For Cambodia. He also partners with universities from abroad who send student volunteers to Cambodia on a yearly basis. Each university has its own system to fund these trips (sometimes students pay; other times they fundraise for their trips), but none of the money is given directly to Wish For Cambodia. Instead of charging a volunteer fee, Sokhem tries to convince volunteers of the financial hardship facing Wish For Cambodia once they are in the school. Of the hundreds of volunteers that have worked inside Wish For Cambodia since 2011, Sokhem has been able to establish a network of about 30 international donors. Most, to Sokhem's disappointment, are not regular donors, placing the financial health of the school in a yearly cycle of doubt. Nevertheless, these donors — and the companies or universities that sourced them — hold enormous power inside Wish For Cambodia, as evidenced by the paintings on the walls. Without them the school could not function.

Often times, and especially during the holiday season in December and January, foreign volunteers teach classes in place of the Khmer teachers. The Khmer teachers sit in the classes and act as translators for the volunteers. This is the locus of the compromise Sokhem must make: partly giving up on his goal of quality education

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[24] This being the case, I prefer to call the practice "tourist volunteers," privileging the intent to sightsee rather than the intent to help. I will nevertheless use the phrase "volunteer-tourists" since it is commonly used in the research literature.

in order to have potential donations from volunteers that are vital to the school's functioning.

Foreign volunteers teach differently than the pedagogies employed by the Khmer teachers. Although the classes follow a textbook, foreign teachers use a variety of pedagogies, mainly because they have different backgrounds and experiences in teaching. Often, they do not follow the textbook, and impart their own lessons using what they think is an appropriate pedagogy.

During my visits to the school, I encountered numerous volunteers. Some were spending a month or two at the school, others just a day. One volunteer from Japan, for instance, spent a day teaching students the Japanese language. She taught random words for which she knew the English translation. She wrote various Japanese words on the white board next to the English translation. Students would repeat the words after her. For some words, she drew pictures on the whiteboard. I saw her do this for the word "apple" (image 6.4). The students sat at their desks and simply repeated the Japanese words the teacher spoke. Since no Wish For Cambodia teacher spoke Japanese, there was little communication between volunteer and students, save for the laughter.
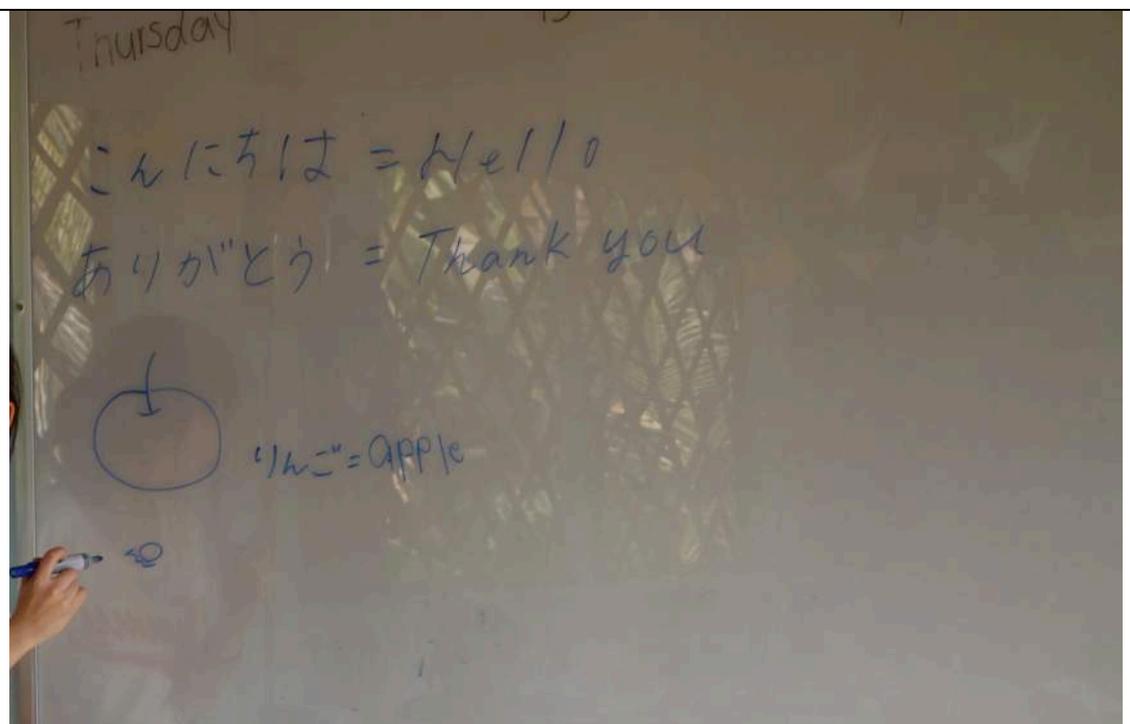
Image 6.4 A lesson in Japanese

When I asked Sokhem about this experience, he justified the classes by connecting Japanese language skills to the tourist-based economy: "Japanese is also a very popular language and many tourists come to Siem Reap, so maybe some of the students they really want to know how to speak Japanese." In my opinion, given the limited exposure to Japanese (one day a week, but often less) and Sokhem's insistence of the value of *English* skills in other conversations, including Japanese language classes seemed to be designed to attract donors rather than for its potential benefit to students.

Another volunteer I met was spending two months teaching English to kindergarten students. He was from France. He was given the youngest grade because his English language skills were not adequate to teach higher levels. Sokhem told me,

> His English is not very good so that cause if I put him in another high level, so maybe it's very hard for him to teach. So that cause he just coming to teach only kindergarten because he's applying for volunteering with teaching English and caring so that cause the most important thing, he's coming to teach and caring the children. And sometimes, if the volunteering coming to teach for a short time, [it's a] very big problem."

During my observations of this teacher, I found that the teacher gave mostly individual attention to the students. Since he could not speak any Khmer beyond "hello" and "thank you," he was unable to control the class, as had the Khmer teachers. (For reasons unknown, I never witnessed a Khmer teaching assistant in his classes.) As the teacher went from one student to the next, children had ample time to play with one another at their seats. The classroom was, in my opinion, disorderly and generally wild. The volunteer was simply unable to manage a whole class without effective verbal communication. The individual attention seemed to be engaging for the students, but that was a fleeting experience compared to the time available to play.

Sokhem sees the value of the volunteers in two ways. The first value is educational: by having volunteer teachers, students are able to practice English with native (or at least fluent) speakers. Sokhem explained this to me one day while talking about volunteers generally.

Extract 6.3 "…practice it with the foreigners."
William: Why is it OK for foreign teachers to come and teach Cambodian children in your school?

Sokhem: You know this one is the main reason in here, we are focusing in English. So the most important thing like Khmer teachers sometimes it's very hard to let the children to speak in English in the class and sometimes when a foreign teacher comes to teach, it's the best way for the children to practice their English. Because if the foreigners didn't come here, maybe even though they just study English but maybe they know many, many words but they don't know how to speak. If the foreigner comes to study to teach them, the special thing they can practice English in the class and listening with foreigners are speaking in their class. And during they have a break, so the best thing the students and teachers can practice it with the foreigners.

During my time at Wish For Cambodia, however, the majority of volunteers I met spoke English as a second language, just like the local Khmer teachers employed by the school. Therefore, the educational value of the volunteers is likely not as great as Sokhem suggested. (I should note for full disclosure that I did not witness volunteers teaching classes of higher-level English, which take place in the evenings. Such classes, if they had volunteers, could have provided students with time to converse with volunteer teachers who spoke English better than their Khmer counterparts. Such cases would achieve the value Sokhem explained to me.)

The second value provided by the volunteers is the possibility of donations. During a volunteer's time at the school, Sokhem hopes to impress upon him or her the school's desperate need for funding. He does this explicitly by posting a "wish list" of needed items outside his office door (image 6.5). He also solicits donations on Facebook, posting pictures of students who need bicycles or school materials. In return for these outward requests for money, volunteers are allowed to teach the children for however long they would like. When the volunteer returns home, it is his or her choice as to whether or not to provide donations to Wish For Cambodia. Sokhem estimates that one out of ten volunteers eventually send money to the school.

help, You could choose which one. All your donation are very useful for our children and the school. By helping our children you are helping their community and developing with the education.

No	the things	Costs	others
01	writing books	2.50/20 cents	
02	Red or blue pens	$12 /a box	
03	Pencils	$11 / a box	'
04	colors pencil	$3.50/ 12	
05	text books Let's go and New headway	50c each $2 .00 each	
06	color paper	$5/package	
07	The party for the International New Year	$200 ✓	

	for food and drink		
08	Teachers' salary/month	$380	
09	Build the library just left the wall and roof	$1800	
10	Markers Ink of Marker	$11 /a box $11 X 2 boxes	
11	Renting land for the school	$60 Per month	
12	A sack of rice to support the kitchen	$30	
13	The seeds for the vegetable garden	$100	
14	two foots balls	$5x2	
15	the children 'toys	$5x4	
16	Three bikes for the morning students and afternoon	$40 X 3	
17	The reading books for the library		
18	buying the land at new school	$10000	
19			

Image 6.5 Donation wish list

Sokhem acknowledged that volunteers pose certain problems in pursuit of quality education, as he perceives it. After Sokhem told me that "And sometimes, if the volunteer coming to teach for a short time, [it's a] very big problem," I asked him why this was the case:

Extract 6.4: "…if we didn't have volunteering…"	
Sokhem:	Because sometimes the students maybe very worried because sometimes they just seeing very lose teachers everyday so that cause this one is a big problem.[25]
William:	Why is that a problem?
Sokhem:	Because the most important thing like at the first time the volunteer when they come, sometimes they don't want to continue about their lessons because just talking and asking [with students] about their background and playing games and after that tomorrow comes, they [the volunteer] leave and another volunteer comes tomorrow, [and the students] asking the same.
William:	So, no real learning takes place?
Sokhem:	So that cause the most thing we just really need about the long volunteering comes but we are facing about if we didn't have volunteering like maybe we didn't have any sponsors. So but even though like volunteers coming for short or long, we are welcome because sometimes, they can come for a short time but they give donations for the school.

At this point it is worth noting that Sokhem differentiates between long and short-term volunteers. Long-term volunteers are preferred because the disruption of a new face in the classroom is minimized. In this way, educational value can be maximized. The conversation continued by looking at the specific problem of short-term volunteers.

Extract 6.5 "…if we didn't have any profit, we cannot stand so long…"	
William:	Do you think that the benefit that those volunteers could give your organization in the future outweighs the

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[25] In this sentence, Sokhem means that short-term volunteers come and go frequently.

	problem of them coming and going quickly?
Sokhem:	Yes, sometimes the short term volunteer they can give the benefit for the organization in the future.
William:	And that benefit to your organization is more valuable than the problem of short term volunteering?
Sokhem:	Actually also, look like sometimes if we didn't have any profit, we cannot stand so long time. No school, no organization, no students coming here. So something, the short volunteering is also important.

Sokhem's compromise is thus between potential donations from short term volunteers and classroom learning disruptions caused by their transient nature. Without short-term volunteers, which are the majority of his volunteers, there would be "no school, no organization, no students." In other words, volunteers are vital to the survival of Wish For Cambodia, and Sokhem will compromise educational goals in order to keep his venture afloat.

6.4 Conclusion

Sokhem and his school, Wish For Cambodia, illustrate part of the history and evolution of household financing of education, the trials and tribulations of attending mainstream public school during the 1990s, and the struggle between pedagogical goals and financial realities inside NGO schools. These insights add complexity to how and therefore why privatization emerged in education. In particular, Sokhem's portrait reveals the political angle of privatization where power relations are reconfigured and spread out over geography.

The privatization of education, through Sokhem's portrait, is not an external force altering the educational landscape without the consent of agents. Rather, Sokhem's history suggests he was deeply aware of the troubles facing public education. In Archer's (2010b, p. 275) terms, Sokhem was aware of the "structural conditioning" within the education system and actively decided to alter social structures through his "social interaction." Sokhem reflected on his history and decided to act by opening a school that taught valuable (in his perspective) skills for the economy. When issues of funding arose, Sokhem adapted to the situation, trying to find suitable and sustainable ways to fund his enterprise. He effectively enacted

multiple sequences of "morphogenesis," alerting the social structure in his school. Choosing to work with foreign volunteers might be perpetuating the volunteer tourist industry on one level, but the decision was also a departure from household financing of education as commonly understood. In terms of social relations, by embracing the funding model of volunteer tourism, Sokhem placed himself in a position where foreigners monopolized power inside the school. He was beholden to foreign volunteers who might become needed donors, allowing donor meetings to interrupt his classes and foreign volunteers to teach as they pleased.

Although it could be argued that Sokhem is simply bound by the discourse (and ideology) of decentralization (his school after all meets the goals of human capital development outlined by the government), a more nuanced view sees Sokhem and Wish For Cambodia as one part of the changing reality of education. Sokhem's moral imperative to provide educational experiences to children that he thought had been lacking in his childhood converged and furthered the household financing of education by opening additional spaces of education where children could learn. The effect of Sokhem's decision—not its original intention—was his school's contribution to the privatization of education, mainly in the form of new and different practices of learning and social relations between non-mainstream teachers and students.

In addition, Sokhem's portrait offers an insight into the contemporary phase of household financing of education. NGO schools funded by international donors have expanded the definition of "household" from a locally bounded group of residents near a public school, as originally conceived, to global households of international donors. Such a reality has altered the vested interests and situational logics in education. New relations of power have been constructed, this time existing across local and national boundaries. International donors have far more say in the operations of Wish For Cambodia than either the residents of Preah Go or MoEYS. As an educational entrepreneur operating an NGO school, Sokhem is predisposed to a general course of action that constantly requires him to seek out new sources of income. As such, diversifying his business is part of his future plan: He hopes to open up a branch school in his hometown of Takeo, a province in the southwest of Cambodia, and diversify services to include a health clinic. On our last day together, Sokhem was hopeful of his future prospects: "I have connections with many nurses and doctors in other countries…[and] they really want to send their volunteers."

Sokhem's school adds additional layers of complexity to the practices of privatization on top of Chenda's private tutoring courses taught inside public school. This complexity is found, in particular, in the new, problematic power dynamics that reinforce the influence people from so-called "developed" countries have in places such as Preah Go, a so-called "developing" country. More generally, Chenda and Sokhem's portraits show thus far that children in Preah Go have the ability to attend public mainstream schooling, private tutoring classes, and extra fee-free classes at NGO schools such as Wish For Cambodia. The additional spaces of education that have emerged since the 1990s have not happened in a vacuum. Other social spaces have also experienced forms of privatization similar to the education system. In the next chapter, I turn to the social space of pagodas, the center of religious life and formally the main site of education in Cambodia. An in-depth look at the changing role the pagoda has played in society contextualizes the recent developments of educational privatization described in Chenda and Sokhem's portrait. The next portrait looks at a member of the influential pagoda committee.

Chapter 7

The changing role of pagodas in social life

7.1 Introduction

Amongst hundreds of paintings covering the walls and ceiling of Wat Ang Thlok, one of two temples in Preah Go, one depicts the story of a *Bodhisattva*, or enlightened being, named Preah Mohosot and his knowledgeable wife, Neang Amra (image 7.1). In the painting, the couple walks along a dirt path. Lotus flowers peer out from a pond to their left and a forest lines the path to their right. Behind them, set against a clear blue sky, sit rice fields spotted with coconut trees and two thatched homes on stilts. Although it is a quintessential scene of everyday life in Cambodia, Mohosot and Amra represent how knowledge and wisdom can protect the Kingdom of Cambodia from internal and external threats.[26]

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[26] The legend of Preah Mohosot and Neang Amra comes from the Buddhist *Cheadaks*, which are a series of folk stories that describe the lives of *Bodhisattvas*. Born into a wealthy family carrying a magic medicine that would cure his father's headache, Mohosot's name derives from two words: *Moha*, meaning "big" or "fantastic," and *Orsoth*, meaning "medicine." In some translations (e.g., Samdech Chuon Nath's dictionary), Mohosot is referred to as Mohosotbandit. The suffix *bandit* means "doctor," referring to one who is wise and knowledgeable or has received an education as a monk. Even though Mohosot wanted to live an ordinary life of farming, he embodied the life of the Buddha. He was known for encouraging different classes in society to live in harmony. He led his noble class on a path of non-discrimination, social justice, and equality with those in lower classes, and he forgave those who wronged. According to the story, the King of Cambodia wanted to bestow on Mohosot the title of "Scholar of the Kingdom" after learning of his wisdom, but the Buddhist laymen advising the King disagreed. The four laymen demanded Mohosot's intellect be tested. They made Mohost answer nine riddles, each of which he solved successfully. Yet, the laymen still denied Mohosot's wisdom. The laymen ejected Mohosot from the Royal Palace because they wanted to sleep with Neang Amra. (Luckily, Amra discovered the laymen's plot and had the King arrest them.) Dejected, Mohosot returned to a simple life of farming and education. When a riddle was put to the King that, if solved incorrectly, would bring chaos throughout the kingdom, Mohosot's help was sought. Returning to the Royal Palace, Mohosot solved the riddle, saving the Kingdom and rejoining his wife. The King immediately made Mohosot the Scholar of the Kingdom, and ordered the execution of the four laymen who had wronged Mohosot and Amra. Mohosot pleaded with the King to forgive the four laymen and brought protection over the Kingdom with his wisdom. Intellect, wisdom, and knowledge, the lesson goes, serve not only the individual but also the nation.

Khemera Sambath, the head of the pagoda committee (*kanakammekar wat*) in Preah Go, sold the wall space for a painting to a resident for US$60. In return, the resident was able to select the story of Preah Mohosot and Neang Amra to be depicted on a wall in the newly built pagoda building. The action of raising funds by selling wall space to residents is a form of household financing inside the social institution of the pagoda, which is similar to the emergence of privatization in education through private tutoring classes taught by teachers such as Chenda and NGO schools managed by entrepreneurs such as Sokhem. Moreover, the selection of this particular story, which connects religion, education, and citizenship, highlights the importance of the pagoda as a historical site of education. It is therefore a valuable site outside the system of education to explore the ways in which privatization has emerged across social life generally.

Image 7.1 Painting of Preah Mohosot and Neang Amra in Wat Ang Thlok

Paintings in pagodas merge Buddhist doctrine with Cambodian folklore. In her book on *Gatiloke*, a collection of stories similar to the *Cheadak* where the story of Preah Mohosot and Neang Amra is found, Muriel Paskin Carrison wrote, "because the heart and mind of Buddhism rested with common folk and their daily lives, the monks chose the folk stories about ordinary daily events to teach the people the 'right way'

to live" (Carrison, 1987, p. 14). Didactic images such as Preah Mohosot and Neang Amra illustrate certain Buddhist principles through Cambodian stories, legends, or anecdotes. In this way, such paintings bring religious ideas to the masses through mediums other than sermons. The paintings were a form of education to the masses and continue to have relevance in contemporary times. Indeed, when a young person receives a blessing from an elder it is not uncommon to hear: "*Som oy mean damres doch neang Amra, Mean pragna doch Preah Mohosot*" ([I] wish [you] the knowledge like Ms. Amra's and the intellect like Preah Mohosot's).

The selling of paintings or pillars raises funds for pagoda construction and religious ceremonies held throughout the year. It is a type of household financing similar to the financing of mainstream schooling (e.g., private tutoring contributes to Chenda's government salary) or NGO schools (e.g., individuals worldwide fund the activities of Wish For Cambodia). Residents of Preah Go are encouraged to support the pagoda financially and are told such acts are considered good deeds, which carries a religious connotation of reverence. Indeed, when someone goes to the pagoda it is common for him or her to give an offering of a few sticks of incense, a couple of small yellow candles, and a little money. In return, a monk offers a blessing.

The Preah Go pagoda committee is tasked with managing the community's two pagodas. Pagoda committees are comprised of elected members that manage the finances and activities in a pagoda. There are no official rules for a committee's operation or structure from the Ministry of Cults and Religion, the national body overseeing religion in the Kingdom. A 2012 report on Buddhism and development in Cambodia by the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) stated, "Each pagoda runs on voluntary contributions from community members, primarily donated during festivals and merit-making ceremonies in the village. Some pagodas may also anticipate larger contributions by *Oknhas* (a title bestowed on some wealthy and influential Cambodians) and members of the international Khmer Diaspora; however, as financial record keeping is inconsistent these funding sources are not often well documented" (p. 28). Similar to education, the place of financing of pagodas relies on individuals who are placed both inside and outside Preah Go.

In Preah Go, five committee members and two *Achar* (Buddhist priests) are in charge of managing the pagoda's finances, raising money, and developing the community. Sambath has been elected five times to the committee and acted as its head when I interviewed him in 2013. "In my understanding," Sambath explained to

me while sitting at his feet in a sign of respect, "the past worked differently from now. It is very clear. Like, this [one square] painting costs US$60, so we write US$60, or however many squares [the painting takes up]. One pillar cost US$100 and then we write the family's name [on it]. The community trusts us and then they want to contribute." The selling of paintings and pillars to raise money for the pagoda was a practice Sambath said did not exist when he was a child in the 1960s. It was a practice that emerged when pagodas reopened after the Khmer Rouge period.

In a sign of transparency, the pagoda committee, which is in charge of pricing and selling the various items, paints the name of the benefactor either on the purchased item or a wall for the names of individuals who gave unrestricted donations (image 7.2). This transparency builds trust in the community by clearly displaying individual donations and acts as a physical record of past donations. It shows exactly what the donation purchased or how much was given. This practice is also common for development projects, exemplified on the walls of Wish For Cambodia's school, where the name of a donor is emblazoned on the physical material purchased with the donation. Sambath explained it this way: "After they [the pagoda committee] note[s] the contribution in the book, they also paint it on the wall to make sure it will not be lost." Adding, "People believe us and give money because they trust us to develop everything."
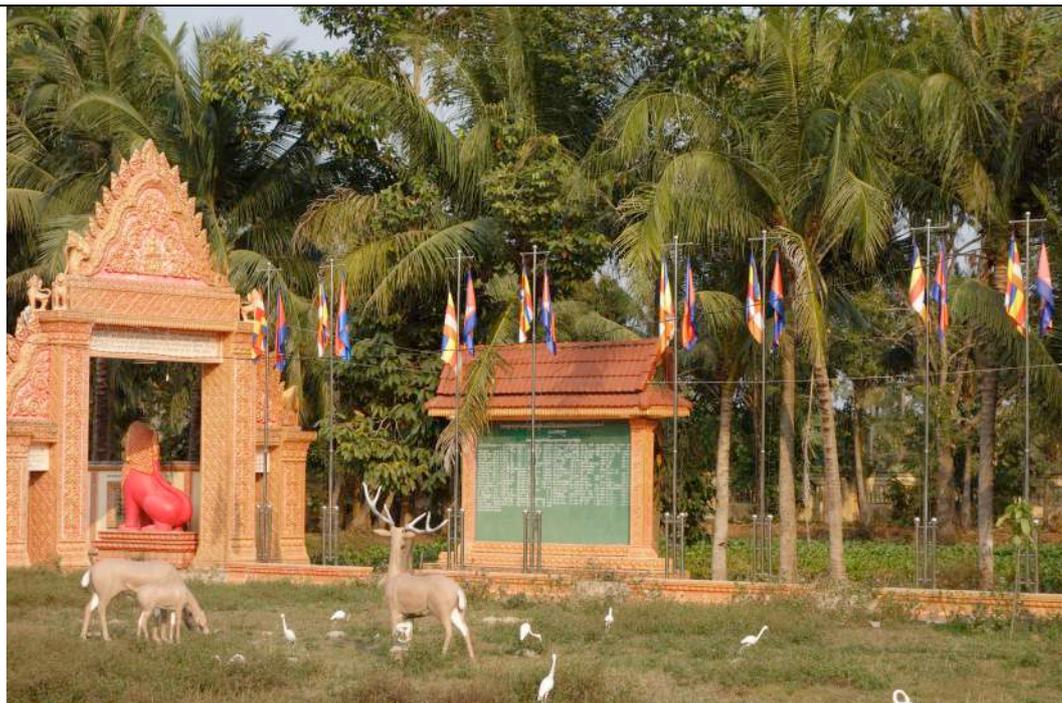
Image 7.2 Entrance to Wat Ang Thlok (left) with list of benefactors (center)

In contrast to funding the construction of pagodas through household financing, ancient temples, such as Angkor Wat for which Cambodia is famous, do not display the names of benefactors. Although the building of these temples was completed through the labor of ordinary people who believed such good deeds would bring a better life once reborn, their names appeared nowhere on the walls. "Like Angkor Wat," Sambath explained to me, "it didn't identify who built it, but just wrote about the family or what king or about the generation which king built it, like Jayavarman 7." (It was, in fact, during the reign of King Suryavarman II when Angkor Wat was built.) It was the king's name that was associated with these temples, not the people.

Times have certainly changed since Jayavarman 7 ruled Cambodia in the 11th and 12th centuries. The commodification of religious iconography is a relatively recent phenomenon, emerging in the decades since the destruction of many social institutions (e.g., the education, monetary, and religious systems) by the hands of the Khmer Rouge. Perhaps started as a way to rebuild the many pagodas that were destroyed between 1975 and 1979, the household financing of pagodas has become an accepted feature of contemporary religious life similar to participation in the system of education. Between the 1960s and the 2010s, the role pagodas played in social life has changed, combined with historical and cultural conceptions, and morphed into new spaces of religious meaning making.

Religious commodification is intertwined with the situated practices of privatization in education. For instance, the pagoda committee often raises money from household donations to support school development, thus occupying a central position of power within the community. This position is legitimate in many ways because the pagoda was the historical site of education for boys, and stories such as Preah Mohosot and Neang Amra remind people of the connection between being a good Buddhist and education. Thus, the selling of paintings or pillars not only bring good merit to those who purchased them but also enable the pagoda committee to develop "everything" to use Sambath's words, including government schools.

In this chapter, the life and history of Sambath demonstrate the changing value of the pagoda from before the Khmer Rouge to the present. The pagoda is connected to the education system both in its historic context and in its present form. The next section details Sambath's history of generational wealth and attempts at surviving the drastically changing socio-political contexts of Cambodia since the 1940s. The

following section juxtaposes Sambath's history with the changes in the role of pagodas in social life where some aspects have survived over time while new roles have been constructed as a source of religious survival. The chapter ends by situating Sambath's history and the changing roles of pagodas in the context of social life that is marked by privatization.

7.2 Generational wealth and adapting to survive

When Sambath was born in 1945, the province of Siem Reap was technically part of Thailand, having been ceded after the Franco-Thai War of 1940-41 (Fry, Nieminen & Smith, 2013, p. 37). At that time, Cambodia was "80 percent Khmer, 80 percent Buddhist, and 80 percent rice-growing peasants" (Kiernan, 2002, p. 483), but a mélange of French colonialists, Japanese imperialists, and Thai soldiers competed for power with the mercurial King Sihanouk, who was placed on the throne by the French in 1941 at 18 years of age in hopes he would be a puppet for French interests (Chandler, 2008). Sihanouk's ability to play one party off another ensured he would not. In the aftermath of World War II, Siem Reap was re-attached to Cambodia as part of French Indochina until 1953 when King Sihanouk negotiated independence from the French.

Sambath was too young to remember the tumultuous years between 1945 and 1953, but by the mid 1950s, he was attending mainstream, secular school, which had first been implemented by the French and further developed by Sihanouk through the 1960s as a way to garner popular support (Ayers, 2000). Few children in Preah Go went to mainstream primary school at this time even though a small school was established in the village. Even fewer children attended secondary school because it was located in Siem Reap town, about 15 kilometers away. In order to attend secondary school, a family had to provide a means of transportation, a place to stay in town, and enough labor to forego their child's work on the farm. In order to attend school, therefore, a child had to come from wealth. Otherwise, a child's responsibility was to the family farm and, in some cases, the local pagoda where religious education could be undertaken.

The mainstream school system at that time was based on the education system introduced by the French in the 1930s (Ayers, 2000). In reverse to the numerical grade system of today, students started primary school in Grade 12 and graduated

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from secondary school in Grade 1. They learned Khmer, mathematics, basic sciences, and the French language. "The school at that time was built from coconut or palm leaves and other trees," Sambath recalled. There were three classrooms in the primary school and, in Sambath's recollection, about 30 students in one class. Sambath insisted that teachers were paid well at the time, earning, he estimated, 4,000 Riel per month. To put this in context, Sambath told me that the commune chief made 600 Riel per month, one gram of gold cost 300 Riel, and a month's supply of rice cost 100 Riel. Notwithstanding the inaccuracies of these memories, Sambath's point was that teachers were paid well when he attended school.

Sambath loved studying and dreamed of graduating and becoming a teacher like his uncle who taught in secondary school. Students who graduated Grade 1, which was the end of secondary education, could automatically teach in any grade and were considered professors. Professors such as Sambath's uncle who taught in the last three grades of secondary school made 7,000 Riel per month. When I asked Sambath about students who dropped out (see extract 7.1), however, he explained why he himself could not finish school:

Extract 7.1 "But because my father had no choice, I stopped school."

William: At that time did many students drop out?

Sambath: Some students lacked money, like in this village, just only 4 to 10 families [sent their children to school]. Few students in this district [attended school]. For the medium income families, they were busy with farming. For me, I had my uncle who was a professor, and he tried to help me to not stop studying. But because my father had no choice, I stopped school.

Although he enjoyed school, Sambath was forced to drop out in Grade 4, which is similar to the end of lower secondary school (grade 9) today. Since his siblings began attending primary school in the Preah Go community, his parents, who had grown older, needed help on the family farm.

Sambath's father was an entrepreneur. He owned a large plot of land (20 meters by 600 meters) and farmed rice. After each harvest he sold the rice and then used the profit to commission a wood-worker in a village in the adjacent district to build him a boat. He did this each year for a decade. Eventually he had 10 boats that he rented out to other farmers who wanted to ship their product to markets further

away, primarily to the Tonle Sap Lake where thousands of people lived. "We earned only 20,000 or 40,000 Riel [each day]," Sambath explained of his childhood, "but that was a big amount of money at the time." Indeed it was an extraordinary amount of money considering professors earned 7,000 Riel each *month*!

Back on the farm, Sambath woke at 4:00 am to begin work each day. He recalled the lack of motorized equipment that farmers have today, and shook his head at the time and energy it took to plant and harvest rice. He was responsible for the entire farm while his father looked after the boat rental business. His mother took care of her younger children while they attended school nearby.

Sambath farmed rice for five years before entering the pagoda as a monk. He de-robed after a year in order to marry, and returned to work on his father's farm and boat rental business. He started a family of his own and eventually had six children.

During the fighting between Lon Nol and Pol Pot's troops in the 1970s (Kiernan, 2002), Sambath supported whoever was in charge at a particular time, which often changed in and around Preah Go since it was close to Siem Reap City, the provincial capital of Siem Reap where Lon Nol had support. Sambath was mercurial like King Sihanouk. When the Khmer Rouge finally forced Lon Nol's army out of Preah Go, Sambath was thankful the fighting had stopped. When the Khmer Rouge began rounding up people to identify educated men or supporters of Lon Nol, he lied: "I kept [my education] a secret. I told them I was a normal person, not a soldier." This saved his and his family's lives. As a supposedly uneducated man he was not a threat to the Khmer Rouge and could continue on with his life.

During the Khmer Rouge period, life became exceedingly difficult. Food was scarce, religion was prohibited, and education banned. As part of the communist block of countries, goods in Cambodia were exchanged with goods in China. There was no free market of goods and services. Residents in Preah Go were known to have historically weaved baskets, so the whole community was charged with making baskets to trade with China for other products. Sambath, having learned basket weaving from his mother as a child, took this on and starting designing baskets in different styles. This impressed his fellow residents, and the Khmer Rouge leaders made Sambath the leader of a group of families. He accepted the job, knowing it would be another way to keep his family safe. Forced to move to Siem Reap City and live in the school grounds where he had gone as a boy, he oversaw ten families whose daily activities centered on weaving baskets. The families made baskets day and

night, and the small children were taken to a collective group where other adults took care of them.

Although private property was prohibited and Sambath had no material wealth under the Khmer Rouge, he maintained a good social standing in Preah Go, which had been developed through his father's financial wealth and his time spent in the pagoda. As a group leader during the Khmer Rouge, Sambath actually increased his level of social and material capital in the post-Khmer Rouge period. After the fall of the Khmer Rouge, he was selected to be a group leader in the newly organized administrative units of the commune. Moreover, his large family (unlike most families, none of his children were killed during the Khmer Rouge likely because of his social position) secured a decent plot of land to begin farming again.[27] Although it was not as big as his father's land, Sambath's share of land allowed him to return to farming. According to Sambath, the size of his land was unlike "those who owned small farming land and couldn't harvest lots of rice, so they tended to find other jobs." The decent plot of land provided his family a level of food security, something rare at that time.

In the early 1980s, the fighting between the Khmer Rouge and Vietnamese forces continued in the north near the border of Thailand. The Phnom Penh government conscripted citizens who lived relatively close to the fighting, such as those in Preah Go, into a militia known as *Kor Pram* (or *Ke hoach 5* in Vietnamese).[28] Sambath was called up to join *Kor Pram*, but he did not want to because he understood the dangers. He realized that if he became a teacher, he would not have to enlist. As a respected member of the community, Sambath was easily accepted as a primary school teacher. Although he had no experience teaching, his past education, which few residents had received, made him an ideal candidate. He adapted quickly to his new role, which he would hold for the next 25 years.

Teaching in the 1980s was not easy. There was very little institutional support in terms of pedagogy training or classroom materials. For the first few years Sambath

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[27] Land was allocated by size of family. Larger families received larger plots of land.

[28] The *Kor Pram* was a plan devised by the People's Republic of Kampuchea, the Phnom Penh government that came to power after the fall of Democratic Kampuchea in 1979. The plan, aimed to resist Khmer Rouge forces along the Cambodian-Thai border. Residents in border villages, including Preah Go, were conscripted into the *Kor Pram*. The conscripted soldiers were tasked with clear-cutting forests riddled with landmines in order to expose resistance forces. Thousands of Cambodians died under the plan (Am, 2009).

was paid in rice by the local government because money was still being re-introduced into society after the Khmer Rouge destroyed the monetary system. By the late 1980s, he started receiving a small salary from teaching. To supplement his income, he purchased and then re-sold ice around the community in the morning. By the late 1990s, he remembered seeing teachers start conducting private tutoring as a way to supplement their salary during times of high inflation. "I never taught private tutoring," he explained to me. "Because I was busy with my [ice selling] business, I decided to do business, which was better [paid] than private tutoring for half a day [of work]." Later he said, "For one class [of private tutoring], we [teachers] earned only 2,000 Riel, so I was lazy to teach [tutoring classes]." Today his family not only owns multiple rice fields (although smaller than his father's in the 1960s). He also sells school supplies, gasoline, and other goods at the front of his house. His home's location near the secondary school makes it ideal for selling school supplies to students as they ride to and from school.

After 10 years of teaching, Sambath was elected to the pagoda committee. This role solidified his influence in the community, which began in the 1950s when he was one of the first children in Preah Go to attend school, by becoming a central figure in religious life. Re-elected five times, Sambath has served on the committee for 25 years. When I spoke to him, he wanted to resign from his post, but, he said, the community and other members of the committee would not allow it.

Sambath's actions in society are diverse, but his position compared to other community members is constructed around a power imbalance. Whenever someone wants to hold a religious ceremony in his or her home, Sambath organizes the event, as he is the entry point into religious life for most residents. When the pagoda needs to raise money for the construction of homes for monks, Sambath walks the streets asking community members to donate, reminding people of the merit they could earn through their contributions. When the school needs help building additional classrooms or leveling the land, Sambath writes contribution letters to Sieng Nam, the provincial senator who is considered an *Oknha*, placing him in conversation with some of the top leaders in Cambodia. When an international aid organization wants to give money to the community, they speak with Sambath about what they can donate. Sambath is a trusted and well-respected man in the community. He occupies a position of power, not only connecting people in the Preah Go community together but also people far beyond the borders of the Preah Go commune.

Sambath's power relation in the community is of a different type from the one Sokhem experienced. Whereas Sokhem lost power by relying on foreign donations to fund Wish For Cambodia, Sambath has expanded his power (in terms of respect and prestige) in the community through his many and diverse connections. These connections extend far beyond the Preah Go borders, and were epitomized by the many photos he hung on his walls of past foreigners who visited the community and used his help.

Sambath's relations of power also extend in time. Similar to his father, Sambath portrays an acute ability to adapt to changing circumstances, finding ways not only to survive but also to profit in difficult times. The wealth from his father lasted through the Khmer Rouge despite the destruction of private property. Although his material wealth is likely less than it was in the 1960s, his social wealth makes him one of the most important figures in the community. He has achieved this level of wealth by developing the two pagodas in the community, which have historic and religious connotations. By furthering the development of Buddhism in Preah Go, he furthered his position of power in the community. In the next section, I detail the different roles pagodas have played in social life, using Sambath's biography as an entry point. This overview gives context to the contemporary moment where household financing of pagodas represents the pervasiveness of privatization in society generally.

7.3 Different times, different values

Similar to Sambath, the pagoda itself has adapted and changed in order to survive the Khmer Rouge. It too has re-emerged as a central public space in the community, and has embraced aspects of privatization similar to the education system. The biography of Sambath suggests that the role of the pagoda in the Preah Go community has changed over time. In this section, the different roles are described using Sambath's life story. These roles are not necessarily sequential but rather overlapping and concurrent. Some roles have waned in importance while others have continued over time. New roles emerge but have different intensities at different periods. All of the roles, however, reflect changes to the larger socio-cultural and political–economic context of the time, and therefore provide valuable context to educational privatization.

7.3.1 Pagodas as rite of passage

In the past, pagodas acted as a rite of passage from youth to adulthood. "At that time," Sambath recalled of his youth, "men preferred to be monks because if they didn't, no one would marry them." It was the role of pagoda to bestow moral value on men who wanted to start a family of their own. Having to ask the father for his daughter's hand in marriage and provide a large dowry, Sambath needed to show that he was a good man, a man of high ethical and moral standards who would not hurt his future wife. Joining the monkhood to prove his moral worth was an easy decision for Sambath in the late 1960s, but one that most youth today never have to make.

Monks must follow 227 precepts outlined in the *Vinaya*, or Buddhist code of ethics. Lay devotees follow a subset of the 10 basic precepts.[29] Becoming a monk for one year would make a man a lay devotee who likely follows part of the *Vinaya*. This was enough to pass into adulthood and be accepted in society as a "good man." Today, however, it is not as common to find men who join the monkhood to transition from youth to adulthood. Other social institutions are used for this.

Sambath's life story exemplifies the role of the pagoda as social rite of passage that cuts across class lines. Even though Sambath's family had enough monetary capital to pay a marriage dowry, he still was required to join the monkhood. The monkhood in this respect is a form of non-monetary capital that society valued. On top of the social role as a site where boys achieved manhood, the pagoda also played a central role in bringing the community together.

7.3.2 Pagodas as source of community

Pagodas have been a historic space where community members gathered. From the Angkorian period where community members willingly labored to build massive temple complexes to the contemporary willingness to donate money, food, and other items throughout the year indicates that pagodas have played a central role in the lives

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[29] The 10 basic precepts are to: Refrain from causing harm or taking life; refrain from taking that which is not given (stealing); refrain from un-chastity (sensuality, sexuality, lust); refrain from wrong speech (lying, deceiving or using hurtful words); refrain from taking intoxicants; refrain from taking food at inappropriate times (after noon); refrain from singing, dancing, playing music or viewing entertainment programs; refrain from wearing perfume, cosmetics and other decorative accessories; refrain from sitting on high, soft or otherwise luxurious beds and chairs; and refrain from accepting money (WFDD, 2012, p. 35).

of many Cambodians. Although many pagodas were destroyed during the Khmer Rouge period, their resurgence in the decades since 1980 show the lasting importance of pagodas as a social safety net where community members not only come together to practice Buddhism specifically but also socialize generally.

The role of the pagoda in this sense is as an institution that bestows merit for good deeds in society. The pagoda encourages and celebrates individuals in society to work together and participate in society in ways that benefit each other. In this way, the many celebrations and ceremonies held inside pagodas act as community events that are more than religious ceremonies and actually ways of constructing collective well-being. Indeed, religious celebrations go beyond monk prayers, often including cotton candy machines that welcome guests of all ages and organized games played by children.

Sambath understands this role of the pagoda and has combined his social role as pagoda committee member with his entrepreneurial skills. The store at the front of his home not only sells school materials to students; it also sells all of the supplies needed to host a religious ceremony. In this way, when community members ask Sambath to organize a religious ceremony, he can offer to sell them all of the supplies, such as candles, soda, and fruit, needed to perform different ceremonies.

7.3.3 Pagodas as threat

Pol Pot and his followers perceived pagodas as threats during the Khmer Rouge period. Although many Cambodians privately practiced Buddhism, official state policy of Democratic Kampuchea was the defrocking of Buddhist monks and destruction and dismantling of pagodas and religion in general. Religion was not compatible with communism and the Khmer Rouge used extreme tactics to forcibly disassociate religion from people's lives. For instance, a pagoda siting atop a small mountain overlooking Preah Go was the site where bodies were burned alive. These people broke the many rules of the Khmer Rouge, one of which banned religion. The message was clear: pagodas were sites of death and should not be looked upon favorably. Although Sambath lived in Siem Reap City at the time, he heard stories from residents who lived in Preah Go about the smell of burning flesh permeating the air. Sambath lied about his past association with the pagoda in order to survive the Khmer Rouge period.

Religion recuperated after the Khmer Rouge. Despite brutal efforts to end organized Buddhism in the country, monks reappeared after 1979 and community members began supporting pagodas once again. It is testament to the lasting importance of religion in people's lives. Viewing pagodas as a threat was a short-lived experiment but had vicious consequences.

7.3.4 Pagodas as development institutions

Beyond raising money or requesting volunteer labor for religious purposes, pagodas have recently emerged as a development institution in their own right. Led by the pagoda committee, money is raised and used for a host of development efforts around the community. The respect and authority bestowed on the Pagoda creates a level of trust and legitimacy in the pagoda committee's efforts to rebuild roads or raise funds for the school. "Lots of people know me," Sambath said with pride. "I helped raise money from the community to rebuild this road too. People helped to rebuild this road as much as they could. I asked them to help as much as they could. They gave like 5,000 Riel, 1,000 Riel, or 2,000 Riel, 10,000 Riel, to 20,000 Riel, and some gave 50,000 Riel."

When compared to development projects funded by the World Bank such as a major road construction project in Preah Go I witnessed while collecting data, the pagoda development projects are miniscule, fixing a few potholes and purchasing a few trucks of soil to level the school's grounds, which is a common practice to reduce flooding and prepare for classroom construction. However, the level of community participation in these events surpasses all other projects by outside groups. As Sambath's quote above makes clear, people can donate however much they can afford. The trust in the pagoda committee encourages people to donate, creating a collective effort at community development. In this way, the pagoda development can be understood as "grassroots" while other development projects, such as those planned at the national level, rarely consult with local residents. Indeed, most residents with whom I spoke thought Prime Minister Hun Sen, not the World Bank, was responsible for the road project as part of political largesse bestowed on the community for voting for the ruling party. Regardless of the details of the World Bank's loan to the Cambodian government for road construction, the perception by local residents in Preah Go was that the Prime Minister was rewarding with new roads the community of Preah Go for voting a particular way.

The drawback to pagoda development is the micro-localization of development. National development is impossible as each local community is responsible for its own actions. Communities will develop to different levels based on the political economy of their environment. Villages such as Preah Go that are close to large cities provide jobs and markets for goods, and therefore provide excess wealth that can be redistributed to the pagoda for community development. But some rural and remote villages that have small economies are less able to develop their communities through the pagoda committee. In this way, the pagoda as a development institution embodies elements of decentralization and privatization, whereby the practice of development is individualized and the use of commodification (e.g., selling paintings of Preah Mohosot and Neang Amra) is prevalent.

7.3.5 Pagodas as sites of education

Pagodas have historically been the main sites for education in villages, especially before mass schooling proliferated in the 1950s. "Being a monk," Sambath said of his childhood in the 1950s and 1960s, "people considered you were educated. It was different from now." The difference first emerged, as I mentioned earlier, when the French introduced secular, mainstream schooling in the 1930s and became widespread after independence in 1953. The WFDD (2012) reported, "As secular education became established as the primary avenue for social advancement, the importance of the pagoda school gradually diminished" (p. 34). Sambath therefore grew up in a time when government schooling usurped the power of the pagoda to educate youth. The transition occurred slowly.

Initially, where a child was educated was based on location and wealth. Sambath explained, "For us, we went to public school because it was close [to our home] but other villagers who lived near a pagoda studied there." Attending public school was not only based on proximity, however: "Those who could go to [mainstream, secular] school were rich." As aforementioned, families incurred costs from mainstream school such as transportation, housing, and the loss of help on the farm, which is similar today but with additional fees like private tutoring. Many families could not afford these costs, so either sent their children to a pagoda in another village or did not send their children to school at all.

As a result of these dynamics, Sambath remembered that poor children studied in pagodas: "People in my family went to study at [mainstream] school but the other

families who were poor went to study at pagodas." This dynamic Sambath remembered from his childhood is still visible today, but to a lesser degree because most villages have mainstream primary schools. In Extract 7.2, Sambath reflected on children who are studying to become monks today:

Extract 7.2 "Only weak students want to become monks."

William: Today, do you think children or students want to become monks?

Sambath: Now? Never. Only weak students want to become monks. In the past, we were happy to become monks to study and get good merit as well. We learned *Dharma*[30] like translating English to Khmer, we learned good from bad.

William: Do children today go to pagoda less often than in the past?

Sambath: Children nowadays go to pagoda on Sunday because they are free from studying or working. But not many want to become monks.

The reduced attendance of children in pagodas is caused by myriad factors, including the temporary destruction of religion during the Khmer Rouge period, the modernization of society in general, and the proliferation of mainstream school. Nevertheless, the insight Sambath offered on pagoda education for poor children suggest that a recent role of pagodas (at least since the 1960s) is for education that cannot be purchased. In other words, mainstream public school requires money to pay for various fees while the pagoda school is not only free to attend but also receives community support in the form of food and financial donations. This insight says a lot about the changing role of education in society and the role that the pagoda has had to take on because of external forces from the larger social context. In the conclusion, this insight is further explored by connecting the privatization of education with the commodification of religion outlined in the beginning of this chapter.

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[30] *Dharma* is the teachings of Buddha or Buddhist law.

7.4 Conclusion

Sambath's biography revealed a complex layering of historical movements from colonialism, war, and international development, and showed some of the different roles pagodas have played in social life. The history of the pagoda in society mirrors the life of Sambath — beginning with immense wealth, surviving the destruction of private property, and finally rebuilding social standing in ways unfamiliar with the past. The present moment of selling paintings such as Preah Mohosot and Neang Amra can be explained and understood through this history. It arose out of a necessity during the post-Khmer Rouge period when pagoda life had to be re-built. Household financing of the pagoda, similar to the social institution of school, was an essential way in which it re-emerged as a vital social institution. Thirty years since the Khmer Rouge period ended, household financing has become a standard way in which the pagoda operates. The selling of paintings inside Pagodas as a way to earn "good deeds" is not uncommon or thought suspect. It is the way in which social life operates.

The contemporary role of the pagoda in social life places the issue of educational privatization, explored in the cases of Sokhem and Chenda, into the larger web of society's interconnected social institutions. That the pagoda sells paintings in contemporary times puts the many fees in public schooling into a larger social context. School privatization is not unique in Cambodian society; rather it is happening in a moment of larger social change that affects many, perhaps all, social institutions. The privatization of the pagoda is happening alongside the privatization of school, and constructs particular social relations similar to those outlined in the previous two chapters.

Sambath's reflections on private tutoring are illustrative of the interconnectedness of society and the normalization of private fees in school and the pagoda. When I asked Sambath when private tutoring first began, he answered without hesitation: "After UNTAC had come, students started paying money for private tutoring." When I asked him to compare the bribes some students pay today with his experience growing up, he said before there was "no need to bribe anyone. [School examinations] depended on our knowledge. But now it is bad. If we don't bribe, we cannot pass." This disapproval of paying teachers before examinations was not equated with private tutoring in Sambath's mind: "But I feel angry at my children

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if they don't study private tutoring. We are not angry at the teachers but at the students." Fees in school are a natural part of education. So too is selling paintings and pillars in pagodas. Across society individuals are expected to contribute financing to social services: teachers offer additional knowledge to students while pagodas offer good deeds.

The last three chapters have looked at privatization through life stories of three teachers, focused primarily on economic issues. Chenda's story revealed the complex spaces of education in contemporary mainstream schooling that are divided between public and private. In order to enter the private spaces of learning, students are required to pay fees directly to Chenda. Sokhem's story, by contrast, revealed the difficulty of operating a school fee-free. He has had to make compromises in order to attract funding from abroad, not only globalizing the notion of household financing but also creating local spaces of global social relations. Sambath's story situates educational privatization into the larger social context by looking at the role pagodas play in social life. Schools and pagodas — two social spaces — have experienced a similar history and witnessed a similar emergence of privatization. This shows the movement of educational space from the pagoda to mainstream schooling, as well as suggests practices of privatizations — namely, the individual payment for social service — is a common practice among members of the Preah Go community.

Privatization, however, extends beyond economic issues. There are political issues that derive from the practices of privatization. The political issues involve social relations of power, which have been touched on Sambath and Sokhem's portraits. A further look at political issues is the focus of the next chapter where the story of a politician in Preah Go uncovers the local politics of privatization and the idea of educational corruption.

Chapter 8
The Politics of Opposition

8.1 Introduction

A sunny afternoon at the Preah Go market in February. Dust floats through the air, past the children running on the dirt road, and onto the fruit, vegetable, and meat displayed in the half dozen stalls. The saleswomen in the stalls endlessly fan away the dust and flies. On the edge of the market, alongside the small canal that cuts through the community, a small, skinny man in brown trousers and an untucked yellow button-down shirt collects rubbish and sweeps the road. He is Noreaksey Pheakdei, the second assistant commune chief on the Preah Go commune council and its only member from the opposition party, the Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP), making every effort to be effective and lead by example. Although the six members of the commune council affiliated with the ruling party, the CPP, prevent Pheakdei from undertaking most duties, he perseveres with activities that often result in ridicule from his fellow residents.

Image 8.1 The Preah Go Market

"At the [Preah Go] market," Pheakdei explained to me at his small home next to a pagoda, "people laugh at me when I sweep the road with a broom." He paused. "But it's my willingness," he continued. Then he added, "These days, I pick up plastic bags too. I don't care when people laugh at me. I am an authority, so I have to serve the people." Again, he paused. Pheakdei usually looks directly into my eyes when speaking, so when he looked downwards it appeared he was thinking about what to say next. His eyes returned to mine, and he continued: "And they take away my responsibilities in the office. As you know here in Cambodia, we have laws, but if those who have power don't obey, where can we sue them?" He finally said, while shaking his head after another long pause, "It's hard in Cambodia."

Pheakdei acts on his convictions, scared neither of laughter nor humiliation. He has a gentle appearance with an intellectual aura. He enjoys writing songs based on traditional Khmer folklore, and he often asked me about international politics and events, such as the formation of the ASEAN Economic Community. His skin is darkened from the sun, and his hands are rough. He looks like he has endured a difficult life. Indeed, he did not want to speak of his childhood during the genocidal Pol Pot regime (1975-1979), only mentioning that eight of his ten siblings and his father died of starvation. This is a large percentage of lost family members, especially when compared to Sambath's family, which lost no members at all.

Despite his troubled past, Pheakdei's eyes are welcoming. He has a smile that is inviting and friendly. When I ask difficult questions, Pheakdei pauses, looks down into his cup of tea, and then usually replies in short, mysterious answers that have deep meanings. "It's like a frog in a well," he answered when I asked about the politicized media in Cambodia. He smiled at me, and then asked, "Do you know what I mean?" I did not, so took his bait and asked for an elaboration. The worldview of a frog in a well, he explained to me, is limited because of the high walls of the well. The frog is trapped but does not know it. There is no alternative reality for a frog in a well. Such a limited worldview is similar to Khmer people, in Pheakdei's opinion, because the ruling party controls national media, thus acting like the high walls of a well. Ignorance, in this perspective, is not an inherent trait of individuals; rather, its source derives from political elites.

Once invited to speak, Pheakdei is didactic and forceful, and always turns any topic of conversation into a discussion about politics in Cambodia. This is expected since he is an elected politician from the opposition party who lost the top position,

the commune chief, by 300 votes in 2012. During our conversations, Pheakdei always blames the Prime Minister, Hun Sen. What did Pheakdei learn during the Vietnamese Era (1979-1989)? He learned more than the current curriculum under Hun Sen. What does Angkor Wat mean to him? It is a proud moment in Khmer history, but sold to a private company by Hun Sen. How does he combat corruption on the local level? It is a game of tug of war with the CPP commune council members, but the real problem is the corruption at the top, in Hun Sen's inner circle. Over the course of my conversations with Pheakdei, I found the different ways to blame the Prime Minister increasingly humorous. Is Hun Sen *personally* responsible for the price of meat in the Preah Go market? Upon reflection, however, I understood Pheakdei's larger point: unchecked power can result in societal harm by benefiting a small group of elites at the expense of ordinary Cambodians. This is why his motto in life and politics is "don't hurt people because of your ambition." This is fitting for a politician in opposition who leads by example.

My intention to speak with someone in the social position of local government official was to understand, through his or her perspective, the dynamics of local educational governance and their relations to the emergence of privatization in education. Pheakdei was assigned to work with me after I requested permission from the Preah Go commune council. I later learned through my conversations with Pheakdei that the commune chief assigns to Pheakdei all duties no other commune council member wants. Although Pheakdei is involved in meetings related to education at the commune level and offers valuable insight into my research question, his forced selection to work with me naturally colors both his perspective of events in the commune and the stories I can tell.

Through my interviews with Pheakdei, the politics of educational finance emerged that extends the discussion on Sokhem's NGO school or Chenda's private tutoring classes. It becomes apparent that, in Pheakdei's perspective, those in positions of power, such as teachers, are sometimes forced by social structures to conduct practices of privatization for personal survival. In other words, although some teachers directly take money from students, there are societal pressures, such as being unable to afford basic necessities in life, making such an action compulsory. Collectively these actions construct a system of privatization that is then reproduced by Chenda and Sokhem, even if that is not their intention. This was made clear in one conversation I had with Pheakdei about small fees taken by public school teachers:

Extract 8.1 "…the circumstance makes them do that…"	
William:	Do teachers ask for money in school?
Pheakdei:	Yes! It has become our social illness when teachers get small salary. They are not motivated to teach our students.
William:	Is it fair for students to pay teachers? Is it right?
Pheakdei:	I know it's not the right thing, but both teachers and us are the victims. In fact, the teachers don't want to do that but the circumstance makes them do that while they are older people to ask money from kids.

The relationship between teachers asking for money from students causes problems in learning — a social illness in Pheakdei's words from Extract 8.1. Pheakdei later said to me:

> My child usually asks me about the lessons she doesn't understand when she comes back from school. And I ask back if her teacher has taught her. She says that her teacher just wrote on the whiteboard and went out. They don't care if their students understand or not.

In Pheakdei's perspective, that his child does not understand lessons in school because teachers walked out of the classroom is the result of larger political forces, namely the ruling party's refusal to increase the salaries of civil servants, which includes teachers. Pheakdei captured the notion that the improper actions of powerful people create a system where learning is impossible when he told me "unknowledgeable people result from corruption." This is similar to the allegory of the frog in a well: giant walls are constructed around knowledge when corrupt acts such as paying fees to teachers, which are one manifestation of privatization, dominate the education system.

In this chapter, the story of Pheakdei showcases the difficulty of opposition politics while also taking a look inside local governance structures. The next section situates the Preah Go commune council inside the national political system, and then details Pheakdei's roles and responsibilities on the commune council. Section 8.3 provides a detailed look inside the commune council, providing nuance to the concept of decentralization. In particular, the concept of "corruption" from Pheakdei's perspective is discussed. In section 8.4 the role that local government plays in the

household financing of schools is detailed, specifically looking at the politics of poor cards and NGOs in local educational governance. As the chapter unfolds, Pheakdei's experiences, insights, and perspectives illuminate a local-level account of the dispossession of public goods for private gain. People in power are able to capture private rewards through the control of public goods such as water or public services such as free health care or education scholarships, which are provided to citizens with official poor cards or through NGO donations. Pheakdei's predicament is thus how to enact social change in a position of limited power. Such a predicament is useful to understanding the enduring nature of privatization in education, and will be discussed in the chapter's conclusion.

8.2 Becoming a deputy commune chief

In the 2012 commune elections, 1,306 people in Preah Go voted for Pheakdei, giving him the third largest number of votes of any candidate. At the time, as in the previous election in 2007 when he first won a seat on the commune council, Pheakdei was a member of the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP). SRP was an opposition party formed by Sam Rainsy in 1998.[31] After the 2012 commune elections, the SRP merged with the Human Rights Party to form the CNRP, becoming the largest opposition party. Pheakdei is now a member of CNRP and, as I have said previously, the only non-ruling party member of the Preah Go commune council.

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[31] Sam Rainsy has had a long career in Cambodian politics. In 1993 he was elected to parliament as a Funcinpec member, which is another opposition party. In 1994, he was expelled from Funcinpec. He then formed the Khmer Nation Party in 1995, which morphed into the SRP during the 1998 elections. As popularity of the SRP grew, so did the ruling party's displeasure with it. Sam Rainsy was charged with defamation in 2005 and sentenced to 18 months in prison. He escaped prison by living in self-exile in France, and was later granted a royal pardon by King Sihamoni in 2006 (at the Prime Minister's request). In 2009, Rainsy again found himself in self-exile after he did not appear in court over charges of illegally moving a border post along the Cambodia-Vietnam border. In 2013, again at the behest of the Prime Minister, King Sihamoni pardoned Rainsy, which led to his return to Cambodian politics in time for the 2013 national elections.

Table 8.1 2012 commune election results

Party	Commune seats won	Percent of total
Cambodian People's Party	8,292	72.4
Sam Rainsy Party	2,155	18.8
Human Rights Party	800	7.0
Funcinpec	151	1.3
Norodom Ranariddh Party	52	0.4
League for Democracy	8	0.1
Cambodian Nationality's Party	1	0
Total	**11,459**	**100.0**

Source: COMFREL, 2012, p. 55

The election of a non-ruling party member to a common council, such as Pheakdei in Preah Go, was relatively uncommon in 2012. Nationwide, CPP won control of 8,292 out of 11,459 commune seats (72.4 percent). Six opposition parties won control of the remaining 3,167 seats (27.6 percent; see table 8.1). The Sam Rainsy Party was the largest opposition party, controlling 2,155 seats (18.8 percent). Pheakdei was in this group.[32]

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[32] To put the local politics of Preah Go in perspective, it is valuable to examine the national political system in more depth. The administration of Cambodia is divided into political units of province (*khaet*), district (*srok,* or *khan* in the capital), commune (*sangkat*), and village (*phum*). A group of villages comprises a commune; a group of communes comprises a district, and a group of districts comprises a province. There are 24 provinces in Cambodia, excluding the national capital, Phnom Penh. Preah Go is a commune comprised of 12 villages. It is one of 10 communes that comprise Siem Reap district. Twelve districts comprise Siem Reap province, which is one of the 24 provinces in Cambodia.

Elections are held at the national and subnational levels. National elections focus on the two chambers of parliament, the Senate and the National Assembly. Commune councils elect Senators (i.e., elections are non-universal) and Representatives to the National Assembly through popular vote (i.e., universal elections). Elections for the National Assembly are held every five years and every six years in the Senate. The first election for the National Assembly was in 1993 and in 2006 for the Senate.

Nationally, there are 61 seats in the Senate, of which 57 are elected positions (two are nominated by the King and two by the National Assembly). After the 2012 commune elections, the CPP controlled 46 Senate seats and the SRP, which has since changed affiliations to CNRP, controlled 11. CPP Senators outnumbered CNRP Senators by 4 to 1.

The second chamber of parliament, the National Assembly, is elected every five years through a general vote and has always been dominated by the CPP. In the first four general elections (1993, 1998, 2003, and 2008) since the formation of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the CPP increased its total number of National Assembly seats. After the 2008 election, CPP controlled 90 of the 123-national assembly seats, making it easy for the CPP to pass legislation.

The near-complete domination of politics by the CPP changed with the formation of the CNRP. In the 2013 National Assembly elections, the CNRP won 55 seats, reducing the number of seats controlled by the CPP to 68. The CPP lost 22 seats between the 2008 and 2013 elections.

The political environment in which Pheakdei finds himself is overwhelmingly one of power solidified by the CPP. His election to the commune council meant that the other members of the council had to — for the first time — deal with a member in opposition, something previously unknown to them. Such a social relation resulted in tactics that prevented Pheakdei from performing his duties as second deputy commune chief, a position bestowed on him for receiving the third most votes in the election.

As second deputy commune chief, Pheakdei's duties concern Security, Environment, and Public Services. Security involves tasks such as preparing the community for the inevitable floods in October; Environment involves tasks such as ensuring community members properly dispose of garbage; and Public Services involves tasks such as ensuring NGO donations make it to their intended beneficiaries. In each of these areas, Pheakdei complained of being blocked by the other commune council members. For example, the Commune Chief sent him to Siem Reap City for administrative work while the commune council met in Preah Go to discuss disaster preparedness, an issue that falls under Security. He was also prohibited from determining which Preah Go residents are awarded poor cards, the primary selection criteria for NGO donations, which will be discussed in detail in Section 8.4.

Pheakdei has even been blocked from working in the commune council hall (image 8.2). "When I first started work," he explained to me, "they [the other members of the commune council] gave me one pen and a piece of paper and said that

The subnational level has non-universal elections (i.e., council members vote, not the general public) for district and provincial councils and universal elections (i.e., the general public can vote) for commune councils. The commune councils are of interest here and are the smallest administrative unit where a popular vote determines who serves on the council. In 2012, residents of 1,633 communes voted for 11,459 seats. Each commune council has between five and ten members. In Preah Go, there are a total of seven members. In the 2012 election, CPP overwhelmingly won the majority of commune councils nationwide. Although the CPP won 72.4 percent of the commune council seats nationwide (table 8.1), it managed to capture the top position — the commune chief, which is determined by which council member received the most votes — on 97 percent of commune councils. In other words, there was a CPP affiliated commune chief in 1,592 out of 1,633 commune councils nationwide. Since the 2012 election took place before the formation of CNRP, other opposition parties controlled the rest — 22 by the Sam Rainsy Party and 18 by the Human Rights Party. The next commune election will be in 2017, and the CNRP hopes to make inroads into the CPP's power at the subnational level and, by extension of the councils' voting responsibilities, the Senate in the election scheduled for 2018.

the pen and paper can be used for a year." Pheakdei was certain the implied meaning in this gesture was that the commune chief would not allocate tasks to him, so the pen and paper would not be used. Pheakdei is also on a subcommittee in charge of women and children. "But I don't receive any tasks!" he complained to me. "I'm just like a cleaner, picking up rubbish." Since he cannot go to the commune office to do work, he cleans the roads, fulfilling some duties under Environment.

Image 8.2 Preah Go Commune Council Hall

Pheakdei's experience highlights the situational logic of ruling party government officials when power is overwhelming concentrated in one party. He complained to me that "people who hold high positions, they know the law, but never use it. They take advantage of people, they don't serve local people." This typically occurs when commune council members charge higher fees than listed for the official stamp on such documents as marriage certificates or land titles. In his case, Pheakdei's duties are clearly written down in the handbook for commune councils (he showed it to me), but the commune council members (those people in "high positions") do not follow the guidelines. Such a practice allows people in power to exploit the system for their benefit — i.e., by charging higher fees than legally defined or distributing largesse, both of which will be discussed in the sections that follow. Pheakdei captured the

logic used by ruling party officials of maintaining the status quo for personal gain: "Only the higher levels of public staff members want to keep this society because they can commit corruption and, recently, they realize that we have corruption in Cambodia but they just ignore it."

Pheakdei's introduction to opposition politics began long before winning a seat on the commune council in 2007. It was 1993 in Phnom Penh when he and his wife attended a rally organized by Sam Rainsy to protest the rising cost of living. Pheakdei worked as a motorbike taxi driver and his wife worked as a seamstress in a garment factory. At the time, the global supply of oil decreased, which caused local gas and food prices to increase. This was caused by the First Gulf War in 1991 when Saddam Hussein, the President of Iraq, ordered troops to ignite oil wells as they retreated from their positions in Kuwait. This geopolitical history advanced Sam Rainsy's populous message, and brought Pheakdei firmly into opposition politics. In Extract 8.2, Pheakdei explained this introduction.

Extract 8.2 "…I was hurt too much."	
Pheakdei:	After I married my wife, I lived [in Phnom Penh] for around 4 or 5 years.
William:	And what did you do for work?
Pheakdei:	At that time, I worked as a motorbike taxi driver. My wife was a tailor and I was a motorbike taxi driver at that time. I had heard that in our country there were a lot of political parties and I had never been a member of the Sam Rainsy Party. Because I was busy with my job and my wife was a tailor. Then His Excellency Sam Rainsy, he started leading the workers who had little salary to demonstrate. My wife and I joined the demonstrations and you know what Mr. Hun Sen said at that time? He said, 'if the tailors or workers demonstrate to increase their salary, let them go be prostitutes at Toul Kok.'[33]
William:	Is that the reason you started to support Mr. Sam Rainsy?
Pheakdei:	Yes, I was hurt too much. My wife was a tailor who demanded a higher salary and I was a motorbike taxi driver and the high gasoline prices affected me. Mr. Rainsy led the group of motorbike taxi drivers to demonstrate and demand a decrease in the price of gasoline. When I demonstrated with Mr. Rainsy,

[33] Toul Kok is an area in Phnom Penh known, at the time, for its high concentration of prostitutes.

> and you know what the response to the workers and the motorbike taxi driver was? [Hun Sen] said that he wanted us to demonstrate against Iran and Iraq!

Pheakdei's involvement in politics continued when he moved to Siem Reap in 2000. He was not formally involved in the Sam Rainsy Party at the time, but he was known in the community to speak openly about politics, something that is often shunned in society for the possible negative consequences it can bring (e.g., being excluded from the largesse of the ruling party).

Pheakdei's life changed when the head monk in the pagoda beside his home died. Many people visited the pagoda to pay their respects. Since Pheakdei ran a small soup stall at the front of his house, the multi-day funeral was good for his business. It just so happened when members of the opposition party ate soup at his stall, Pheakdei, being his normal self, was openly speaking about politics. He said he was speaking out against unemployment and inequality. The opposition party members overheard him and tried to convince him to run for political office in Preah Go. Pheakdei did not take the suggestion seriously until "four or five days [after the funeral], [the opposition party members] came again and I said 'no' again." The Sam Rainsy Party members told him: "[if] you want to help, you need to work publically, not indirectly. [Speaking indirectly at a soup stall] means nothing." Pheakdei was scared because "[when my wife and I] came [to Preah Go] we didn't know the people. If we are afraid of a dog, the dog will bite us. I noticed that too." He continued, "after hearing the words [of the opposition party members], I considered this problem and [if] I wouldn't do it, maybe no one would do it. In order to help society, I decided to [run for office] and I guaranteed [to them that I would win a seat on the commune council]." He was successfully elected in 2007 and proudly displayed the opposition banner outside his home (image 8.3).

Image 8.3 Cambodian National Rescue Party banner outside Pheakdei's home

Since being elected, Pheakdei has successfully learned opposition politics. His successes were confirmed when he was reelected in 2012, missing out on being the commune chief by 300 votes. From Pheakdei's perspective, the goal of opposition politics is to criticize: "In democratic countries, the winner has to do but the loser has to criticize. We criticize for improvement." In my conversations with Pheakdei, he commonly criticized the political system in Cambodia. However, he also did a lot more than speak against the ruling party. He made frequent visits to people's homes to discuss issues affecting them. On these visits, he explained the role of government and the way the budget works for development. He also told people about their rights under Cambodian law and encouraged people to pay their taxes. Pheakdei summed up his political goals as follows: "I want to make people in society equal, and live together in peace. [I want] there to be no gap between rich and poor. Today, there is a big gap, so we want to narrow down this gap to create balance." Achieving his political goals are much more challenging than the explanation of his ideals, which will be the focus of the next section.

8.3 Decentralization and the emergence of corruption

In late April 2014, when I met Pheakdei for a second round of data collection, he jumped into a story about reporting corruption to Radio Free Asia (RFA). Although I asked him how he spent his Khmer New Year celebration, thinking it would be an easy way into a conversation after a few months' hiatus, Pheakdei responded by recounting a triumphant story:

> I twice reported to RFA about toilets and the village chief taking money from the villagers and not having enough water for rice, which caused more than 400 hectares to die. After I reported, the village chief gave the money back to the villagers that night!

When I enquired about the village chief taking money from residents, Pheakdei elaborated on the story:

> More than 6,000 toilets were funded by the World Bank under the cooperation of the Provincial Department of Rural Development. All community people were gathered to the meeting and each family could get a toilet for free. And if we built the toilets by ourselves, they gave us the money but before it was not like this because we had to pay some money even though we were responsible to build the toilets. And I reported this to RFA which helped to broadcast to other provinces and it was also heard by the Ministry of Interior.

Pheakdei's story highlights the intersection of international aid, decentralization, and political largesse. International funding (in this case, from the World Bank) is provided to the government for national development. The government distributes the funding to subnational levels of government as part of its decentralization efforts. At the subnational level, the development money is used in ways to reward those residents who supported the politician in charge of distributing the funds. Pheakdei's story showed that residents who did not support the CPP would not get money to build a toilet, which was the intended purpose of the money from the Provincial Department of Rural Development. Pheakdei captured this intersection in the following quote, noting the level of confusion that emerges:

> It's hard for us because the government always says that the money funded by foreign donors is the government's money. And they make the people confused; the money they use is to develop their party. So it takes a long time if we want to change and it's hard to get involved in politics these days.

The practice of providing favors based on political affiliation is a common political feature. Even Pheakdei complained, "I don't have the chance to distribute gifts to them [people who voted for him] fairly" because the members in his party are not as wealthy as those in the CPP. Residents who voted a particular way could reap rewards such as receiving free bags of rice, small amounts of money, or development assistance similar to the case above. Politicians in power, particularly from the larger CPP political party, control more resources (both national and personal) that can be re-distributed to supporters. It is not uncommon for new roads, pagodas, or schools to be built in areas that supported the CPP. Nevertheless, Pheakdei disliked the practice:

> So I know that the money [CPP politicians] use to support pagodas, schools, hospitals, and roads is not their kindness but they help because they want votes from people. They cheat people and they earn money by doing evil things in our nation.

Beyond political gift giving, there is also a level of corruption that emerges when those in power use their social position for individual gain and are not held accountable, which is another feature of Cambodia's system of decentralization. The emergence of corruption is highlighted in Extract 8.3 when I asked Pheakdei about the 400 hectares of rice that died from the blocked irrigation system:

Extract 8.3 "Sometimes it is the way of corruption."

William: How about the irrigation system?

Pheakdei: Actually we have an old irrigation system but it was blocked. So we didn't have enough water for our rice field.

William: Why was it blocked?

Pheakdei: Sometimes it is the way of corruption. We had enough water in the irrigation system but some rich people wanted to water their rice fields so they gave some money to the authority in order that the authority block the water for them because if the authority hadn't blocked the water, it would have been enough water flowing to our rice fields.

William: How much money do people give to the authorities for this?

Pheakdei: Corrupt people don't care how big or small the amount of money. [The authorities] accept all the time if we give them money even

	10,000 or 20,000 Riel [US$2.50 to 5.00].
William:	Did the authorities stop blocking the water?
Pheakdei:	They stopped immediately after I reported the case to RFA news.

The corruption identified by Pheakdei in Extract 8.3 emerges when the authorities — that is, the members of the commune council — refuse to allow the free flow of water through the community's irrigation system. The irrigation system can be understood as a public good that was designed to provide household farms with free water. All households are supposed to be able to use the irrigation system, regardless of political affiliation. Yet, in practice, the commune council only allows access to the water for those residents who paid a bribe. By blocking access to the public good, residents are dispossessed of water essential for farming, which in most cases is the sole livelihood of households in Preah Go.

In our conversations, Pheakdei had conflicting views on corruption. On the one hand, he saw it as a form of individual agency enacted by people in power. In this respect, it is a conscious effort by individuals to act in ways that create personal advantages, typically at the expense of ordinary residents. For example, the council members who blocked water in the irrigation system did so for private gain (i.e., financial bribes) at the expense of farmers who relied on the water. On the other hand, Pheakdei at times implied that the political system creates the conditions where corruption was necessary for survival (e.g., extract 8.1). In this respect, it is the social system that creates corruption, not individuals. For example the teacher fees Pheakdei spoke of in Extract 8.1 highlight this form of corruption. In that extract, Pheakdei said, "I know it's not the right thing [for teachers to charge student fees], but both teachers and us are the victims." They are victims of the larger political forces that, in Pheakdei's perspective, keep teacher salaries low, which then forces teachers to ask for additional money from students.

This contradiction in Pheakdei's perspective indicates that corruption may in fact be better understood as a property that comes into existence in social relations of power that have a range of intensities. Corruption, in this respect, is a social practice. It can be acute when people in social positions of power, such as the commune council members, knowingly take advantage of people in positions of lesser power for

personal gain. It can be benign when individuals who are in power but cannot change the social system, such as teachers, act in ways for personal (economic) survival.

Moderate social practices of corruption, however, can become normalized as correct behavior in a social system. The acceptable everyday practices of individuals, in other words, re-produce the social order where corruption (of lower intensities) is customary. This behavior is found the reliance on private tutoring to top-up teacher salaries in exchange for providing additional instruction to students. Chenda, the mainstream public school teacher in Chapter 5, relies on private tutoring to supplement her income. This is an easier social practice than it is for her to advocate that the government increase the salaries of all teachers.

Pheakdei's contradictory statements about corruption are therefore based on intensity. The social practice of corruption is appropriate for people in positions power who can provide social services but cannot change the social system (i.e., teachers such as Chenda). Corruption is intense when people who are in social positions to change society use social relations for their personal benefit (e.g., in the case of blocking the irrigation system by commune council members). From this conceptualization, Pheakdei's conception of corruption makes sense: teachers asking for fees is an acceptable form of corruption in an environment of low teacher salaries, while those in power to implement social change (i.e., politicians) are individually held accountable for their corrupt actions because of their social positions of power.

In an environment where politicians take advantage of public goods and use development funding as a form of political largesse, it is not surprising to find that people have lost trust in public institutions. Pheakdei emphasized this point when describing the health care system, which was highlighted in Chenda's story in Chapter 5:

> We spend lots of money to go to the hospital but we don't trust the ways they treat us. When I see people dying, I feel worried because I don't have money to go to the hospital when I'm sick. We don't have insurance when we are sick like other countries. These days we don't have enough to eat, so we will wait to die when we are sick. What can we do? We are proud to be Khmer, but we shouldn't have a communist leader like this.

Notwithstanding Pheakdei's insistence that these issues stem from the "communist leader," Hun Sen, it is important to note that the system of education is also an

institution that has lost the trust of the public. Pheakdei emphasized this point when I asked him about the beginning of corruption in Cambodia (extract 8.4).

Extract 8.4 "When there was corruption, education was not effective…"	
William:	When do you think corruption first started in Cambodia?
Pheakdei:	It started around 1990. Around 1993, I should say. When there was corruption, education was not effective as well. In our society, even if we study higher education, people cannot find a good job. Our society cannot get a good education system because most people lost their belief [in it].

Exploring in more depth the space of education reveals how issues of decentralization and corruption play out at the local level and begins to explain why people lost their belief in the education system. The politics that play out at the level of the commune council offer one window into this phenomenon. The next section looks at these politics in more detail.

8.4 The local politics of educational finance

Similar to Sokhem in Chapter 6, Pheakdei differentiates between increases in enrollments in education and the quality of education. "Cambodian education sector has only quantity but not quality" he told me. When I asked why there was no quality, he responded, "Sometimes students buy lessons and give money to teachers and if they have no money they fail." Pheakdei's experiences offer insights into this issue from a subnational governance perspective. In order to begin to understand why "students buy lessons and give money to teachers" it is important to understand the politics of educational financing at the local level. There are different ways the government funds schools. Pheakdei explains it like this:

> In fact, the ministry of education helps to give buildings and PB [Program Based] funds. Plus help from the commune committees and sometimes Sieng Nam gives some help too. And the people in the community help to collect money to support the school building too, but when the building is finished, they put the name of some powerful people.

Pheakdei's explanation recognizes multiple ways to fund education. There are the government funds (i.e., Program Based funds), funds from politicians such as Sieng Nam, and then household financing. The first source of funding comes in the form of the Program Based budget. This is used for administrative costs, such as buying pens, books, desks, or gardens. The amount schools receive depends on the number of students enrolled. Pheakdei told me the current rate is US$5 per student. The school director manages the Program Based money. Government funding can also be used to build schools and fences and any large infrastructure project. If a school needs money for larger infrastructure projects, it must write a proposal to the national government, usually submitted through subnational levels of government such as the Department or Provincial Offices of Education. The subnational government then determines which schools will be funded for which projects. Some of the money used in this budget comes from development partners such as the Asian Development Bank or the World Bank.

There is also educational financing from politicians. In Preah Go, Sieng Nam is the main politician supporting school development. Politicians often support school development using their own money as a way to reward communities who voted for them. Additionally, some politicians spend their own money to develop schools as a way to gain favor from Hun Sen (Verver & Dahles, 2015).

The informal financing of schools typically takes the form of household financing in the form of donations (or fees) paid by students directly to the school or teacher. These fees have been discussed in previous chapters. Exactly how household financing takes places depends on the school — the principal in charge, the teachers who tutor, and the relationship between the pagoda committee and the school. In some cases, the principal sends letters home with students asking parents to donate money for various construction projects. Other times, the water or electricity fees are levied directly on students.

There is also funding from NGOs, which Pheakdei missed in his explanation. There are no formal guidelines for placing NGOs in schools or exactly what or how NGOs should fund schools. Often it depends on informal relationships and networks that are created between school principals or teachers and NGO representatives, who are typically foreigners as in the case of Wish For Cambodia School (chapter 6). Unlike Sokhem's school, however, many NGOs work inside public schools. In order for an NGO to work inside a public school, Pheakdei explained, the school must first

ask permission from the subnational department of education (DOE). NGO help can also come through the commune office. NGOs that go through the commune office are matched to the annual development plan put together by the commune council. This plan sets priorities and then those priorities are funded by a combination of funds — one source of which is NGOs. Another source comes from the pagoda committee, which is managed by Sambath in Preah Go and discussed in Chapter 7. Often the principal asks the commune council for school construction to be put in the development plan so that NGOs can help fund the school.

When it comes to private tutoring, Pheakdei explained to me his understanding of its origin:

> [In 1989] there was not many schools like today, so teachers needed to add tutoring in order to transfer their knowledge to students. But it is not good because it leads students to not attend class and some have a girlfriend and go for a walk.

In Pheakdei's understanding private tutoring emerged because the government lacked the capacity to properly manage public schools. Teachers did not have enough time to cover the lessons in public school (or, in some cases, purposefully chose not to teach effectively), so there was a need to create a private space that would supplement the lessons in public school. Tutoring also had the added benefit of topping up teachers' salaries.

Overall, the multiple ways to finance education show a complex geography of people far beyond Preah Go. This geography emerged in the wake of the destruction caused by the Khmer Rouge where households were forced to support local services. As international aid flowed into the country and the national government increased public funding to institutions such as the education system, local politicians were left to navigate the politics of this geography. In connection with local governance of education, I asked Pheakdei about possible ways to regulate or prohibit private tutoring. He explained:

> We have to find solutions to people's problems and complaints. We can help them when teachers ask students to give them more money but we won't be able to help them if they do not complain. Sometimes the school director collects money from students to build school gates and some parents react to this problem too. And we have to tell the school director not to collect money from students because doing this can make poor families become poorer.

From this perspective, local governance is about resolving problems that might emerge when schools collect informal fees. The problem is that most residents do not complain about paying fees to schools, thus disabling the commune council from taking action. Pheakdei insisted that the commune council does not manage funding for schools. PB budgets are given directly to the school principals by the subnational offices of education, bypassing commune councils, and school infrastructure projects are controlled by the department or provincial offices of education. This was confirmed by Chenda who explained to me the yearly ritual of siting around the school director's desk deciding what to do with the PB money, which was placed on the table in the teacher's lounge room.

The only area over which the commune council does have control is the distribution of poor cards and the involvement of NGOs in the community, both of which relate to the politics of education financing at the local level. Poor cards are a national scheme designed to identify and support families in particular financial hardship. There are two levels of poor cards, first and second. Obtaining a first poor card entitles residents to free health care from local clinics as well as aid given by NGOs to the commune council. A second poor card entitles residents to discounted health care from local clinics (usually 50 percent off) as well as aid given by NGOs (assuming all first poor card holders received aid first). Another benefit that is determined by poor cards in Preah Go is the distribution of scholarships by NGOs for students to attend private tutoring.

Pheakdei often complained during our conversations that the commune chief distributes poor cards as part of his political largesse. There is not a formal system used to distribute the cards, thus giving a large amount of power to the commune chief to reward his family and friends. Pheakdei made this clear this Extract 8.5:

Extract 8.5 "…the real poor cannot get anything…"
William: What does the government do for the community?
Pheakdei: They give some seeds to people for growing. Seeds like tomatoes or beans. But I think that those plants cannot help people live better. Why? Because after [the distribution of] plants are approved, the government sells them to poor people, and the poor are divided into two kinds—first poor and second poor.

William: How do they sell them to the poor?

Pheakdei: Those plants are for poor people. They try to choose who to
             consider first poor and who is second poor. They will then call
             the poor people to get [the seeds]. When they give it to people,
             sometimes they are not in the right groups and then the real poor
             cannot get anything because the authority gave everything to
             their relatives [or political members].

Pheakdei later added: "so [the commune council members] select only those who
support their party, and if not, they will not give them [any of the donations]." The
politicization of poor cards plays out with NGO donations, which often take the forms
of student "scholarships" (i.e., money to pay for tutoring) and bicycle donations.
"Actually," Pheakdei explained to me, "it is the donations from organizations that
government officials give to people in order to attract more supporters." I asked if the
NGO officials know their donations are sometimes used for political purposes.
Pheakdei responded:

> Of course not! They [NGOs] come to help people. The true purpose of NGOs
> is to help people and it's good if they are willing to help people. But
> sometimes [politicians] use funds from NGOs to buy gifts for people with
> political intention. That's why the CPP is so proud because when there are
> more NGOs helping Cambodia, they can take more advantages and then
> people become poorer and poorer.

Pheakdei's experience of household financing of education is naturally colored by his
political affiliation. Comments such as, "I always admire and pay gratitude to
foreigners because they help our country. In contrast, our government doesn't help
us," are probably Pheakdei walking the fine line between reliance on foreign
donations and opposition politics where criticism is required. (It is also a form of
social positioning during the course of my interview with him. He was likely
navigating the politics of local financing of social services by praising foreigners such
as myself in efforts not to dissuade me from contributing a donation, which I did not.)
It is unknown whether Pheakdei would act in ways similar to the CPP officials he
criticizes if he were in power. Nevertheless, Pheakdei's insights into local level
politics shine light on the many ways political largesse and corruption can emerge.
His stories highlight the real interests at stake if the social order were to change. It is
most telling, in my opinion, that few residents actually complain to the commune

council about school fees. It is to his insight that I turn in the conclusion of the chapter.

8.5 Conclusion

In an environment where political largesse and corruption are enacted in everyday practices such as the distribution of poor cards and the attendance in private tutoring, Pheakdei believes education is a possible path through which social change can occur. "The educated person, even if they are less or more educated," he told me, "they know what is wrong and what is right and what should not be done." He paused, looking into his cup. "In total," he continued, looking straight into my eyes, "educated people can clearly divide between justice and injustice."

Despite this idealistic conception in the hope of education to create social change, he also recognizes the exact opposite — that education will actually reproduce a society based on corruption and largesse:

> In the future, our society will not be better because we teach [students] to be corrupt since they are young and then when they become older, they apply this to the whole society.

Pheakdei's recognition of the paradox of education — that it both changes and re-produces society — shares similarities with his life story that highlights the political processes of enacting social change. Although he feels that his work on the commune council has not changed the corruption and largesse he believes underpins the political system, he has in fact produced a level of social change, even if that is not the total overhaul of the political order for which he aspires. Nevertheless, Pheakdei shows the complex navigation required for local politics.

Pheakdei has had a level of social mobility that saw him go from driving a motorbike taxi in Phnom Penh to being the third highest elected official in his commune in Siem Reap. Although he complained about the other commune council members blocking his actions, he has in fact accomplished a lot. His physical presence as the first and only opposition member on the Preah Go commune council caused other members to react in ways they had never done before. The CPP members have had to figure out how to distract Pheakdei, such as sending him to the city center during a meeting, in order to continue governing in ways they believe are

correct but which Pheakdei would verbally disagree. This alone is a massive change in the socio-political reality in the Preah Go commune council. Moreover, Pheakdei's story showcases the complex practices of navigating a political system where power is seemingly concentrated. For instance, he learned to use media as a tool to force the commune chief to stop using the irrigation system as a way generate bribes.

When it comes to education, Pheakdei also highlights the political side to education finance and shows how education is deeply connected to the wider political and economic social domains. Although the commune council does not manage the finances of schools directly, they do play a crucial part in dealing with NGOs that support schools. Using poor cards as a way to determine which families to support may seem like a good idea by NGOs, but such a practice has been hijacked for political ends by some members of the commune council who determine which families are deemed "poor." This particular issue was not resolved during my time with Pheakdei, and he spent a lot of time lamenting the fact that he cannot give out poor cards to his constituents. Yet, Pheakdei's insights reveal the politics behind one of the movements in privatization — the reliance on NGOs to fund local schools, either directly through school construction or indirectly through student scholarships for private tutoring.

It is unknown whether Pheakdei's actions will result in lasting social change. This is an empirical question that can only be determined years after this writing. However, it is important to emphasize that all the people in Preah Go do not share Pheakdei's hope for social change defined by eliminating corruption and largesse in and through various social institutions, including education. In fact, there is a competing narrative that emerged in my data collection, emphasizing the positive social changes since the Khmer Rouge period. In this view, progress has been achieved after a near total destruction of social life, and the privatization of education, which marks the contemporary moment, should not be frowned upon as Pheakdei does but actually embraced and welcomed. The view of progress in the next chapter captures the idea of social mobility, but from a different perspective to that of Pheakdei's life story, and celebrates the proliferation of school choice, such as Chenda's private tutoring classes and Sokhem's NGO school, and the connection between school and pagoda through people such as Sambath.

Chapter 9
The Historical View of Progress

9.1 Introduction

Sixteen years after Pol Pot's death in 1998, the Cambodia-Thai border is no longer home to thousands of refugees or a haven for Khmer Rouge fighters. The land mines that prevented Hun Sen's forces (backed by the Vietnamese) from penetrating the northern parts of Cambodia are gone, removed in haste by the *Kor Pram*[34] or with care by the Cambodian Mine Action Centre, a leading NGO tasked with removing landmines. Also removed from the border were the UN refugee camps that had sheltered the hundreds of thousands of Cambodians who had fled the Khmer Rouge.

The contemporary border between northern Cambodia and southern Thailand is now safe to move within, between, and across. The uninhibited movement of people and remittances across the border is a source of economic opportunity and sign of prosperity for Cambodians seeking higher wages. It is a space of capitalistic intentions: Thai construction firms and small businesses want to hire low-wage Cambodian workers to reduce expenses and increase profits; Cambodian workers want to move to Thailand to find higher wages, sending remittances back home to support families. From the perspective of rural farmers in Cambodia, crossing the border represents a form of social mobility that could bring economic security.

Preah Go has experienced an increase in migration to Thailand since the 2000s. In 2013, the Preah Go commune council recorded 329 people who migrated — legally or illegally — to Thailand. That represents about 4 percent of the Preah Go community. One person to migrate was the daughter of Rotha Serey. Serey, a septuagenarian, has lived in Preah Go almost his entire life, experiencing the ups (e.g., independence) and downs (e.g., countless conflicts) of Cambodia since the 1950s. He and his family have personally experienced all of the forms of education in Cambodia. When it comes to his daughter who migrated to Thailand, he situates the increased level of migration to Thailand in historical terms*:*

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[34] See footnote 28.

People in Siem Reap just started going to work in Thailand recently. I have lived through different times, including the Pol Pot regime, but we don't have to talk about it. I became an adult in the time of King Sihanouk and I got married in 1970 when Lon Nol started to control the country and then Pol Pot in 1975, 1976, 1977, and 1978. The Pol Pot regime took over the country for three years, eight months, and twenty days. The Pol Pot regime ended in 1979 and after that, since 1980, the country has developed a lot. Today's society is more developed [than before].

Serey sees his daughter's choice to migrate with her husband to Thailand as progress — a sign of social mobility and economic development — when compared to the lack of choice he experienced during the Khmer Rouge period. Today there is freedom in movement and in choice that was unavailable — and punishable by death — under Pol Pot's regime. Serey is proud that his daughter, after years of crossing, is now a *meekjal* ("master of the wind"), or a leader who helps people across the border and finds them work. Inside Preah Go, people often speak with Serey about opportunities to cross the border with his daughter when she visits from Thailand.

However proud he is of the status afforded to him by his daughter's work in Thailand, Serey also recognizes the downside of migration. Serey's experience offers a window into understanding how migration takes on meaning — both good and bad — beyond economic prosperity. When I asked about his son-in-law's experience in Thailand, Serey responded, "My son-in-law makes more money in Thailand, but he drinks a lot." Serey explained to me that his son-in-law is either wasting desperately needed money on alcohol or coping with the stress of living in a foreign country through alcohol. The main stress Serey pointed out to me was that his son-in-law was unable to speak Thai. Moreover, Serey has experienced first hand the splitting of families as parents decide to leave their children in Cambodia as they search for higher incomes in Thailand. During my conversations, Serey introduced me to a young girl who lives with him. He described her as an "orphan" not because both of her parents had died but because they had migrated to Thailand in search of economic security.

The proliferation of choice in Preah Go exemplified by migration to Thailand is also present in the education system. In Serey's perspective it is a welcomed alternative to the years under Khmer Rouge rule. Serey is proud that his grandchild is able to experience choices in learning that were unavailable in the Khmer Rouge period. However, he also recognizes the downsides to a system that discriminates

based on economic means. "There are more opportunities," Serey told me at the end of our time together, "but I feel a bit sad because I don't have enough money for my grandchild's education."

In order to understand how illegal migration to Thailand and the increased choice in education have become viewed as signs of progress, it is important to understand the circumstances through which people such as Rotha Serey survived. Viewed through the historical narrative of progress from social destruction during the Khmer Rouge period to abundant choice in work and education, Serey's biography captures the cultural processes of meaning making in contemporary Cambodia that offer an alternative view on social progress to that of Pheakdei presented in Chapter 8. Moreover, Serey's biography adds a historical understanding of the contemporary period of educational privatization. This chapter first looks at the progression of education in Serey's lifetime.

Similar to the movement from destruction to choice broadly captured by migration to Thailand, the education system has also experienced a proliferation of choice and freedom. Unlike Serey's children's educational experiences in the 1970s and 1980s, his grandchild has had the opportunity to learn in multiple spaces of education, which is similar to his own experience growing up in the 1950s and 1960s. Then the chapter situates Serey's historical narrative of progress in education in his experiences during the Khmer Rouge period, giving a historical comparison to the multiplicity of choices people have in work (i.e., the ability to migrate) and in education (i.e., the ability to attend public, private, or NGO schools) today. Similar to migration to Thailand, increased choice and freedom in education comes at a certain cost. These costs are explored in the fourth section, which is followed by a conclusion that returns to the idea of social mobility.

9.2 Progress in education

Serey's history offers a window into the different historical periods of development in education in the Preah Go community. Not only was he educated in the Preah Go community, but also his children and grandchild received their schooling there. Collectively, Serey and his family have participated in most types of education since the 1950s, some of which have been recounted in the previous chapters. Similar to the development of Thai migration as a sign of progress, the education system in

contemporary times has developed and expanded in positive ways, especially when compared to the education system during the Khmer Rouge period. A comparison of the different types of education over the course of Serey's lifetime adds historical context to the contemporary moment of educational privatization, offering a positive reading of social change at least compared to Pheakdei's frustration dealing with a political order marked by corruption and largesse. It becomes clear that the present system, despite its downsides, is a welcomed change from life, and education, under the Khmer Rouge.

9.2.1 Public school pre-Khmer Rouge

Serey began his education at the Prey To Tung primary school in Preah Go, which was built in the 1960s and still functioned when I collected data (image 9.1). At Prey To Tung, he attended secular, mainstream schooling that was originally implemented by the French and expanded during Sihanouk's rule. "We started from Grade 12 to study the whole year, learning consonants and vowels," Serey told me. "Then [we] went to Grade 11, and then 10. We could read and write and calculate numbers. For Grade 9, we could minus and divide numbers, and Grade 8 we could solve exercises and Grade 7, we could do it more and more." At the end of primary school in Grade 7, students had to travel to Siem Reap city to attend the *Lycée*, a secondary school. The distance from Preah Go to Siem Reap city caused many students to stop their schooling after primary school.

Although Serey's memory of Prey To Tung primary school is limited, he does remember the different dynamics related to fees and testing when compared to the education of his children and grandchild. He recalled there were no enrollment fees in primary school and that teachers did not take money from students. His parents paid tax on their small piece of land, but he was not sure how the school was funded. Students never bought examination answers like some students do today. There was no systemic cheating like there had been in the 1990s and 2000s when teachers or examination proctors allowed paying students to cheat. Nevertheless, whenever there was an important examination such as at the end of the semester or the end of primary school in Grade 7, police officers lined the classrooms to prevent parents from throwing in answer sheets to students.

Image 9.1 Prey To Tung primary school, 2014

9.2.2 Pagoda school in the 1960s

When Serey finished Grade 7 at Prey To Tung, he went to pagoda school instead of the *Lycée*. His uncle was a head monk in Siem Reap and encouraged him to join the monkhood. Studying at the pagoda was a coveted social position at the time. He studied at Wat Preah Promreath for 12 years, which had been built in 1371 and still stands in downtown Siem Reap City (image 9.2). "In pagoda school," Serey recalled, "I studied 12 subjects, translated religious books, learned geography, and completed exercises." He preferred pagoda school to public school because the strict rules allowed him to focus on his studies. Since he lived in the pagoda and had no responsibilities other than Buddhist ceremonies, he could devote his undivided attention to studying. When he lived in Preah Go, by contrast, he had to help his parents farm after school.

The pagoda school relied on donations from households and students. The donations were used to hire teachers and maintain facilities. Community members provided food for the monks and money to build dormitories on pagoda grounds. Sometimes students had to pay to hire teachers from outside the pagoda who would teach subjects elder monks could not. Serey explained: "We hired a teacher to teach at the pagoda. There were several monks and we studied together by paying a monthly

fee to the teacher. The teacher took 15 Riel per month from each student." Serey also had to spend money on textbooks and materials.

Image 9.2 Wat Preah Promreath in Siem Reap City, 2014

The pagoda school was strict. During examinations in the pagoda school there was absolutely no cheating in Serey's memory. The school was so strict that it was unimaginable for cheating to take place. Despite the strict atmosphere, during important examinations, the police lined the pagoda to prevent people from entering and monks were frisked before going into the examination room. The use of police to prevent cheating was a common practice not only in pagoda schools but also in mainstream schooling, and continues into the present. In terms of class size, Serey said:

> For pagoda school, there were more than 30 students, maybe 35, 36, or 37 [students per class]. For public school, it depended on the level and each class. Some classes had more than 20 students, but I forget [exactly]. At that time, there were not many students going to study.

When his father asked for help on the family farm, Serey's studying in the pagoda school ended. This was similar to Sambath's experience in secondary school. Serey returned home and began a life of farming. He married in 1970, at the time when

conflict in the country began. During the Khmer Rouge period, Serey said, "education was about constructing the canal…there was no education." His children did not go to school until after the conflict ended.

9.2.3 Education post-Khmer Rouge

When the Khmer Rouge period finally ended in 1979, Preah Go tried to rebuild its education and pagoda systems. Although a few monks joined the pagoda and religious life began again for some community members, few children received their education inside the pagoda. Instead, the secular, mainstream school system became the main site for education, as I have stated previously. After hiring teachers from the village (and a few outside), Prey To Tung primary school reopened.

The leaders of Preah Go also created a program whereby each village of the commune elected one person to teach adults how to read and write. Since Serey was an educated man before the Pol Pol era, it made sense for him to do this. In 1980 he became the official adult tutor in Preah Go. "I started to work as a literature teacher. I taught for two years each day to both genders." The classes took place at his home and he taught about 15 adults. When I asked if he made a salary from this work, he said: "No salary, but the other teachers in the district told me to take two Riel [from each student]. Some [students] gave me [money] and some did not." This arrangement is similar to contemporary private tutoring, and is, in fact, the earliest mention of private tutoring in my research albeit a space for adults and not children as in its contemporary manifestation exemplified by Chenda in Chapter 5.

Serey tutored for two years before being asked to work for the government. After finishing his career as a tutor, he started conducting research on hygiene in six villages and reported his findings to the commune office. His youngest brother eventually recruited him to work in the police department. He was in charge of recording in a notebook all of the small skirmishes the police had with the Khmer Rouge to the north of Siem Reap, closer to the Cambodia-Thai border. He had to determine when and where each incident occurred. If people were injured or died, he had to note that too. This job was dangerous because it required Serey to travel to rural areas of the province where the fighting occurred. At 29 years old he stopped working because his wife, who had just given birth, did not want Serey to work all over the province, risking his life for record keeping. Living together and farming, Serey and his wife could raise their children and oversee their children's education.

When his children attended school in the 1980s and 1990s, fees first appeared. Serey remembered paying an enrollment fee for his children in primary school. Private tutoring by public school teachers also started at this time and became a common feature in his children's education. He saw no problem with the arrangement, since he himself had tutored adults a few years earlier. He gave money to his children who gave money to their teachers. His children had different feelings, which they told me on many occasions I sat with the family after interviewing Serey. For instance, Serey's son once told me: "The teacher took the money. If we didn't give the money to him, we would not be allowed to take the exam." For Serey's son, the informal fees in education caused teachers to act improperly. By contrast, Serey had the opposite opinion because he compared the contemporary education system to its non-existence under the Khmer Rouge.

Serey's children did not place the education system in its history as he had, and instead focused on the other fees and bribes they experienced growing up. The examination system was perhaps the most notorious location for informal fees. His children would buy answer sheets from their teachers and begged Serey to bribe the proctors of the exam in exchange for help. I asked Serey's son about examination costs when he was in school. It cost "5,000 Riel for one subject and the teacher would ask for about US$300 [approximately 1,200,000 Riel] when we passed the exam. And if we didn't give them the money, they would sell [the scores attached to] the names who had passed the exam."

Serey's son was referring to the different ways teachers could extract money from students through the examination. Before the examination, students could purchase answer guides that they could sneak into the examination room. During the examination, students could bribe proctors to be allowed to cheat. Sometimes proctors themselves would answer a student's examination, while other times a proctor would simply not report students' cheating. What I found most interesting was that a proctor would treat students differently during the examination. Different prices allowed students to use cheat-sheets or receive help from a protector. Those students who did not pay any money before the examination would be punished and held accountable by the official rules if caught cheating during the exam.

After the examination, some teachers would sell the passing scores back to students. Serey's son indicated this cost US$300. The exact process of such a system worked by detaching the names of students from their scores. The scores would then

be re-arranged by highest bidder. If a student, for example, could not pay the teacher to keep her or his passing score, the teacher would then try to sell that score to students who had failed. In this way, Serey's son highlighted how every stage of the examination process was turned into a business opportunity.

9.2.4 Education in the 21st century

It was only in the early 2000s that Serey remembered seeing foreigners in Preah Go. The Preah Go lower secondary school (image 9.3), originally built in the 1980s, was developed by international NGOs starting in 2007. The school received a library from an American NGO and an auxiliary building from an Australian one. (The auxiliary building was the location of Chenda's private tutoring classes in chapter 5.) NGOs also added concrete floors to each classroom, leveled the land to prevent flooding, and added a school fence, which stopped cows from accidently grazing on school grounds. Beyond the physical development of the school, NGOs gave scholarships, bicycles, and rice to needy families. Serey's grandchild received a scholarship to attend private tutoring in 2013, and was hoping to receive a bicycle in 2015. A few times, a foreign volunteer taught English inside the school for an extended period.

A more recent development was the introduction of NGO schools in Preah Go. These schools did not operate inside public schools, as had some of the other NGOs present in the community, but did overlap with mainstream schooling through scholarships that were intended to pay for private tutoring classes and school uniforms. In 2009, two NGO schools, operated by Cambodians but funded by international donors (one of which was Wish For Cambodia School presented in chapter 6 and the other one called Sustainable Help School), began operating in Preah Go, and in 2012 a Korean orphanage was built that offered free English lessons coupled with lessons in Christianity. His grandchild studied "at three schools: public school, [NGO] School, and the Christian school for English." Serey reflected on the abundance of school options: "In my opinion, I am very happy because there are lots of places to study."

Image 9.3 The Preah Go Lower Secondary School, 2014

The multiple spaces of education are a sign of progress. Serey's family can pick and choose which services to consume and which to forego. Although public school is believed to be mandatory because it is the easiest pathway to advance to higher education, private tutoring by public school teachers, which was the main additional space of learning when Serey's children were in school, is being challenged by the other spaces of education that offer free services, such as Wish For Cambodia school. When I interviewed Serey, his grandchild, who was enrolled in Grade 5, did not attend private tutoring, but did the year before. I enquired as to why this was the case: "Because she learns at NGO school, Christian school, public school, and dancing class too." In other words, Serey's grandchild chose to attend a combination of other educational services that did not include private tutoring. Private tutoring, in this perspective, is but one of the many spaces to which families can choose to send their children.

The different educational choices available depend on the grade in which the child is enrolled. Serey's grandchild, for instance, is in Grade 5 so the extra spaces of education such as NGO schools and the Korean orphanage act more as sites of day care than as a site of examination preparation. Since private tutoring costs money, there is an economic element in Serey's logic: "Students don't have to pay if they

study at NGOs or Christian charities. Students have to pay some money if they go to public school." In higher grades, however, Serey's grandchild may return to private tutoring in order to do well in mainstream school and on mainstream examinations just as his children had.

Serey is proud to see his grandchild access the different types of education available in Preah Go. The education system in contemporary Cambodia is, in Serey's opinion, finally reaching the heights achieved under Sihanouk when he attended school. When I asked if there were any differences between his school and his grandchild's school, he replied:

> It's a little different. The difference is that when I was in school, there were no big school buildings. We faced problems with travelling; I walked to school, but students nowadays have motorbikes. For example, I walked for two hours to school but students today spend only ten minutes.

In order to understands Serey's positive outlook on the contemporary education system, it is important to understand Serey's biography. In the next section, Serey's history and life story show how an educated man survived the Khmer Rouge.

9.3 Three years, eight months, and twenty days

Life under the Khmer Rouge regime was a surreal experiment in human cruelty. "One day felt like two months," Serey told me. The leader of the movement, Pol Pot, declared his socio-economic experiment "Year Zero" in an attempt to re-start history that, he believed, was plagued by Western and capitalistic imperialist influences. He wanted to create a communist society through a "Super Great Leap Forward" (*moha loot phloh moha oschar*), connecting his movement to Mao's economic program in China, which included forced evictions and enemy purges (Khmer Rouge party documents translated in Chandler, Kiernan, & Boua, 1988, p. 11). Unlike Mao, however, Pol Pot aimed to achieve communism without going through socialism, as Marx had theorized. In 1975, two Khmer Rouge members were quoted as saying Cambodia would "be the first nation to create a completely communist society without wasting time on intermediate steps" (quoted in Fletcher, 2009). When the Khmer Rouge came to power in April 1975, they "forcibly emptied Cambodia's towns and cities, abolished money, schools, private property, law, courts, and

markets, forbade religious practices, and set almost everybody to work in the countryside growing food" (Chandler, 1999, p. vii). Serey remembered, "If we wanted to pray and they saw us, they would kill us."

The massive social dislocation implemented under the Khmer Rouge was a cruel reality for Serey who was educated for six years in secular school and then spent 12 years in pagoda school learning to be a monk. He was an educated man, a trusted member in his community, who was forced to hide his religion, education, and ability to speak French. His intelligence likely saved his life, but he had to play dumb to survive:

| **Extract 9.1 "…we kept it confidential."** |
Serey:	At that time, during Pol Pot, we could not be educated. For example, I was not that educated, but if I said I was, they would immediately kill me.
William	How did you keep it secret?
Serey:	Yes, we kept it confidential. When they asked me to do [something] I pretended I didn't know how to do it. But actually I did know how to do it.

In our conversations, Serey recounted how the entire social system was recreated into communal living: everyone labored at the same time, ate at the same time, and slept at the same time. Men and women were separated and forbade from fraternizing. Children were cared for by groups of soldiers and taught "songs and poems that reflect[ed] good models in the period of political/armed struggle..." (Khmer Rouge party documents translated in Chandler, Kiernan, & Boua, 1988, p. 113-114). The secular education system was believed to be a remnant of French colonialism, so it was eliminated along with many teachers. Wearing glasses went out of fashion because they implied intelligence. Religion was not compatible with communism, so it too was prohibited from daily life. There were arranged marriages and joint wedding ceremonies. Breaking rules was punishable by death, and spies were believed to be everywhere, creating an atmosphere of mistrust among villagers.

The Khmer Rouge regime ruled Cambodia for three years, eight months, and twenty days, but the way in which they ruled changed over time. At first, the Khmer Rouge was a welcomed alternative to the corrupt Lon Nol regime and was embraced by many rural Cambodians when King Sihanouk made radio announcements in

support of the Khmer Rouge. Once in power, however, the Khmer Rouge lost the support of many civilians who experienced forced labor and food rations. Serey remembered the last six months as being the worst: "For six months, we ate rice a little bit, like a small plate and mostly just porridge, maybe around six or seven spoons each time. If we resisted [against the hunger], we lived. If not, we died." By the end of the social experiment, a painful paradox emerged: a country lush with rice in the 1960s and a rural political movement whose logo was encircled by a wreath made of rice, had after three years created an agrarian society unable to feed its citizenry. Rice was distrubted unevenly (with more going to people in high positions of power) and traded to other countries such as China in exchange for other goods. People starved and looked for ways to survive. Some risked death by stealing food. Others, such as Serey's wife, scraped the roots of fruit trees for extra nourishment.

The six-month period Serey recounted with the most dread was when he worked on the 1978 canal that connected two towns ten kilometers apart. Canals were a necessary component of sustainable rural living, providing water to rice fields. Building a canal was back breaking labor. Serey remembered that the work on the canal was separated by gender. Each day Preah Go residents woke at 3:30 am for a meeting. At these meetings, Khmer Rouge leaders discussed concepts of morality, which could last for hours. At 6:00 am work started, finishing for the morning at 11:00. At 1:30 pm, work would start again and last until 5:00. The relentless work made no sense to Serey, but he was too scared to act otherwise.

The Khmer Rouge controlled people by instilling fear in society. Serey told me that the leaders of the Khmer Rouge in Siem Reap would "invite" (i.e., demand) all community members to gather in front of the royal palace in Siem Reap. Khmer Rouge leaders would then ask who was a monk, a Lon Nol solider, or an educated person who could speak French. Those who raised their hands had to publically confess. Some people, Serey remembered, raised their hands even though they were not educated, religious, or a solider in hopes that there was some benefit for being classed in such a way. The people who raised their hands were then separated out from the group. Later in the night, the group of educated people, monks, and soldiers were walked out of the communal living area and never seen again. Serey thought that the Khmer Rouge either burned the people alive or they threw them into waters infested with crocodiles: "In Siem Reap, there was no kiln [for burning people]. If they arrested you, they would bring you for crocodile food." There was, however, a

kiln built inside a pagoda atop a small mountain that could be seen from Preah Go. Indeed, Sambath in Chapter 7 recounted stories of people in Preah Go who remembered the smell of death coming from the mountain.

The Khmer Rouge used psychological duplicity to trick people into doing things they would otherwise not do. Serey's cousin, who had been a Lon Nol solider, was invited to Siem Reap for a meeting with the Khmer Rouge, thinking it was a privileged occasion. Serey remembered seeing his cousin wake up early and receive money and food from his grandmother before heading off to the city. He even invited Serey to join him because he thought it was a special day. Serey recalled thinking something was not right, so declined the offer. His cousin never came back from that meeting. The Khmer Rouge killed him for supporting Lon Nol. Serey's sister-in-law was also killed, but for different reasons: she dried rice under the roof of her house, which was incorrect in the eyes of the Khmer Rouge leaders in Preah Go. Everyone in her group learned a valuable lesson: do not deviate from the rules even if some are asinine.

The fear and psychological distress of life under the Khmer Rouge for families such as Serey's was made worse through the hierarchical system imposed on social life. The social system was broken into groups (*krom*), consisting of about ten families. A three-person committee was in charge of each group. The group leaders, such as Sambath in Chapter 7, were responsible for all members in a group. If a member in the group broke the rules, not only would that member be punished but so would the leader, although to different degrees. For instance, when Serey's sister-in-law broke the rules for drying rice, she was killed. Her group leader, however, was likely disciplined in less extreme ways: he could have been denied food or verbally reprimanded by his superiors. Nevertheless, a group leader, or one of his family members, faced the prospect of death because such a fate rested on the capricious orders of a superior who faced similar pressure from his superiors. This system of social order and discipline worked its way up to the highest levels, creating a hierarchy whereby anyone in a position of power feared for his or her life from leaders above. The best course of action for group leaders was to enforce strict discipline on those below them. This protected the group and the leaders, but created a miserable life for people low in the hierarchy such as Serey and his family. Group leaders, however, were treated differently than the workers. "When someone became head of a collective group, he could eat delicious food," Serey recounted. This

resentment divided society into classes, something Pol Pot's return to Year Zero was supposed to avoid.

Serey knew the Khmer Rouge period in Cambodian history was over when he heard gun fighting to the south of Preah Go all day and night. He finally knew it was completely over when all of the leaders of his group and the district went missing. "If people were able to survive the regime, they had a valuable life. For me, I was very lucky."

Serey puts his contemporary life circumstances in the context of the history of his near-death experiences during the Khmer Rouge period. He is "lucky" to have survived and therefore thankful for each day he has lived since. Compared to the incomprehensible life moments he lived through, such as his sister-in-law's death, the educational opportunities and choices that his children and grandchild have are unthinkable; he never imagined such a life ever existing. Although he sees the level of choice as a sign of progress, he also understands the difficulties that emerge when choice proliferates. In the next section, the paradox of choice — that it is desirable but has downsides — is discussed through the many spaces of schooling.

9.4 The paradox of choice

The choice to migrate to Thailand is a source of pride, status, and prestige in communities whose members were once forced to flee their country in fear of fighting, starvation, and disease. Maryann Bylander, who has studied Cambodia-Thai migration in a village close to Preah Go, argued that "over time migration has become imbued with meaning beyond its economic promise, associated with status, modernity, filial responsibility and idealized versions of both masculinity and femininity… As migration becomes normative over time it can be seen as a rite of passage, a status marker, or the way to participate in a consumer lifestyle" (Bylander, 2014, p. 301).

A similar argument can be made regarding the proliferation of educational choice in Preah Go that Serey's life story highlighted. As fee-based tutoring and NGO schooling become normalized in the 2010s, the different spaces of learning, to use Bylander's phrase, "become imbued with meaning," especially when compared to the past. Originally, private tutoring provided literacy education to adults in the post-Khmer Rouge period and then became a necessary mechanism to support the

rebuilding of a national education system by providing additional learning and income to students and teacher respectively. Similarly, NGOs originally provided desperately needed funding to localities in Cambodia suffering from four years of near total social destruction. In the contemporary moment, however, private tutoring and NGO schools are indicative of the neoliberalization of social life. The ability to spend money on extra education is a sign of prestige. Children who do not attend private tutoring or NGO schools are often blamed as being lazy. Attending multiple spaces of education is a sign that one can afford to devote time to education instead of farming. There is a meaning in the contemporary landscape of education that goes beyond the economic promise of being able to secure a high-paying job in the future as Sokhem had hoped for his students.

What Bylander (2014) does not mention, however, are the negative outcomes from such systems such as migration or educational choice. Paying for educational services creates a system where there are financial barriers to schooling. The spaces, in other words, segregate society along lines of income, or at least along lines of what people spend their income on. Although the ability for Serey's granddaughter to attend different spaces of education made him proud, in Extract 9.2 he responded to the inequality that emerges from such a system:

Extract 9.2 "…it's not fair but what can we do to deal with it?"	
William:	Do you think it's fair for wealthy Cambodians to be able to purchase more education than poor Cambodians?
Serey:	I don't know how to think about this. If we have money we can get education but those who don't have money will not be able to study.
William:	Do you think that is fair?
Serey:	I think it's not fair but what can we do to deal with it? Now we have NGO schools that don't require students to pay and there are good teachers there. Only poor students will be accepted to study there. Nowadays, NGO schools support students to study in college too.

Although Serey told me he wishes for more NGOs to open schools in Preah Go, he also believed "public school is better than private school." When Serey spoke of private school he was referring to NGO schools, and when he spoke of public school he included private tutoring. This contradictory stance towards the multiple spaces of

education is similar to understanding the economic benefit of migration to Thailand along with the family destruction it causes: although there are downsides to fee-based private tutoring that are partially alleviated by NGO schools, public school is still the best option for many children.

Despite the proliferation of school choice in Preah Go, Serey also recognized the precarious nature of fee-based schooling in poor communities. This was demonstrated when I once asked Serey about medical costs because I had learned such expenditures often put families in difficult financial positions where compromises have to be made. It was Chenda's story in Chapter 5 that altered me to the difficult positions families often find themselves in when a family member needs medical care. Serey once got sick and had to go to the Siem Reap provincial hospital. I asked him how he afforded the costs: "We didn't have money when I got sick, so my children stopped studying." Serey needed money for hospital care, so his family decided to reallocate the money used on their children's education.

Serey's choice to use money originally allocated for his children to attend school highlights the complex nature of educational choice in low-income areas. Serey's family had to sacrifice the future (in the form of their children's education) for an immediate (medical) need. The calculations families must make between medical care and education services (but also food expenditures and other needs such as clothing) are often idiosyncratic. Nevertheless, they do constitute a reality for families with limited financial means and highlight one of the paradoxes of choice: in an environment of abundant choice, the different financial barriers to access each (educational) space construct a zero-sum system. Unable to afford all choices, families must decide on what they will spend their money, sometimes quickly reallocating expenditures in times of emergencies. When it comes to the historical narrative of progress Serey so proudly recalls, it is the paradox of choice that leaves him helpless: "but what can we do to deal with it?"

9.5 Conclusion

Where Serey has been and what he has seen makes all the problems of contemporary Cambodia, such as those mentioned by Pheakdei, seem minor (and miniscule). He has survived social destruction and witnessed social progress. He knows what it is like to

have neither freedom nor choice. He is a happy man — a lucky man — and proud of his grandchild's future.

His portrait showed the development of education in Cambodia from the Sihanouk era through the Khmer Rouge and finally to the present. He situates his perspective in a historical understanding that compares each moment to the destruction caused by the Khmer Rouge. From such a perspective, it is hard not to see in a positive light the massive social change that has occurred in Cambodia since the 1970s.

Serey's story shows the arch of educational progress like that of a roller coaster. It was on an upward trajectory in the 1950s and 1960s, only to come crashing down in the 1970s. The 1980s and 1990s witnessed big rises in the re-opening of schools followed by small dips in the form of an excessive fee system. In the contemporary moment, Serey's grandchild is on an upward trajectory, rivaling only the education he received during his childhood. Education in Preah Go, Serey believes, is doing well precisely because of the many spaces of education that exist and all of the international aid Preah Go receives.

Yet, similar to the migration of his daughter to Thailand, Serey also recognizes some of the difficulty within the contemporary moment in education. When choice is linked to financial means, poor families are put in difficult situations. They have to decide what they are willing to spend their money on — which combination of choices is affordable. Sometimes these choices result in neglecting education.

Whatever the progression of life or its political impediments, as contrasted by Serey and Pheakdei's perspectives on social change, the actual process of navigating the many spaces of education, which have been portrayed in the previous chapters, is complex and difficult for many families. This process is detailed in the final chapter of section II by focusing on the many decisions a mother must make regarding her children's education, bringing together many of the insights learned from the previous chapters.

Chapter 10

The difficulty of navigating educational space

10.1 Introduction

Tina Punthea, a mother of four in Preah Go, looked up at the airplane that had just taken off from Siem Reap airport. The thunderous noise overhead had, like many times before, interrupted our conversation. We paused and watched the modern miracle of aviation soar through the sky. Punthea has never been on an airplane but she is used to the sound of jet engines living so close to an international airport where roughly two million tourists pass through each year.

 "Where would you go if you could take an airplane anywhere?" I asked once the sound had passed.

She quickly answered with one word: "Malaysia."

In 2011, there were as many as 50,000 Cambodian women working in Malaysia as domestic workers or so-called "maids" (Vrieze, 2012). Although Prime Minister Hun Sen banned the migration of women to Malaysia in the same year because of the poor working conditions and outright exploitation of some maids by their employers, Punthea dreamed of the economic security the job would bring her family. Punthea's cousin and a friend migrated to Malaysia in 2007: "They went to work in Malaysia as maids, and when they come back they built big houses." She estimated that Cambodian maids in Malaysia earned US$200 per month, almost twice the amount she and her husband made combined.

At thirty-eight, Punthea's hands are rough from two decades of weaving baskets (image 10.1). Like many women in Preah Go, Punthea carts palm leaves and rattan by bicycle five kilometers from a forest to her home once a week. She then soaks and smokes the leaves to make them pliable and give them color. Carefully cutting and weaving the pieces together, she slowly assembles baskets that can be found in many of the luxury hotels in Siem Reap used as rubbish bins. I found a basket like hers in the market selling for US$5. On a good day Punthea makes two

baskets, which can earn her 10,000 Riel (US$2.50) from middlemen who buy directly from her and sell to shop owners in Siem Rap or Poi Pet, a border town between Cambodia and Thailand.

Image 10.1 Punthea weaving a basket

Punthea's husband, Rithevy, works as a builder. He is hired on a casual basis by different construction firms in Siem Reap city and earns 10,000 Riel (US$2.50) for each day of work. His carpentry and masonry skills are on full display at their home in Preah Go. When they married in 1994, Punthea and Rithevy lived in a small, thatched house, which still stands. Over time, however, Rithevy built a wooden house on high stilts. When I visited their home in February 2014, Rithevy was tiling the ground floor and laying bricks to enclose the space under the house (image 10.2).

Image 10.2 Punthea's home, new (top) and old (bottom)

As a parent of four children, ranging in age from seven to 19, Punthea has to navigate the educational landscape in Preah Go with limited financial resources. Similar to the baskets she weaves, Punthea's experiences and decisions intertwine different aspects of society and education. She worries about the cost of education, but believes that schooling is necessary for her children to find good jobs. She lives through the

humiliation of being judged poor or wealthy by the commune council in hopes of receiving a poor card that would ensure aid from international donors. Her children discover and manage the different teaching styles in NGO schools, public schools, and private tutoring; and she defers to the older generation to make sense of Buddhist teachings.

As the final chapter in the findings section of this dissertation, the portrait of Punthea, a mother of school-aged children in the Preah Go community, brings together different themes and social realities as she tries to figure out what is best for her children. The chapter looks at three different social spaces and relationships: (1) the space of government in daily life, and Punthea's relationship to the commune council and, by extension, international aid organizations; (2) the space of education, and Punthea's relationship to her children vis-à-vis educational decisions; and (3) the space of the pagoda and Punthea's relationship to religious life in the community. The chapter ends by returning to Punthea's dream of finding economic security — her dream to earn a large salary — in order to allow her children to thrive educationally.

10.2 The politics of poor cards

The portrait of Noreaksey Pheakdei, the second assistant chief of the Preah Go commune council, in Chapter 8 highlighted the politics of poor cards. A poor card is the government issued identification card that determines which families are deemed "poor" in order to distribute aid to those most in need. There are two different levels, "poor one" and "poor two," that differentiate the severity of poverty and, subsequently, the benefits a family can receive. Families with a poor one card receive free health care and are at the top of the list for aid packages distributed by NGOs, which include school scholarships (i.e., money to pay private tutoring fees, school uniforms, textbooks, notebooks, etc.) but also free rice or chickens. Families with a poor two card receive a fifty percent discount on social services and are given second priority for NGO donations.

Since the commune council determines which families receive poor cards, Pheakdei complained that the process favored relatives or families who supported the local commune council officials. In other words, poor cards are a form of political largesse and sometimes do not reach families actually living in poverty. As Pheakdei

stated, "sometimes… the real poor cannot get anything because the authority gave everything to their relatives."

Such a situation is at the heart of Punthea's relationship with the commune council. She laments the fact that she cannot receive a poor card. Over the course of my conversations with Punthea, she referred to the fact that she cannot get a poor card or its benefits in multiple ways:

"They think we are rich."

 "We cannot pass because they think that we are rich."

"I never get gifts. They don't put my name [on the list]. I never get anything."

"They never include me as poor."

In her various expressions, the actors referred to as "they" prevent Punthea from being considered poor and receiving benefits. It is not that she is too wealthy to be considered poor, but that a group of actors — "they" — prevent her economic poverty from being known and legitimated. In each case, "they" referred to the members of the commune council. Such a reference highlights the power "they" have in society; the commune council members are solely responsible for determining the government-recognized poverty level or wealth of each family by holding the power to assign labels. Punthea, in other words, is powerless, or believes she is powerless, in her relationship to local government officials.

When power to decide who is poor and who is not rests in the hands of locally elected commune council members, the concept of poverty turns from a state of economic affairs into one of political affiliation. If one is affiliated with the wrong party, such as the CNRP, or not strongly affiliated with the right one, such as the CPP, then benefits will not likely reach some families that are actually in economic poverty.

Although Punthea did not tell me which party she voted for in the last election, the reason the commune council thinks Punthea's family is rich is obvious to anyone walking past her home. Or at least it is obvious to Punthea. The high stilted, wood-planked house with a concrete base gives the impression of wealth. "They just come to take a picture," Punthea said as she explained the humiliating process of poor card

selection, "and we have to stand in front of the house…. They look at only the surface, not the income." The commune council, in Punthea's perspective, does not look at the context or history of her family's portrait. Neither do they consider the politics of framing the photo.[35]

A picture of Punthea in front of her old house would suggest a different economic viability than one in front of her new house. Instead, they look at the surface image of her life — that is, her house — devoid of the struggles she faces trying to support four children; devoid of the landscape in which the portrait exists. The commune council does not realize that Punthea's husband had slowly built the house by hand over two decades or that Punthea was so poor that she had to ask her sister to take in one of her daughters. The commune council is not interested in these details because it is this simple process of photos that looks legitimate in the eyes of international donors who want to ensure their donations to reach the poorest (looking) families. "We are poor as well," Punthea complained. "But they don't know... It's not fair."

Without a poor card, Punthea must navigate the many spaces of education with limited resources, a paradox of choice, which Serey highlighted in Chapter 9. In the next section, I explore some of Punthea's educational decision-making.

10.3 The economics of educational decision-making

Despite receiving nearly no government or international aid, Punthea allocates most of the family's income, after paying for food, to her children's education. "I tell my children that if you don't study, you will be like me." Punthea sees herself as an uneducated woman who is trapped in poverty. She does not know how to escape the life of a basket weaver, and puts her hope in her children's future: "I want [education] to get a good job for them. Just only that."

Education costs money, however, which is in short supply for Punthea. And yet although she spends most of her money on her children's education, she was unable to talk about exactly how her money was spent. She knows she has to give her

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[35] This insight connects to a shortcoming of the method of portraiture — that is, not situating a person within his or her context or history and thus de-politicizing insights gained from the portrait — which the landscape portraiture attempts to overcome.

children money each day, sometimes more when there are examinations. She does not know, however, exactly what her children pay for or why once inside school. For instance, when I asked what her daughter had spent money on in school that day, Punthea replied, "For buying something. I don't know." Instead, Punthea said her daughter "studies [private tutoring] for several subjects, maybe four or five subjects. I don't ask her. She asks me for 2,000 or 3,000 Riel and then she goes." Punthea gives the money and lets her children figure out how best to spend it. This is perhaps the best strategy in an environment where price is regulated by the free-market of educational services. Each teacher can behave in different ways, possibly changing over the years or in contrasting ways to different children, so it is likely impossible to track precisely the costs to education. It is easier to trust that her children will spend the money in the most advantageous way. Her children, in other words, are the most knowledgeable people in the free market of education to make decisions on spending. Instilling the value of education in her children, Punthea hopes, ensures that her money is spent wisely.

What she does know is that her children have to undertake in private tutoring. They have to go, in her opinion. It is an essential part of the educational experience: not only will her children get more knowledge, but also teachers will treat them better in government class. Speaking of her youngest son, she said, "If he studies private tutoring, he is allowed to sit in the front [of government class]." These sorts of behaviors were not outwardly admitted in my interviews with Chenda in Chapter 5, the lower secondary school teacher who also teaches private tutoring. Although I did notice a difference in Chenda's teaching *style* in government class compared to private tutoring class and that she acted friendlier in private tutoring compared to government school, Punthea's insight suggests that some teachers give benefits to students who attend private tutoring in government class. These sorts of unofficial rewards may go unnoticed by the casual observer such as myself, but highlight an important way in which the privatization of education is enacted. In Punthea's son's case, private tutoring in Grade 1 is sometimes held from 4:00 until 5:00 pm. Although this hour is officially mainstream public school (the second shift of school, which Punthea's son was attending when I was there, officially ends at 5:00 pm), his teacher dismisses all students who cannot pay additional money one hour before school ends. Moreover, the son told me that his teacher encourages students who attend private tutoring to disrespect students who do not attend private tutoring by not listening to

them in government class or by saying they are incorrect, regardless of the answer given. These sorts of tactics, although perhaps exaggerated by Punthea and her son and not necessarily the case for higher grades or other teachers, indicate a type of relationship parents and their children have with teachers specifically and the school generally. It is a relationship that depends on the ability to access the different spaces of schooling.

Outside of mainstream schooling, Punthea has to navigate the multiple spaces of NGO schools. These schools offer educational opportunities to her children for which Punthea does not have to pay. The various schools in Preah Go — Wish For Cambodia (detailed in chapter 6), the Korean church, and Sustainable Help School — offer different services. Wish For Cambodia provides English and Computer lessons in daily classes taught by local Khmer teachers and/or foreign volunteers. The Korean church provides English lessons on the weekends but adds a religious component. Since she lives next to the church, she lets her children go to the lessons. The free food is the biggest draw for her children. Punthea's youngest son told me how he liked eating the cake served there. The Sustainable Help School was the first NGO school to open in Preah Go, and offers English and Khmer lessons taught by Khmer local teachers and foreign volunteers. This is where all of Punthea's children go except her eldest child who attends Wish For Cambodia in the evening.

NGO schools serve multiple functions. First, they provide education on certain subjects (in Preah Go: English, Khmer, and Computing). The foreign language skills are highly valued by parents such as Punthea because such lessons do not officially begin in government school until Grade 7. Punthea thinks this is too late to learn a language. The NGO schools therefore provide an opportunity for young students to receive language training, which is seen, following the same logic presented by Sokhem in Chapter 6, as a vital skill for the tourism job market in Siem Reap. Second, NGO schools provide an opportunity for students to be cared for when not in mainstream public school. In this way, parents do not have to look after young children and can instead work or run errands. Punthea, for instance, can make the trek to the forest to buy weaving materials without worrying about her children. To this end, both NGO schools and the Korean church in Preah Go build time in the official schedule for students to play on school grounds. The games, often organized by foreign volunteers, appeal to many students and attract students to the schools with fun activities beyond learning. Third, NGO schools act as the conduit for many

donations to the community. Much of the international aid in Preah Go goes through NGO schools and then is distributed in the form of bicycles, bags of rice, or scholarships (for private tutoring, etc.) to the community. Although the NGO schools accept the money from abroad and distribute the goods locally, the process is mediated by the commune council, which provides a list of families who are eligible to receive donations based on poor cards.

Although NGO schools are usually sites of young children playing and learning, they do present a challenge for older students. Some students are old enough to work, and have conflicting obligations with learning times offered by the NGOs. This is why Wish For Cambodia offers evening classes to young-adult learners. Other older students are dissuaded from attending NGO school classes when their Khmer teachers are younger than they are. This was the case for Punthea's eldest daughter who decided to switch from Sustainable Help School to Wish for Cambodia because she did not respect a teacher younger than her. Switching schools causes conflict both in the student's need to adjust to new school norms and in the administration of the school (e.g., a changing number of students requires flexibility in classroom seats and school textbooks). As a result of the increasing numbers of students switching NGO schools, Mean Sokhem, the director of Wish For Cambodia presented in Chapter 6, implemented a policy whereby students were only allowed to switch schools once. If a student decided to leave Wish For Cambodia, he or she would not be allowed back.

The biggest challenge for Punthea's eldest child, however, is figuring out the economics of higher education. Punthea's daughter is the first member in the family to even consider attending higher education, and finding, applying, and attending an institution of tertiary education is new and unknown territory. Punthea's eldest daughter graduated from high school in 2013. When I met her in 2014 she was studying English at Wish For Cambodia. "She wants to study medicine," Punthea explained to me after her daughter left for the market, "but I cannot support her because the tuition fee is so high." Instead of being a medical doctor, Punthea has convinced her daughter to attend a private university in Siem Reap that is easy to get into and relatively cheap compared to medical school. "Next year I want her to study at Build Bright University [BBU] in management." BBU costs US$360 for the first year and US$400 the second year. Although these costs are high, they are manageable, especially if her daughter finds a job in the city and continues to live at home.

The challenges Punthea faces navigating the many spaces of education are similar to other social domains. One such social domain is religious life captured by the institution of the pagoda. In the next section, I look at Punthea's relationship to the pagoda by comparing her history and her limited financial means vis-à-vis the pagoda with that of Khemera Sambath from Chapter 8, who happened to be Punthea's teacher in primary school.

10.4 The culture of pagoda life

Punthea's connection to the pagoda in contemporary life is not like Khemera Sambath's in that she attends religious ceremonies during major holidays but does not go to the pagoda each day. For Punthea, the value of the pagoda derives from her mother: "I heard from previous generations that [we go to pagoda] in order to build good merit for the next life." She tries to support the pagoda by giving money when she can, but she has not purchased a painting in the pagoda or donated enough money to have her name inscribed on a pagoda wall. For her, pagoda life is a social requirement that is important but not life defining.

One reason Punthea is not as religious as Sambath or Rotha Serey (chapter 9) may be generational. Whereas Sambath and Serey were born at a time (circa 1950s) when pagoda life was thriving both in terms of community participation inside the pagoda but also in terms of the number of young boys attending pagoda school, Punthea was born at a time (1976) when religion was completely outlawed, many monks were defrocked, and no child received education in pagoda (or mainstream) school. She came of age when the pagoda as a social institution had to be rebuilt and repopulated with monks. The pagoda's role in society, therefore, did not have the same meaning and value as it once had. The older generations such as her mother, Sambath, or Serey had to teach the practices of Buddhism to the younger generation. Learning religious practices, however, was interrupted by the need to find enough food to eat and the difficulty of navigating social life in the other institutions that had been re-constituted such as mainstream public school, the local government, and NGOs. Religious life did not take on the same central position as it once had.

Compared to her parents, Punthea also had a different relationship to Angkor Wat, the temple that is most revered in Cambodia. Whereas her mother primarily sees Angkor Wat as a great religious site, Punthea sees it as a source of economic

opportunity. In 1992, during the UNTAC mission, there was a renewed international effort to clean the Angkor temples, which had begun in the mid 1980s but which were repeatedly interrupted due to the on-going conflict caused by the Khmer Rouge. The temples were seen as cultural centers that needed to be restored to cultivate national pride. After being added to UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1992, an Indian delegation of archeologists and engineers undertook a contract to clean and restore some of the temples in the Angkor complex. Funded internationally, positions to clean the temples were well paid. As a single woman, Punthea took the opportunity not, as I had thought, as an act of merit or good deeds in the Buddhist sense, but for the economic benefits of a steady job. She earned 36,000 Riel per month and was guaranteed a two-year contract. Since she spent only 1,200 Riel each day, this money covered her monthly expenses. She could work for two years without worry, which was a luxury compared to her precarious work as a basket weaver. The job entailed cleaning temples with corrosive liquids, which unfortunately damaged the stone (not to mention the health issues they may have caused employees such as Punthea), and filling in holes with cement. Since she started weaving baskets for a living, Punthea continues to see Angkor Wat as the main attraction for tourists and thus as the source of demand for her product. Without Angkor Wat, Punthea could not sell as many baskets, and the temple complex provides thousands of jobs to tour guides, which is a sought-after profession in Punthea's opinion.

Similar to their mother, Punthea's children participate in pagoda activities only during holidays or when a special ceremony occurs. Although they are being socialized into practices of Buddhism when ceremonies take place, it is clear they do not consider the pagoda as a space for learning like it once had been for Sambath or Serey. None of Punthea's children considered going to the pagoda to receive education, and in fact did not realize learning inside pagoda schools had been possible for earlier generations when I mentioned the subject. To her children, education is primarily given in government school, private tutoring, and NGO schools. Moreover, Punthea's children are being exposed to various religions beyond Buddhism. For instance, the Korean Church next door to Punthea's home offers free English courses (as well as free cake) coupled with Christian teachings. With the exposure to religions other their Buddhism, children in Preah Go will ultimately have to make a choice as to which religion to follow or not follow. Children in past generations practiced Buddhism in a more-or-less automatic way. Serey's grandchild (chapter 9) was

similarly exposed to multiple religions, and Serey valued the choice his granddaughter would have once she became an adult. The relationship to the pagoda for Punthea and her children, therefore, is not as strong as it once had been but it still is an institution in social life. The institution of the pagoda is important in social life, but it is a cultural relic that does not determine the future direction of her children's lives as it once had for older generations.

It is now time to return to Punthea's aspirations both for herself and her children. In her contemporary social life, Punthea desires nothing more than her children's success. She wants them to escape poverty through education, and this sometimes forces her to make extreme decisions in her own life. In the concluding section, I try to understand Punthea's decision to embrace illegal migration in an effort to ensure social mobility for her children in their future.

10.5 Conclusion

After Punthea answered my far-fetched question about flying on an airplane to Malaysia, she told me about her more feasible wish to work in Thailand, similar to Rotha Serey's daughter in Chapter 9. Like many people in Preah Go, the prospect of working in Thailand is attractive for the economic benefits it brings. It is so attractive that even some students in lower secondary school have dropped out in order to earn a living in Thailand. In 2011, for instance, I attended a school meeting at the Preah Go lower secondary school where migration to Thailand by students was the main topic. Many people were concerned about young children making the journey to Thailand, but did not know how to stop the flow of people across the border. Three years later the issue of migration remained a central topic of conversation during my data collection, suggesting the issues still poses challenges to the community.

The logic to move to Thailand is relatively straightforward. For less than US$100, one can cross the border illegally and find work as a laborer or waitress. There are transportation services to take Cambodian workers from Siem Reap to the Thai border, which is about 100 kilometers away. There are also Cambodian workers (known as *meekjal*) who can help first timers cross. Once in Thailand, the same sorts of intermediaries help the flow of Cambodian workers to their final destination in Thailand. Moreover, Thai language skills are not needed (although do make life challenging, as Serey's son-in-law experienced), and the pay is twice the wage in

Cambodia for similar work. Sending money back to Cambodia is also easy with mobile transfer options. Beyond the economic costs, there is a legal cost of crossing. The chances of getting caught for illegal crossing, however, are slim or believed to be slim by the *meekjal* who share stories of crossing when they are back in Preah Go. Taken together, the process to migrate to Thailand is relatively easy. The economic benefits are high and the legal risks are low.

Punthea wished to work in Thailand, but did not have sufficient money to hire a *meekjal* to help her cross for the first time. Our conversation moved to other topics, and I did not think much of her wish. We talked about her other wishes, such as sending her children to school and finding them good jobs in the city, perhaps as a tour guide or as an NGO official. She told me of the stress of providing enough money to support the family and the humiliation suffered when looking for help from the government. She explained to me the daily challenges of navigating society and education for her children, and worried for their future as only a mother could. She wanted them to move out of a life of poverty.

When I returned to Cambodia in late April 2014 for my second round of data collection, I visited Punthea to confirm interview times. We agreed to meet in early May. We also talked about Khmer New Year and she told me again about her wish to work in Thailand. Her baskets were not selling because demand had fallen during the off-season when it is too hot, wet, or both for tourists to visit. Life was increasingly difficult. She was in desperate need of money. Since many Cambodians who work in Thailand return for Khmer New Year, Punthea had had many conversations about life and work in Thailand. Punthea met a *meekjal* who could help her cross, but she first needed to collect enough money to afford the trip. She sounded unsure of her prospects, so confirmed her interview dates. I again did not notice the seriousness of her preparations.

I arrived for our first interview and found Punthea's mother cooking rice. "She's gone," she told us. "Excuse me?" I replied. "She moved to Thailand yesterday." It was at that moment when I realized the powerful pull that work in Thailand had on families in Preah Go, especially those under enormous stress to adequately provide for their families. In all my conversations with Punthea, she always said she would do anything to provide enough money for her children to attend school. Educating her children was her only hope to escape poverty. Neither

the government nor international aid had helped, so Punthea had to make drastic decisions, especially with her eldest daughter about to embark on higher education.

The day I finished my interviews in Cambodia was May 22, 2014. It was the same day that the Royal Thai Armed Forces launched a *coup d'état* and installed a military junta to temporally govern the country. One of the first acts of the junta was to expel the Cambodian migrant workers under the premise that illegal migration hurt the Thai economy. Thousands of Cambodian workers desperately tried to cross back into Cambodia. Some were caught, imprisoned, and faced high fines. Many were stuck at the border unable to find transportation back to their villages. The supply chain that had once supported the flow of workers had fallen apart. It was a humanitarian crisis, and the Phnom Penh government had to step in to provide immediate assistance. In the following months, I tried to contact Punthea but the number to her cell phone did not work. I am left unsure of her status as an illegal migrant but understand her struggle to support her family continues.

Part III

Chapter 11
Conclusion

11.1 The road less traveled

This thesis has explored the concept of educational privatization through a critical spatial lens that conceptualized the production of educational space as a social phenomenon consisting of conceived, perceived, and lived spaces. It has focused on the everyday actions of individuals and their social relations as a way to study the complex phenomenon of educational privatization. It has also explored the ways in which individuals understood themselves in relation to their own histories and identified traces of past events in contemporary moments. These spatiotemporal moments, captured in six portraits of individuals within the same socio-institutional environment, were theorized as enacting educational spaces.

The approach taken in this thesis advances the study of privatization by starting with individuals. The everyday lives and interactions of individuals were locations where privatization unfolds. Practices of privatization exist in the form of household payments for various types of educational services. Embedded within these transactions are types of social relations that have become pervasive in society.

The reliance on household financing for education emerged during the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge when the state was all but destroyed and had to rebuild. In addition, the flow of international aid during the historical moment of liberal internationalism and neoliberal economics injected non-public monies into local systems of education. This history has resulted in practices of educational privatization in the absence of policies clearly promoting such an agenda. Indeed, most official education policy in Cambodia is concerned with increasing the role of the state in public schooling, not advancing privatization. This is why a focus on the individual is crucial to understanding how educational privatization advances in contexts such as Cambodia: it moves the analytical gaze from government policies to situated practices and social relations.

What then can be learned about educational privatization from the individuals portrayed in Part II? In this chapter, I read across the portraits and connect the emergent themes to the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2 and 3. By doing

so, I answer my research questions posed in Chapter 4: how have individuals enacted educational privatization in one community? And what are the perceived, conceived, and lived spaces of education where privatization unfolds? Answering the former, I describe in the next section how the different actors from Part II enacted privatization. I then turn to the latter, applying Lefebvre's spatial triad to theorize educational privatization from the perspective of everyday life. These two sections constitute a "landscape portrait" of educational privatization. Following this, I turn to the value of using landscape portraiture to study educational privatization, highlighting this dissertation's contribution to the literature on educational privatization. I conclude by returning to where I began, zooming out beyond Cambodia to show broader relevance.

11.2 Enacting privatization

The six portraits portrayed in Part II showed a variety of ways in which different types of individuals — people in different social roles or positions — enacted educational privatization. The six individuals acted out or performed the social world of privatization, making and re-making their realities through different material practices. But the social world of privatization is not homogenous, and the different actors showed different social realities even within the same socio-institutional environment. In other words, the six individuals lived physically close to one another, but their social realities were diverse, divergent, and multiple.

Botum Chenda, the mainstream school teacher who taught private tutoring, was the clearest example of the enactment of privatization. She held fee-based classes for her public school students. Her action of holding private tutoring classes forced some of her students to ask their parents for money to attend the extra lessons. This is exemplar of household financing of education and the exclusion of students who cannot afford the fees or extra study time that is inherent in such systems. Chenda performed her social position of teacher differently in the two spaces of education. In government school, she acted in a formal manner and strictly followed the MoEYS guidelines. In private tutoring, by contrast, she was friendly with students and allowed them to chat and work in groups. These small differences are important because they suggest the "social interactions" (Archer, 2010b, p. 275) of education is different in

these two spaces, despite being comprised of the same people in the same geographic location or place.

Tina Punthea, whom I positioned in this study as the parent, had a son who experienced the differences between mainstream school and private tutoring classes. She explained how her son's government school teacher often hurt students who did not attend private tutoring and asked the students that did attend to criticize those who did not during mainstream classes. Although I never saw Chenda act in similar ways, what became clear was that the two spaces have different social expectations of what is correct behavior. In other words, the "structural conditioning" (Archer, 2010b, p. 275) of the students through these two spaces produces different sets of normalized relations. In private tutoring classes, Chenda was expected to make the classes worthwhile for the students without burdening them with too much work. In exchange, students were expected to pay Chenda. This market relation in private tutoring created a social reality where, for instance, corporal punishment rarely if ever occurred because students could simply choose not to attend. The market relation in fact made Chenda appeal to students through means not observed in her mainstream classes. She attempted to make her private tutoring classes fun by being friendly with students and giving students individual attention. This was a way to entice students to attend her private tutoring classes. Moreover, unlike government school, in private tutoring she taught example problems and lessons at a speed that allowed students an opportunity to ask questions. In government school, by contrast, Chenda was more concerned with being evaluated by the principal and respected by parents. She was required to act as a professional teacher who followed the rules and standards set by MoEYS, finishing the curriculum on time without complaint. She was also expected to ensure students in mainstream schooling behaved like good students — disciplined, respectful, and devoted to learning. Many parents, Chenda believed, wanted teachers to act in maternal (or paternal) ways towards their children. The way in which these familial attitudes were enacted, however, differed in the two spaces: in mainstream schooling Chenda showed tough love, which included corporal punishment, while in private tutoring classes she showed interest in the students' personal lives.

These different student-teacher relations were negotiated in complex ways and signaled different social relations of power that crisscrossed space at local and global scales. For example, although Chenda charged money for students to attend private tutoring, she acknowledged that she let some students attend for free. The onus,

however, was placed on students, who had to approach Chenda for such a privilege. This was a difficult action to take by students because of the inherent power imbalance between teacher and student. Chenda also admitted that she asked a student to collect money on her behalf in private tutoring because she did not want to be perceived as interested only in the financial aspect of tutoring. She had to balance her reputation as a teacher, which carried historical legacies of being a guru[36] in society, with the financial benefit received from tutoring. Moreover, Chenda had to manage the multiple NGOs that provided scholarship money for some students to attend her private tutoring classes. These relationships were particularly complex because she did not know the staff members of NGOs who lived in Siem Reap like she did the parents and students who lived in Preah Go. When I spoke with Chenda, she told me about an NGO that had missed payment for the tutoring classes of several children for three months. She was, however, too scared to call and ask the NGO for payment. These findings reinforce Massey's (1994) notion of the spatial as "constructed out of the multiplicity of social relations across all spatial scales, from the global reach of finance and telecommunications through the geography of the tentacles of national political power, to the social relations within the town, the settlement, the household and the workplace (p. 4).

On the student side of the relationship, the navigation also proved complex. Rotha Serey, the town elder in my study, explained to me the many choices his granddaughter had in educational services. Serey and the parents of his granddaughter carefully selected which services were most appropriate for her at a given time. They weighed the educational benefits of each space of learning, cost to attend those spaces, and the extra-academic (i.e., unrelated to mainstream school curricula) benefits of each space. Private tutoring, Serey explained to me, was not always necessary for his granddaughter. When she was doing well in school and had a teacher who did not force students to take private tutoring, she did not need to go to the extra lessons. This contrasted with Khmera Sambath, the pagoda committee member, who said he would be disappointed in students who did not attend private tutoring all the time. Additionally, since Serey's granddaughter was in a grade where there was no end-of-year examination, the family deemed private tutoring

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[36] The word in Khmer for "teacher" derives from the Sanskrit word "guru," which has become a word widely used in the English language to mean a revered teacher.

unnecessary. Instead, his granddaughter attended dance and English classes. These extra-academic spaces of learning provided his granddaughter with extracurricular activities while also offering a form of childcare while her parents worked.

The navigation of education as a student, however, can be even more complex when one must have a relationship with a teacher who is considered corrupt. Serey's children remembered paying exorbitant amounts of money during the examination process in order to obtain a passing grade in the 1990s. They were forced into these relationships by teachers who were taking advantage of a system of education with weak accountability structures. These sorts of relations were similar to those remembered by Mean Sokhem, the school director of Wish For Cambodia. Sokhem's distaste of public school teachers in the 1990s when he was in school was the impetus for beginning his educational enterprise. These stories make clear that the student-teacher relation is dynamic and ever changing; no two relationships are identical, and personal history influences future life choices.

Students also navigated teacher-student relationships outside of mainstream schooling. NGO schools are a relatively new place of learning, and have resulted in additional sets of relationships that students must navigate. NGO schools hire teachers who do not carry the same social responsibilities as those of mainstream school teachers. There are neither examinations that students must pass in these schools nor social requirements for teachers to act in certain ways. In Wish For Cambodia, Sokhem hired teachers who were former students as a way to produce lasting norms and customs inside the school. Nevertheless, these norms were upended whenever foreign volunteers came to teach. These foreign volunteers brought their own ideas about the meaning of a good teacher, and the resultant relationship with students was, in my perspective, one commonly based on playfulness and informality. Although students likely learned a great deal about different parts of the world through the various foreign volunteers who passed through the classrooms of Wish For Cambodia, it appeared that students were more entertained than educated during these interactions. This was epitomized by the Japanese lesson where effective communication between students and teacher proved difficult. Sokhem recognized this problem, but did not know how to overcome it since his school relied on foreign donations. The social relations found in Wish For Cambodia can therefore be seen as an example of "new spatial thinking" (Beech and Larsen, 2014, p. 76) where a relational sense of the global and local is not only found but also produced.

Local politics also contributed to the way in which social relations of power were formed and educational privatization was enacted. The clearest example of politics in Part II was found in the international aid flowing into Preah Go. This stream of aid complicated social reality even further and affected educational privatization. Since the local government tried to control foreign donations, the distribution of aid to households was politicized. Noreaksey Pheakdei, the second assistant commune chief in Preah Go, detailed exactly how the politicization of aid occurred through the distribution of poor cards. People who supported the CPP, the ruling party since the 1990s, were given poor cards, which allowed them to be first in line for aid. This distribution system suggested that children in families that did not support the CPP were discriminated against. This political reality resulted in diverse outcomes. Serey, for instance, proudly explained to me all of the donations his family had received over the years, suggesting he supported the CPP. Punthea, by contrast, complained how she had received none, implying she supported an opposition party. Whereas Punthea explained how she struggled to afford her children's education, Serey was generally positive in his opinions about all of the educational options from which his granddaughter could benefit. In this way, "the new global geometry of power" that Rizvi and Lingard (2010, p. 172) found at the level of educational governance also exists within the interaction and interrelations of individuals at the school level.

The enactment of educational privatization is a complex process. It produces diverse social positions and social interactions. Countless possible trajectories co-exist. The six portraits in this thesis show some of the ways in which educational privatization was practiced and the diverse possibilities — from the good to the bad, the just to the unjust — of social reality. Educational privatization from this perspective showcases different types of social relations, primarily between student and teacher.

The educational spaces that were enacted by individuals and their social relations created areas where privatization could thrive. These spaces were ever becoming, shaping social reality just as Soja (1996) theorized the workings of the spatial. But the material practices and lived experiences of the ever-becoming spaces of education were different across social positions in society. These differences emerged out of different political, economic, and cultural realities, and the histories of

each individual. In order to understand the spaces of education in more detail, the next section applies Lefebvre's spatial triad (figure 2.3) to the six portraits.

11.3 The changing spaces of education

Individuals enact these relations, some of which were outlined in the previous section. In order to theorize the spaces of education where privatization exists, I used Lefebvre's spatial triad (figure 2.3). This triad separates space into three interconnected elements: perceived, conceived, and lived spaces. These spaces exist simultaneously and cannot be reduced to one of the three. I outline each of these spaces below.

11.3.1 Perceived spaces

Perceived spaces consist of everyday life of individuals who use and create space. Perceived spaces are therefore conceptualized as the situated practices of socio-economic processes. These spatial practices re-create the social order (Archer's notion of morphostasis) but contain the potential for altered future realities (Archer's notion of morphogenesis). In the six portraits, the perceived spaces of education occurred inside the many places of education: private tutoring classes, mainstream schooling, NGO schools, and — to a lesser extent — the pagoda (school). This geometry of places was defined by different material practices. In private tutoring classes, for instance, the free-market of educational choice required Chenda to act in ways so as not to dissuade students-cum-clients from attending. In government school, students used government-produced textbooks while in NGO schools private company-produced textbooks were used. In pagoda school, students read or translated religious texts. These material differences are crucial to spatializing educational privatization from sites of organic interactions between individuals —individuals' on-the-ground practices where space is used, created, and interpreted.

Different actions defined each space. As mentioned in the previous section, students in government school acted in formal ways. These actions included standing when giving an answer and following along silently as the teacher gave a lesson. In private tutoring, students were loud and talkative. They did not stand when addressing the teacher, and could shout for the teacher's help whenever they wanted. This behavior was similar to Wish For Cambodia, where students were not as disciplined

as in government school. Students often worked on bracelets in class, and moved seats whenever they wanted.

These actions were disciplined through different rules. In government school, rules were set by MoEYS and enforced by the school principal. A bell marked the beginning of each class period, and Chenda never taught over the scheduled time. The textbook was the only source of academic content presented in the class. Chenda moved at the pace required to complete the textbook in one year, which at times disadvantaged students who needed a slower or quicker pace.

By comparison, private tutoring classes were more relaxed. There was no official start time, and Chenda often came to class only after she had finished her household obligations. Sometimes she had to run home to eat between classes, and other times she was delayed because of her child's illness. These slight schedule differences did not matter to Chenda as she was in charge of the tutoring classes; she did not have to report to anyone except the students. Students, however, could have been upset with her for reducing the length of private tutoring classes. In such cases, they would receive less instruction for the same amount of money, since the tutoring fee did not change. Students' only recourse was not to attend private tutoring, which would bring a greater risk of not doing well on government school examinations. This power relation, which comes from the socio-economic process of household financing of education, left students with little choice but to sit and wait for Chenda to arrive. If Chenda missed a class, for instance, she would simply forgo a day's pay from tutoring and the students who waited would have wasted time.

Unlike government school, which is marked by the reality of double shift schooling, Chenda could teach in private tutoring as long or as short as she deemed necessary. Sometimes she went over one hour when students required extra help and other times she ended class early. The main rule in the class was the need for students to pay. Chenda appointed a student to collect money after each lesson, and this student strictly enforced the rules, sometimes hitting students who tried to leave class without paying (see image 5.4). The situated practices inside private tutoring classes were open to the possibility of radical alternative possibilities of education precisely because Chenda operated in the absence of any accountability mechanisms.

In Wish For Cambodia, the actions were disciplined in yet a different manner. Here global influence, which resulted from the socio-economic processes of development aid and assistance in the post-Khmer Rouge period, was more directly

felt on local school grounds. Khmer teachers were literally trained by foreign volunteers, and students interacted with foreigners directly, often on a daily basis. Sokhem's difficulty was instilling a set of standard behaviors for students and teachers when the school was transitory in terms of both volunteers passing through as well as the students, such as Punteha's daughter, who switched between the different NGO schools in Preah Go. Moreover, the Khmer teachers Sokhem hired never received formal teacher training such as Chenda. These teachers were therefore left to their own devices (and short training offered by Wish For Cambodia). In one case, I witnessed a teacher administer hits to two students' hands using a stick.

The perceived spaces also looked different physically. The government school had the traditional placard of the King and his parents as the highest object in the room. The Cambodian flag commonly was present, but there were few decorations on the walls. The wall space that received the most attention in Chenda's classroom listed the rankings of the students in the class. In Chenda's private tutoring classes, by contrast, there were no decorations on the walls and even Chenda had to purchase the markers and erasers. (Sometimes Chenda's private tutoring classes were held inside mainstream school classrooms, but this depended on the school's class schedule. I typically observed Chenda in the school's auxiliary building.) The Wish For Cambodia classrooms were completely different, filled with paintings and motivational sayings. These physical differences created environments where different behaviors were expected, which was part of the "structural conditioning" (Archer, 2010b, p. 275) of various educational actors.

These different practices and physical environments embodied different socio-economic processes. Wish For Cambodia, for instance, embodied a place through which the socio-economic process of neoliberalism occurred. The school operates as a business and is not held accountable in its educational practices by the government; teachers are de-skilled through the reliance on textbooks that explain exactly how to teach; and marketing is a primary concern of Sokhem in hopes of attracting more students in the village and more donors from abroad. Sokhem even had to alter his business model many times in order to keep the organization functioning, which had backwash effects on student learning as evidenced by the group of students who braided bracelets instead of paid attention in class.

The place of government school, by contrast, required spatial practices that derived from socio-economic processes of "publicization" (Bray, 1994) — the

attempt to increase the state's role in the education system. The rebuilding of the Cambodian state in the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge has slowly resulted in a greater role by MoEYS inside public schools. Chenda, for instance, reluctantly changed her teaching whenever a new version of the national curriculum came out. She also decorated a wall in her classroom with the student rankings, which MoEYS required. One indication of the increasing role of MoEYS is a larger school budget. This physically manifested itself inside the Preah Go lower secondary school through cash payments known as the PB budget. Chenda recounted to me the yearly ritual of sitting around a table where the money was stacked to discuss with the other teachers what the school administration should do with the money. As the money increased each year, the school was able to achieve more of its plans, which, theoretically, allowed the school to rely less on the contributions from pagodas, NGOs, or households. These state-building efforts, however, have not gone far enough: Chenda routinely complained about her low government salary, which was the reason she claimed to teach private tutoring.

The place of private tutoring created yet a different set of spatial practices. These practices were similar to, but different from, government school. Although private tutoring classes took place inside public school grounds and consisted of the same students and teachers, private tutoring embodied a different set of socio-economic processes. These processes were more akin to a free market of educational goods and services. In private tutoring, students paid for classes directly and Chenda set the price. This economic process dictated social behaviors such as Chenda not being as strict in private tutoring compared to government school in order to attract more students.

The space of private tutoring may have derived from the deficiencies of state schooling (e.g., a curriculum too long to teach adequately in the time allocated), but it did not embody a distaste for the state as had Wish For Cambodia. This is an important difference because it shows how private tutoring is part of privatization as Bray (2011, p. 60) indicated without being part of neoliberalization per se as I have argued elsewhere (Brehm, Silova & Tuot, 2012). One of the main reasons Chenda believed students attended her private tutoring classes was precisely because she was a government school teacher. She was in a more powerful position to influence the grades of students in mainstream schooling than a tutor who was not also a government school teacher. This position allowed Chenda to act in ways different

from the teachers at Wish For Cambodia. Chenda, for instance, was highly trained at the government's expense and cared about her reputation as a respected teacher in the village. She wanted, at least rhetorically, for public education to be strengthened to the point where private tutoring would not be needed. Until that point is reached, however, household financing of education that has dominated local schools since the end of the Khmer Rouge continues to create a free-market of education. Educational attainment depends on the amount of money an individual household can spend.

There were many different types of spatial practices in the many places of education in Preah Go. These practices co-existed and had their own histories. In most cases, the actors were similar across the many places of education, but the spatial practice demanded by them changed in each. This has a wider implication for the spatialization of educational privatization. Namely, privatization can emerge through multiple socio-economic processes where different spatial practices occur. Even an attempt to strengthen public schools can result in practices of privatization. These spatial practices may seem banal to the individuals undertaking them, but within each contains traces of the larger political and economic processes. Nevertheless, looking at perceived spaces alone is not enough because they do not focus on the ideologies of schooling captured inside the minds of individuals.

11.3.2 Conceived spaces

Another type of space that can be read across the portraits is that of conceived space. Conceived spaces are the discursive and scientific knowledge[37] that form ideologies in the minds of individuals and are represented in those individual's plans, models, designs, and maps of and for action. These representations of space are similar to but different from the spatial practices of perceived space. Conceived spaces change depending on perspective, but typically make a truth claim about the present (sometimes using historical knowledge to support such claims). In this study, there were multiple perspectives on educational privatization, each using various forms of scientific knowledge and containing different ideological biases. There was my perspective, which was physically captured in my typology of educational

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[37] By scientific knowledge, Lefebvre was concerned with scholarly insights that were "divorced from worldly practice" (Law, 2015, p. 195). These insights were often based on rational, positivistic thinking that was popular in the field of sociology in the 1970s.

privatization (section 2.2.1). There was also the perspective of government officials, which were found in school policies ranging from Child Friendly Schools to the PB budget. There were also the perspectives of the individuals in this study who held a range of ideological positions related to educational privatization and publicization. In particular, the six portraits in Part II contained ideologies that relate to so-called scientific knowledge of neoliberalism, human capital theory, and the notion of progress, as well as inequality, social injustice, and corruption.

The first conceived space is my own. The scientific knowledge, which was outlined in section 2.2.1, I brought to this study categorized educational privatization in particular forms — they were, privatization of public education through external or internal influences as well as new, private locations through which children learn. The typology put forward was based on scholarly research across many countries and contained ideological biases and particular knowledge claims: it saw privatization as having a net negative effect on education systems (e.g. Macpherson, Robertson & Walford, 2014). It also conceptualized privatization as occurring primarily as a result of government polices (e.g. Burch, 2009a). My intention was to challenge this so-called "scientific" typology through a landscape portrait where everyday practices could be read as containing elements of educational privatization. In this way, my conceived space — or "academic theory" to use Burawoy's (1998, p. 7) phrase — would be critiqued, challenged, and extended.

Another conceived space of educational privatization was contained in government policies related to education. Although I did not review every government policy since the 1990s, the general thrust of the policies that did appear in this thesis aimed for a more public education system. The ideology in these policies captured education as a human right, echoing knowledge claims of international agencies such as the UN, which is not surprising given the role of UNTAC in the formation of Cambodia's contemporary governing structures (Curtis, 1998). In this way, the government was — at least discursively — supposed to provide basic education to its citizenry. This resulted in polices that built more schools and hired more teachers; programs such as the PB budget were devised in order to provide additional financial resources to schools; and initiatives were set up to create Child Friendly Schools. Even the School Support Committee, which I suggested was part of the processes of privatization, were intended by the government to create a more public educational space through increased community involvement (Shoraku, 2008).

These various plans and policy designs represented educational space as one primarily of public schooling. The various plans and policies, of course, diverged with spatial practice, which was outlined in the previous subsection.

Turning to the six participants in my study, conceived spaces can be seen in the different ways in which education was understood; in the different beliefs in the purpose of education. In other words, the different ideologies of education resulted in different plans of action for each individual. This is not to say that each person actually achieved his or her plan vis-à-vis education. This is similar to the way in which government policies are not always implemented as designed. Rather, these plans lived in the minds of each individual and were based on different truth claims. In other words, the six participants maintained their own "folk theory" (Burawoy, 1998, p. 7), as interpreted through my analysis, that was different from the "academic theory" above. These plans represented the ideal space of education for each individual, in his or her own unique way, sometimes converging and sometimes diverging with the reality of spatial practice.

Although neoliberalism is a set of macro-economic policy drivers that defined a particular socio-economic process, it is also a discursive ideology within the lives of individuals. This individual-level, or "articulated" (Springer, 2011), neoliberalism was primarily found inside Sokhem's portrait. He believed that the government could not provide education to a high quality (his truth claim about public education) and therefore thought it was up to individuals such as himself to chart a new course in education. He thus planned and designed his school, Wish For Cambodia, in a way where teachers would use pedagogies that were the exact opposite of those implemented by government school teachers. In practice, however, teachers at Wish For Cambodia shared similarities with government school teachers (e.g., repeating in unison was a common pedagogy in both places). In a similar way, the pagoda committee's plan to sell paintings to fund pagoda construction embodied the ideology of neoliberalism. In this case, the plan turned religious practices (i.e., good deeds) into religious commodities (i.e., a painting of a Buddhist story, which could be purchased).

When it came to education, all of the research participants connected education to the labor market. This ideological conception embodies the idea of human capital theory, which looks at rates of return for additional years of schooling as measured by future earnings (e.g., Keeley, 2007; see also Psacharopoulos, 1989). This theory connects education to the labor market, implying that the more education

one receives the higher income one will earn. Punthea shared this knowledge claim, for instance, in her hope for her children to receive more education in order for them to live a life better than hers. She desired this so much that she designed and implemented a plan where she would move to Thailand to earn a higher salary in order to afford her children's education costs. For much of my time with Punthea, this plan lived in her head and went unfulfilled in reality. I was surprised when I discovered that she had in fact moved to Thailand and later saddened to hear of the mass exodus of illegal migrants back to Cambodia after the change in Thai government. Punthea's conceived plan likely did not unfold as she had hoped. In a similar way, Sokhem justified his entire educational enterprise by saying he wanted to prepare students for the tourist based economy in Siem Reap. This idea then resulted in him designing curricula that emphasized English and computer literacy. This truth claim was stretched to its limits when he justified the teaching of Japanese, which seemed neither done well educationally nor was economically valuable for a child's employment prospects. Nevertheless, Sokhem maintained his conception of how and why his school operated.

The idea of "progress" cuts through both neoliberalism and human capital theory (Dale, 2005). This idea assumes that it is possible for youth to do better than their forebears in previous generations. Education from this truth claim ameliorates the socio-economic troubles households face today in hopes of a better tomorrow. Serey showed this thinking most clearly. He saw tremendous progress in his lifetime and thought his granddaughter had a bright future because there were many places to obtain education. In other words, Serey's ideological belief in progress was confirmed in the "map" of education he saw in his community, which consisted of NGO schools, private tutoring classes, orphanages, and churches. His idea of progress was confirmed by the physical presence of many different educational institutions in Preah Go. In this thinking, the rise of private tutoring or the reliance on NGO schools did not signal problems with government school (as my conceived space of education implied) but were rather interpreted as signs of progress, especially when compared to educational life during the Khmer Rouge.

Alongside these ideologies promoting a positive take on the contemporary educational moment were discourses on corruption, social injustice, and inequality. Punthea believed she was discriminated against because the commune council would not classify her as poor. This injustice resulted in Punthea planning and designing

other ways to obtain an education for her children. This plan ultimately resulted in Punthea moving to Thailand. Likewise, Pheakdei complained of the corruption he believed permeated every part of government. He was certain that Prime Minster Hun Sen was to blame for nearly every social ill. This ideological claim to truth therefore required him to devise ways to see himself as being a productive member of the commune council in the face of strict opposition. One of these ways was for Pheakdei to clean the street as an act of defiance or call Radio Free America when he thought corruption occurred. When he could not solve a problem, he returned to his ideological stance that placed blame on the corruption of the ruling party. In fact, when his supporters were not selected for poor cards, he used their plight as proof for his ideological leanings. These ideas also manifested themselves in Chenda's acknowledgement that private tutoring excluded some students and her willingness to allow poor students to attend for free. This plan, of course, did not work as she intended in the everyday practices of private tutoring; students were too scared to ask Chenda to attend private tutoring for free just as Chenda was too scared to ask NGOs to make payments on time.

The discursive regimes that made truth claims on the education system in Cambodia presented in each portrait's perspective, as well as my and the government's perspectives, resulted in different plans, models, and maps of action. Although these actions did not necessarily unfold as each person intended, they do offer insights into the ways in which educational space is conceived across multiple "academic" and "folk" theories (Burawoy, 1998, p. 7). The importance of the conceived spaces of education vis-à-vis educational privatization is that different ideologies can co-exist in the same space, each making diverse truth claims about education. In terms of educational privatization, there were few claims to its outright efficacy. Only Sokhem outwardly advocated for a decreased role of the government in the provision of education. Rather, the majority of people's conceptions saw education as a means to obtain a better life. This ideological stance gave way to seeing more education, of whatever type, as a welcome sign. These conceived spaces tolerated privatization even if most did not advocate for it.

11.3.3 Lived spaces

The last space in Lefebvre's triad is lived space. Lived spaces are the images and symbols that overlay physical space, creating a realm of desire and myths. Sometimes

lived spaces can contain critiques of the dominant social order. These affective spaces emerge out of perceived and conceived spaces, but cannot be reduced to either. Lived spaces emerge through the various signs and symbols in the perceived spaces of education (the material formations in space) and the ideologies and forms of knowledge in the conceived spaces (the ideal formations of space). In addition, lived space merges the multiple temporal dimensions — biological, modern, and lived time — into a total time experienced by individuals.

The many places where a child can obtain an education in Preah Go were a direct result of the history of Cambodia. After the fall of the Khmer Rouge, households were required to contribute money towards schooling in their community. Many of the contributions by families supported the entire community. When a school built or purchased more desks from household contributions, which was the example I used in Chapter 1, those desks benefited children beyond the families who donated the money. Eventually, with the rise of private tutoring and examination bribery, household contributions began to provide individual benefits: only the child who gave a teacher money before an examination, for instance, received the benefit, not the whole community. Additionally, as international aid flowed into Cambodia, NGOs began to proliferate (Bandyopadhyay & Khus, 2013). Many opened schools or started working in public school. The combination of the historical events of the post-Khmer Rouge and resultant flow of international aid resulted in a perceived space of education dominated by many physical places where a child could be educated.

This perceived space connects with multiple ideologies, the conceived spaces of education. The ideology of neoliberalism, as I have said previously, is imbued in NGO schools that claim to be providing education of a higher quality than the mainstream public schools. Human capital theory justifies increased household contributions on education, particularly of the sort that provides self-benefit, because it conceives more education as the primary way to better employment opportunities. The truth claim of progress is also easily attached to the many places of learning because it is compared to the Khmer Rouge period when no educational opportunities existed beyond communist propaganda.

Out of the combination of perceived and conceived spaces of the many places of education arises an existential — and largely insatiable — desire: the lived space of educational privatization is an *individual* endeavor where one must do anything and everything to obtain as much of it as possible. The student rankings in Chenda's

mainstream classroom symbolized the individual pursuit of high grades. The dictum painted on the wall in one of Wish For Cambodia's classrooms that read, "stars can't shine without darkness," signaled that education is an individual good that makes *one* star shine brightly, not many. The despair Punthea felt when thinking about the high costs of higher education for her eldest daughter required a change in *Punthea's* situated practices, not a change in the distribution mechanisms of international aid. The benefit of private tutoring class was in its pedagogy of *individualized* attention, which rarely occurred in government school. Education or the lack thereof thus became mythologized as the reason for one's success or failure. If only the many students found throughout this thesis could obtain more education, then their lives would be changed for the better. The onus was placed on the individual to seek out, find, and pay for additional educational services.

Lived space also includes a temporal dimension. The rise of individualism in education can be chronically traced through the different socio-economic formations from the Khmer Rouge to the contemporary moment. The rebuilding of the education system in the 1980s tried to create inclusive schools for all children. With much of the funding coming from the Soviet Union, these reforms embodied ideas of socialist political economies. With the structural reforms in the 1990s based on neoliberalism, the decentralization of education resulted in household financing of education. Schooling became increasingly individualized, pointing to the rise of market capitalism within society.

But as a lived space, temporality contains more than chronological time. In terms of biological time, the individualization of education changed the very lifestyles of families. Children began attending more education in pursuit of the mythical benefits it would provide in the future. Parents needed to work longer hours to increase their income in order to pay for the additional educational services they desired for their children. These changes resulted in new configuration of when a person went to sleep or ate dinner. These changes also altered the time that families could spend together and what it meant to fully live life.

Lived space also includes a lived time of moments — the historicism that one brings to understanding his or her own life that connects past, present, and future (Shields, 2005). The individualism that emerged in the spaces of educational privatization was packaged and repackaged in each person's interpretation of their biography and history. Serey, for instance, linked the pursuit of education to the

history of Angkor Wat, which he described in different stories to his children and grandchild. He spoke of Angkor Wat's four libraries as sites of learning, contrasting them with the total destruction of education during the Khmer Rouge period. He looked at all of the places his grandchild could learn in Preah Go in the present moment, and described a future where children have boundless choices in where they learn. Individualism in education thus contains various conceptions of time simultaneously, helping people make sense of their lives and choices in their contemporary social reality through the promulgation of desires and myths.

11.4 The value of landscape portraiture

Extending the concept of portraiture set out by Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997), the collection of portraits in this thesis made a landscape portrait of educational privatization. A landscape portrait of privatization is somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand a portrait captures one moment in time while on the other hand privatization is a process occurring across chronological time. Conceptualized through Lefebvre's notion of lived time, however, a landscape portrait encapsulates a collection of diverse perceived, conceived, and lived spaces of education where privatization can be found. Privatization from this perspective is not only an on-going process dictated by government policies, but also a lived moment for individuals who must decide how to navigate the public and private spaces of learning in local places. A landscape portrait thus brings together multiple temporal dimensions through historicism and chronological history. The collection of portraits therefore showed some of the diverse ways in which the landscape of education has changed because of educational privatization, bringing together traces of history found in the contemporary moment without forgetting that social space is continuously changing and being shaped by individuals.

The contemporary moment of educational privatization portrayed in this thesis is one marked not by government policies promoting an agenda of privatization but rather by individuals who participate in spaces of education where practices of privatization occur. In fact, the government of Cambodia has implemented multiple polices since the 1990s that could be seen as an increase in publicization. These policies increasing the role of the government in educational provision have been generally successful: the balance of household expenditures to education relative to

government expenditures has moved closer to an even split. Yet, households still pay private tutoring fees, which have likely increased since the 1990s, and the rise of NGO schools has created diverse non-public spaces where education takes place. Moreover, international aid in the form of scholarships for students to attend private tutoring entrenched a private supplementary system alongside mainstream schooling. These developments are played out in local politics and create competing interests for scarce aid resources. These movements indicate that educational privatization in Cambodia is thriving despite a lack of government policies promoting such an agenda. By late 2014, the government's rhetoric began to support the idea of public-private partnerships as a positive approach to education. This suggests future government policy may indeed promote a privatization agenda, which will likely result in complex interactions with the practices of privatization described in this dissertation.

The landscape portrait of privatization outlined in the last two sections extends the theoretical understanding of privatization. In Chapter 4, privatization was conceptualized into a typology of three types: exogenous, endogenous, and private means of knowledge production. This typology is useful when thinking about privatization as an on-going process, particularly from an education policy perspective. However, the landscape portrait showed that the situated practices of individuals who combine historical and biographical understandings into lived moments also enact privatization. Everyday life, in other words, contains valuable insights into the infinitely complex social phenomenon of educational privatization. In this way, looking at everyday moments of lived experience across multiple individual actors can extend the theory of educational privatization. These types of studies can complement studies on educational privatization from other perspectives.

Looking at the mundane, the normal, and the everyday revealed a complex social reality of educational privatization in Preah Go. Taking individuals as my starting point and reaching wide into each individual's social relations and deep into the individual's past, each portrait was an intimate look at a social phenomenon from a different angle. Collectively, the portraits shed light on the larger phenomenon of educational privatization, highlighting themes and concepts that were not necessarily representative of all portraits but rather emergent out of the collection of portraits. The landscape portrait was thus irreducible to its parts. The concepts and themes that emerged from reading across the portraits could not have been understood if only one

portrait had been presented. In this way, the landscape portrait depicts the relationship between individuals and society: the latter is made up of the former but cannot be reduced to it. Society is more than the aggregation of individuals, similar to the landscape portrait that is more than an aggregate of portraits.

My contributions to the field of knowledge can therefore be summed up in three distinct ways. First, in the Cambodian context, my thesis showed how privatization could exist inside schools despite clear national policies advocating publicization. This is an important realization because as "developing countries" attempt to strengthen the role of the state in public education, educational privatization could still flourish. This insight could therefore potentially be useful beyond the context of Cambodia. I also advance the study of educational privatization as mainly looking at national (or global) policies to one that looks at the everyday lives of individuals. This is a valuable contribution because it recognizes the profound insights that can be gained from studying a small number of people. Privatization as a social practice is clearly an area where more scholarly work could be done. My third contribution centers on what I have called landscape portraiture. This method and theory offers a valuable way for researchers to blend inductive and deductive approaches to research.

11.5 The Preah Go landscape

When I moved to the Kingdom of Wonder, I was initially interested in the phenomenon of private tutoring. I expanded my focus to include household financing of education, which has a history in Cambodia dating at least to the post-Khmer Rouge period when most state institutions were destroyed or non-functional. In the contemporary moment, household financing has evolved because of international aid. NGO schools are part of this global development: they are non-mainstream schooling but also are not financed by households living near the school. Instead, foreign donors finance these schools that (in at least some cases) provide free educational services to students. This manifestation expanded my focus on educational privatization not as local phenomenon of service provision but as a complex mix of foreign and domestic household financing.

Through this study I realized that educational privatization in Preah Go was a complex phenomenon of globalization. The international aid and foreign volunteer

teachers had dramatically changed the Preah Go landscape, not only in building toilets but also in engaging in cross-cultural interactions with students. Preah Go has also affected the people who have volunteered or donated money to NGOs. Preah Go is the definition of a so-called "developing country" for many foreign guests passing through Siem Reap. Moreover, the fluctuations of the global economy have real impact on the lives of people in Preah Go, from increased food prices (e.g. sharply in 2007-8) to the global financial crisis (also in 2007-8), which reduced tourism to Cambodia and subsequently made life much more difficult in Preah Go. These global phenomena have real consequences on daily life. Likewise, the global economy is impacted by the changing desires and actions of individuals seeking to find places in the global economy. The migration of cheap labor to Thailand, for instance, has had dramatic impact not only on the Thai economy but also on the Cambodian one. The desire of students to learn a second language is similarly affected by global political and economic processes: during colonialism, the language of prestige among Cambodians was French; during the 1980s it turned to Vietnamese and Russian; and since UNTAC it has been English. I incorporated this relational understanding of globalization throughout the portraits, connecting the individuals in Preah Go to the seemingly abstract processes that define globalization — modalities, flows, obstacles, and senses of exclusion.

11.6 Beyond the Kingdom of Wonder

In 2013, I was standing on a public platform inside the International Financial Center in Hong Kong. As I peered out over Victoria Harbor, I looked down at the construction project below. It was a common sight in Hong Kong: cranes and bamboo scaffolding are found on most city blocks. But this construction project was being erected on land that, a few years earlier, had not been there. The land was placed there as part of Hong Kong's massive land reclamation project in recent decades. Some of this land, I knew, came from Cambodia. The soil was illegally dredged by a Cambodian business with ties to the CPP and then sold on the international market. When I lived in Cambodia, the news of this environmental catastrophe made national headlines. Dredging was but one way soil was removed from Cambodia; it was also being excavated from the land.

Since Hong Kong was one of the largest buyers of Cambodian soil, it was likely that the land extending further into Victoria Harbor was actually, in some ways, a piece of Cambodia. The reclaimed land, in fact, could have been from Preah Go. While I was collecting my data there, I witnessed a 100-hectare piece of land, which is twice the size of Disneyland in Hong Kong, being excavated. This land was owned by Sieng Nam, an *Oknha* with close ties to Hun Sen and a patron of the Preah Go community. (In fact, Khemera Sambath, the head of the pagoda committee from chapter 7, wrote to Sieng Nam, requesting a denotation for the development of the Preah Go lower secondary school.) Massive holes were being dug and the soil trucked out of the community. Every day I drove to Preah Go, I would pass countless trucks carrying soil, one after the other. Although the trucks' final destination was unknown, it is possible that some of the soil in those trucks made it to international markets. In other words, the physical soil of Preah Go was being taken out and placed in new geographic locations. This complex economy of soil changed the physical landscape of Preah Go. The holes in Preah Go filled with water and caused new patterns of flooding and new pathways to travel through the community. Likewise, additional soil physically transformed the geographic space wherever it ended up. The extended land in Hong Kong, for instance, provided new space for expensive real estate to be built. When landscapes change, possibilities that once existed cease while new possibilities emerge.

Education is similar to the ebb and flow of the soil commodity market where local geography changes. The spaces of education change over time. New ideas enter the education system and radically alter its formation. New spaces emerge through altered social relations within different political economies. Different people arrive to participate in the education system and global flows alter the landscape. But the construction of new spaces of learning opens new possibilities and closes others. Just like the digging of holes ended the possibility to grow rice on land in Cambodia and created the possibility for another high-rise to be built in Hong Kong, the physical spaces of learning are changing and not just locally. As David Harvey's (2014) quote in the frontispiece of the thesis made clear, crises dramatically change physical as well as economic, political, and cultural landscapes, which brings me back to my first encounter with private tutoring.

Returning to that moment in October 2010 when I first enquired about the group of students who were wearing everyday clothes inside public mainstream

school premises, I now have a better answer to my question than the one my colleague provided: those students were not just going to private tutoring classes, but were also enacting a space of education where privatization flourishes.

Appendices

Appendix A:
Phase 1 Guiding Questions

Questions:
1. Over the next 5 days, I would like to talk to you about your biography and how it relates to education and Cambodian culture. When you answer, please consider telling me stories that you remember. The more specific you can be about yourself and your family, the better. Could you first tell me where you were born, about your family, and your memories of school?
    a. Issues to consider: did an "educated person" signify anything when you were growing up? If so, what? How could you tell someone in the village was an "educated person"? What types of people became "educated"?
    b. Were there issues of "corruption" within school during this time? If so, what are some examples?
    c. What was the place of religion within the schooling system then?
    d. Within the school system, gifts are often given to teachers. Did you ever participate in this practice? Why did you or didn't you? What does the gift mean within the school system?
    e. What role does the government play in education?
    f. What role do NGOs play in education?
2. Cambodia has experienced a rather tumultuous history. It was occupied by the French for nearly 100 years, invaded by the Japanese during World War II, experienced a coup in the 1970s by a corrupt general supported by the Americans, pillaged by Pol Pot, rescued by the Vietnamese, and ruled steadily albeit forcefully by Hun Sen. I would like to talk about each of these periods and for you to tell me about your own history or family history vis-à-vis these moments in Cambodian history.
    a. First we have French Colonialism. How did French colonialism impact your family? During French colonialism, the traditional form of education, at least until the 1930s, was the Wat or pagoda school. Did you or anyone in your family attend a pagoda school? Did Wat schools cost any money? How and why did people value education in the Wat School? Do you think the pagoda school influences the education today? If so how? Why do students often repeat lessons verbally and in unison in class? The French eventually created a public education system in Cambodia in order to educate the ruling Cambodian class. Some even went to France to receive higher education. Did you or any of your family members attend a French Lycée? During this time did education cost any money? Who paid for education? Did people value education? If so, how? What were the qualities of an educated person at this time?
    b. From the end of World War II until the end of the Khmer Rouge, Cambodia experienced a rather difficult history for any nation. Education at this time must have been difficult too. During this period—from the 1940 until 1979—how did your family manage? What did your family have to do to survive? Did anyone in your family

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go to school? If so, why? Did it cost anything? Were gifts provided to teachers or principals?

c. After the Khmer Rouge, the Soviet Union provided lots of assistance to Cambodia through Vietnam. Lots of people from Ukraine, Russia, and Vietnam helped the government in Cambodia. Textbooks were translated from Vietnamese into Khmer. There were even some Cambodians (roughly a 1000 or so) who studied abroad in communist countries such as Vietnam, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and China. What was the education experience for your family like during this time? Did you attend public school? Did it cost any money to attend? What did you learn? What class was your favorite? Do you think people valued education during this time? If so, why and how?

d. After the United Nations Transitional Authority of Cambodia came into Cambodia with nearly 20,000 soldiers and enough staff members to control the entire Cambodian government, education drastically changed. Although there was great progress in enrolling children in school and translation of the Vietnam textbooks into Khmer, the UN effectively started over. New textbooks had to be made, which were in line with the idea of human rights, and a major push for enrollment began. Did you or anyone in your family go to school from 1992 until present? Can you tell me about their experience? Why did they go to school? How much did it cost? What was the value of school for your family during this time?

3. Do you value education? How and why do you value it? What is valued? What will education bring? Why is education important or not? Is it worth spending money on? Does the government have a responsibility to provide education? What is actually learned in school?

   a. What qualities does school produce in youth that is important to you?

   b. What do you make of someone with long titles or someone who has completed a doctorate degree? Do you see these people as different than people without titles? How do you act in front of people with titles? Is education supposed to provide the chance for people to earn titles?

   c. Teachers are called "cru" which derives from "guru." How are teachers respected in the education system today? How were they treated before?

   d. What does education or school allow you to do?

   e. In the village, do people know who is educated and who is not? How do people know this?

4. Angkor Wat is the pride of Cambodia. It is on the flag of the country and recognized globally as a UNESCO Heritage Site. Why is Angkor Wat so beloved by Cambodians?

   a. Angkor Wat has many libraries. Does this mean that during the Angkorian period, education was cherished?

   b. In the history of Cambodia, we find that there was an elaborate system of patron/clientship, meaning, for example, that rice growers from around Cambodia had to give their crop to the King who would then re-distribute the food. Often times, as historians have pointed out, this lead to many farmers going hungry because the King did not distribute enough food. Does this sort of clientship still happen? Do people at

lower levels of society have to give something to people above them? Does this happen in school?

c. Do you think there are any legacies from Angkor Wat present in society today? If not, do you think the contemporary society in Cambodian could learn anything from the Angkorian period? If so, what?

d. What qualities does Angkor Wat symbolize?

e. When you look at Angkor Wat or think about Cambodia's long history of god-kings, does the thought make you do anything, perform any rituals?

f. Bring up the story of the stolen object and ask for reactions. What is the meaning and importance of relics such as the one stolen? Should it have been returned to Cambodia or not?

g. Why is it important for Cambodia to keep heirlooms? What about the national museum in Siem Reap? It took heirlooms from around Cambodia and placed them in one area mainly for tourists to see. Even for Cambodians it costs about 1 dollar to visit. Is this right?

Appendix B:
Phase 1 Weekly Schedule

General questions for all participants:

Day 1

- Where were you born? When did you begin living in [Preah Go]? What do you do for a living? Tell me about your family (how many brothers and sisters, what do they do? How many children? Where did you meet your partner, etc.?) What are your fondest memories of school growing up?
- Did an "educated person" signify anything when you were growing up? If so, what? How could you tell someone in the village was an "educated person"? What types of people became "educated"?
- How are teachers respected in the education system today? How were they treated before?
- What does the curriculum teach students?

Day 2

- How did French colonialism impact your family?
- Did you or anyone in your family attend a pagoda school? What did they teach? Did Wat schools cost any money? How and why did people value education in the Wat School? Do you think the pagoda school influences the education today? If so how? Why do students often repeat lessons verbally and in unison in class?
- Did you or any or your family members attend a French Lycée? What was taught in these schools? During this time did education cost any money? Who paid for education? Did people value education? If so, how? What were the qualities of an educated person at this time?

Day 3

- During this period— from the 1940 until 1979—how did your family manage? What did your family have to do to survive? Did anyone in your family go to school? If so, why? What was taught? Did it cost anything? Were gifts provided to teachers or principals?
- After the Khmer Rouge, what was the education experience for your family like during this time? Did you attend public school? What was taught? Did it cost any money to attend? What did you learn? What class was your favorite? Do you think people valued education during this time? If so, why and how?

Day 4

- Did you or anyone in your family go to school from 1992 until present? Can you tell me about their experience? Why did they go to school? What was

taught? How much did it cost? What was the value of school for your family during this time?

- Overall, what does education or school allow you to do?

Day 5

- What is the meaning and importance of relics like the one stolen in the article/video? Should it have been returned to Cambodia or not?
- Why is it important for Cambodia to keep heirlooms? What about the national museum in Siem Reap? It took heirlooms from around Cambodia and placed them in one area mainly for tourists to see. Even for Cambodians it costs about 1 dollar to visit. Is this right?
- When you look at Angkor Wat or think about Cambodia's long history of god-kings, does the thought make you do anything, perform any rituals?

Day 6

- Do you think there are any legacies from Angkor Wat present in society today? If not, do you think the contemporary society in Cambodian could learn anything from the Angkorian period? If so, what?
- Is there any form of client/patron relationship present in today's society? In the education system? Do people at lower levels of society (*neak kr*o) have to give something to people above them (*neak mean*)? Does this happen in school?

Specific questions on day 1:

Government Official

- What role does the government play in education?
- Were there issues of "corruption" within school during previous times? If so, what are some examples?

Pagoda Laymen

- What was the place of religion within the schooling system?

NGO Director

- What role do NGOs play in education today? Why weren't there NGO schools before 1990?

Teacher

- Within the school system, gifts are often given to teachers. Did you ever participate in this practice? And now as a teacher? Why did you or didn't you? What does the gift mean within the school system?

Town Elder

- If you or someone in your family went to school, what did he/she or you aspire to become because of the education?

Parent

- If you or someone in your family went to school, what did he/she or you aspire to become because of the education?

Appendix C:
Phase 2 Guiding Questions and Weekly Schedule

Parent

Friday, May 16, PM

1. How was Khmer New Year?
2. What three words best describe you?

Individual focus on personal income and expenditures
3. How many hours do you work per day, per week? What is your salary?
4. What does your husband do for work? How many hours does he work per day, per week? What is his salary?
5. Do you get any other income besides from your work?
6. How much do you spend in a week, month, year?
7. What do you spend your money on? Have the prices of things gone up recently? How does this compare to before?
8. What percent of your income goes to food, to education, to the pagoda?
9. In the course of one year, how much money do you spend on tax? Should there be taxes to fund social services? If not, how should they be paid for? Is there any community financing of social services?
10. You told me that in 1981, your father was commune chief. Did this come with any social or economic benefits? Have these benefits lasted today?

Individual focus on personal expenses on school
11. Can you tell me exactly what you spend your money on for school? Go through each of her children to figure out what she spends on each of them. Is the cost different in different grades?
12. Do you pay any taxes for school?
13. How do you give money to the school, teacher, etc.?
14. Is there any way you are able to see how the school spends its money?
15. Why do you give informal fees to the school?

Tuesday, May 20, pm

Village focus on economy
16. What is the economy of [Preah Go]?
17. How has the economy changed in recent years?
18. You said if you could go on a plane, you would travel to Malaysia to work. Why did you say this? Is this similar to going to Thailand? What are the pros and cons of moving abroad to work? Is it easy to cross borders?
19. Has subsistence farming increased, decreased, or stayed the same since you moved to [Preah Go]? Do many people farm for profit?
20. What other actors are working inside the [Preah Go] villages? Does Sieng Nam or other companies own land in [Preah Go]?

Village focus on economy of school

21. What actors work inside the school – teachers, NGOs, pagoda committees, commune council, POE, DOE?
22. Can you tell me how these actors work together or not together?
23. How do all of these actors affect student learning?
24. How much do each of these actors pay for education in [Preah Go]: NGOs, households, government, SCC, pagoda committee, teachers, principals?
25. What is the relationship between your children and their teachers, principals, NGOs?
26. Can you tell me about the economy of examinations inside [Preah Go]? For your daughter who wants to go to BBU? What about your children in younger grades?
27. You told me that when you took exams, the police lined the school. Why did they do this? Does it still happen today? Why?
28. Why do teachers charge fees?
29. If teachers followed the law, would there be any fees in school?

Wednesday, May 21, pm

Governance of school fees at local level
30. What does the commune council do to regulate the money going into schools? If not the commune council, then who?
31. How does the commune council monitor school examinations? If not commune council, then who?
32. How does the commune council monitor the distribution of textbooks? If not the commune council, then who?
33. What about private tutoring? Should the commune council be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
34. You told me last time that Facebook is where the real news is found today. Facebook also helps students cheat on examinations. Do you think this is a problem?
35. Can the pagoda committee play a role in the development and governance of the school?
36. You told me you do not get a poor card even though you are not rich. Why is this? (Is it because you do or do not support the CPP?) Although you don't have a poor card, you told me that an NGO supports your second daughter to attend private tutoring. How did she earn this scholarship?

Governance of school fees at national level
37. What does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS do to regulate the money going into schools?
38. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS do monitor school examinations?
39. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS do monitor the distribution of textbooks?
40. What about private tutoring? Should the DOE, POE, or MOEYS be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
41. The new minister says teacher salaries will increase and that examination cheating is a big problem. Will this solve the problem?

Thursday, May 22, pm

Relationships and connecting present to past

42. What effect do large household expenditures on education have on society?
43. What kind of relationship is created between teacher and student when informal fees are charged?
44. What are the benefits of this type of relationship?
45. What are the drawbacks?
46. Besides money, is anything else given to the teacher or principal? That is to say, are there any gifts being exchanged?
47. We spent the last few days talking about the economy in [Preah Go] and within the school. Lots of fees are paid in school. Can you tell me how this is the same or different with your experience growing up and going to school.

Friday, May 23, pm

Connecting examinations to logging

48. The fees in school remind me of the illegal logging of trees in Cambodia. Can you watch this video and tell me your reactions?
49. Tree logging is happening nationally and has been increasingly since the 1990s and in particular since the 2000s. How has this affected the [Preah Go] community?
50. Do you think the logging and the examination are connected in any way?

NGO Director

Monday, May 5, AM

51. How was Khmer New Year?
52. What three words best describe you?

Individual focus on personal income and expenditures
53. How many hours do you work per day, per week? What is your salary?
54. What does your wife do for work? How many hours does she work per day, per week? What is her salary?
55. Do you get any other income besides from your work?
56. How much do you spend in a week, month, year?
57. What do you spend your money on? Have the prices of things gone up recently? How does this compare to before when you were a student in Phnom Penh? In your homeland?
58. Today, what percent of your income goes to food, to education, to the pagoda?
59. In the course of one year, how much money do you spend on tax? Should there be taxes to fund social services? If not, how should they be paid for? Is there any community financing of social services in [Preah Go]?

Individual focus on personal expenses on school
60. When you were in school, can you tell me exactly what you spent your money on for school (private tutoring, examinations, enrollment, other fees)? How

about today for your children? How much do you spend on their education? For what services?

61. As a resident of [Preah Go], do you pay any taxes for school?
62. How do you give money to the school, teacher, etc.?
63. Is there any way you are able to see how the school spends its money?
64. Why do you give informal fees to the school?

Tuesday, May 6, AM

Individual focus on NGO income and expenditures

65. Can you tell me how much income you bring in each year and by what sources?
66. Can you tell me more about the process of finding donors to support your school?
67. Before you used to charge fees from students. Can you tell me how you calculated this fee and why you decided to stop charging the students? Did you notice an increase in enrollment once you stopped charging fees?
68. Bob was important in the development of [Wish For Cambodia]. Bob's organization, also funds [another NGO school]. You said you know the director —former and present—very well. Can you tell me how Bob ended up supporting both schools?
69. Can you tell me about your expenses as a school? Last time you told me you spent $20,000 last year because of school construction and plan on spending another $20,000 this year. Can you walk me through the various expenses – teacher salaries (do they get paid when volunteers teach?), rent, water, electricity, etc.?
70. When you select students for any scholarships or even entrance into [Wish For Cambodia] school, do you use the poor cards given out by the commune council as a way to determine the need of an individual family? Do you know if children from families who support CNRP are given the same opportunity for scholarship and help from [Wish For Cambodia] as those families who support CPP?
71. You told me that you first started [the precursor to Wish For Cambodia] with a few friends from university. This organization lasted 1.5 years before you closed it. You then opened [another organization] which turned into [Wish For Cambodia]. Can you tell me why [the first school] had to close and what lessons you learned from that experience that you've used when you set up [the organization that became Wish For Cambodia]?
72. Is starting a business in education difficult? What were your biggest challenges? Do you think what you are doing is education or training? What's the difference between these two words?

Village focus on economy

73. What is the economy of [Preah Go]?
74. How has the economy changed in recent years?
75. Has subsistence farming increased, decreased, or stayed the same since you moved to [Preah Go]? Do many people farm for profit?
76. I noticed that Sieng Nam bought lots of land in [Preah Go] and is now digging up the land and sending it to Siem Reap. What do you think of this?

77. What other actors are working inside the [Preah Go] villages? Does Sieng Nam or other companies own land in [Preah Go]?

Wednesday, May 7, AM

Village focus on economy of school
1. What actors work inside the school system in [Preah Go]– teachers, NGOs, pagoda committees, commune council, POE, DOE?
2. Can you tell me how these actors work together or not together?
3. What is the affect on student learning of having all of these actors inside the school?
4. Do you think having choice in which schools a student can attend is advantageous?
5. How much does each of these actors pay for education in [Preah Go]: NGOs, households, government, SCC, pagoda committee, teachers, principals?
6. What is the relationship between your children and their teachers, principals, NGOs?
7. What is your relationship as an NGO director with the community? As a teacher with your students? Can you compare your relationship to students with that of a government school teacher's?
8. Can you tell me about the economy of examinations inside [Preah Go]?
9. Why do teachers charge fees?
10. If teachers followed the law, would there be any fees in school?
11. Does your NGO give out scholarships for students to study in government school – i.e., attend private tutoring or take examinations?

Governance of school fees at local level
12. What does the commune council do to regulate the money going government school? If not the commune council, then who?
13. How does the commune council monitor school examinations in government school? If not the commune council, then who?
14. How does the commune council monitor the distribution of textbooks in government school? If not the commune council, then who?
15. What about private tutoring? Should the commune council be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
16. Facebook also helps students cheat on examinations. Do you think this is a problem?
17. Can the pagoda committee play a role in the development and governance of the school?
18. What sort of oversight does the local government have of your NGO school? Do they look at finances? At education quality? At equality of opportunity?

Thursday, May 8, AM

Governance of school fees at national level
1. What does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS do to regulate the money going into schools?
2. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS monitor school examinations?
3. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS monitor the distribution of textbooks?

4. What about private tutoring? Should the DOE, POE, or MOEYS be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
5. The new minister says teacher salaries will increase and that examination cheating is a big problem. Will this solve the problem?
6. What sort of oversight does the national government have of your NGO school? Do they look at finances? At education quality? At equality of opportunity?

Relationships and connecting present to past

7. What effect do large household expenditures on education have on society?
8. What kind of relationship is created between teacher and student when informal fees are charged?
9. What are the benefits of this type of relationship?
10. What are the drawbacks?
11. Besides money, is anything else given to the teacher or principal? That is to say, are there any gifts being exchanged?
12. We spent the last few days talking about the economy in [Preah Go] and within the school. Lots of fees are paid in school. Can you tell me how this is the same or different with your experience growing up and going to school.

Friday, May 9, AM

Connecting examination fees to logging

13. The fees in school remind me of the illegal logging of trees in Cambodia. Can you watch this video and tell me your reactions?
14. Tree logging is happening nationally and has been increasingly since the 1990s and in particular since the 2000s. How has this affected the [Preah Go] community?
15. Do you think the logging and the examination are connected in any way?

Pagoda Laymen

Monday, May, 5, pm

1. How was Khmer New Year?
2. What three words best describe you?

Individual focus on personal income and expenditures
3. I want to ask you about your family's income today compared with before the Khmer Rouge, if you can remember that far back. Before the Khmer Rouge, your family owned lots of capital — boats to rent and lots of rice fields. Today you own a small store, some rice fields, a vegetable garden, cows. You also worked as a teacher, were elected to the pagoda committee, and take care of this young boy whose parents are in Thailand. You also said you get a pension from your 25 years of teaching, and earn a little money organizing pagoda festivals. I wanted to know if you could tell me about each of these labor

activities and tell me how many hours you, your parents, wife, or children worked per day, per week? I want to know how much income you are able to bring in today compared with before the Khmer Rouge. Think of this in terms of household not individuals.

4. Where do you buy the goods you sell in your store and who do you sell your vegetables to?
5. Do you get any other income besides what you have mentioned?
6. Now I want to ask you about how much do you spend in a week, month, or year today compared with a time before the Khmer Rouge.
7. What do you spend your money on today and then? Have the prices of things gone up recently? How does this compare to before?
8. What percent of your income goes to food, to education, to the pagoda?
9. In the course of one year, how much money do you spend on tax? Should there be taxes to fund social services? If not, how should they be paid for? Is there any community financing of social services?

Individual focus on personal expenses on school
10. When you were in school, can you tell me exactly what you spent your money on for school?
11. When you were a teacher, did you have to pay for anything in order to be a teacher? Did you have to give money to the principal or anyone in government on a regular basis? Did you tutor students? How much did you earn from this?
12. You said that when you were in school, taxes were common. Do you know how much these taxes costs for your family, which owned a lot of land?
13. When your children were in school, how much money did you give to the school, teacher, etc., and how? What about this boy you watch? How do the payments to school work?
14. Is there any way you are able to see how the school spends its money?
15. Why do you give informal fees to the school?
16. How does the pagoda committee give money to school?

Tuesday, May, 6, pm

Village focus on economy
17. What is the economy of [Preah Go] today?
18. How has the economy changed in recent years?
19. Has subsistence farming increased, decreased, or stayed the same since you moved to [Preah Go]? Do many people farm for profit?
20. Last time we talked about Sieng Nam. Are there any other people or companies who own lots of land or are working inside [Preah Go] villages?

Village focus on economy of school
21. What actors work inside the school – teachers, NGOs, pagoda committees, commune council, POE, DOE? Compared to when you were in school.
22. Can you tell me how these actors work together or not together?
23. What is the affect on student learning of having all of these actors inside the school?
24. Do you think all of these people working within education today provide choice to students? How is choice in education good and how is it bad?

25. How much does each of these actors pay for education in [Preah Go]: NGOs, households, government, SCC, pagoda committee, teachers, principals?
26. What is the relationship between your children and their teachers, principals, NGOs?
27. Can you tell me about the economy of examinations inside [Preah Go]? How has it changed since you were a child? You said police surrounded schools during examinations when you were a student. Why did this happen? Was there cheating taking place inside the schools? Can you tell me the history of testing in Cambodia schools within [Preah Go]?
28. Why do teachers charge fees?
29. If teachers followed the law, would there be any fees in school?

Wednesday, May 7, pm

Governance of school fees at local level
30. What does the commune council do to regulate the money going into schools? If not the commune council, then who?
31. How does the commune council monitor school examinations? If not the commune council, then who?
32. How does the commune council monitor the distribution of textbooks? If not the commune council, then who?
33. What about private tutoring? Should the commune council be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
34. Facebook also helps students cheat on examinations. Do you think this is a problem?
35. Can the pagoda committee play a role in the development and governance of the school? How is money collected? How is it distributed? After 25 years of work on this committee, how would you make it better?
36. You said last time that gangsters can be violent to the teacher. Why are they?

Governance of school fees at national level
37. What does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS do to regulate the money going into schools?
38. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS monitor school examinations?
39. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS monitor the distribution of textbooks?
40. What about private tutoring? Should the DOE, POE, or MOEYS be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
41. The new minister says teacher salaries will increase and that examination cheating is a big problem. Will this solve the problem?

Thursday, May 8, pm

Relationships and connecting present to past

42. What effect do large household expenditures on education have on society? Have you noticed a change since you were in school? A teacher?
43. What kind of relationship is created between teacher and student when informal fees are charged? Can you tell me about the relationship you had

with students when you were a teacher? What about today? Or when your children went to school?

44. What are the benefits of these types of relationship?
45. What are the drawbacks?
46. Besides money, is anything else given to the teacher or principal? That is to say, are there any gifts being exchanged? Were gifts exchanged when you were a teacher? When you were in school?
47. We spent the last few days talking about the economy in [Preah Go] and within the school. Lots of fees are paid in school. Can you tell me how this is the same or different with your experience growing up and going to school.
48. You look after a boy whose parents moved to Thailand. Can you tell me how this happened? Why did the parents move to Thailand? How did you end up watching the boy? Why did you want to look after a boy?

Friday, May 9, pm

Connecting examination fees to logging

49. The fees in school remind me of the illegal logging of trees in Cambodia. Can you watch this video and tell me your reactions?
50. Tree logging is happening nationally and has been increasingly since the 1990s and in particular since the 2000s. How has this affected the [Preah Go] community?
51. Do you think the logging and the examination are connected in any way?

Town Elder

Monday, April 28, AM

1. How was Khmer New Year?
2. What three words best describe you?

Individual focus on personal income and expenditures
3. I want to ask you about your household today. I know you don't work anymore, but I wanted to discuss the economy of your household—what your children do for work, how many hours they work per day, per week? What is their salary?
4. Do you get any other income besides from this work?
5. How much does your household spend in a week, month, year?
6. What do you spend your money on? Have the prices of things gone up recently? How does this compare to before?
7. What percent of your income goes to food, to education, to the pagoda?
8. In the course of one year, how much money do you spend on tax? Should there be taxes to fund social services? If not, how should they be paid for? Is there any community financing of social services such as the funeral payments for your uncle last time?
9. Do you ever borrow money? You told me before that when you were growing up in the 1960s and 1970s, your family had 1.2 hectares of land then rented another half. Who did you rent from? How much did it cost?

Individual focus on personal expenses on school

10. Can you tell me exactly what your household spends on your your grandchildren's school? How does this compare to when you were in school? When you were a teacher in the 1980s? What was the economy of education like when you taught adults at your home?
11. Do you pay any taxes for school – today, before?
12. How do you/your children/grandchildren give money to the school, teacher, etc.?
13. Is there any way you are able to see how the school spends its money?
14. Why do you give informal fees to the school?

Tuesday, April 29, AM

Village focus on economy

15. What is the economy of [Preah Go]?
16. How has the economy changed in recent years?
17. You told me one of your daughters works in Thailand. Can you tell me how she ended up working in Thailand? What does she do in Thailand? Do many people from [Preah Go] go to Thailand to work?
18. Has subsistence farming increased, decreased, or stayed the same since you moved to [Preah Go]? Do many people farm for profit?
19. Do you subsistence farm? How has this practice changed in your household since the 1980s?
20. I noticed that Sieng Nam bought lots of land in [Preah Go] and is now digging up the land and sending it to Siem Reap. What do you think of this?
21. What other actors are working inside the [Preah Go] villages? Does Sieng Nam or other companies own land in [Preah Go]?

Village focus on economy of school

22. What actors work inside the school – teachers, NGOs, pagoda committees, commune council, POE, DOE?
23. Can you tell me how these actors work together or not together?
24. What is the affect on student learning of having all of these actors inside the school?
25. Do you think all of these actors provide more choice to your grandchildren? Was there less choice when your children went to school? When you went to school?
26. Is there any negative side to increased choice?
27. How much does each of these actors pay for education in [Preah Go]: NGOs, households, government, SCC, pagoda committee, teachers, principals?
28. What is the relationship between your grand-children and their teachers, principals, NGOs? How are the relationships different from when your children were in school and from when you were in school as a student and teacher?
29. Can you tell me about the economy of examinations inside [Preah Go]?
30. Why do teachers charge fees?
31. If teachers followed the law, would there be any fees in school?

Wednesday, April 30, AM

32. What does the commune council do to regulate the money going into schools? If not the commune council, then who?
33. How does the commune council monitor school examinations? If not the commune council, then who?
34. How does the commune council monitor the distribution of textbooks? If not the commune council, then who?
35. What about private tutoring? Should the commune council be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
36. Facebook also helps students cheat on examinations. Do you think this is a problem?
37. When you were a teacher in the 1980s, how was school governed within the village?
38. Can the pagoda committee play a role in the development and governance of the school?

Governance of school fees at national level

39. What does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS do to regulate the money going into schools?
40. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS monitor school examinations?
41. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS monitor the distribution of textbooks?
42. What about private tutoring? Should the DOE, POE, or MOEYS be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
43. The new minister says teacher salaries will increase and that examination cheating is a big problem. Will this solve the problem?

Friday, May 2, AM

Relationships and connecting present to past

44. What effect do large household expenditures on education have on society?
45. What kind of relationship is created between teacher and student when informal fees are charged?
46. What are the benefits of this type of relationship?
47. What are the drawbacks?
48. You said before that today people have the freedom of choice, which didn't exist, under Pol Pot. Can you tell me how this relates to education and how it is positive and negative?
49. Besides money, is anything else given to the teacher or principal? That is to say, are there any gifts being exchanged? Did you ever give gifts when you were in school, a teacher, when your children were in school?
50. We spent the last few days talking about the economy in [Preah Go] and within the school. Lots of fees are paid in school. Can you tell me how this is the same or different with your experience growing up and going to school.

Monday, May 12, AM

Connecting examination fees to logging

51. The fees in school remind me of the illegal logging of trees in Cambodia. Can you watch this video and tell me your reactions?
52. Tree logging is happening nationally and has been increasingly since the 1990s and in particular since the 2000s. How has this affected the [Preah Go] community?
53. Do you think the logging and the examination are connected in any way?

Government Official

Monday, April 28, pm

1. How was Khmer New Year?
2. What three words best describe you?

Individual focus on personal income and expenditures
3. What do you do for work? How many hours do you work per day, per week? What is your salary?
4. What does your wife do for work? How many hours does she work per day, per week? What is her salary?
5. Do you get any other income besides from your work?
6. How much do you spend in a week, month, year?
7. What do you spend your money on? Have the prices of things gone up recently? How does this compare to before?
8. What percent of your income goes to food, to education, to the pagoda?
9. In the course of one year, how much money do you spend on tax? Should there be taxes to fund social services? If not, how should they be paid for? Is there any community financing of social services?

Individual focus on personal expenses on school
10. Can you tell me exactly what you spend your money on for school
11. Do you pay any taxes for school?
12. How do you give money to the school, teacher, etc.?
13. Is there any way you are able to see how the school spends its money?
14. Why do you give informal fees to the school?

Tuesday, April 29, 2 pm

Village focus on economy
15. What is the economy of [Preah Go]?
16. How has the economy changed in recent years?
17. Has subsistence farming increased, decreased, or stayed the same since you moved to [Preah Go]? Do many people farm for profit?
18. I noticed that Sieng Nam bought lots of land in [Preah Go] and is now digging up the land and sending it to Siem Reap. What do you think of this?
19. What other actors are working inside the [Preah Go] villages? Does Sieng Nam or other companies own land in [Preah Go]?

Village focus on economy of school
20. What actors work inside the school – teachers, NGOs, pagoda committees, commune council, POE, DOE?
21. Can you tell me how these actors work together or not together?
22. What is the affect on student learning of having all of these actors inside the school?
23. How much do each of these actors pay for education in [Preah Go]: NGOs, households, government, SCC, pagoda committee, teachers, principals?
24. What is the relationship between your children and their teachers, principals, NGOs?
25. Can you tell me about the economy of examinations inside [Preah Go]?
26. Why do teachers charge fees?
27. If teachers followed the law, would there be any fees in school?

Wednesday, April 30, 2pm

Governance of school fees at local level
28. What does the commune council do to regulate the money going into schools? If not the commune council, then who?
29. How does the commune council monitor school examinations? If not the commune council, then who?
30. How does the commune council monitor the distribution of textbooks? If not the commune council, then who?
31. What about private tutoring? Should the commune council be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
32. You told me last time that Facebook is where the real news is found today. Facebook also helps students cheat on examinations. Do you think this is a problem?
33. Can the pagoda committee play a role in the development and governance of the school?

Governance of school fees at national level
34. What does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS do to regulate the money going into schools?
35. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS monitor school examinations?
36. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS monitor the distribution of textbooks?
37. What about private tutoring? Should the DOE, POE, or MOEYS be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
38. The new minister says teacher salaries will increase and that examination cheating is a big problem. Will this solve the problem?

Friday, May 2, 2 pm

Relationships and connecting present to past

39. What effect do large household expenditures on education have on society?
40. What kind of relationship is created between teacher and student when informal fees are charged?
41. What are the benefits of this type of relationship?

42. What are the drawbacks?
43. Besides money, is anything else given to the teacher or principal? That is to say, are there any gifts being exchanged?
44. We spent the last few days talking about the economy in [Preah Go] and within the school. Lots of fees are paid in school. Can you tell me how this is the same or different with your experience growing up and going to school.

Monday, May 12, 2 pm

Connecting examination fees to logging

45. The fees in school remind me of the illegal logging of trees in Cambodia. Can you watch this video and tell me your reactions?
46. Tree logging is happening nationally and has been increasingly since the 1990s and in particular since the 2000s. How has this affected the [Preah Go] community?
47. Do you think the logging and the examination are connected in any way?

Teacher

Friday, May 16, AM

1. How was Khmer New Year?
2. Last time we spoke you told me that today Cambodia is like communism. We had to stop last time because of the smoke, so could you please elaborate on this idea?
3. What three words best describe you?

Individual focus on personal income and expenditures
4. How many hours do you work per day, per week? What is your salary? What is your schedule in one week? How many hours of private tutoring and how many hours of government school? How much do you earn from private tutoring in one week and how much from government school?
5. Your husband works as a tour guide. How many hours does he work per day, per week? What is his salary?
6. Do you get any other income besides from your work?
7. How much do you spend in a week, month, year?
8. What do you spend your money on? Have the prices of things gone up recently? How does this compare to before?
9. What percent of your income goes to food, to education (do you have children that go to school?), to the pagoda?
10. In the course of one year, how much money do you spend on tax? Should there be taxes to fund social services? If not, how should they be paid for? Is there any community financing of social services?

Individual focus on personal expenses on school
11. Can you tell me exactly what you spend your money on for school in order to teach? (Any notebooks? Extra books? Markers??)

12. Do you pay any taxes for school?
13. Can you tell me about collecting money from students? Why do you have a "class monitor" collect the money in private tutoring?
14. Do you ever have to give money to someone else in the school—another teacher, principal, DOE/POE official?
15. Is there any way you are able to see how the school spends its money?
16. You said last time that private tutoring happens because (1) students want it; (2) the curriculum doesn't have enough example problems/practice; and (3) there isn't enough time to teach everything. Do you ever encourage students to come to private tutoring by withholding information in government school?

Tuesday, May 20, AM

Village focus on economy
17. What is the economy of [Preah Go]?
18. How has the economy changed in recent years?
19. Has subsistence farming increased, decreased, or stayed the same since you moved to [Preah Go]? Do many people farm for profit?
20. I noticed that Sieng Nam bought lots of land in [Preah Go] and is now digging up the land and sending it to Siem Reap. What do you think of this?
21. What other actors are working inside the [Preah Go] villages? Does Sieng Nam or other companies own land in [Preah Go]?

Village focus on economy of school
22. What actors work inside the school – teachers, NGOs, pagoda committees, commune council, POE, DOE?
23. Can you tell me how these actors work together or not together?
24. What is the affect on student learning of having all of these actors inside the school?
25. How much does each of these actors pay for education in [Preah Go]: NGOs, households, government, SCC, pagoda committee, teachers, principals?
26. What is the relationship between you and the students, other teachers, principals, and NGOs?
27. How are textbooks given out? Do students have to pay for them? Why don't you use textbooks in private tutoring but do use them in government school?
28. Can you tell me about the economy of examinations inside [Preah Go]? You said that you had to take an examination in the teachers training college. Did you have to cheat on this exam? What about purchase answers. In one of he classes I observed, I also noticed many students throwing in paper with answers on it during the English exam. Is this common?
29. Do you ever charge fees for students to take exams? Do you ever give out answers?
30. How are exams graded? Is it likely that students who cheat do better on exams?
31. Do students who pay money do better on exams? In class overall? Is there a direct benefit on exams if students give money to his/her teachers?
32. Some people say that the issue with exams is that teachers don't follow the laws. If teachers only followed the law, these people argue, there wouldn't be any fees. Do you think this is true? How would you respond?

Wednesday, May 21, AM

Governance of school fees at local level

33. What does the commune council do to regulate the money going into schools? If not the commune council, then who?
34. How does the commune council monitor school examinations? If not the commune council, then who?
35. How does the commune council monitor the distribution of textbooks? If not the commune council, then who?
36. What about private tutoring? Should the commune council be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
37. Facebook also helps students cheat on examinations. Do you think this is a problem? Has this occurred in your classes?
38. Can the pagoda committee play a role in the development and governance of the school?

Governance of school fees at national level

39. What does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS do to regulate the money going into schools?
40. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS monitor school examinations?
41. How does the DOE, POE, or MOEYS monitor the distribution of textbooks?
42. What about private tutoring? Should the DOE, POE, or MOEYS be involved with the collection of fees between teacher and student?
43. The new minister says teacher salaries will increase and that examination cheating is a big problem. Will this solve the problem?

Thursday, May 22, AM

Relationships and connecting present to past

44. What effect do large household expenditures on education have on society?
45. What kind of relationship is created between teacher and student when informal fees are charged?
46. What are the benefits of this type of relationship?
47. What are the drawbacks? Any ethical issues with teachers tutoring own students?
48. Besides money, is anything else given to the teacher or principal? That is to say, are there any gifts being exchanged?
49. We spent the last few days talking about the economy in [Preah Go] and within the school. Lots of fees are paid in school. Can you tell me how this is the same or different with your experience growing up and going to school.

Monday, May 23, AM

Connecting examination fees to logging

50. The fees in school remind me of the illegal logging of trees in Cambodia. Can you watch this video and tell me your reactions?

51. Tree logging is happening nationally and has been increasingly since the 1990s and in particular since the 2000s. How has this affected the [Preah Go] community?
52. Do you think the logging and the examination are connected in any way?

Appendix D:
Consent Forms

1. Permission letter for [Preah Go] Village Authority

From: William C. Brehm and This Life Cambodia
To: [Preah Go] Village Authority
Date: October 1, 2013

Objective: Asking permission for data collection in [Preah Go] village.

Be informed that William C. Brehm from the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong and supervised by Professor Mark Bray, in conjunction with This Life Cambodia (TLC), aims to conduct interviews and observations of six individuals who have different roles in the education system — a teacher, a parent, a monk, an education businessperson, a town elder, and a government official. The purpose of this research is to understand how different types of individuals react and respond to an education system that relies heavily on household financing. The research will take place in [Preah Go] because the village and its members offer a good example from which the rest of Cambodia can learn about the effects large household costs to education can have on individuals and communities.

The six people who opt to participate in this research will be interviewed and observed by Tuot Mono, a research assistant from This Life Cambodia, and William C. Brehm for a total of 21 days between 7 and 12 months. During the research various people who interact with the six main research participants will be interviewed and/or observed. All interviews will be audiotaped and photos and video recordings will be taken during observations. As such, participants have the right to review the recording and erase part or the entire recording. Audio/video recordings and field notes will be stored in TLC's office until December 2015, at which point they will be destroyed.

The study will be organized between October 2013 and January 2014, and have three phases of data collection. The first phase will begin in February 2014 and last no later than April 2014; the second phase will begin in May 2014 and last no later than July 2014; and the last phase will begin August 2014 and last no later than October 2014.

For this research project, all information obtained will be used for research purposes only. Participants will not be identified by name in any report of the completed study. Participation is entirely voluntary. This means that participants in the research can choose to stop at any time without negative consequences. It is possible that some people may tell stories or talk about issues that could cause problems in the community.

If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact William C. Brehm (077 435 127) or TLC (063 966 050). If you want to know more about the rights as a research participant, please contact the Human Research Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Faculties, the University of Hong Kong (+852 2241-5267).

2. Assent form for primary research participants

To be read to participants and audio recorded:

Dear [name of participant]

I am William C. Brehm of the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong. My supervisor is Professor Mark Bray. Today is [say date]. I will conduct a research project entitled "Responding to Educational Capitalism: Portraits of 'Neoliberal Subjects' and their Social Relations in Cambodia" and would like to invite residents of [Preah Go] village to participate. The goal of the study is to construct six written portraits of individuals who have different roles in the education system — a teacher, a parent, a monk, an education businessperson, a town elder, and a government official. The aim is to understand how different types of individuals react and respond to an education system that relies heavily on household financing. I want to work in [Preah Go] because I've worked here before, and think the village and its members offer a good example that the rest of Cambodia can learn from.

If you opt to participate in this research, you will be interviewed and observed by a research assistant from This Life Cambodia and me for 21 days over a period of 7 to 11 months. The data collection will not occupy all of your time during the 21 days. Interviews will last between 1-1.5 hours each day, and 3-4 hours of observation will occur. I will audio-record our conversations and take photos and capture video of your surroundings, but you have the right to review and erase any part or the entire recording at any time if you so choose. I will store field notes, videos, photos, and audio recordings in TLC's office and destroy them by December 2015.

During the data collection, I will also speak with various people with whom you interact. The research will be conducted in 3 stages: The first phase will begin in February 2014 and last no later than April 2014; the second phase will begin in May 2014 and last no later than July 2014; and the last phase will begin August 2014 and last no later than October 2014. During each phase, I will come to [Preah Go] village for 6 weeks in order to spend one week with each participant. It is possible that some people may tell me stories or talk about issues that could cause problems in the community. All of my notes, pictures, and audio-recordings will be stored on my computer, which will be locked inside This Life Cambodia's office.

Please complete the reply slip below to indicate whether you do decide to participate in this research. All information obtained will be used for research purposes only. Participants will not be identified by name in any report of the completed study. Participation is entirely voluntary. This means that you can choose to stop at any time without negative consequences. If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact William C. Brehm (077 435 127). If you want to know more about the rights as a research participant, please contact the Human Research Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Faculties, the University of Hong Kong (+852 2241-5267).

If you understand the contents described and agree to participate in this research, please state the following:

I will participate in the research.

If you do not understand the contents described or do not agree to participate in this research, please state the following:

I will not participate in the research.

Your help is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely, William C. Brehm.

3. Assent form for secondary research participants

To be read to participants and audio recorded:

Dear [name of participant]

I am William C. Brehm of the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong. My supervisor is Professor Mark Bray. Today is [say date]. I will conduct a research project entitled "Responding to Educational Capitalism: Portraits of 'Neoliberal Subjects' and their Social Relations in Cambodia" and would like to invite residents of [Preah Go] village to participate. The goal of the study is to construct six written portraits of individuals who have different roles in the education system — a teacher, a parent, a monk, an education businessperson, a town elder, and a government official. The aim is to understand how different types of individuals react and respond to an education system that relies heavily on household financing. I want to work in [Preah Go] because I've worked here before, and think the village and its members offer a good example that the rest of Cambodia can learn from.

I would like to interview you in a quiet place of your choice since I've noticed you interact with [name of primary subject] on a regularly basis. If you opt to participate in this research, you will be interviewed by a research assistant from This Life Cambodia and me for 30 to 45 minutes. I will audio-record our conversations and take photos and capture video of your surroundings, but you have the right to review and erase any part or the entire recording at any time if you so choose. I will store field notes, videos, photos, and audio recordings in TLC's office and destroy them by December 2015.

My research project takes place in [Preah Go] between February and October 2014. The research will be conducted in 3 stages: The first phase will begin in February 2014 and last no later than April 2014; the second phase will begin in May 2014 and last no later than July 2014; and the last phase will begin August 2014 and last no later than October 2014. During each phase, I will come to [Preah Go] village for 6 weeks. I will speak with different people in the village, and may ask you for follow up interviews during the subsequent phases. It is possible that some people may tell me stories or talk about issues that could cause problems in the community.

Please complete the reply slip below to indicate whether you do decide to participate in this research. All information obtained will be used for research purposes only. Participants will not be identified by name in any report of the completed study. Participation is entirely voluntary. This means that you can choose to stop at any time without negative consequences. If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact William C. Brehm (077 435 127). If you want to know more about the rights as a research participant, please contact the Human Research Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Faculties, the University of Hong Kong (+852 2241-5267).

If you understand the contents described and agree to participate in this research, please state the following:

I will participate in the research.

If you do not understand the contents described or do not agree to participate in this research, please state the following:

I will not participate in the research.

Your help is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely, William C. Brehm.

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