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Learning for Cambodian Women: Exploration through Narrative Identity and Imagination

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The University of San Francisco

LEARNING FOR CAMBODIAN WOMEN:
EXPLORATION THROUGH NARRATIVE IDENTITY AND IMAGINATION

A Dissertation Presented
To
The Faculty of School of Education
Department of Leadership Studies
Organization and Leadership Program

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Doctor of Education

By
Alvina Sheeley
San Francisco, California
December 2012

THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
Dissertation Abstract

Learning for Cambodian Women:
Exploration through Narrative Identity and Imagination

Research Topic

This study explains different ways of thinking about education that may improve the quality of life for women in Cambodia. The present inquiry portrays the personal histories, narratives and hopes of selected women to uncover possible ways in which government and non-government agencies may transform the lives of Cambodian women through education programs.

Theory and Protocol

This research is grounded in critical hermeneutic theory formulated by Paul Ricoeur (1992) and follows an interpretive approach to field research and data analysis (Herda 1999). This orientation places the researcher and participants in a collaborative relationship that exemplifies the power of conversation and the importance of language to unveil new understandings about our world.

Research Categories

Two categories served as the boundaries for both data collection and analysis: Narrative Identity, understood from a critical hermeneutic orientation, reveals the process wherein a person reconfigures the story on the basis of who he or she is and it is through the recounting and retelling that one's identity can change; and Mimeses may happen when history is reinterpreted providing a basis for understanding the current situation, and in turn, lead to imagining a possible future that could become a reality through appropriate action in the area of adult learning.

Findings

The participants, who live in the rural villages now or have lived there, posit that the Cambodian government lacks solicitude for their education because they are currently the poor inhabitants and farmers of the country. To re-imagine their future life through an education program, changes must occur within themselves as well as with government policies. The following findings were derived from the conversations with participants: (1) women play a minor role in the current economic development (2) there is an absence of literacy curriculum with trained and skilled educators (3) authentic communications are closed. If these concerns were addressed, there could be an improvement in the lives of some of the women in Cambodia.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

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I thank the rural women who opened up themselves to share their history, expectations, and the passing of their arrows from the past to the future. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of their lives and the life-world of rural village and suburban women. My understanding and interpretation of the material that they have provided for

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I thank Alicia Wood who started me on this great adventure and educational journey many decades ago. In addition, I thank my friends who encouraged me throughout my years to complete my education.

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I thank two of my elderly sisters, Marlene, and Catherine, who allowed me to participate in solicitude with them during their confinement to nursing homes. Both of them always believed, like my mother, that I would “make something of myself.” My experiences with them were being-in-the-world together in the sense of taking care of them. I thank all of my brothers and sisters for their love and support throughout our lives.

To my son, Kirk Sheeley, I leave this dissertation that reveals wisdom from well-known philosophers. May he hold true to the belief that he may inhabit his proposed life-world. This dissertation is written but continues to be open to explore further horizons.

To the memory of my parents
William Darrell and Emma Alvina Riley
Who lived their lives with solicitude for Others

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CHAPTER ONE: STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

Introduction

This research is an inquiry into educational opportunities for women in Cambodia. More specifically, I investigated the nature of existing learning programs for a selected group of women in order to determine their role as potential students in adult education programs. The selected group of women currently lives in villages or used to live there but now work in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap suburbs. My research focused on the personal histories, narratives and hopes of these women in order to uncover possible ways in which government and non-government agencies could transform their lives through education. The success of innovative educational programs hinges on an improved communication process between Cambodian women and government and educational agencies, and could incorporate narrative conversations as one factor in that communication process.

Preliminary data shown below suggest that many village and rural Cambodian women have not had the opportunity to think about or envision themselves as becoming educated. Women remain uneducated in a larger proportion than men in developing countries, and this is true of Cambodia. Young girls may start out in the primary grades, but "[i]n developing countries, nearly one out of every five girls who enrolls in primary school does not complete her primary education" (UNICEF 2006). These girls do not ever catch up and as adults remain behind men in the arena of adult education in poor countries. UNESCO (2007:1) has found that "worldwide, 774 million adults lack the minimum literacy skills. One in five adults is still not literate and two-thirds of them are

women." The UNESCO slogan reads Literacy is the Best Remedy. UNESCO conducts an annual literacy conference that is always held on the eighth of September.

This study was based on the use of approaches that belong in the critical hermeneutic tradition. I list below the two primary categories used and a general research question that pertains to each research category:

Category One: Narrative Identity. In the process of narration, a person reconfigures the story on the basis of who he or she is and it is through the recounting and retelling that one's identity can change.

Question: What is your story, and how has it changed over the past years?

Category Two: Mimeses. Understanding a story involves three kinds of mimeses (a sense of time—past, future, present). In the case of my research, mimeses may happen when the turbulent Cambodian history is reinterpreted providing a basis for understanding the current situation, and in turn, lead to imagining a possible future that could become a reality through appropriate action in the area of adult learning.

Question: What in your past needs to be understood in a way that will lead you to imagine a different life today, one that could perhaps be realized through education?

This research may be viewed from three different perspectives. One, the contents of this report could be an addition to the scarce number of studies that are available in the current literature on Cambodian women in education. A current search of literature in the area of women and education in Cambodia reveals that only a bare minimum of research has been carried out on this topic. Hopefully, this research contributes to the existing dearth of knowledge and understanding of village and rural women in Cambodia. Two,

the findings of my research effort may contribute to different ways of thinking about education and, therefore, may improve the quality of life for women in Cambodia. Three, these findings may be applicable to other developing nations, especially those with similar history and culture. The following Chapters present a brief Background of The Issue, Significance of the Issue, and a Summary.

Background of the Issue

In the past, Cambodian women lived their lives as though they were deemed by tradition to be the correct pattern of action in their society. They stayed at home, tended the children, cooked, and helped with the farming. When a pattern such as this was inherited from one generation to the next, the females followed the footsteps of their ancestors because they respected their mothers and their grandmothers who established the roles for them. They helped their mothers and they expected their daughters to help them, thus perpetuating the cycle. Annuska Derks (2008) writes that over the past two decades, these patterns have changed in urban areas but many remain entrenched in the poorer regions.

Miwa (2005:442) states that war has created disruptions in the family structure. Cambodian men move to find work in urban areas; thus resulting in an increase rate of divorce. Village women and those who live in rural areas have continued with the traditional pattern of assuming a significant responsibility for farming and, therefore, generating the meager family income. This has resulted in 26 percent of the population in Cambodia, or 2.2 million people, living in households headed by a woman, ages 40–44, according to the census taken in 1998, National University of Singapore 200b:65 (Miwa 2005).

Cambodian women have been denied a formal education for many reasons in the past centuries. Criddle (1987:287–289) explains that prior to the completion of Angkor Wat in the 12th century, tribal cultures inhabited the country and the people worshiped god-kings. Though Cambodia reached its cultural height in the 14th century, women's need for education was still not recognized. From the 12th to the 16th century, wars were fought between Cambodia and Thailand, and the ancient kingdom declined and disappeared during the 16th and 18th centuries but was rediscovered in the late 1800s (See Appendix A, Table 2: Traces of Cambodian History). Even the religious rituals wavered between Hindu, Mahayana, and Theravada Buddhism (Kent and Chandler 2008:16).

As Cambodia discarded the Hindu and Mahayana Buddhist religion, they developed and maintained the Theravada religion as their official faith. The monks not only had access to the rituals but also they wrote them. Theravada Buddhism influenced the Cambodians to see the world through the lens of their texts and their ideas. The consequence of these religious developments was that, though the Buddhist traditions were exposed to all Cambodians, the women were left out of the educational process because they were prevented from studying with the monks or in the monasteries. Paul Magocsi (1999:301) affirms that in Cambodia

[g]irls and young women were not allowed education or training at the temple. Theravada Buddhist monks have traditionally viewed women with apprehension because females are potential temptresses who may lure monks from their vows of chastity.

In spite of this fact, the Buddha ethics represented a potential opportunity that may have "helped the Cambodians understand and express their societal changes originated through cultural transmission from other countries" (Elaine Forest 2008).

Cambodians revered the teachings of the Buddhists and may have regarded the religion as their only hope, especially in times of great tragedy. The war of the 1970s waged by the Khmer Rouge against its own people perhaps was the most plundering tragedy ever experienced by the Cambodians. The destruction caused by the last dictator who ruled from 1975–1979 has had devastating effects on education, especially on women for the past 30 years. Etcheson (2005:10) writes that

[d]uring those years, the Khmer Rouge Regime illegally deported thousands of ethnic Vietnamese-Cambodians, killing all who moved too slowly to leave. They destroyed property and leveled villages and cities alike. Their torture inflicted merciless pain on helpless prisoners who had committed no crime.

In addition, books were burned, teachers, merchants and almost the entire intellectual elite of the country were murdered, to make the agricultural communism envisioned by Pol Pot a reality (Cambodia Today, Khmer Rouge History 2010). All schools were closed and people who wore glasses were hunted down (Jon Swain 1995). This devastation is in stark contrast to the era between the 9th and 13th centuries when Cambodia was one of the most advanced civilizations on earth (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011).

In addition to historical markers of both achievement and depredation, the fact remains that today Cambodia ranks as the 124th poorest nation out of 169 nations, according to the United Nations Development Program (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011). Poverty kills many attempts to educate people because poverty breeds corruption and promotes despair and a lack of hope. Still governments and non-government agencies attempt to create educational opportunities for the poor, but often the attempts are unsuccessful.

Many education pilot programs in Cambodia have not lasted for several reasons. Jackie Rosenbloom (2004) writes that among those reasons are the difficulty in coordinating programs with the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MoEYS); no or few economic incentives to maintain women's involvement; lack of women's involvement in designing their own learning program; women's lack of imagination for a literate future; lack of women's roles in the development of materials; high teacher-student ratio; and the lack of supplementary materials in libraries.

In view of the above reasons for unsuccessful education programs, women fare even worse than men do in achieving educational goals. The women who live in villages and in rural areas carry the lion's share of the burden in supporting families since they have to bear, raise and maintain children in addition to working in the fields. For women in general in Cambodia, Derks (2008:218) reports "[s]ixty-four percent of Cambodian women above twenty-five have not completed primary-level education (as opposed to forty-six percent of men)", a difference of 21 percent. The odds are even less favorable in the poorest villages of the country because farming provides the main source of sustainability and women are the ones primarily responsible for agricultural production. Moreover, tradition in villages calls on women not only to tend to the family and the farm but also bear the significant burden of collecting wood for cooking. This chore alone usually demands more than three hours a day. Women are dedicated to gathering wood, boiling water and cooking food, which consumes the major part of their day (East Asia and Pacific regions).

With this brief background of the issue, my research revealed how women who live in the rural village areas and some suburban areas under these conditions imagine a

way to live life differently; one way could be by attending education classes. In their stories, they imagined different possibilities through reflection and the telling of a new story with concomitant new actions, such as attending a school if one existed. The relationship between imagination and action is expressed by both Richard Kearney and Paul Ricoeur. Richard Kearney (1989:6) posits that the "possible worlds of imagination can be made real by action" and agrees with Ricoeur (2004:42) in that "there can be 'no action without imagination'." The cornerstone for these women's lives to improve resides in the relationship between imagining going to school and actually attending school.

It is important to consider women's education that could provide new possibilities and future changes because of the role women play in the development of their countries. As Hillary Clinton stated, "Women hold the key to global development" (Bunting 2011). This document examines the stories of selected Cambodian women in one of the poorest countries in the world, with the intent of working with these women to understand how best to offer education that helps to create a new story – one that houses imagined possibilities for all the people in their community.

Significance of the Issue

It is important for policy leaders to imagine a future that fully embodies women and their critical role in the development of Cambodia. Not to have an adequate education process that effectively incorporates these women and strengthens the women to be effective contributors to society would unnecessarily perpetuate a situation of waste of human capital for the nation. A country's willingness to be open for social, economic, and educational changes with equality for all women allows them, individually and

collectively, to become possible participants in the local, regional, and global world markets.

Summary

In Chapter One, I introduce the area of my research, Cambodia, and the status of educational backgrounds for women. I present Narrative Identity and Mimeses (Mimesis₁, Mimesis₂, and Mimesis₃), as the hermeneutic research categories. I give a brief explanation of the history of the country, present current social, political, educational backgrounds, and point to the possible significance of this issue in terms of everyday benefits for women in Cambodia.

The remaining research consists of Chapter Two, Chapter Three, and Chapter Four, Chapter Five, Chapter Six, and Chapter Seven. Chapter Two introduces Cambodia's Geographical Location; History; and the Political, Economic, and Educational Backgrounds. Chapter Three presents the Review of Literature on Education and Women's Education in Cambodia and on Anthropological Theories. Chapter Four discusses the Theoretical Framework and Research Protocol. Chapter Five offers the Data Presentation. Chapter Six gives the Analysis of Data. Chapter Seven presents the Summary, Findings, Actions, Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO: INTRODUCTION TO THE COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Introduction

This Chapter introduces the background of Cambodia and includes the Geographical Location and a Brief History. It also includes the Cultural Background, the Political Background, the Economic Background, and the Educational Background.

Geographical Location and Brief History

Cambodia, a small Southeast Asian country with a population of approximately 14 million, is surrounded by China, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Gulf of Thailand, (See



Figure 1 Topography Map
(<http://google.com>)

Figure 1, Topography Map). The geography of Cambodia is varied with mountains, rivers, lakes, and forests.

Cambodia's tropical climate is created by its proximity to the equator, 13 degrees north. The monsoon rains last six months, June to November, which cause floods; the dry season, from December to May, creates occasional

drought. The Elephant and the Cardamon Mountains lie in the south; and the Dangrek Mountains lie along the Thai border.

The important waterways are the Tonle Sap Lake and the Tonle Sap River, a tributary to the Mekong River. In the middle of the country lay low plains that give the country an appearance of a bowl. Within its borders, there remain approximately one million buried landmines (Cambodia, Country Studies 2011). There continue to be wild animals in the Mondulkiri province, such as Asian elephants and Bengal tigers (see page 164, Figure 6 Bengal Tiger); however, they are becoming extinct because of the landmines (Davies and Dunlop 1994).

Early History

Most of the early history in this Chapter is drawn from Appendix A, Table 2 (Traces of Cambodia, Criddle and Mam). In the beginning, Cambodia was Kambujadesa, a Sanskrit word. The country's formal history began with the first century A.D. and from that time until the eighth century, Cambodia was known as the Khmer Kingdom with god-kings. In this period of time, Cambodians began to build Angkor Wat, dedicated to King Vishnu. This Wat was completed in the 12th century which is referred to as the



Figure 2: Angkor Wat Temple
(<http://google.com>)

Angkor period and Angkorian culture. Angkor Wat created a powerful image of Cambodia to the rest of the Southeast Asian countries with its magnificent phallic symbol towers.

In the 15th century, Thailand conquered a part of the Khmer Kingdom and through the next three centuries, the ancient kingdom declined and disappeared. In the late 1800s Angkor Wat was rediscovered and the history was made known again. In the year 1864, Cambodia became a French Protectorate where it remained until 1954, the year France liberated Cambodia and posted a 19 year-old named Sihanouk, as a puppet king (Criddle 1987:287–289).

At the time that the Vietnamese were struggling to divide themselves into two countries, Sihanouk renounced his kingship in 1955 and assumed the position of both the prince of Cambodia and the president. Fifteen years later Prince Sihanouk was dethroned in a bloodless coup by Lon Nol who established the Khmer Republic. In 1975, the

Khmer Rouge, under the dictatorship of Pol Pot, defeated the Khmer Republic (Criddle 1987:287–289).

Through centuries of turmoil and radical changes, many Cambodians sustained their identities as individuals and as a collective culture. Ricoeur (2004:138) writes that

[e]very society . . . possesses . . . a sociopolitical *imaginaire*, . . . an ensemble of symbolic discourses. This *imaginaire* can function as a rupture or a reaffirmation. As reaffirmation, the *imaginaire* operates as an ideology which can positively repeat and represent the founding discourse of a society, what I call it 'foundational symbols', thus preserving its sense of identity (italics in original).

Cultures are not transmitted through one's genes but rather through knowledge, arts, beliefs, values and social institutions. Shahideh (2004:34) states that "[h]uman beings are always changing, as are our identities and our understanding of time and history."

Humans and cultures change as they respond to the environment; this in turn, changes the humans and alters their understanding of themselves and others.

Since the known existence of Cambodia, its history has been riddled with conundrums. Cambodia's name changed according to who was ruling the country at the time. For example, Cambodia was the Khmer Republic from 1970–1975; Democratic Kampuchea from 1975–1979; the People's Republic of Kampuchea from 1979–1989; and the State of Cambodia from 1989–1993. Currently, the name is the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Cambodians believed in Hindu religious rituals in their early existence. During the 12th century, they changed their faith to Buddhism. "The Five Precepts of Buddhism are the injunctions not to kill, steal, commit adultery, lie (gossip, bear false witness), or drink alcoholic beverages" (U Sam Oeur 2005). In *People of Virtue, Refiguring Religion*,

Power and Moral Order in Cambodia Today, edited by Kent and Chandler, Alain Forest (2008:16) states that

[v]ery little is known about the religious history of Cambodia between the thirteenth and twentieth century. The best one can do, . . . is to elaborate on hypotheses about the changes that took place in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when Cambodia shifted from religious heterogeneity, with . . . cults honouring Siva ('the king of the gods, the god of the king' *devaraja*) and Vishnu coexisting with diverse forms of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism, to the uncontested superiority of a form of Theravada Buddhism stemming from a reform that took place in . . . the second half of the twelfth century (*italics in original*).

Parts of the Cambodian history are steeped in mystery because of the lack of historical recordings and the upheavals in governance.

Current Social Situation

According to the World Bank Report of 2010, Cambodia's population is approximately 12,881,000. This shows Cambodia doubled the population from 1980 to 2010 which was 6,400,000 in 1980, the end of the Pol Pot era. Tensions exist today as they have in the past between the borders of Cambodia and Vietnam over territorial rights. These tensions have increased as both countries look to off-shore islands for ownership (Bora Touch in Khmer Institute 2009).

Discrimination against women and denial of their rights to exist alongside men with the same privileges continues, with some government leaders ignoring women's social and educational environments (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011). Women who are being denied their education are falling further behind in their qualifications for employment as compared to the men who have the education system more readily available to them.

Political Background

Cambodia has lived under a dictatorship political culture for centuries from both foreign countries and from their own leader, Pol Pot, aka Saloth Sar. David Chandler (1999) allows us to see Pol Pot's character in *Brother Number One, A Political Biography of Pol Pot*. Chandler's research revealed that the last Cambodian domination occurred by Pol Pot, a Marxist Communist Cambodian, and his notoriously known group of leaders. Pol Pot was a former teacher as well as three of his leaders who studied together in Paris.

Ben Kiernan (2008:150) stated Pol Pot and the Gang of Four, Ieng Sary, Khieu Samphan, Son Sen, and Ta Mok, known as the Butcher (aka Ek Choen, Oeung Choeun, Ung Choeun and Brother Number 5) were the original Cambodians to begin the Khmer Rouge. In addition, Nuon Chea; Ieng Thirith; K'ang Sheng; and Kaing Guek Eav (Kang Khek Ieu, aka Comrade Duch) joined forces. Chaddler (1996:317) stated that the

[t]eacher-student relationship was another crucial place where power and subservience were deployed; it is not accidental that so many Khmer Rouge leaders were school teachers by profession, adept at controlling rooms full of potentially unruly people.

Criddle and Mam (1987:101) state that Pol Pot wanted the "[p]eople to be molded by Angkar ('the Organization') like hot metal put on an anvil and pounded into shape into the pure Communists of the future." U Sam Oeur (2005:31) stated that "I wasn't aware of the extent to which Pol Pot intended to completely eliminate our entire traditional culture." The history of the war reveals this belief to be true with many other Cambodians who followed Pol Pot's orders at the beginning of the exodus of Phnom Penh. Ricoeur (1992:167) posits that "[t]o strip people of who they are, is only a temporal state but one cannot strip a person of what they are which is a permanent state." Kearney (2002:142) states that in a story of genocide "[y]ou can kill a people but you

cannot silence their voices." This is true is the Cambodian society. Many rural village suburban women are eager to tell their stories through their own voices about the past.

When Pol Pot and his chosen leaders returned to Cambodia from France, his new ideology created a chaotic world that consisted of demons and monsters. François Bizot (2004:108) discloses Pol Pot's doctrines in a conversation with Douch (The Butcher). Bizot had been in Cambodia as the Pol Pot regime began, innocently captured as an enemy, and held in captivity for a long period of time in a secluded area. The Butcher was assigned to be Bizot's guard. During that time, The Butcher and Bizot began to have frequent discussions and Bizot states

[I] have followed your educational sessions. They're not unlike courses in Buddhist doctrine: renouncing material possessions; giving up family ties, which weaken us and prevent us from devoting ourselves entirely to the Angkar; leaving our parents and our children in order to serve the revolution. Submitting to discipline and confessing our faults . . . There are ten 'moral commandments' that you call, *sila*, that have the same name as the ten Buddhist 'abstentions' (*sila*). The revolutionary must accept the rules of a *vinaya*, exactly as the monk observes a religious 'discipline' (*vinaya*). At the start of his instruction, a young soldier is given a pack containing six articles (trousers, shirt, cap, *krama*, sandals, bag), just as the novice monk receives a regulation kit of seven items. . . In everything you tell me, and in what I have heard myself, one finds religious themes from the past: taking on a new name, . . . enduring hardships, rather like ritual mortification, even the soothing, enticing words of Radio Peking announcing the advent of a regenerated people, born of the revolution (*italics in original*).

Pol Pot's destruction of the religious temples may have been his attempt to destroy the ideological symbols of greatness and power. In essence, he stole the values and beliefs so they could not be transmitted to the next generation. When he destroyed the revered temples, he attempted to strip the people of their collective identity. Thus, he gained more state control over the people. Not only did his regime destroy the sacred Buddhist temples, the symbol of Cambodian religious culture, it also burned Cambodian literature, libraries, and theatres, abolished money and separated Cambodia's family

structure. It appeared that he was striving to establish the most advanced and purist ideologically agrarian society.

Estimations of slaughtered Cambodians in the mass genocide totaled one and one-half million Cambodians, including educated citizens, trained manpower, monks, and anyone who looked educated. The precise figures of those who were slaughtered may never be known. Pol Pot even purged his regime in search for purity and internal security. Every Cambodian had to be engaged in productive labor because of Pol Pot's utopian agrarian society. There were exceptions to everyone being a laborer. Kiernan (2008:161) states that illiterate 12-14 year old youth were used as pharmacists who mixed meds and dispersed aspirin, tetracycline, and anti-diarrheal tablets. Youth were also used as a "collector of all things" as Om Sothea, a conversation partner, stated.

Chandler (1996:311) maintains that tragedy implies sadness and tragedy also "[d]escribes a narrative pattern of Cambodia's political history, in terms of such ingredients as leadership, social structure, and power relations." Chandler (1996:314) ponders, "What was in the Cambodian social structure and relationships that produced so many avid leaders and so many cowed, bewildered subjects." One may conjecture that the unstable government did not allow people to develop strong character with leadership skills for themselves and others.

Current Politics

According to David Ayres' (2000) report on Cambodia's system of government, the bipartisan system is a democracy under a constitutional monarchy that was agreed upon by the various warring parties in 1991 to conduct national elections under the direct supervision of the United Nations. King Norodom Sihanouk presumably served the

country as the head of state for life and represented a symbol of unity and continuity of the nation. Though he did not govern, he appointed senate members.

In 2004, former King Norodom Sihanouk abdicated his throne to Norodom Sihamoni because of his poor health which began to trouble him from the early 1990s. During that time, he moved to Beijing, China, for medical treatment but his complications caused his death, in October 2012, at the age of 89 years while in China. He was revered by many people including the peasants who adored him for his efforts to improve their social and economic standards. Throughout his reign which began at the age of 19 years, he constantly tried to balance the opposing forces within the country. Most importantly, he liberated the country from the French rule in 1953. At that time, he transformed Cambodia from a colony to a kingdom.

The Prime Minister, Hun Sen, was voted into office by the National Assembly in 1998 and represents the Cambodian People's Party (CPP). The upper house is the Senate and the Lower House is the House of Legislatures. Representatives run the parliament as a Democracy and every aspect of the government is under the National Assembly. Hun Sen was a former officer of the Khmer Rouge regime, escaped to Vietnam during Pol Pot's reign, returned after Pol Pot fled to the mountains, and quickly rose into his political position. The major opponents of the CPP are the royalist FUNCINPEC (National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia) led by Prince Norodom Ranariddh, a son of King Sihanouk.

The Sam Rainsy Party, which is the minority party, is led by Mu Sochua who previously held the position of Minister of Women's Affairs. She publicly announces suspected crimes that the government commits against the people, but is threatened with

huge monetary fines or imprisonment for her public actions, or a combination of both punishments. Ayres (2000) states that the country still operates on theories of a free society but government leaders move slowly from theory to praxis and further reports that the National Assembly rarely

[d]ebates issues of pressing national concern, the Senate is largely inactive, few commentators would attest that the judiciary is independent, and political violence—directed especially at opposition political figures—remains endemic.

Chandler (1996:323) asserts that "[p]olitics in Cambodia can be changed and that such concepts as the rule of law, civil society and respect for human rights can take root in Cambodian culture." In the sixteen years since Chandler wrote this, Cambodia has been making progress.

Economic Background

The economics of Cambodia, like its other infrastructures, has experienced many advances and retreats. In the early history, Cambodians worked metals, iron, and bronze, plus they had navigational skills and access to the waterways to transport their products (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011). During the time Cambodians were building Angkor Wat, they created a system of canals and reservoirs that freed them from the unreliable seasonal monsoons, thus enabling Cambodians to begin harvesting surplus supplies of wet rice (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011).

When Cambodia was a French protectorate, the people were heavily taxed and this action brought a mass protest which led to the French government assessing poor people with 90 days of public works labor as a tax substitute. During the early 1900s, Cambodians experienced an economic growth but the depression of 1929 caused

suffering throughout the world, especially in all rice cultivating countries (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011).

In the years before Pol Pot ruled the country, Sihanouk sought international economic aid from countries in both the East and West. As he started a deficit in the country, he also nationalized trading companies, banks, insurance, and major industries which caused an economic deterioration. The demonetizing of the Riel contributed to the end of his era. For unknown reasons, the country placed more emphasis on health and education and social improvements than it did on the economic situation. The port city of Sihanoukville became the country's second largest port and carried importance for the economy. The United States helped construct a highway linking the Sihanoukville port to Phnom Penh and Germany helped build a railway from the Sihanoukville port to the capital. Rice and rubber became the country's two principal commodity exports and foreign-exchange earners (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011).

Fighting between Cambodia and neighboring countries reduced the amount of land for cultivation that resulted in food shortages and devastated the rubber plantations and processing facilities. In efforts to stabilize the country's economy, the government attempted to increase import taxes, increase interest rates on bank deposits and commercial loans, introduce a flexible currency exchange system, and institute other reforms. In addition, Sihanouk sought support from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Asian Development Bank (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011).

During the 1970s, when Pol Pot reigned, Cambodia's economy shut down. He disallowed foreign trade of all kinds, closed the country, the banks, and moved all people to the countryside to be agrarians. The Khmer Rouge abolished private ownership of

land, created a cashless nation and paid workers with food rations (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011).

Current Economics

As indicated earlier, Cambodia ranks as the 124th poorest nation out of 169 nations according to the United Nations Development Program (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011). One thousand Riels, Cambodia's monetary base, equal US\$.25 as of February 4, 2011 (Coin Mill 2011). After the revolution, Cambodia changed the economy by restoring the banks, reintroducing currency, promoting domestic and foreign trade, abolishing forced labor, introducing an eight-hour workday and basing pay on work performed (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011).

Cambodia concentrates on agriculture and forestry as the current and real commodities for the national economy, mostly rice, fish, wood, and rubber. In order to transport these products, the country restored roads, inland waterways, and railroad networks (Cambodia: CountryStudies.US/Cambodia). Derks (2008:7) notes that global economy has opened recently, however the "ideas of social reconstruction and the ways in which people handle new possibilities, changes and insecurities have so far hardly been analyzed."

Agriculture and fishing are considered to be a more valuable source of revenue than education because of the "heavy maintenance burden of schools" (Ayres 2000:46). Derks (2008:5) reports that the "young, rural women dominate in small-scale street trading that often involves food items." After the revolutionary war of 1975-1979, factories in Phnom Penh were renovated and reopened though development was slow because of the lack of both skilled workers and experienced managers. In addition, when

the law guaranteed workers the right to keep their wages, their income, and their property, they were encouraged to open small shops with few employees in Phnom Penh and other urban areas (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011).

Land, previously owned by citizens, is now being sold which undermines private landowner rights and is one of the reasons for poverty. Somaly Mam states that some parents who are destitute for money sell their children, "even as young as six years old", into prostitution (CooperAndersonBlog360°, 2007). The devaluation of the children as human beings is replaced with the value of them as commodities that are readily sold on the streets and in the markets. Foreign-owned garment factories are capitalizing on Cambodia's cheap labor market and are attracting young girls into the sweat-shops.

Derks (2008:9) refers to

[p]ast societal practices when women in developing countries formed a cheap, easily controllable, flexible workforce, serving international male-dominated capital by producing commodities for the world market, and by fulfilling subsistence and reproductive services in the informal sector or the sex business.

Currently, the country is accepting an ecotourism that is bringing opportunities for employment, but the downside of human exploitation occurs from low wages earned in garment factories. Derks (2008:191) finds that women must pay a commission to work in a factory, must have startup capital to begin a trade, seek an occupation that brings an immediate and profitable income to support them, and work under the traditional assumption that they must send money to the parents who live in the villages. These choices create dilemmas for the Cambodian women as they ponder if they should stay in the village to live with their families and remain poor at that time in their lives, or move to the city, live alone, pay rent and seek gainful employment that requires no education.

Educational Background

The education system for women has played virtually no part in Cambodians' lives. Wars, invasions, and revolutions may have stifled learning throughout the country's history, as I mentioned earlier. Cambodians may have concentrated on survival of the horrors and traumas of the wars before they even may have been able to think about stabilized educational systems, particularly for women.

The Cambodians may have presumed that they were dependent on other countries and accepted a passive way of life. This view of life has had dreaded implications on their educational values today. Students learned at the temples about the foundations of their religion, basic literacy and life skills. When the French arrived, they neglected education, and in 1931, only seven high school students graduated (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011). During the time that the French occupied Cambodia, each village had only one primary school. For the higher education, the students attended only one of the four years needed for a college degree. After the one year at a college, the students enrolled in a lycée, a secondary school to prepare students for a university.

Following the independence, the number of students rapidly increased, even with the exodus of many students who left to study abroad in countries such as America and Canada, plus other European countries (Cambodia: Country Studies 2011). After the Cambodians received their freedom and independence from France, the idea to educate as many as was possible failed because the classrooms were not large enough and only those who lived near the schools were able to attend. The teachers were poorly trained and under qualified, and the subject matter was not relevant to their lives.

Between 1975 and 1979, the Pol Pot era, there were no formal education systems or educators. Ebihara, Mortland, and Ledgerwood (1994:13) state that one Khmer woman put it as "over one thousand, three hundred days of hell." Male students like U Sam Oeur (2005:93), who achieved remarkably high marks, received scholarships through USAID to study English abroad in America and Canada. If the farmers were wealthy, the youth also had more educational opportunities to study in Phnom Penh or abroad. These opportunities occurred before Pol Pot's control of the Cambodians. However, the farming rural villages with poor people had to stay in Cambodian fields to be the agrarians.

This brief review offers an overview of the education system for poor rural village women. The Country Studies of Cambodia reported the deficit results of the occupation of France in Cambodia and other current theorists reported the lack of opportunities because of the farmers' socio economic status. The next educational situation looks at the current movements in women's education. The views are presented by Mu Sochua, Chhinh Sitha, Kelly Sperry, Salvina Kang, Serey Phal, and Annuska Derks.

Current Educational Situation

A number of foreign NGOs have established educational programs for all Cambodians, but the programs change. Jackie Rosenbloom examined programs that have been implemented by NGOs (see Adult Learning and Women's Education below). Today, according to Rosenbloom, there is no stable and sustainable education system. There is a lack of classroom space (see Figure 4 and 5 below); equipment and infrastructure; insufficient salaries to attract teachers to the education field; and a shortage of qualified and experienced teachers in the rural areas (Chhinh Sitha 2002).

Figures 4 and 5, below, reveal some conditions under which the women learn. One woman cares for her small child who sits in her lap while she tries to learn.

The classrooms shown in Figures 4 and 5 reveal better conditions than the ones that I observed during my field research. Those rural village class rooms were enclosed, hot, humid, and had only one fluorescent light tube that hung from the ceiling to illuminate the room. Sitha (2002) reports that student school fees hinder the disadvantaged students from attending school (see Figure 3 below) and village girls must tend to the farm animals. Educators have an inability to group learners in their target level of learning without including large learning level discrepancies within the age groups.



Figure 3 Village
(<http://google.com>)



Figure 4 Classroom
(<http://google.com>)



Figure 5 Classroom
(<http://google.com>)

The former Minister of Women's and Veteran's Affairs, Her Excellency Mu Sochua, (2002) reported in the Phnom Penh Post, June 7–20, that the role of the Ministry is to be an "[a]dvocate and catalyst for women to transform and take hold of their lives. For the woman it is about making safe choices for herself and not letting anyone else make those choices." In addition, Sochua (1999) stated that the ministry is mandated to promote a new image of Cambodian women. They are charged with "[m]oving (women) from a disadvantaged group to the nation's invaluable assets and its economic potential." To provide further comment on women's education, Serey Phal, Director of the Cambodian Women's Development Association asserts that

[w]omen's issues are not recognized since we don't have women represented in our government. Men do not clearly comprehend women's problems because they are not in the same situation as we are. If we want to help women participate more in government and decision making, we need to think about women's education as part of the long term plan because at the university level only 10% of the students are women.

Kelly Sperry (2004:45) states in *The Situation of Women in Cambodia* that the "Oxfam Great Britain claimed in 2003 that only 22 percent of Cambodian women could read a newspaper or write a simple letter" and further states that the National Institute of Statistics reports "[a]mong those 65 years and older, only 15.7 percent of females are literate compared to 71.4 percent among males." Sperry (2004:45) continues discussing women's learning by stating several specific reasons for the low levels of primary education:

[I]n rural areas women are expected to undertake domestic work around the home and hence the efficacy of educating girls is neither understood nor perhaps accepted. In some instances education is even viewed as a hindrance to women as some men may not wish to marry an educated woman. Therefore in poor households, priority is given to educating sons rather than daughters, who can be kept home to assist in domestic chores. The second reason is the availability of schooling. Underpaid and under-resourced teachers ask for informal enrollment fees from students to maintain the upkeep of the school and staff. In addition to these fees are sundry expenses such as pens and textbooks. Therefore in practice education can place a large financial burden on poor families that in some instances cannot be met. According to UNICEF, while initial enrollment rates for first time students are reasonably equitable, the aforementioned factors ensure a significantly higher dropout rate for female students in primary education.

The World Bank website (2008:1) reports that women with formal education tend to have better knowledge about health care practices, are less likely to become pregnant at a very young age, tend to have fewer, better-spaced pregnancies, and seek pre- and post-natal care. In addition to having access to this knowledge through the education system, Cambodian women who are enrolled in an educational program may also seek an

understanding of their equal rights and protection under the law. Sarvina Kang (2010:1) avows in the *World Pulse Magazine* that

[i]nadequate education puts many girls and young women in danger of being sold or duped into the sex industry. Poverty, illiteracy, family problems, and gender discrimination create a fertile breeding ground for trafficking exploitation, rape, and abuse.

Derks (2008:144) reports that women in the city have more opportunities for a better education than the women in the villages. A disadvantage to women living in the rural areas has been the travelling distance. Also, Derks (2008:54) notes that the difficulty to travel contradicts the cultural taboo to which "a woman needs to be protected and cannot travel too far from home unaccompanied by relatives." In addition, the country women were formerly farmers' daughters who did not receive an education in their early years and thus continue the practice of imagining themselves as married women who farm. This belief re-enforces the cycle of placing rural women in a disadvantaged status denying them the right to be recognized as a valuable asset in the country's economic potential.

Summary

In the past, Cambodia has been plagued with horrendous political events, drastic economic changes and insufficient education efforts for women. Cambodia, a small agricultural society, about the same size as the state of Oklahoma, United States of America, nestled between the countries of Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, and China, has experienced feast or famine. Cambodians designed and constructed Angkor Wat that demonstrates their cultural power and driven desires to develop a magnificent edifice that symbolizes their collective identity. Their political instability created repetitive downfalls to all phases of their culture which drastically affected the education system for

women. They recovered from one collapse only to experience another collapse. The last collapse caused by the Khmer Rouge has had lasting effects on the Cambodians' ability to recover in all areas of their society. Their struggles to improve their society continue today but not with as much emphasis on women's education as on other phases of their society.

In Chapter Three, the Literature Review is presented in three parts. The Introduction offers the general concepts. In Part One of Chapter Three there are selected Anthropological Theories that include individual and societal cultural changes, human needs, cultural symbols, and Cambodian culture. Part Two of Chapter Three shows several authors' theories on Adult Learning and Women's Education Through Literacy which are pertinent to this study. Part Three of Chapter Three presents Current Literacy Theories on learners' classroom participation. Chapter Three concludes with a summary.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Chapter Three presents a review of literature that covers general concepts from anthropological studies to adult literacy, as they relate to women's learning. I discuss important anthropological concepts developed by the early anthropologists Branislaw Malinowski and Ruth Benedict, and the historical and contemporary anthropologists David Chandler and Clifford Geertz. Also included are women's education authors Gail Weinstein, Jackie Rosenbloom, Norton Pierce, and Malcolm Knowles, the creator of andragogy and others.

I chose Ruth Benedict and Branislaw Malinowski because of their in-depth research and anthropological theories germane to my studies. I selected David Chandler because he is the most knowledgeable historian and anthropologist on Cambodia. I also make reference to Geertz's work because of his research on religion as a cultural system, which helps to understand the link between Buddhism and Cambodian education. I chose Herda because she developed the research protocol for the critical hermeneutic participatory research process.

PART ONE: Anthropological Theories

Ruth Benedict: Individual and Societal Cultural Changes

Ruth Benedict (1934:36) posits that "change, we must remember, with all its difficulties, is inescapable." Changes take place in all cultures, including the Cambodian culture that has experienced small and large changes in the past and continues to undergo changes today. In addition to research in cultural changes, Benedict also studied what the importance of religion, mythology, and symbolism gives to values and beliefs of a

culture, and how it evolves. Though parts of a culture change through time, there are important aspects of a culture, such as religion and symbols of values and beliefs that are maintained and transmitted to the descendants. Benedict studied how ceremonies, rituals, magic and kinships play in culture in addition to her other interests.

In Cambodia, past experiences, values, and traditions have placed more emphasis on men's education than on women's. Women's learning may change and may be the most challenging future events because of the past practices. Benedict's view of religion plays a part in the current situation in men's and women's learning in Cambodia. We ought to expect that the religion of Cambodians may continue as long as the Cambodians accept the teachings as their past and current values of life. Benedict (1934:14) states that the "human cultural heritage, for better or worse, is not biologically transmitted." Further, she maintains that "a culture, like an individual, is a more or less consistent pattern of thought and action" (Benedict 1934:46). Benedict postulates that from the moment of one's birth

[t]he customs into which he is born shape his experience and behavior. By the time he can talk, he is the little creature of his culture, and by the time he is grown and able to take part in its activities, its habits are his habits, its beliefs his beliefs, its impossibilities his impossibilities.

To change from the inherited family traditions to an individual stance against one's cultural inheritance may lead to major disruptions within the family. In Cambodia, current generations are expected to respect family members and all community elders. Often young women migrate to the cities for dual purposes, to seek freedom from the restraints of family traditions and to earn money for the family as a form of their respect. Derks (2008:170) states that the women who move to the city "[r]emit their earnings to the family to give back their indebtedness and maintain their honor, respect, and

affection." Benedict (1934:37) theorizes that "[n]o man can thoroughly participate in any culture unless he has been brought up and has lived according to its forms." In comparison, Benedict (1934:83) expresses that belief in a power is a cultural "[m]echanism which gives a theoretically unlimited freedom to the individual. He might go out and get this supremely coveted power, no matter to what family he belongs."

Bronislaw Malinowski: Human Needs

Bronislaw Malinowski (1948) searched for components that hold a society together. Malinowski (1944) asserted that all aspects of a culture intertwine with each other and work as a whole in order to keep a society solvent. Malinowski (1948:67) believed that religion helps one endure "[s]ituations of emotional stress" by "[o]pen[ing] up escapes from such situations and such impasses that offer no empirical way out except by ritual and belief into the domain of the supernatural" and further states "[h]ope cannot fail nor desire deceive." Human needs for escaping stressful situations often are met through religion and religious hymns, hopeful prayers, and silent meditations.

In Cambodia, the government and non-government educational, economical, and social agencies may need to study the past and present educational systems to determine how and if they are influencing and satisfying the needs of women's learning. Malinowski (1944) posits that if changes are to be affective, they need to produce a transition from an unstable past to a more stable environment that requires sound understanding of the developmental process, and technical skills. When shifts in cultures occur, humans can create equally valid patterns of life for themselves. This will be evident when paradigm shifts in women's education occur from a minor role to a more

major role where their contributions to society match more accurately their human needs as well as for other persons in their country.

Clifford Geertz: Cultural Symbols

Geertz (1973:91) posits that "cultural acts, the construction, apprehension, and utilization of symbolic forms, are social events like any other; they are as public as marriage and as observable as agriculture." The construction of Angkor Wat, as symbolized on their current national flag since 1940, continued through six centuries and the meaning was passed from one generation to the next. The value of acknowledging their accomplishment of constructing Angkor Wat was as much a social event as a cultural act. Cambodians' cultural symbols are their faith in Theravada Buddhism, its teachings, and the ideal representation of Angkor Wat.

David Chandler: Cambodian Culture

David Chandler began his research after his graduation from Yale in the 1960s and wrote about Cambodia's narrative, the country's history, and its culture for many years that followed. Chandler (1999:12) reports a major discovery about Angkor Wat which states

[F]rench savants deciphered over one thousand ancient Khmer and Sanskrit inscriptions, named Cambodia's kings, and placed them inside a precise chronology. French scholarships gave the Cambodians a prestigious history that as a colonized people they were not prepared to handle. Many Cambodians believed that Angkor Wat, the world's largest surviving religious building, and other temples had been built by supernatural creatures rather than by earlier Khmer.

Another importance of Chandler's writings relates to his analysis of the effects of the Pol Pot regimen on all aspects of the Cambodian culture. These past 50 years have given him various opportunities to talk with people from other countries about the

Cambodian tragedy. Included in his research books are stories of the people and how they coped with the traumatic economic and social episodes that they endured. The importance of his writings is evidenced in a universal "attempt to understand when the revolution actually began and why people joined Pol Pot's revolutionary forces" (Farely 2007). The communist domination of Pol Pot and his forces killed almost all educated people in Cambodia; thus destroying all possibilities of the citizens to receive an education for many years after the fall of his regime. The armies of Pol Pot killed the affluent Cambodians because they represented the Western World, the capitalists.

During Chandler's research, he had the opportunity to converse with Pol Pot's brother and with approximately 100 other people in five other countries besides Cambodia to discuss Saloth Sar's (Pol Pot) background, education, political views, ideologies and personal life experiences. His research led to the biography of Pol Pot, *Brother Number One, A Political Biography of Pol Pot*. Chandler's insights offer readers and researchers an in-depth look at how Cambodia came under his leadership and how that leadership led the country to a collapse. Pol Pot stated in 1977 (Chandler 1999:13) that "if our people were capable of building Angkor, we can do anything." The daily reminder of Angkor Wat's grandeur and their ancestors' accomplishment of its construction may have burdened many citizens to devote themselves to Pol Pot's cause to the detriment of themselves.

PART TWO: Women's Education and Learning Through Literacy

Weinstein, Rosenbloom, and Pierce

The following literature review relates to the women's learning programs. Gail Weinstein, Jackie Rosenbloom, and Norton Pierce are among the authors discussed.

In speaking of women's education, Gail Weinstein (2001:173) reports that women's needs in education relate to accessing information, possessing a voice to express ideas, carrying out independent action to participate in solving problems and bridging their learning to future possibilities in the world work force. The world constantly changes, exasperated by the advent of computers and the Internet. The fact that very few Cambodian women have access to these two technologies reflects one of the problems in their education. Education is a potential investment for their future life but since 1979 the Cambodians who stayed in their homeland have had few instructors and few books with literature to help them learn.

In the journal article *Should I Stay or Should I Go? Investigating Cambodian Women's Participation and Investment in Adult ESL Programs*, Norton Pierce (2002:11–12) presents ideas on developing identities through learning a language which links a person to the culture. His theory argues that learners organize and reorganize who they are and this process, in turn, influences how they relate to the social world.

Jackie Rosenbloom (2004) examines programs, formal and non-formal, that have been tested since 1980. The programs address the needs of IDP's (Internally Displaced People) and APPEAL (Asia Pacific Program for Education for All). Other programs are implemented by UNESCO and USAID; NGO's; and WORTH which includes a focus on literacy, economics, and advocacy for women. The Pro Literacy International targets women between the ages of 18 and 45, who are single, widowed, poor, or are on their own with children because of an abusive family situation.

PART THREE: Current Literacy Theories

Knowles, Stein, Ledgerwood, Ebihara, Skilton-Sylvester and others

Skilton-Sylvester (2002:10) offers information on ways teachers may help women learn how they can "acknowledge [their] identities" and may construct an environment that is conducive to inspire learners to recognize their self-worth. Further, Skilton-Sylvester (2002) posits that classroom participation provides women with the time they often need for themselves. Women with a large number of children may not have as much time to learn as those women with only one or two children. Most often the women with one or two children do not experience the poverty that women with a large number of children experience. Thus, the poor women who most need the learning programs are often the ones who lack the time to learn.

Long (2002:13) believes that "women may be ambivalent to participation in educational programs because so many of these women's relatives were killed because they were educated." With this information, teachers have a responsibility to acknowledge women's individual differences and educate each learner on the basis of where they are in their journey to learn. Some women have overcome the horrors of the Khmer Rouge war while others still experience the mental effects of the war.

This fear of the unknown upon returning home from war may have posed an additional dilemma for the women. Derks (2008:52) states that after 1979, a larger percentage of the population were women and "more than one in every four households is headed by a woman." Pol Pot executed the intellectuals of the country; therefore, there were no psychiatrists to treat Cambodians who suffered mental traumas. Today, many of the women may continue to suffer from past and present fears of being educated.

Ebihara, et. al. (1994:1) assert that despite "the tragedy and loss they have already experienced, people contemplating flight dread the unknown and the additional horrors they suspect will occur." All citizens had to face the unknown future after the war whether they lived in Cambodia or moved to a different country.

According to Knowles [2011:181 (1973)] "[e]ngaging adults as collaborative partners for learning satisfies their *need to know* as well as appeals to their self-concept as independent learners" (italics in original). Knowles (1989 TIP: psychology.org) researched women's need to understand why they need to learn experientially, to approach learning as problem-solving and to recognize learning's immediate value. Knowles [2011:148 (1973)] explains that the goals and purpose for learning include three categories. The purpose of adult learning may change society, support and nurture good social order *societal*, promote productivity *institution* and enhance personal growth *individual* (italics in original). Knowles [2011:143 (1973)] suggests that adult education encompasses the concept of an educator being the "one who has responsibility for helping adults to learn, a set of *organized activities to accomplish the educational objectives* and a *movement of social practice*" (italics in original). His theory shows a concern for knowledge gained through the educational outcomes that lead to social change.

The women who live in Cambodian villages possess some assets to potentially experience personal growth, to be productive members of their institution and to change and improve the Cambodian society. However, some Cambodian women's deeply seated internal images of their world limit them to familiar ways of thinking and acting. This mindset may partly impede the Cambodian women's advancement because change

challenges the restructuring of long and deeply held schema, a cognitive structure of experiences accumulated and packed into memory. To create a paradigm shift of the mindset, Cambodian women may have to alter the way they interpret new information and create different views of their interpretation of educational materials.

Knowles [2011:70 (1973)] explains that

[p]edagogy is designed for teaching children and assigns to the teacher full responsibility for all decision making about the learning content, method, timing, and evaluation. Learners play a submissive role in the educational dynamics. In contrast, andragogical focuses on the education of adults and on the precepts that adults need to know why they need to learn something; maintain the responsibility for their own decisions and lives; enter the educational activity with a greater volume and more varied experiences; have a readiness to learn in order to cope effectively with real-life situations; and respond more to internal motivators than external motivators.

Knowles [2011:58 (1973)] reports that *andragogy* is an intentional and professionally guided activity that aims to change adult persons; *andragogics* is the background of the methods and ideologies, and *andragology* is the scientific study of both andragogy and andragogics (italics in original). Knowles [2011:140 (1973)] further states that andragogy is rooted in both humanistic and pragmatic philosophy. The humanistic perspective reflects the concern for self-actualization and the pragmatics reflect the concern for valued knowledge gained from experience, rather than from formal authority.

Sondra Stein, former director of WEAVE (Women's Education and Vocational Enrichment), was involved in adult literacy educational programs. Her emphasis included a vision of empowerment for self-sufficiency by giving learners the tools they needed to improve their lives. Her theory exhibited the belief that if women possess the tools, the determination, and the vision for empowerment, they would have the essence of

human capital development, workers in control of their own lives. This philosophy may create better workers that would shape future capital development for Cambodian rural village and suburban women.

The information that is provided by Knowles [2011 (1973)], Rosenbloom (2004), Pierce (2002), Skilton–Sylvester (2002) and other adult educators may help link women to each other, allow them to have a voice in the learning process, help them understand why they should consider education and teach them how to learn. Herda (1999:67) states that if learning is “[c]arried on at a reflective critical level, forms of reasoning and argumentation may be learned by others and developed within a cultural and political tradition.”

Part of the research project was to inquire if there were critical and reflective aspects of the education programs available to the Cambodian women. As I have presented the previous information that I gained from the research on education opportunities for women, there was little education programs available and none that were critical or reflective. The material in the former sections of this chapter and other chapters shows women’s education has been neglected and especially the rural village women’s education.

Summary

Relevant literature on anthropological concepts and women’s education research are presented. There is general discussion but there is very little written research on the topic of women's learning in the villages and suburbs of Cambodia. Benedict (1934) and Malinowski (1948 and 1944) provided the framework for cultural change and Geertz (1973) spoke of symbols and interpretations in culture. Chandler (1999, 1996, 1991,

1983) supplied information about Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge Regime. The current literacy researchers of Rosenbloom (2004), Pierce (2002), Skilton-Sylvester (2002), Knowles (2011), Stein (2003), and Weinstein (2001) contributed to theories, in general, which confirmed the limited amount of work in this area, particularly in Cambodia.

In Chapter Three, the past and present anthropologists set the basis of Cambodian's thoughts on religion, religious symbols, family structures, and the Khmer Rouge War. Several decades have passed since the end of the Khmer Rouge rampage yet village and rural women continue to tolerate the absence of an education. The educational theorists have presented their research and findings on education for women yet these findings have not made their way into the Cambodian education system. The theories that were presented by the literacy experts may prove to be the best method known by which Cambodian women may learn. In Chapter Four below, I discuss the Theoretical Framework, Research Categories, and Research Protocol.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH THEORY AND PROTOCOL

Introduction

My subject of women's learning in rural villages and suburbs of Cambodia uses a participatory research protocol and refers to collaborative research carried out in a critical hermeneutic perspective. In particular, the research draws heavily from the theoretical work of Paul Ricoeur and Ellen Herda. From Ricoeur, I use the notion of Narrative and Mimeses, and from Herda, I adopt the critical hermeneutic research protocol. Herda (1999:96-97) states that “[c]ategories serve as general parameters for the research inquiry and data collection process as well as themes for the analysis.” Ricoeur emphasized reinterpretation through Narrative Identity and Mimeses and Herda develops a viable application of Ricoeur’s ideas for the social sciences, and focuses on participant based interpretative research.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that underlies my research includes the two concepts of Narrative Identity and Mimeses. The idea of Narrative Identity is found in Shahideh's and Kearney's work, as developed by Ricoeur. Shahideh (2004:vii) speaks about Narrative Identity and states that “[t]o tell a story is both to remember and create who one is . . . story mediates our understanding of identity.” Kearney (2002:3) states narratives are important and that “[t]elling stories is as basic to human beings as eating. For while food makes us live, stories are what make our lives worth living.” Ricoeur (1984:28) states that “[w]e have no idea of what a culture would be where no one any longer knew what it meant to narrate things.” To narrate one's story, one moves among the three aspects of Mimeses discussed below. As each participant told her story to me, she

rediscovered who she was and could reflect on her past and present lives as an outsider. Their stories offered the opportunity to gain a new understanding of who they were.

Research Category: Narrative Identity

The importance of Narrative Identity, as Ricoeur debates with Kearney (2004:131) in *On Paul Ricoeur, Owl of Minerva (Transcending Boundaries in Philosophy and Theology)* that “[w]e must have a sense of the meaningfulness of the past if our projections into the future are to be more than empty utopias.” Moreover, in the book *On Stories*, Ricoeur (2002:131), postulates that “[o]ur lives may be described as a flux of events which combine to form an action which is both cumulative and oriented—two crucial features of any narrative”, and further states that “[e]very person's action can be read as part of an unfolding life-story, and each life-story cries out to be imitated, that is, transformed into the story of a life.” A narrative brings together all of a life's aspects comprised of actions, events, and persons. Within a narrative are characters, and each character is depicted through a story which acts and is acted upon (Ricoeur 1992:140–168). The Cambodian women that I conversed with had stories with actions, actions that were directed to someone and someone's actions directed to them. Actions driven in both ways by the women created the events.

As the person narrates a story the person goes through a transformation in his character which is really being able to separate the *idem* from the *ipse*. *Idem* is the numerical oneness and *ipse* is the ethical part that remains committed in spite of changes in circumstances, and this commitment is driven by what Aristotle calls the purpose of life. Narratives reveal one's identity by what one is and who one is. Ricoeur (1992:118–119) refers to “‘the what?’ as the *idem* that overlaps ‘the who?’ with the *ipse*, which at

times, may be problematic.” A person is thought of as the what (physical characteristics that are inalterable) and the who (identifiable characteristics that are alterable such as habits, values, and ideals). Kearney (2002:152) states that "the story told by a self about itself tells about the action of the 'who' in question; the identity of this 'who' is a narrative one called an *ipse*—self of process and promise, in contrast to a fixed *idem*—self, which responds only to the question 'what' ." Often the Cambodian women presented a case of lost identity of ‘the who’. The difficulty of reinstating and regaining their educational knowledge, economic values, and social order made manifest the values of the women and the values of the communities. Through the everyday actions to bring a sense to their world, the women gain an understanding of ‘the who’, the *ipse*, they are.

Idem is what one is permanently in time and remains the same throughout one's life, despite changes that one goes through. What one inherits from one's ancestors and what are acquired traits create the eternal being. The *ipse* is temporal and varied, constantly modifying itself. The *ipse* changes in response to the environment, the outside matter of the self, and acts to what is not evident or seen. Ricoeur (1983:52) describes Narrative Identity as a transcultural form, in that "time becomes human to the extent that it is articulated through a narrative mode, and narrative attains its full meaning when it becomes a condition of the temporal existence."

Ricoeur (1992:118) postulates that it is the extent that *idem* and *ipse* overlap that determines the strength of a personal identity. To retain the sense of self is to challenge one's self but how the *ipse* identity responds to the other may be problematic. Through the interpretation of one's self, the role in Narrative Identity may be understood. Ricoeur (1992:148) posits that “[t]his mediating function performed by the Narrative Identity of

the character between poles of sameness and selfhood is attested to primarily by the imaginative variations to which the narrative submits identity.”

To keep the *idem* and the *ipse* always in tension is significant because there will always be changes influencing the *ipse*. The importance of character development through interactions with others helps to maintain the person of who "I am." This balance is not an anchored state of the self nor is it a whole surrender to the outside other. Ricoeur (1992:123) refers to this as “[h]onoring a promise, keeping one's word expresses a self-constancy that cannot be inscribed, as character was, within the dimension of something general but solely within the dimension of who.” One of the difficulties of women trusting the Cambodian government lays with the broken promises that were not possible to keep and promises that were never meant to keep. This was expressed in their history as well as present day events where women do not receive an equal education and therefore do not receive equal opportunities as men receive.

Thus, *idem* and *ipse* remain in suspended play, constantly moving, playing back and forth, overlapping at times and being projected in opposite directions at other times, never completing itself or staying stationary. The negotiation between the *idem* and the *ipse* is a continuous movement throughout our lives. The movement causes introductions to new experiences but not at the loss of the ethical self. Cambodian women have not lost who they are because of the experiences they have had. They know their permanency in the *idem* as they gain new experiences that affect the *ipse*. Kearney (2002:156) states “[t]he narrative is an open-ended invitation to ethical and poetic responsiveness.” Anticipation in the continuous play with what is constructed and how to

manipulate the construct to express the truth of a narrative is the intention of the story.

This assumed text of the declaration is the just of the ethical component of the self.

Cultural identities include the *idem* and the *ipse*. The *idem*, the what, is found in the traditions and the history that are not negotiable; these traits are part of the nucleus being. The importance of maintaining a culture, throughout time without altering what uniquely defines the culture, challenges the interactions with others outside of the basic structure of the culture that identifies who the people are. Shahideh (2004:40) states that the "[n]arrative is the illuminated part of one's identity which distinguishes one's character from others and acts as a basis for one's choices and actions." When Cambodian women reflect on their historicity, analyze and interpret it, and try to understand its meaning to their lives, their actions may offer an image of a future that is different than their present one. Ricoeur (2002:136) affirms in *On Stories* by Kearney (2002) that "[t]he meaning of human existence is not just the power to change or master the world, but also the ability to be remembered and recollected in narrative discourse." This theory will find its application in the story-telling to be done by the Cambodian women.

Research Category: Mimeses

Mimesis₁

Mimeses are narratives that embody temporal times of the past, the present, and the future. Narratives have multiple plots that are interwoven, yet each is a distinct phase of time. The first plot characterizes the past traditions; the second plot is the tension of the present that mediates the past with the future; and the third plot characterizes the horizon of expectations. Ricoeur (1983:54) states "[w]e are following therefore the

destiny of a prefigured time that becomes a refigured time through the mediation of a configured time."

Each of the time period plots require emplotment to bring it together to make a whole story. Ricoeur (1981:292) analyzes Mimeses as a function that can only occur "[w]here there is 'doing' or 'activity'; and poetic 'activity' consists precisely in the construction of plots." Ricoeur further posits that the prefigured time constitutes the episodic dimension of narratives in chronological order made up of events. Ricoeur (1981:290) continues with a postulation that "[t]he events begin to be explained when they are transformed *into* a story by emplotment" (italics in original). The configured time grasps together the details and transforms the events into a story. The conclusion of a story is an end point, and expectation, which helps the reader to understand the story as a whole.

Ricoeur (1984) theorizes that a story is understood by the how and why of the successive episodes that led to the conclusion. The ending of a story is unforeseeable but it is acceptable by the reader through the episodes that are brought together. When the Cambodian women tell their stories, they carry the reader or hearer with them. Both the teller and the listener experience the episodes. As the episodes increase in depth much like a serial movie, the listener may catch a glimpse into the conclusion. This is true of the Cambodian women's stories for many of them are very similar. Richard Kearny (2002:152) describes Narrative Identity as when

[s]omeone asks you who you are, you tell your story. That is, you recount your present condition in the light of past memories and future anticipations. You interpret where you are now in terms of where you are coming from and where you are going to. And so doing you give a sense of yourself as a narrative identity that perdures and coheres over a lifetime.

Ricoeur (1981:291) explains that "history is both a literary *artifact* (and in this sense a fiction) and a representation of *reality*" (italics in original). Kearney (2002:142) further states that "[w]hether it is a matter of history or fiction, *mimesis* imitates action in such a way that we can represent things absent or forgotten" (italics in original). History, our past, validates and values our existence through our memory. Kearney (2002:154) refers to Habermas when he proposes that

[h]istory is always told with specific 'interests' in mind, the first of which is the 'interest' in communication. This interestedness is essentially ethical in that what we consider *communicable* and *memorable* is also what we consider *valuable*. What is most worthy of being preserved in memory is precisely those 'values' which ruled the individual actions, the life of the institutions, and the social struggles of the past (italics in original).

Stories are told to communicate with others about a life that wants to be known. Historical facts are woven into a story from memory and what that memory brings forth are the facts that are most valuable to the teller.

Mimesis₂

Plots are constructed in the present tense, Mimesis₂, through praxis which assures continuity between the two realms of action; the ethics, goodness and badness and the poetics, the understanding of actions and sufferings. Mimesis₂, the present stage, represents the medium that holds Mimesis₁ and Mimesis₃, the past and the future stages respectively, together. It concerns the field of practical experience prefiguring narrative emplotment and the reception of the narrative work by the world of the reader and listener. Ricoeur (1983:65) states that "[t]he two reciprocal relations expressed by *from* and *into* characterize the plot as mediating between events and a narrated story" (italics in original.).

Mimesis₂ conducts the reader from one side of the text to the other through the power of reconfiguration. Ricoeur (1981:187) states that Mimesis₂ is the "[p]osition of the author who 'puts himself on stage' and hence gives himself in representation. One is not *behind* the text, as a hidden intention would be, but *in front of it*, as that which the work unfolds, discovers, reveals" (italics in original). Henceforth to understand is to understand oneself in front of the text, exposing oneself to the text and receiving from it an enlarged self. The women participants placed themselves in front of their stories as they revealed their past and their present episodes of life. The episodes themselves were behind the present time but when those past episodes were told, the women were placed in front of the story as a flower that unfolds in the morning sun. "To construct the story, one draws a meaningful story from a diversity of events or incidents and transforms them from a practical field of experience into a story" (Ricoeur 1984:65). Ricoeur (1984:81) states that "[t]his configuration leads to Mimesis₃ or refiguration, which marks the intersection of the world of the text with the world of the hearer or reader." The text can only be established from the abstraction of Mimesis₂.

The author of the text lifts the story above the transparent depths of living, acting, and suffering to be given to a reader or a hearer who receives it and thereby changes the reader's acting. The reader is the one who traverses himself or herself to doing something, from Mimesis₁ to Mimesis₃ via Mimesis₂. Ricoeur continues discussing the author of a text as one who can never disappear but may disguise himself or herself, to assume different voices such as a story told in the first or third person. The author creates a plot, the characters, their thoughts and a title. In my research, all of the participants related their story in the first person. When the Cambodian women referred to something

or someone in the third person, that voice was most often used as a referral to the current and past leaders.

The configurational dimension is different from the episodic dimension. The succession of events can easily be translated into one thought, point, or theme whereas the configurational alignment prescribes a sense of an ending on the indefinite series of events. Emplotment joins the point, theme, and thought of a story with intuitive presentation of circumstances, characters, episodes, and changes of fortune that make up the denouement. Several of the women told stories in a linear pattern that began from their first memory of what they wanted to share. The theme that surfaced in almost all of the women was their belief that the education program for women who live in villages would not improve because the power for action was in the hands of the authority or top leaders of the country.

The flowing of the story from Mimesis₁ through Memisis₃, from the past toward the future, constitutes an alternative to the representation of time. Ricoeur refers to this representation of time as the arrow of time, one that is shot through the space and time from past to future. Ricoeur (1983:69) states that there is always "[a] place for innovation inasmuch as what is produced, in the poesis of the poem, is always, in the last analysis, a singular work, this work. A work of art, the text, is an original production, a new existence in the linguistic kingdom." When a person tells a story, the story reaches from the memory to the future through the present time. The author of the new story has created an original text.

Mimesis₃

Ricoeur (1981:181) posits the question: “[a]re we not ready to recognize in the power of imagination, no longer the faculty of driving 'images' from our sensory experience, but the capacity for letting new worlds shape our understanding of ourselves?” Imagination frees the minds from confines of realities and paradigms that may inhibit the Cambodian women’s thinking, acting, and being in the world differently. This activation of the being in the world differently allows them to embrace the outside other. Imagination may disclose their unprecedented world and create an opening onto possibilities which transcends the limits of their actual world.

Many of the older Cambodian women that partnered with me in this research need help in opening their minds to new possibilities that they have not conceived of in the past years since the havocs posed on them by the Khmer Rouge war. The younger women have the drive to change their present lives. They do not suffer the consequences of the war like their parents. Kearney (1998:232) posits that imagination is the common root of “[b]oth sensibility and understanding. While the role of imagination in understanding pertains to its productive and projective powers, its role in sensible intuition expresses its ability to remain open to what is given from beyond itself.”

The alternative way of being alludes to an ethical and reasonable human being who shares the world of possibilities with the others in the world. Ricoeur (1981:292) reflects that “[i]mages are not only a mental thing, a thing in the mind; it has a distinctive intentionality, namely to offer a model for *perceiving things differently*, the paradigm of a new vision” (italics in original). Imagination releases your experiences outside of the limitations imposed by your real world. It is difficult for a Cambodian woman to imagine

her life in a future space and time that is totally different than the current life. Sharing narratives and probing questions in a nonthreatening environment may bring new thoughts and new hopes to change their existing world.

To live in a newly found world allows the women to appropriate something new. They are permitted to play with the most distant images and to realize unknown truths. Even though these ideas are complex and very highly philosophical, they point to the reality that each woman is capable of telling a story and retelling it through imagination – enabling each person to reflect and propose a different future – one that makes more sense for a new world emerging in their lives as village and rural women of Cambodia. Thus, the importance of narrative exists.

Narrative allows the Cambodian women to view, read, and revisit a text in order to interact with it. Kearney (1998:230) explains that "[t]he power of identification stems directly from Kant, Husserl, and the phenomenologist's definition of imagination as the 'faculty of representing a person or a thing that is not itself present'." Through imagination, the women can traverse in and out of narrative constructs that reveal different roles of character that can allow interpretative meanings that would otherwise stay hidden. Kearney (1998:123) posits that

[t]he imagination addresses an invisible meaning in the visible world and the world responds only because both participate in a common core of Being. It is precisely because of this cognate genesis that imagination may serve as an agent of creative dialogue rather than monologue.

Imagination makes reinventing a life possible by taking into consideration all three of the Mimeses, past, present, and future. For the Cambodian women to refigure their world, thinking differently in a non-linear fashion, requires some form of discourse to keep matters in motion. Imagination drives the curiosity so that traversing does not

become stagnate. Shifting their minds from one direction to another leads to numerous and diverse future possibilities. Kearney (1998:148) explains that a “[h]ermeneutic approach to imagination thus differs from a structuralist or existentialist one in its concentration on ‘the capacity of world–disclosure yielded by texts’; its primary concern is with worlds which these authors and texts open up.” The Cambodian women may overcome the social and economic oppressions through education that leads to the uniting of their narratives; thus in turn, open their minds to new possibilities.

Ricoeur (1981:171) describes imagination as a mediator between two polarized ideals. The discourse evolves from innocent play to a contest for balance. The struggle with ethical issues arrives when the women search for the meanings of the imagination. The play transcends back and forth between opposites as does the polarized ideals. Ricoeur, throughout his works, cautions the reader to resist the urge to assimilate the opposites, to strengthen retention of a suspended tension, and to negotiate meaning between the two. The past and the future stand in tension by the present tense and what will happen in the future as the women reflect in the present tense about their past lives. The polarized ideals of imagination flow back and forth between images and ideas until the differences are recognized to the degree that both may stand side by side but are not united. Ricoeur (1981:186–187) posits that “[i]f imagination is a process rather than a state, it becomes comprehensible that a specific dysfunction corresponds to each direction of the imagination process.”

If possible, the Cambodian women can contemplate the merits and demerits of different imaginations by observing one in the other because imagination mediates the two poles. This allows understandings to be judicious and not impaired. One embraces

the other in dialogue through imagination. In other places and in other times, we tend to think of sitting around a campfire and telling stories that give opportunities to reflect on the past and dream of the future. Thus by having the last thoughts of the day about imagination may lead to pleasant dreams about a possible different future-life.

Contemplating different perspectives and making choices acknowledge that there is something needed that is not present. Imagination keeps the women from being overtaken by extremes, allows them to have an identity that dignifies a promise, and permits them to acquire knowledge about their world through the stories they tell.

Kearney (1998:123) states that

[t]he logic of the imaginary is one of both/and rather than either/or. It is inclusive and, by extension, tolerant; it allows opposites to stand, irreconcilables to co-exist, refusing to deny the claim of one for the sake of its contrary, to sacrifice the stranger on the altar of self-identity.

Regarding Mimeses, Herda (1999:79) states "[a]ll three of Mimesis are creative acts and are interrelated. Although action is present in all three stages, action is most important in Mimesis₃." In terms of my research, I hope I created the conditions for the participants to become aware, in a way easily understood to them, of the three Mimeses as distinct faces that, though they are interrelated, the critical one becomes Mimesis₃.

Research Protocol

I followed the critical hermeneutic participatory research process developed to conduct this inquiry by Herda (1999). The researcher and the research participants collaborated on this research based on their conversations. Herda (1999:90) states that the conversations challenge the prejudgments of the researcher and the conversation partner through interactive dialogue. The dynamics of the research conversations allowed data to emerge from meaningful dialogues focused on the research topic.

Narrative Identity and Mimeses categories guided the research conversations that provided a context for understanding how women in Cambodia understand and interpret their individual and collective identities in villages and rural settings as well as suburban settings.

Research Categories and Questions

The themes revealed in the review of literature drive the categories (Herda 1999:102–104). The research categories inform the guiding questions thus giving the research conversations a direction toward the inquiry. As indicated above, Narrative Identity and Mimeses are the themes that appeared in the critical hermeneutic literature about women's learning; so that, in turn, seemed appropriate for this inquiry.

Stories are told and retold from different perspectives. Narratives are temporal and provide an interface for reflection which allows the speaker to narrate the story. The purpose is to gain a better understanding of how narratives may be developed and captured in a text. Specifically, I discovered how narratives may raise social issues to the level of discourse, the potential for global communication, and the resolve of personal and social inquietude. Kearney (1989:6) discusses how

[m]etaphors, symbols or narratives produced by imagination all provide us with imaginative variations of the world, thereby offering us the freedom to conceive of the world in other ways and to undertake forms of action which might lead to its transformation.

Imagination is a major issue for the women learners in Cambodia. Cultural traditions and heritage that date from the 12th century have played a major role in how women understand themselves and how they work through the continuous paradigm shifts in personal and collective identities. For these reasons, I integrated reflection, story and imagination into my questions. My intent was to explore how rural village and

suburban women think about current educational programs; which, in turn, reveals insights about these women learners' personal and cultural identities. The use of critical hermeneutic theories described above may provide a deeper understanding of how imagination influences the world that they wish to inhabit. The following proposed questions guided my research.

Category: Narrative Identity

1. What meaning does your history give to your present world?
2. Please talk about the education you have had in your life.
3. If you wish, could you tell me about your history? In other words, tell me a story about your life.

Category: Mimeses

Mimesis₁

1. In your recollection, what are two important events that shaped your life for today?
2. How different are you today than you were five years ago? ten years ago?
3. Could you please tell me about some of the most difficult moments you faced in your youth?
4. With that train of thought, what are the most difficult moments you faced in the last five years?
5. What have been major setbacks for rural women's education?

Mimesis₂

1. Do you attend school? Why or why not?
2. What types of jobs are modeled for women in your text books by people you know?
3. Who are you in relation to women who live and work in the city?
4. What role do rural women play in the current Cambodian economy?

Mimesis₃

1. What can Cambodian women do to improve their lives and raise their economic status?
2. How can Cambodian women contribute to the process of changing the educational system?
3. How can the government (MoEYS) help the educational program for women?
4. How do you imagine your identity five years from now? ten years from now?
5. Tell me how you imagine women who live in the rural areas could have the freedom to receive an education that focuses on both skills and academics.

Data Collection

The primary process of data collection is three-fold: conducting the research conversation; transcribing the research conversation; and reviewing the transcribed text for accuracy (Herda 1999:97–98). I invited 14 Cambodian women (see sample Letter of Invitation in Appendix B) to participate and I and the translator, when necessary, explained the process to the potential participants. I was not able to travel to the remote villages in the Northeast provinces to carry out the research as had previously been planned but I still focused on the same general women, i.e., rural village and suburban women. These women wanted to attend school but did not have the opportunity while other women had the opportunity and attended school. I obtained permission from the research participants to record the conversations (see sample letter in Appendix D).

The conversations were carried out using the questions as guides though not each anticipated question was asked. I imagined that I would meet far more women who have not attended school beyond elementary, if that. For this reason, my questions above were dedicated to this potential group of participants.

Research Conversation Participants

All conversations were conducted in English through a translator when needed. Some conversations occurred in the suburbs of Phnom Penh and Siem Reap and other conversations occurred in the villages such as Aranh and Satakanseng.

In addition to the research participants in Cambodia, I had a conversation with Dr. Judy Ledgerwood an anthropologist at Northern Illinois University. In Cambodia, the other research conversations included a manager of Daughters of Cambodia, Sugar and Spice Station in Phnom Penh; Pisey Khim, manager of the Women's Resource Center in

Siem Reap; the manager of the Mekong Creations; and Joseph and Marilyn Chan, developers of the Women's Learning Center.

After the conversations have occurred, Herda (1999:98) suggests that the researcher transcribe the conversations into a working text to be presented to the conversation participants for review. If the participants were not literate or highly literate, a translator would be used. At this time, adjustments to the transcript may be made by the participant and the participant would inform the researcher of any material that the participant did not want disclosed. In addition to the research conversations, I kept a journal to record my observations and thoughts about the data collected. Ideas, observations, insights, and other material collected, including the journal became a part of the overall data collection. I included materials and documents that shed light on projects initiated by the government or organizations similar to the work being carried out by professionals who work with NGO projects. The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBHS) at the University of San Francisco (USF) approved my proposal on March 17, 2011 (see letter in Appendix C).

Participants

Upon being introduced to the women research participants in Cambodia, I determined if they were bilingual, English speakers, or Khmer-only speakers. I worked with two different male translators, one in Phnom Penh and the other in Siem Reap, in this determination. Upon an initial judgment that a Khmer speaking conversation partner expressed interest in participating in my study, I requested the translator to explain to the volunteer that she would be invited (see sample Invitation Letter in Appendix B), and respond with confirmation and consent (see sample Confirmation and Consent Letter in

Appendix D). The individuals had time to determine their interest in accepting the invitation. The translator was available to answer any questions about needed clarification. When the participant agreed to accept the invitation, the translator and I explained everything in detail to her. At that time, if the participant had no questions, I proceeded with the conversation.

The conversations took place at an agreed upon time and were reviewed with the research participants at the completion. Changes, if necessary, were made known to me through the translator and placed in the final English transcription. A sample Letter of Appreciation is presented in Appendix E. I stressed that at any time, and for any reason, the volunteer, without any repercussions, could discontinue the research conversation and not participate in the process.

Table 1. Chart of Research Conversation Participants

Name	Approx. Age	Social Status	Location
Pheara Then	38	Sugar Cane Cone Vendor	Sangkat Wat Phnom
Heak Hea	25	Lotus Nut Farmer	Aranh Village
Hon Samnang	20	Nursing Student	Sangkat Wat Phnom
Sokhan Ho	29	Restaurant Server and Cafeteria Assistant, Butterfly Garden	Wat Bo Road Suburb
Om Sothea	47	Vegetable Farmer	Kien Svay District
Chann Nath	52	Shop Cleaner	Siem Reap
Pen Sor	29	Vegetable Farmer	Kien Svay District
Om Sen	50	Vendor of fruits, vegetables, and meats	Kien Svay District
Tola Seng	24	Translator	Sangkat Boeung Tumpun Suburb
Judi Ledgerwood	45	Anthropologist	NIU, DeKalb, IL
Joseph Chan	67	Minister and Manager of Women's Adult Center	Phnom Penh Suburb
Marilyn Chan	67	Women and Music Ministry Coordinator	Phnom Penh Suburb
Khim Pisey	29	Manager of Women's Resource Center	Salakanseng Village
Sor Sney Mom	23	Cook, Butterfly Garden	Wat Bo Road Suburb

Sopheak Phan*	26	Silk Weaver, Artisans d' Angkor	Poeuk District
Any Sen*	25	Old Market Place Vendor's Helper	Siem Reap
Keav Ung*	21	Blue Pumpkin Ice Cream Server, Artisans d' Angkor	Poeuk District

*Pseudonym

The following photographs of my participants were taken by me. The absence of a photograph occurred when I did not have my camera with me or the battery was dead.

Dr. Judy Ledgerwood (no photograph)

Dr. Judy Ledgerwood has authored several books about Cambodia with emphasis on Cambodian women. Her knowledge on the subject of rural and village women's education was gained through her travels to Cambodia and volunteering as an English tutor in a refugee resettlement in Tacoma, Washington, in 1982. Later she gained her degree on Southeast Asian Studies and the Khmer language at Cornell University.

Marilyn and Joseph Chan



Joseph and Marilyn Chan have founded a safe-haven for young women in Sangkat Boeung Tumpun, a suburb of Phnom Penh. They help women overcome spiritual oppression, poverty, and authority oppression. Marilyn and Joseph provide a safe place for village women to learn about Christianity and a women's network system during the week. Joseph and Marilyn have lifted women from substandard situations in the villages and brought them to the center to heal. Joseph and Marilyn escaped the Pol Pot war and travelled to the United States. He earned several degrees while in America including a certificate of attainment from the School of Theology at Claremont, California. He currently serves on the Board of Global Ministries in the United Methodist Church California-Nevada Conference as well as supports budding ministers in Mondulkiri Province, Cambodia. Marilyn has a certificate

in Early Childhood Education and a Bachelor of Science in theology from San Jose Christian College. She networks with both local and international women's groups.

Khim Pisey (no photograph)

Khim Pisey, a bilingual woman, manages the Women's Resource Center in Satakanseng Village, Svay Dangkhum, Siem Reap, and two employees. She believes her position is a calling to help women, a position that needs no further education to maintain her skills. Khim strives to help women strengthen their ability to meet social demands. Her education included attendance through high school; then she worked in five restaurants; later she was hired for the manager's position by an NGO. She is married and has a two-year old son.

Any Sen* (no photograph)

Any Sen, a night market worker located near the Artisans d' Angkor, is a student at a higher level school. Her older sister, who did not earn an education, manages the night market booth where she sells stuffed animals. The profits are used to pay for Any Sen's school tuition and books. Any Sen wants to become an accountant and own a shop that will be located in another part of Siem Reap.

Keav Ung* (no photograph)

Keav Ung is a server at Blue Pumpkin on the Artisans d' Angkor grounds (approximately 5.4 hectares), a silk farm in Poeuk District. She dropped out of school during the past year and does not plan to return until the education system is restructured. She tried to attend school which was being conducted in a semi team-teaching program. This non-formal education system failed her for two reasons. The first reason occurred because the Khmer teacher did not know how to teach and the second reason was the

English teacher did not teach to the level of the students' learning. She stated learning was too frustrating for her and she could use her present time to earn money.

Sopheak Phan*



Sopheak Phan works as a silk weaver at her own station in the Artisans d' Angkor Silk Farm in the Poeuk District, 15 km from Siem Reap. She wants to save her money, apply for a government loan, and open her own weaving shop to sell items that she makes. She speaks Khmer but does not read or write the language. Her vision does not include attending school.

Om Sen



Om Sen lives with her parents, some of her seven children, and Pen Sor and Om Sothea in a village near Kien Svay District, Kandal Province. She studied until grade seven before the Khmer Rouge war but did not continue to learn after the war because she had to take care of her children. To have an income, she sells her home-grown vegetables from her garden. In addition she buys meats from the meat market and then resells them to the villagers for a profit that is used to send her 20-year old daughter to the Phnom Penh University.

Heak Hea



Heak Hea is a Lotus Flower and Lotus Nut farmer who lives with her husband, two children, and her brother in a three open-sided house that sits on stilts over their one hectare (2.471 acres) Lotus Farm in Aranh Village. They grow rice on three hectares

on the same road as their lotus farm but on the opposite side and further away from the lotus farm. She would study during the rainy season if a school were nearby for her to attend. She stated that her education included primary school, level eight, six years of studies. The levels of the grades do not match the years of study because the country was still struggling to reinstate a balanced education system after Pol Pot's demise. A white painted sign on a brown board nailed to a nearby tree states "Welcome to Lotus" in English. By the year 2016, she imagines she may be the owner of a bigger shop.

Pheara Then (no photograph)

Pheara Then is a sugar-cane cone vendor who sells the cones all day in the city park next to the Bassac River, Sangkat Wat Phnom, Phnom Penh, as she strolls from one area to another. She never attended school, cannot read and cannot write. She was very young when the Khmer Rouge controlled the country and she did not have a chance to attend school. She focuses on the needs of her three children and their education so that they will be educated and have good jobs.

Om Sothea



Om Sothea, a crop farmer in Kien Svay District, Kandal Province, sat on the slatted open-air picnic floor with one of her three children in her lap as she told me her story. She studied until grade nine before the Khmer Rouge war and studied in grade one after the war. The grade level sequences were renumbered after the war. During the war, she was a "collector of all things". She wants to open a small business someday but cannot estimate in how many years.

Sokhan Ho



Sokhan Ho works as a restaurant server at the Butterfly Garden Restaurant located on the Wat Bo Road area across the Siem Reap River. She imagines that she will work at a second job in the same type of work and save enough money to buy a house. She is a confident young woman who came to Siem Reap by herself, stayed in a dormitory, and studied at a Lycée school. If there could be a school in Siem Reap for women, she believes it would be very good for her to learn more English.

Sor Sney Mom



Sor Sney Mom is a single female who works at the Butterfly Garden as a cook in the Wat Bo Road area near the Siem Reap River. Sor Sney Mom is a novice English speaker who needed Sokhan Ho, her friend, to translate our conversation. She neither reads nor writes Khmer. She imagines herself working as a hotel desk clerk in five or ten years. However, she acknowledges that she must learn more English. If there were a school near the Butterfly Restaurant or near her home, she may attend.

Hon Samnang (no photograph)

Hon Samnang, a nursing student who has studied English for three months, speaks the language with confidence. Her mother and father live in a village but she lives in Phnom Penh while she studies for her nursing degree. Her father, an educator in their native province of Takeo, has influenced her life and career. Hon Samnang plans to complete her education to become a doctor and return to her native village to establish her practice there.

Pen Sor



Pen Sor is a mother of two children who lives in Kien Svay District, Kandal Province. She shares the same residence with Om Sothea and Om Sen. She worked as a live-in cook and house cleaner before she was hired to work in a garment factory. She left the factory job, married her husband, and now takes care of their two children. She believes taking care of her children overshadows all further education for herself.

Tola Seng and Marilyn Chan



Tola Seng resides in the Women's Learning Center with Marilyn and Joseph Chan. She earned a degree in Foreign Language from the Royal University of Phnom Penh and utilizes her knowledge as an interpreter for the United Methodist Church missionaries. In addition, she uses her skills to help village women learn English and about the Bible. She plans to write a book with her husband.

Chann Nath



Chann Nath works as a shop cleaner that sells various handmade items by village women. She has not attended school since the war because she lacks abilities to concentrate. Now, her friends and she gather at a church on occasional evenings to read the Bible and sing Christian hymns in Khmer.

Data Analysis

Transcribing the conversations into a text allowed me to distance myself for interpreting the data so that I could appropriate meaning from the text (Herda 1999:86). I

analyzed the data using the same critical hermeneutic theory referenced for choosing the research categories. Additional themes that surfaced were noted. In addition, I interpreted the data for new understandings that broadened my horizon about the research topic. Throughout the research process, I maintained a journal to record conversational words or phrases that may have pertained to the topic questions, actions, reflections, ideas, and plans that would help to identify the categories. The journal text enabled me to distance myself from the notes and allowed me to revisit the working text at a later time that may have exposed new meanings in the text.

Herda (1999:98–90) proposes the following stages for data analysis:

- Transcribe the conversation into a working text;
- Review the text and highlight sections that reflect critical hermeneutic theoretical concepts;
- Select passages reflective of themes based on research categories, take note also of other themes relevant to critical hermeneutic theory;
- Interpret the selected passages according to critical hermeneutic theory and the research topic; and
- Discuss findings, including areas of the research that deserve further investigation.

After reflecting on the data revealed through the conversations, the researcher may reach new understandings about the topic and begin to think differently about the line of inquiry that promotes ethical action (Herda 1999:80).

Entree to Research Site

In 2011, I travelled to Phnom Penh by plane via Thailand from San Francisco, California, USA. After three days of conversations in Phnom Penh, I travelled by bus on newly asphalted paved roads as well as unpaved roads with chuck holes to reach villages that offered opportunities to converse with village women. On my six-hour bus trip to Siem Reap from Phnom Penh my seat partner was a Phnom Penh police officer who helped me learn some Khmer language words. When the bus arrived in Siem Reap, I hired one of the many moto-tuk drivers who was waiting for passengers to exit the bus. He took me to Hotel Auberge Mont Royal which was my home for the remaining days. Siey Sith Psisey, one of the moto-tuk drivers, became my driver and translator for the duration of my research in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Timeline

I flew to Cambodia to conduct my research during the month of June 2011. After collecting data I worked on transcriptions, data presentation and analysis from July 2011 through July 2012. From July 2012 until October 2012, I completed the dissertation.

Language Study

In preparation for my trip, I studied the Khmer language in private sessions with Mr. Frank Smith, a language professor at the University of California in Berkeley. In addition to learning the Khmer language with Mr. Smith, I increased my knowledge through the language tapes that he wrote and published. These lessons furthered my understanding of the Cambodian culture and customs. Cultural artifacts and handicrafts were introduced in the chapter lessons. Dr. Judy Ledgerwood, an anthropologist at

Northern Illinois University, directed me to a free Khmer language program on the Internet offered by NIU. Since that time, I have used both programs to learn Khmer.

Journal

Throughout my research of women's learning in Cambodia, I maintained a running personal observational journal. During the conversations, the recorded verbal notes helped me when I collected and analyzed the data. The journal enabled me to recognize some themes and relationships of my established categories and provided a way to record visual expressions and the environment of the participant. The journal was used to supplement the recorded conversations with participants I met in Cambodia. The additional data increased meaning of the broader picture. I recorded visual sightings, surrounding sounds, and my reflections.

The journal was updated on a periodic basis, as much as possible, such as after a field trip when I returned to the hotel room and reflected on my thoughts of what I had just experienced. The anecdotal observations in the journal assisted me in my long-term memory recollections. Noting research citations about education increased the importance of the research on women's education in the villages of Cambodia. As I mentioned earlier, keeping a journal helped me to record my reflections of the conversations, actions, and plans as well as words, phrases, and ideas that surfaced during the conversations. When I revisited the journal, I encountered information to interpret the text in a new way.

After I returned and distanced myself from Cambodia, the journal writings helped me to recall specific sights, sounds, activities, and what some conversation participants said. See a sample page of my journal in Appendix G. My journaling notebook was a

reliable source to record impromptu conversations encountered in the villages. When anthropological research is conducted in another country, in a place where a researcher may not be able to revisit for some time, constant readiness to record carries a tremendous importance. I reviewed my notes daily which helped me to prepare for the approaching conversations in the suburbs of Siem Reap and in the rural villages.

Research Pilot Project

Introduction

In the fall of 2010, I completed a pilot study, the precursor to the dissertation, to investigate the relevancy and appropriateness of the categories and questions. The study provided me with the occasion to practice a research conversation. Following this introduction, I provided some background information about my conversation partner; reflections on the pilot project; and background of the researcher. Ricoeur (1977:20) states that "[h]ope is the first gesture in a hermeneutic conversation, the hope that the word spoken can reach the other." Though these two elements of a conversation are important, the conversation rather than the participants is more important.

Background of Research Pilot Partner

Charles Hallisey and Anne Hansen (1996) state that "[t]he trauma of memory and the reality that the consoling stories that people tell to order their own narratives of trauma cannot always be their own stories." Hansen (2008:7) further states "[i]t became apparent that to begin to understand Cambodia's genocide required rethinking the past and its interpretation as well as the present." Ricoeur (2004:464) reminds readers that created "evils are indescribable misfortunes for those who suffer them." The Cambodians who suffered under the dictatorship of Pol Pot tell their stories from an individualistic

memory as well as a collective memory. The Pol Pot genocidal war has been noted to be the most horrific war of the 20th century.

Kim Ken

Kim Ken is an immigrant from Cambodia who lives in Suisun, California. She was born in Battambang, Cambodia, in 1965, lived through the Khmer Rouge dictatorship, and began her life in the United States in 1987. Today, she is an American citizen. Her family consists of three brothers, two sisters, both parents and one daughter. Nobody in Kim's immediate family is educated; however, her daughter did attend California State University, Sacramento, until this year when she decided to quit. Kim speaks fluent Khmer but limited English. Today, she is enrolled in an adult educational program and attends classes every day.

Kim has no skills to support her and no hobbies though she does enjoy watching movies. Kim lives with a significant other who works at a local community college. The father of Kim's daughter lives in the Stockton area and has not provided any financial or emotional support for Kim or her daughter since shortly after their daughter was born.

When Kim was about seven years old, she had to help her mother take care of her siblings and to cook meals for the family. Her father squandered what money the family had on alcohol and did not provide any affection for his wife or children. When Pol Pot controlled the country from 1975–1979, Kim was used as a child laborer in his agrarian utopia.

Kim's past and present narratives, as written in this text, prescribe a new plot where future actions may occur and unfold. Herda (1999:121) stresses that

[f]or every conversation there is a common language or there is the creation of a common language among interlocutors. Partners in a genuine conversation must

work out a common language and in such a language there is something placed in the center that is the focal point on which they exchange ideas with one another, agree, and disagree.

Data Presentation and Analysis

I have presented the data from my research conversation with Kim Ken in its entirety in Appendix F. My analysis of the data is based on the research categories of Narrative Identity and Mimeses. As Kim told her story, she remembered the events of the past and interpreted them from facts and information that may have helped her understand her past actions. Kearney (1998:158) states “narrativity, as the construction or deconstruction of paradigms of story–telling, is a perpetual search for new ways of expressing human time, a production or creation of meaning”.

Kim Ken characterized her world as it was in her memory. In the first plot of her past, during her life as a child laborer under Pol Pot's regime, she states "I think I was ten or 12 years old. They let me work." Under Pol Pot's regime, to let a person work was a better life than the alternative which was execution. Her message presented an image of a young girl who was "permitted" to work. When I questioned her about her life before the Pol Pot era, Kim Ken went into the topic more deeply. She stated that her life before Pol Pot was work at home, helping her mother but not under the threat of a beating or an execution—rather she helped the family through a sense of family responsibility and obligation. She replied that

[m]y mother, she work hard because my father always got drunk.
I start work helping my mother. I don't go to school. My mother
don't have too much money because she work by herself and
we all the kids.

Even at this early age, her mother and she were perpetuating the Cambodian tradition of the woman's place is in the home caring for the children, preparing the food,

tending the garden vegetables, and rounding up the farm animals. The women in the family were the wood gatherers for cooking. Ricoeur (1985:298) stated that "[t]he past is more like the order of facts, it is unalterable." Kim Ken's remembering was a "[r]eality of history made 'visible' again through images; and this makes memory a reproduction, a sort of second production" (Ricoeur 1999:16) in *Imagination, Testimony, and Trust*. Kim Ken's youthful life, spent laboring instead of learning a skill, set a weak basis for her learning as an adult. In story-telling, the speaker offers testimony to the narrative. Ricoeur (1999:16) states in the dialogue that "[t]estimony is the ultimate link between imagination and memory, because the witness says 'I was a part of the story, I was there'."

Chandler (1996:307) states that "[u]nder the Pol Pot regime, people in the country side worked all year, in ten day bursts, without salaries or leisure time." Pol Pot's utopian ideal was not understood by everyone, however, "[t]housands came to share this ideal to the point of dying for it; tens of thousands of others died without any understanding of the ideal" (Chandler 1996:307).

Kim Ken related a part of her story as follows. When Kim Ken and her friends passed her house and saw the sugar cane that her mother had planted, she could not take her eyes off the stalks and her mind off the taste. Kim Ken stated that one day

[I] got in trouble too. I thought that place my house, but my mom not there. I think all the plant is my mom's. I am so hungry and then I saw the sugar cane. Then I go get it and I eat it and they caught me. Then I got in big trouble. They (referring to Pol Pot's guards) say everything is for everybody not just for me.

Ricoeur (2004:462) states that "reflection leads back to the center of the memory itself, which is the place of the affection constitutive of the feeling of fault." Kim Ken

stated that her friends became angry with her because she caused them to eat the cane and be punished for it along with her. In traumatic times such as those, the fear of friends' abandonment may have scared her more than she already was scared by her physical environment. The soldiers punished Kim Ken and her friends by pouring red ants on them, tying them to separate poles overnight, and waking them early in the mornings to work in the fields chasing birds out of the fields all day.

I began to probe Kim Ken for ideas about adult women's future possibilities in learning. In our discussion about how women can change to better their social status, she appeared vague in seeing hope. Kim Ken stated that "[t]hey have them and then they sell the children. The poor people have more children than the rich people. Rich people can buy protection." Chandler (1996:324) reports that "[t]he mortality rate in Cambodia is one of the highest in the world." There are 141 deaths out of a 1000 under the age of five and 55 under the age of one for every 1000 (World Bank Development Indicators 2008).

The appearance of these facts would say that advancing the adult women's learning may help the Cambodian women be better educated about having healthy families. Kim Ken's expectation of her current life is to accomplish a certificate of completion in the adult education program. Her significant other and a Cambodian friend offer support and encouragement for her to finish the adult education program and enroll in the community college where her friend attends and her significant other works.

She states that she often forgets what the teacher has said or instructed because her mind wanders and she continues to have dreams about her past life under Pol Pot. Kim Ken's acceptance of living in America with her family poses no regrets of her decision to leave Cambodia. In her present life, she wants to think about herself and let

her extended family members that live in Cambodia take care of themselves. For women's education in Cambodia, she believes that they should speak up, create a strike, or vote in a new prime minister which will be very hard to accomplish.

Reflections on the Pilot Project

My questions focused on Kim Ken's Narrative Identity, her past life in Cambodia, her present life in California, and her future aspirations. This participatory research process allowed her to revisit her memories, consider her present status, and imagine a new future. I gained an understanding about the actions of Cambodian women through Kim Ken and how their actions are based on interaction and involvement. The pilot study helped me to further realize that this topic was what I wanted to do for my dissertation. My categories remained the same in my proposal as they were in my pilot study. To conduct a successful research on Cambodian village women's learning, the importance is placed on a speaker and a hearer.

Background of the Researcher

Women's education is a personal issue that is important to me. Though I have had the opportunity to learn beyond my high school education, I have had to jump the hurdles to become a life-long learner and earn a Bachelor's and a Master's Degree. My hurdles were both self-imposed and imposed upon me. To help other women visualize themselves in new ways may improve my understanding of who I am as both a local and a global citizen.

My cultural heritage, the idem, 'the what?' of who I am, is Jewish, German, and Irish. 'The who?' I am, the *ipse*, was shaped through my experiences of many cultural differences through the variety of foods, the assortment of songs, the diverse celebrations

that I came to know through my parents' traditions and values; language; religious beliefs, and my environment. My interactions with siblings, parents, grandparents, nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins and all my extended family members have shaped my family culture and my *ipse*, the who? of who I am. What I have become and am becoming is a reflection of my ancestors and myself. My actions today are a reflective act from my family institution of traditions and history. Ricoeur (1992:3) writes that “[o]neself as another suggests from the outset that the selfhood of oneself implies otherness to such an intimate degree that one cannot be thought of without the other [and] instead one passes into the other.”

My accelerations in education were sports, academia, and music. I enjoyed learning and developing relationships with others that I encountered on my journey through life. Throughout my years of learning, I esteemed most of my teachers. One special memorable activity as a youth was developing my relationship with my music teacher and learning to play music. Ms. Schuler, a single woman who rode a motorcycle with a sidecar, influenced my character. On Sunday afternoons, I rode in the sidecar to our group jam sessions where each member of our Kalena Band shared musical talents and played songs that she had taught us. In addition to our jam sessions, our relationship was deepened by Ms. Schuler’s and my participation in performances at Sunday evening church services, by her motivation for me to enter county fair talent contests and to play for organizations such as the PTA.

As a teen–ager with a new privilege of owning a driver's license, on occasion, during the summer school breaks, my mother prepared boxes of goodies for me to take to her friends in nursing homes. While I visited with them, I listened to their stories and

later related those narratives to my mother. At times, her friends believed they were being unjustly treated by the nurses or the institutions where they were housed. My responsibility was to deliver the goods, listen to the stories, and interpret their injustices as real. Though my part was small in the process of attending to assumed injustices, my mother was the one who acted upon the information. In *Being and Time*, translated by Joan Stambaugh, Martin Heidegger [1996:180 (1953)] posits that "[b]eing-in-the-world is essentially care, being-together-with things at hand. Being-together-with is taking care of things." To move from knowing about something to doing something about a situation creates a new way of being in the world and taking care of things.

My narrative as a high school graduate follows. After graduation from high school, my learning came in a series of every ten years. I earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of California, Davis, in 1974, and entered the teaching field a year later when I completed the teaching certificate program. Ten years later, I attended St. Mary's College of Moraga where I studied for the Master's Degree in Organization and Leadership and was a candidate for valedictorian. Ten years later, I began the doctoral program in the School of Education, Department of Leadership Studies in Organization and Leadership at the University of San Francisco. I dropped out only to begin again ten years later and this time I will finish my doctoral in 2012. I try to imagine what my life may be ten years from now.

Summary of Pilot Study

The pilot study revealed some significant benefits to promoting women's learning programs in Cambodia. The research participant, Kim Ken, benefitted from this project through a motivation to enroll in more English classes at the adult education program in

Fairfield or in ESL classes at the Solano Community College. Those benefits are the result of imagination and self-discovery which is part of the creative process in interpretative philosophy. Herda (1999:54) states that in

[a] text created in hermeneutic participatory research, there is the potential of bringing to the foreground, not only new relationships and new understandings but also the traditional meaning and experiences in which the participants we work with linguistically move, namely, the community of memory.

Women who are searching for a better understanding of their identities and who they are in relation to the others of the world may benefit from the participatory research philosophy. The creative process includes a non-linear way of thinking. This way of thinking can potentially open up new possibilities as we engage in different scenarios about ourselves in particular and those with whom we share our world in general. These new understandings may lead to new ways of being and acting with others and may have better informed and illuminated the readers of the text.

Summary

In Chapter Four, I presented the research theory and protocol that included Paul Ricoeur's ideas of Narrative Identity and Mimeses (Mimeis₁, Mimesis₂, Mimesis₃) and Ellen Herda's critical hermeneutic research protocol. In addition, I applied Ricoeur's theories with the participants' narratives. The data was extracted from the conversations and interactive dialogues. I explained that I also used a journal to help retain a good record of information. In Chapter Four, I listed the names of the participants and pertinent information about them. There is a description of the entrance into the research site, the timeline, and the Khmer language program. Included in Chapter Four are the summary of the pilot program, background of the project researcher as well as the

researcher's reflections on the pilot project. Chapter Five presents the data collected from the conversations and excerpts from documents on Cambodia, its land, culture, and economics.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA PRESENTATION

Introduction

The data collection, rooted in an anthropological interpretive study grounded in critical hermeneutic theory, summons the researcher's interpretation of the world encountered throughout the research in order to illuminate a new Narrative Identity. In Chapter Five I present the data collection of narratives that may help women who moved from the rural villages to the suburbs and women who currently live in rural villages to gain new understandings to form their future identity in relation to others, one that may be realized through education. This manner may best afford the depth and the breadth of the conversations which have been woven into the themes of Narrative Identity and Mimeses.

Two underlying themes that I interpreted were as follows. One was the individualism or lack of networking for upward mobility through the sharing of information about how to attain advancements within the system. For example, Sopheak Phan, the weaver at the Silk Farm, is the only participant who mentioned something about a government loan which indicated she has access to public information that other women may not have. I ponder if other women knew about this program, would their newly acquired knowledge encourage them to imagine a world different than the one they currently inhabit. Habermas (1987:58) states that "[p]ersonal identity is a mirror image of collective identity." If Sopheak Phan shares her knowledge, other women may learn and as a collective body of women, they may move forward together. Habermas (1987:45) posits that if group identities could be clarified, they could express a collective consciousness which may weigh more than an individual consciousness.

The second underlying theme was the passivity of those participants who wanted to wait for the government to act upon their lives. I interpreted this passivity as an attitude towards the government that stated the government leaders did not care about poor village women. Several village women expressed this belief of neglectfulness by leaders of their village and those leaders above them. For example, Heak Hea said the government does not care about them because they are poor. In addition, Pen Sor stated that tomorrow will be the same as today and the government does not care. Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume Two*, discussed the task of critical social science as the emancipation of the masses so that all individuals have a voice. The difficulty to free oneself from traditional roles can be diminished by the reasonable use of anticipation and imagination.

Herda (1999:128) explains that “[t]he researcher as narrator—the researcher is more of a narrator than an analyst—calls upon productive imagination in the invention and discovery of plots grounded in quote from conversation and theory.” The voices of these Cambodian women that illuminate from this text may lead to a greater understanding of their history, of their present moments in the cosmic world, and of their imagination for a life-world different from the one they live in today. Gadamer [1996:304 (1975)] states “[i]f we put ourselves in someone else’s shoes...then we will understand him – i.e., become aware of the otherness, the indissoluble individuality of the other person – by putting ourselves in his position.” Throughout the research process of collecting narratives, the researcher listens attentively as well as actively participates in the conversation.

Each woman's narrative offered a unique perspective to this study. Paul Ricoeur (1985:247) explains that "[t]he notion of narrative identity also indicates its fruitfulness in that it can be applied to a community as well as to an individual." The individual narratives of these women may be applied to themselves, their inner circle of friends, their village, province, and country. By retelling the stories of these conversation partners, together as one, a text was created that revealed an opportunity for greater understanding along the continuum. Upon telling a narrative, it remains open for new interpretations and understandings (Kearney 1999). This Chapter is presented in terms of my two research categories Narrative Identity and Mimeses. Mimeses is divided in three parts, Mimesis₁, Mimesis₂, and Mimesis₃.

My research in Cambodia included selected women who lived in rural villages and the suburbs of Siem Reap and Phnom Penh and represented a cross section of ages, occupations, and involvement with their family and community relationships. These conversations, in addition to the pilot program, provided me with the opportunity to interpret the appropriated text and come to new understandings about the lives of these Cambodian village women and their educational programs.

The selected participants wished to tell their stories which may or may not include traumatic childhood memories of the war that was waged by Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge. The importance of listening attentively to a story of horror without prejudgments validates the truthfulness of what happened to the person. Kearney reminds us that to be attentive to the repressed voices of history is a way of giving a future to their muted past. Rabbi Chaim Brovender of Rosh Yeshiva (Website : Yeshiva @Jerusalem Israel.org) states that we "[c]ollectively take note of tragic events so that we can make some sense of

how tragic history informs the present, and how it might direct our actions and our growth for the future.”

Narratives of Phnom Penh Rural Villages and Suburban Women

In Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, I met several women who wanted to tell their stories and who ranged in age from 20 to 50 years of age. Hon Sanmang, 20 years of age and a nursing student who lived in Sangkat Wat, was waiting for a ride in a city park along side of the Basaac River when I met her. Tola Seng, 24 years of age, an interpreter who lives in the suburbs of Phnom Penh, was visiting in the Adult Women’s Center managed by Marilyn and Joseph Chan when I met her. While Hon Sanmang and Tola Seng have earned an education, other conversation partners have not.

Om Sothea, 47 years of age; Pen Sor, 29 years of age; and Om Sen, 50 years of age live together in a village in the Kien Svay District. The literacy scope of all of these participants ranged from being illiterate to being completely literate in speaking, reading, and writing in Khmer. Hon Sonmang and Tola Seng were bilingual in Khmer and English. It was interesting that some of the conversation partners said they spoke Khmer while other participants said they spoke Cambodian. They both are the same language. The Khmer language spoken by some women sounded exactly like the Cambodian language spoken by others. In addition, the interpreters did not state the participants spoke different languages.

Hon Sanmang and Tola Seng

Though both Hon Sanmang and Tola Seng have earned the beginning of an education; they have reached a plateau where one will be able to further her education, uninterrupted, while the other’s education will be interrupted now with an unforeseen

date to return. Hon plans to further her studies in the medical field beyond the nursing degree that she will soon complete. Her focus on education, I believe, is derived from her father's educational position as a teacher and his influence on her learning. She states that she was born in a village in Takeo Province. "My mother is a housekeeper and my father is a school teacher. He teaches English at the high school." Hon Sanmang's bilingualism in English and Khmer may help her to communicate and administer medical treatment both Khmer and English speaking people.

Hon's interpretation of her identity, the *idem*, speaks for her as she talks about her life in Takeo Province with her father and mother and their family history. The *what* manifests itself in her strong identity with her Cambodian culture and traditions. The other part of her identity, the *ipse*, is revealed through her present character that has been shaped by the influence of her parents, village community members, and currently by her professors, friends, and interactions with other persons.

In Ricoeur's concept of Mimeses, Hon expressed an understanding of Mimesis₁ as she talked about her past life in the village. In reference to the past, Heidegger [1996:346 (1953)] understood the past to be "objectively present but without 'effect' on the 'present'." She has a clear imagination of her future life as a doctor in her native village, Mimesis₃. Her Mimesis₂, present life, was explained explicitly as a student in the nursing program. Heidegger [1996:185 (1953)] declares that "all the human being's behavior is 'full of care' and guided by his 'dedication' to something." Hon talked about this concept of Heidegger as she described her future career as a doctor in her native village and caring for the rural village people.

Her father currently pays for her education at the Banya Parhasastra School, an expensive private school. After she establishes her practice and begins to earn an income, she plans to repay her father for the loan. She hopes to administer health care to families, friends, and neighbors in her native village in Takeo and thus exert her social commitment to others in need. Her father's placement on the importance of education and the role it plays on the family unit and society are being maintained and transmitted to Hon. Habermas (1987) posits that a person who acts in public space evolves from the family institution of traditions and history. In critical theory, these actions are reflected in justice and respect for the other. These comments were made under the Background of the Researcher.

Tola Seng was born in Chi Chin on the border of Cambodia and Thailand, but received her education in Phnom Penh with the help of the missionaries in the United Methodist Church of Cambodia. One of Tola Seng's hardships that she endured as a young person was living in a single parent home. When she was young, her mother attended school which modeled the value of learning. Tola Seng and her siblings stayed home, gathered the wood for cooking, and collected water for drinking and house uses.

Now, Tola Seng's bilingual fluency in Khmer and English helped her to earn a Foreign Language Degree in English. Tola Seng's success may have evolved partly as a result of the United Methodist Church's support for her mother. This church employed her mother to work in the facilities, thus, in turn, enabling Tola Seng to enroll in a school. Tola Seng's religious beliefs helped her to endure emotional stress and to cling to a belief in a different and hopeful world interpretation. Tola Seng spoke clearly about her past life, her present career, and her future aspirations, all of the Mimeses. In the *ipse* part of

her life, the ethics, she clearly defined her purpose in life. Tola Seng is dedicated to being a translator for the missionaries, an English teacher, a caregiver for her mother-in-law, and a liaison for the village women.

Tola Seng appears to be a bright woman who visualizes a different life than the present one. She plans to teach others how to read and write so they may raise their standard of living. Her public sphere actions have evolved from the institution of the church and Marilyn and Joseph Chan as well as her mother. Later she plans to write a book with her husband. Tola Seng has moved from an unstable past to a more stable environment that offered educational experiences and a new pattern of life.

Tola Seng mentioned an educational problem between the city and the surrounding villages. For example, before school starts in Phnom Penh, the government presents a motivational program about the importance of sending the daughters to school for their education. However, parents in the rural villages do not have televisions in their homes. They can see these government issued messages on the village's one handkerchief-size screen in black and white that sits on a table in the back of a covered three-sided room with rows of auditorium style seating. If rural parents do not have a front row seat, they are not able to see and hear the messages very clearly. Therefore, Tola Seng and other Christian associates from the mission make periodic visits to the rural villages to encourage parents to educate their children.

In the Cambodian culture, respect for one's elders is valued. Tola Seng lives by this cultural reverence, Heidegger's theory of solicitude, and takes care of her mother-in-law whose only child is Tola Seng's husband. Therefore, for this year and several years

to come in Tola Seng's future, she may not attend university classes to further her education.

Om Sen, Om Sothea, Pen Sor

In a village in Kien Svay District, Kandal Province, I visited with Om Sen, Om Sothea, and Pen Sor, who are related to each other and live together. These three women have had little education and they have forgotten what they did learn, but they know how to raise vegetables and fruit on their land as well as turn a profit from the resale of meats. Om Sen, 50 years of age, and Om Sothea, 47 years of age, lived through the enslavement of the Khmer Rouge War. Pen Sor, 29 years of age, born after the Khmer Rouge period, attended school until grade five.

The money that all three of them earn from the sales of their vegetables and animals such as chickens is used to feed the family and send Om Sen's daughter to the Phnom Penh University. Pen Sor's husband works for a construction company and travels to various locations in Cambodia to work. Therefore, her husband lives near the location of his job during the week and returns home on the weekends. Pen Sor's life is an example of a household headed by a woman because the husband has passed away or works in another part of the country. Pen Sor stated that the only other type of work she has done is house cleaning. Om Sen, Pen Sor, and Om Sothea carry the burden of the farm and home maintenance, production of the food, house chores and the care for the children.

When Pen Sor and I talked about the possibility of her attending a school for women, she replied "[t]he leader of the village decides what will happen. The women and men do not have a lot of voice." Her narrative next year may remain the same as this

year because she stated “[n]ext week will be the same as this week. Income is the same this month and next month.” She does not visualize the possibility of an increase in her husband’s wages which would create a different economic status next year for herself and for her family. Pen Sor accepts her unalterable past, Mimesis₁, and her present life, Mimesis₂, but lacks an imagination, Mimesis₃, to create a different future life.

Pen Sor does not visualize herself as being-in-the-world to join in her environment as a co-creator of what happens to her now and in the future. Heidegger’s theory, stated in Chapter Four, says persons are being-in-the-world, in charge of their life, or being-with-the-world, allowing someone else to have charge of their life. The power in her life, she believes, rests with the village leaders instead of within herself. She seems to sit and wait for someone to act upon her instead of acting to co-create her world. Her life stands in a frozen relation of dependence where she waits for the government to act upon her.

Pen Sor’s older relatives that she lives with are the models in her life. It may be difficult for Pen Sor to pursue an education and leave the care of her children to the older women. This would be breaking with a cultural tradition and with the *who* of her person, her *ipse*. Pen Sor lives in the present world that does not include a future life that is different than the one she now inhabits. When certain social standards are set upon a societal group, such as those that have been imposed on Cambodian women for centuries, women have a difficult time to imagine a different world. Many Cambodian women continue to suffer the traumatization of the three wildernesses during the Pol Pot regime; starvation, disease, and execution. The knowledge of these events may be one of the greatest mental deterrents to the women’s advancement in education.

Pen Sor, Om Sothea, and Om Sen have no means of transportation to travel to a school and there is no local village school for them to attend. Om Sen and Om Sothea believe they are too old to continue learning a language to read and write. Om Sothea stated that after the Khmer Rouge lost the war, the educated soldiers of Pol Pot's army were used to teach others, but they did not have the knowledge of how to teach and some of their knowledge had been lost due to traumas.

Cambodians who lived through the horrific circumstances during the war years may want to live in peace on a farm in these remote villages where it is quiet, peaceful, and hidden. Pen Sor and her husband are examples of this circumstance. Her husband sought the isolation of the farm for fear of the Khmer Rouge soldiers, though the war had ended. Even today in Cambodia, some people fear the unknown, the demons of the past era, the real or imagined soldiers. Om Sen and Om Sothea both may feel safe in the remote villages where they live with their elderly parents. They spend most of their days caring for their children and tending the gardens.

Pheara Then

After my visit with the previous three women, my interpreter and I rode his motorcycle to a park along Basaac River, a suburb of Phnom Penh. There, we strolled slowly through the park and looked for women who may be willing and eager to be participants. In this park I encountered a sugar cane cone vendor named Pheara Then, 38 years of age who lived in Sangkat Wat. Our conversation grew from a simple question of "May I talk with you?" After she agreed, I introduced myself and why I wanted to talk with her. From there, I began to reach an understanding of her personal values for her children. She grew up on a farm where her parents grew rice and raised cattle. Pheara Then never

attended school; does not know how to read; and does not have a desire to attend school at the present time. Her comment regarding attendance in a school for women was, “I would like to but I am too busy with this job. I need the money to support my children. I want all of my children to study, be educated, and have a good job.”

Ricoeur (1985: 298) says “[t]he past is more like the order of facts, it is unalterable. Experience draws a lesson from the past for the future.” Pheara Then states she wants her children to have a future that is different from her past, a past narrative which she cannot change but only reflect upon. Instead of looking to improve her economic status through an education system, Pheara Then desires to sell more cones at a different location that may lead to more sales and more income. Pheara Then contemplates a future in Mimesis₃ that will not include an education; however, it may be a continuous effort to provide financial support for her children.

Narratives of Siem Reap Rural and Village Women

Siem Reap, located near Angkor Wat, has a more relaxed environment than Phnom Penh but still is a very busy city with lots of traffic. To travel to Siem Reap, I rode the bus on National Route 5 where some of the road had been repaved. The morning after my arrival, my moto-tuk driver and I left the city, drove through the suburbs, and arrived in the villages.

Heak Hea

When I saw a woman with a road side stand of lotus nuts, we stopped to talk with her and to taste the lotus nuts. Heak Hea, age 25, lives in Aranh Village and devotes her time to her family of two small elementary aged male children, her husband, and her brother. They live in a one-room thatched roof house open to the outside air and sits on

stilts over the lotus farm waters. They farm one hectare (2.471 acres) of lotus nuts and three hectares of rice. As I talked with her, I understood her affectionate relationship with her husband and brother. She stated that “[w]e live together, my husband, my brother, my two sons and me.” Though she has no education in accounting, she managed the finances for the roadside nut stand, and in addition, harvested the crop at the side of her husband. Throughout our conversation, she repeatedly referred to her status in life as a poor person. In our discussion of the possibility of attending a school that may be built across the street from her house, she said that she has “no time to learn” even if there were a school across the street.

She mentioned that she “[w]ent to primary school, level eight. I took six years and started a book but I never finished. I had to take care of my children.” In visualizing the possibility of having a school located there, she replied that the “[g]overnment does not care for poor people.” She is interested in attaining a better job with more income for the family as she stated, “I want a different job but I don’t know how to get a different job. I want a bigger shop and sell more things besides the nuts. I want to sell things like a souvenir shop.”

Heak Hea visualizes herself setting new horizons for a different world even though she believes the government will not help her or other village women. Heak Hea lives in-the-world as a co-creator of her future rather than with-the-world. When Heak Hea has knowledge of the government loan that Sopheak Phan mentioned to me, she may change her fusion of horizons and imagine a new life-world to inhabit.

Heak, like other women that I met, has a difficult time deciding what to do with her life because there are few choices for women. Their choices are more easily

determined if they play the same role that their mother and grandmother played and the one that they interpret the government prefers them to play, that is to stay home while the men participate in the economic, social, and civic activities. Staying chained to traditions may justify staying at home and framing the families and themselves like the same family unit they were born into. However, Heak has a definite plan to achieve her goal of being an owner of her own souvenir shop by the year 2016, but has no plan as to how to reach that goal.

In our conversation, I asked what improvements are possible to raise the economy for her family. Her reply was, “I can learn English more, work hard.” Her decision to achieve more education or to earn more family income creates difficulty for her to commit herself to one or the other. She spends all of her time on a daily basis with her husband, brother, and children, none of whom speak English. Therefore, she may have a difficult time to learn English unless she exposes herself to many English speakers on a daily basis such as the potential tourists that may travel that way after the road improvements are completed.

When I asked her to respond to the question of what may be the saddest moment she experienced, she said she could not talk about it because it hurt so much she would cry. She was surrounded by her two children, her husband, the interpreter and me. She may not have been ready to reveal those thoughts to her husband and children and least of all to me, a person whom she had just met and a person from another country. She may have been fearful that her words and thoughts would reach the ears of the government officials. Another speculation is we had not established an authentic trust at that point. She is the only participant who did not answer the question. If Heak Hea had been able

to speak English and she and I were alone, would she have shared that part of her life with me? Our novice relationship may not have been sufficient enough time to develop a trust for someone whose parents had experienced the threat of death or were executed during the Khmer Rouge and transmitted that fear to their children.

Sokhan Ho

I found Sokhan Ho, 29 years of age, who lives in the suburbs of Siem Reap at Wat Bo Road and works at the Butterfly Garden Restaurant as a cook and server. Sokhan Ho shows her pride in her status of life by stating, “I am a service here in the restaurant. And one more thing, I am cutting experience.” She not only serves food to the customers’ tables but she also prepares the food to be cooked by slicing and dicing.

Her dauntless courage helped her raise her economic status when she moved from the rural village life to the suburbs of Siem Reap. When she moved by herself on her own, her horizon was finite but not limited. Gadamer [1996:302 (1975)] posits that “[t]he horizon is a range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point.” The metaphor of a fusion of horizon carried the idea of a coming together as a subject and an object coming together and creating a new understanding. Later, Gadamer [1996 (1975)] explains that people move into new horizons as the new horizons move with the people. Horizons are always changing for people who are moving.

Sokham Ho’s horizon moved when she left her village and sought a new way of living and her horizon continues to move as she moves continuously towards new ways of being. In contrast to Pen Sor, Sokhan Ho, involves herself as being-in-the-world and believes she is a co-creator of her life. She stated that she “[c]ame here alone, without

mother and father. It was hard to find work for the first time because I was alone and I did not know how to speak. I am working here and make me a very good life. Like, I am confident, like my family can help also.” She appears to be a person who has no fears of the unknown.

In our conversation, she emphasized education such as learning English, and a skill such as her knowing how to offer restaurant service, as important steps to become employable. Again, her horizon of a different future opens her understanding of her limitless horizons. These changes influence her *ipse* in relation to others as she approaches each new horizon. She equated the university with a higher level of education but she did not attend a university. She told me that

[f]or my education, I finish four grades at the school and then I go to university. I just go to study English at the organization. Like they call this education is Lycée. I just study for one year and then I can speak English. It is a very good school. They didn’t charge us because we are all very poor. It is like an NGO.

She frowns on factory and night club working positions because that type of work does not require an education. If there were a school for women, Sokhan Ho believes “[i]t will be good for me” and visualizes herself learning in a school to improve her economic status. Kearney (1998:158) states the “[a]nalysis of narrative operations . . . can teach us how we formulate a new structure of ‘time’ by creating new modes of plot and characterization.” As Sokhan furthers her education and creates a new narrative, she structures that period of time in her life which determines the plot. Sokhan Ho’s husband works as a cook at the Butterfly Garden where she works. She believes that by working together, they may earn enough money to buy their own house and rent rooms to help bring more money to their household.

Sor Sney Mom

In addition to working with her husband, Sokhan Ho works with Sor Sney Mom, a woman who also lives on Wat Bo Road. Sor Sney Mom is 23 years of age and also is a cook. Sor Sney Mom only speaks Khmer but does not write or read the language so Sokhan Ho translated her story. Sor Sney Mom states that she wants to work at a place that will pay her more money, such as in a hotel. Though she wants to be a hotel clerk, she believes she does not know enough about customer service and money denominations to qualify for that position. She realizes that being bilingual in Khmer and English will help her qualifications but she does not know how she will accelerate her learning because of her work schedule. Sor Sney Mom contemplates this fusion of horizons but worries how to reach her aspirations.

Chann Nath

Chann Nath, a 52 year old orphan lives near the shop where she works and at other times, she is confined to a hospital. She rents a room from a woman she knows but does not possess anything in the room but her clothing and personal items. She continues to suffer from the devastation of the loss of her 11 siblings, both sisters and brothers, and her parents during the Pol Pot Regime and her own enslavement during the war that lasted from 1975-1980. Chann Nath remained alone like an orphan in her own world throughout the war, her teenage years, and into her adult life. Even today, she continues to live alone in the world without the knowledge of what happened to her family, death or escape. The war trauma and loss of family members caused Chann Nath to experience mental duress to the point that even now, she is not able to perform the duties of her work

on a constant daily basis. Those memories shape her unthinkable scars that were inflicted by the Khmer Rouge.

Chann Nath's father's achievement in the Cambodian society was as a clerk in the court system. His position carried status in the community and provided a sustainable income for the family that provided the opportunities for his children to be educated. When the war began, some siblings decided to fight against the Pol Pot regime and were never heard from after they left home. The same fate fell upon her father, her mother, and the other siblings. Most often educated people were taken to the woods to be re-educated, which meant they were being taken to the killing fields. Chann Nath does not know for certain if her family members were taken to the fields or not taken there because the families were separated and could not be in daily contact with each other. As I have previously stated, in similar situations about the Khmer Rouge, a pattern of destruction evolved.

Chann Nath's story has haunted me, as I remembered her sad, hollow, and melancholy appearing facial expressions. Kearney (2002:156) states, "[s]tories alter our lives as we return from text to action." On my next visit to Siem Reap, I wish to visit the same shop in search of her so that our narrative text may remain an open-ended invitation to ethical and poetic responsiveness. Chann Nath has no money and said "[t]here is no school here for old ladies," though she is only 52 years of age. She states, "[r]ight now, I do not have any children to help me when I get older and older. I have no sister. I do not know what my future is." Kearney (1998:54) maintains that "[i]magination is a poetics of the possible. It is the very origin of creativity of being." Chann Nath has limited imagination for living in a world different than her present world. Kearney (1998:142)

reminds us that it is through the power of imagination that lets new worlds shape our understanding of ourselves.

Chann Nath, as other conversation partners, imagines herself in similar ways; that is, they are poor and may remain the same because the government does not offer opportunities for poor people. While it appears to be true that the government treats village people differently than those who live in the cities, each individual has the unreleased power to act rather than wait to be acted on. Though in Chann Nath's situation, she may feel more secure in her present work assignment, being dependent on and surrounded by those who care for her. Paul Ricoeur (1989:6), posits in *The Narrative Path: The Later Works of Paul Ricoeur*, that "[t]he shortest route from the self to itself is through the images of others." Socialization and sharing public and cultural space aids the rural village women like Chann Nath to know themselves through their *ipse*, their character, and through interaction with others.

The Cambodian women that I conversed with voiced their ideas of a future life-world that was based on their past histories. Ricoeur presents his thoughts on a person's future as something that is guaranteed because of an ability to own a Narrative Identity which allows the person to remember the past as an historical event. Kearney (1998:28) reminds us that Husserl believes that "[i]n imagination we have the capacity of complete freedom to transform our human historical existence and what is there exposes as its 'life-world'." That utopia represents our imagination that frees us from our ideological present status in life and lifts us to new possibilities. In referencing the idea of imagination, Kearney (1998:170) posits that "[e]very poetics of imagining serves to

supplement the work of imagination itself – a work in perpetual process, which began with the birth of humankind and will not cease until we cease.”

After Chann Nath lost her whole family during the Pol Pot war, she did not have family members or societal members to help her continue to develop her *ipse*. Her family traces and traditions, which represent important elements in one’s culture and society, dissipated through the war years and after the war ended while she lived alone. To live in isolation causes mental duress for some persons who are alienated from ties to their closest humans, but are also alienated from a community identity. Those persons become aliens in their own society and are looked upon as the other, someone that is different from the majority.

Through all of my conversations with the rural village women, Chann Nath is the only one who asked me a question about myself at the end of our conversation. She asked “[h]ow old are you right now?” I believe her question about my age and my role as a student in a university caused her to be curious about a comparison of her life and age with my life and age. This questioning indicated to me that she may think there is a possibility for her to attend school. Questioning is the first step to penetrate the veil of obscurity so that openings onto possible worlds may transcend the limits of the actual world. Kearney (1998:148-149) reminds us that “[a] poetic imagination liberates the reader into a free space of possibility . . . and thereby disclosing ‘new ways of being in the world’.” I believe that Chann Nath imagined herself being in a different world, silently and pensively, if only for that one flash of a thought.

In my conversation pilot study with Kim Ken and in this research conversation with Chann Nath, I realized that they share a similar disability caused by the trauma of

the war. Kim Ken has flash backs, dreams nightmares, and cannot concentrate in the adult education classroom. Chann Nath has difficulty living in the present and staying focused on the reality of the day. These mental disabilities to function in an everyday social manner in society give testimony to the horrors that war can cause.

Any Sen

I visited the night market in Siem Reap and watched a woman weave threads into a cloth. As I stood there, a young woman, Any Sen (pseudonym), 25 years of age, stepped from the next booth through an open blanket that divided the two booths and entered this open area. She began explaining how the woman wove the threads into cloth. During our conversation, I inquired about her education. Her older sister, owner of the next booth, provides funds for her to attend school and reserves time for her to study in their market booth. Her idea is to earn an education and teach at an elementary school which may come to fruition through her strong desire and her sister's dedication. Her story reveals the unalterable story of her sister but reveals Any's story as an unfolding narrative that could allow fusions of horizons to take place and help her reach her proposed world. Any's sister exhibits solicitude as expressed in Heidegger's theory and this solicitude will help Any to reach her aspirations.

Keav Ung

Puok District, location of the silk farm, is also the district where Keav Ung lives. I conversed with Keav Ung (pseudonym) who serves ice cream, sodas, and cookies at the Blue Pumpkin Ice Cream stand at the silk farm. She explained an important reason women may drop out of the educational programs shortly after they begin. She stood on the other side of the counter, under the shade of the canopy, with her arms propped upon

the counter, and leaned forward to discuss this significant situation with me in her best English which was understandable.

She had dropped out of the learning program because the American teacher taught the lessons so quickly that the limited English speaking students did not have sufficient time to comprehend the subject matter. On the other hand, she stated that the Cambodian instructor did not know teaching strategies. In other team teaching classrooms in other locations in Cambodia, other students like Keav Ung may be very confused and frustrated. This team-teaching concept may not have been implemented with prior training and appropriate learning materials.

Sopheak Phan

Sopheak Phan (pseudonym), 26 years of age, lives in the same district, Puok District, a suburb of Siem Reap as Keav Ung. She has three sisters, two brothers, a father who works as a custodian and a mother who is a housewife. She attended school until she was six years of age and had no further education. Therefore, like others, she only speaks the Khmer language. While she works at the silk factory, she wants to save her money and borrow a certain amount from the government to open her own weaving shop which will lead to a better socio-economic status for herself. My interpreter told me that she wanted to ask me something. With her eyes looking directly into mine, she asked “[w]ill you help me?” I asked “[h]ow can I help you other than giving you money?” She casted her eyes aside as she replied “[i] don’t know”. I asked if she would use the money to attend school but she did not answer my question. Sopheak Phan has a clear understanding of her past, Mimesis₁, and her present, Mimesis₂. She imagines raising her standard of living through Mimesis₃.

Narratives in Suburbs

Sugar 'N Spice

In addition to the above conversations, I travelled to other locations in search of narratives. In Phnom Penh, I met the manager of the Sugar 'N Spice Shop and restaurant who told me an interesting story. The young women who work in the Sugar 'N Spice Shop and restaurant represent a minority of women who have escaped from the brothels. To protect these fragile women from being coerced into returning to the brothel, the manager provides transportation on bicycles to and from the restaurant and their homes.

The women are prohibited from interacting with the customers in any way so I was not able to converse with anyone. One rule of the house states that the women must not discuss their previous life in the sex trade market with other women in the program so that they live in the present and imagine their future. They may not be able to tell their life stories now, but according to Kearney (2002:131) “. . . every person’s action can be read as part of an unfolding life-story, and . . . each life-story cries out to be ‘imitated’, that is, transformed into the story of a life.” Their life stories may be written or told in another time of their lives.

To help these women change their lives from downward spirals to upward ladders, funds are raised through the sale of foods, handmade clothing, one-of-a-kind purses, hats, pedicures, and notecards under the name of PolkaDots©KhmerGirls, www.daughtersofcambodia.org. Counselors are provided on the site and in the homes as well as police home visits to ensure the women’s safety. These women attend educational classes and travel on the bicycles that are provided by the school funds. The

success rate at this organization is indicated by 90% of the women who leave the center, leave to establish their own business.

The manager visualizes opening more Sugar 'n Spice shops in the near future because of their high rate of success, the income that is driven from the sale of handmade items and the income from individual donors and organization supporters. While the women are not allowed to reminisce on their past, they live in their present world at the center, and are encouraged to imagine a world-life in which to live that is different from the past and present ones. Though I found this to be an informative encounter, the availability to converse with the women would have added a greater depth to this story.

Women's Resource Center

Khim Pisey is the Outreach Coordinator who provides information and knowledge about legal rights, personal care, literacy education, mental health counseling and work skills training for the village women on a drop-in daily basis. The Women's Resource Center was founded in 2008 by Judy Larkin and maintains a board of directors.

The day I visited the center, Khim Pisey had finished a lesson on the female reproductive system, the importance of cleanliness, and protective methods against AIDS and HIV. She stated that the government does not provide educational materials for these rural women who speak only Khmer. Therefore, Khim Pisey tries to provide a comfortable non-threatening environment for women to discuss and question feminine hygiene.

Khim Pisey prefers to imagine her working at the Women's Resource Center five and ten years from the present time. She values her assistance for women through educating them about their physical bodies, listening to their sad stories of abuse, feeling

empathetically and referring them to the correct organization for help. The women who frequent the Women's Center do not attend a public school. Khim Pisey stated that women who are abused may not concentrate on educational lessons but only think how they and their children may survive the abusive treatment.

The basic purpose of the Women's Resource Center is to provide free referrals to other services available to the women in Siem Reap. Khim Pisey states that this organization is structured to build each woman's strengths and abilities to influence the way they address most of their encountered situations; thus, in turn, the organization may lend a hand in creating a better society for the Cambodian women and children.

Khim Pisey states that her role is to help the women acquire the decision-making processes necessary to empower their own lives that may lead to the desire to achieve an education. She imagines that the women may advance their standing in their respective villages but it may take years. The Resource Center utilizes the Internet Facebook page and a website at outreach@wrccambodia.org to spread the word about their important mission. The awareness of this organization is spread through the women's stories as told to others.

Mekong Creations

The women who sew the quilts for Mekong Creations Non-Profit Organization in Siem Reap live in the poor rural villages where they complete all of the stitching to make the quilts. I visited the Mekong Quilts Outlet in Siem Reap (www.mekong-creations.org) to explore the possibility of women workers' free time to attend school while working in the shop. I talked with the manager, who is a bilingual Cambodian. He told me that the women sit on the floor all day with their knees bent to the side of their body. By the end

of the week, the women have created a new and beautiful quilt, ready for sale for as much as US\$150.00. In the shop, many beautifully designed youth and adult quilts were displayed on make-shift beds, blanket holders, and wall hangings.

Several women work on the same quilt at the same time which allows occasions for conversations to occur and new narratives to develop. The women have the advantage to remain in the villages with their families but also have the disadvantage not to be exposed to opportunities to attend an educational program. These quilters live in the border villages of Vietnam and Cambodia and speak the ethnic languages of that area.

The organization provides steady employment to sustain the family income and provide educational scholarships for the children of the women quilters. In addition, the profit from the sales are applied to the promotion of health and quality of life initiatives as well as community development programs in the remote villages of Svay Rieng Province. Unfortunately, the community development programs exclude educational programs for women.

Joseph's Senior Center for Rural Women

Marilyn and Joseph Chan survived the Pol Pot period and escaped through Thailand to America. They returned to Cambodia to offer spiritual help to suffering Cambodians who wanted to heal from the world's most horrid genocide known in history, the Khmer Rouge, through spiritual healing from oppression. They live in a secluded compound in the suburbs of Phnom Penh which is surrounded by a very high concrete wall and locked double doors much like the castle doors and walls of the middle ages. Joseph and Marilyn Chan have purchased land on which to build Methodist missions in various villages. In addition, their endeavors include the staffing to teach the

local people the skills needed to grow food, raise pigs, and the skills needed to help with construction of furniture and buildings.

They work daily to fulfill their Joseph Chan's dream of building an Adult Center for poor rural village women. The United Methodist Church sponsors the Chans to help educate the village women and develop skills that may lead to new job opportunities for them. These village women stay in the compound for several days during the week and return home to be with their families throughout the weekend. This program has helped some women develop the skills that furthered their opportunities to find work. On the evening that I talked with Tola Seng a group of approximately 40 rural women were present. After their dinner, they danced traditional Cambodian line dances while they sang Christian hymns in Khmer.

The following is a summary of the individual narratives and those narratives of organizations that help the Cambodian women. Some of the preceding narratives have similar themes. For example, Tola Seng, Hon Samnang, and Khim Pisey already have a good start in life. Their proposed worlds appear reachable to them as I understood and interpreted their stories. Heak Hea, Sokhan Ho, Any Sen, Keav Ung, Sopheak Phan, and Sor Sney Mom have ideas about their proposed life world but are unable to empower themselves to accomplish their ideas.

Dr. Judy Ledgerwood and Joseph and Marilyn Chan are successful people. All three of them have helped Cambodian women who lived under the authority of Pol Pot but also those who are the daughters of women who suffered the enslavement. Similar to their actions, Pheara Then and Khim Pisey have plans to continue with the work they perform. The former is helping her children to reach their proposed world and the latter

is helping Cambodian women to educate themselves on good health, hygiene, and how to break the chains of abuse.

In addition, Om Sen, Om Sothea, and Pen Sor, according to their narratives, are not imagining a proposed world different than the one they live in now. Chan Nath continues today and probably tomorrow with chains of troubled memories that do not allow her to move on.

The Sugar N Spice and Women's Resource Center managers introduce women with similar backgrounds to these programs; thus, in turn, the network of women may encourage and support each other. Women who quilt also have the opportunity to tell their narratives to others. Kearney (2002:134) posits that "[e]very narrative is told from a certain point of view and in a certain style of genre."

Summary

Chapter Five contains the narratives of the conversation partners and four managers of resource organizations. Each individual told their own story in their own way. I have integrated theories from Paul Ricoeur, Richard Kearney, Ellen Herda, Martin Heidegger and Jürgen Habermas. I included women's quotes from their narratives to disclose how the philosophies stated in this research are applied to the research participants' lives as well as may apply to the lives of other women. Chapter Six analyzes the data that was presented in the categories of Narrative Identity and Mimeses: Mimesis₁, Mimesis₂, and Mimesis₃ in Chapter Five. The analyses of the data may further bring an understanding of their lives to the reader of this text.

CHAPTER SIX: ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

As a story unfolds, the experience of the reader or listener is influenced by the way events are configured by the plot. Telling and interpreting stories form a circle: the imagination constructs meanings as they are told and as they are understood (Kaplan 1984:118).

Chapter Five contained the selected participants' narratives that included the Mimeses: Mimesis₁, Mimesis₂, and Mimesis₃. In Chapter Six I interpret the data presented in Chapter Five using the critical hermeneutic concepts of Narrative Identity and Mimeses. The analysis of those narratives and mimeses brings more meaning into this study and illuminates a deeper understanding of Cambodian women's identity through their narratives. Shahideh (2004:37) writes "[o]ur interactions are affected by and are driven by our knowledge of self, which is exercised through interpretation."

The Cambodian women who participated in the research and identified themselves in an authentically narrated text that is representative of their own identity are more likely to question their interpretation of themselves in a reflective manner on what they have stated. That may rouse a conscious awareness of their Mimesis₂ as compared with their Mimesis₁ and Mimesis₃. Shahideh (2004:vii) writes "[t]o tell a story is to both remember and create who one is." The new narrative, told in a reflective mode, puts forth the creation of a story. This research focused on women's learning but their suffering from the Khmer Rouge War surfaced through their stories. As I reflected on the effects of war on these selected women, I questioned if men suffer differently or the same.

Ricoeur (1988:186) in *The Wake of Imagination* by Kearney reminds us that “[h]orror attaches to events that must never be forgotten. It constitutes the ultimate ethical motivation for the history of victims.” We recognize the history of victims and continue to hear their stories of suffering so that the events may always remind us of what could happen in the future. Geertz (1973:104) explains that the “[p]roblem of suffering is, paradoxically, not how to avoid suffering but how to suffer, how to make of physical pain, personal loss, worldly defeat, or the helpless contemplation of others’ agony something bearable, supportable—something, as we say, sufferable.”

Ricoeur (1981:398) states that whether “[p]ersonal or collective, memory refers back by definition to the past that continues to be living by virtue of the transmission from generation to generation, this is the source of a resistance of memory to its historiographical treatment.” Though some of the selected rural village and suburban women did not live through the Khmer Rouge Regime’s war, they lived the history through the stories of their parents and other Cambodians.

Geertz (1973:111) posits that the “[w]orld of everyday life, itself, of course, a cultural product, for it is framed in terms of the symbolic conceptions of ‘stubborn fact’ handed down from generation to generation, is the established scene and given object of our actions.” In other words, the options are to accept the world as well as the individual and collective memories as history, overcome the historical objects of the world, or adjust to the past and present life challenges.

Though some of these women participants did not live through the horrors, they live them through the oral histories of their parents; thus, in turn, the stories become part of their histories. Ricoeur (1992:107) posits that we are “[a]lways in community with

others, and the actions of each one of us are intertwined with the actions of everyone else.” Their actions to tell their stories and my actions to listen and interpret them brought us into a kind of community with each other.

Part of the role of education is to build citizens who may become productive members of a society to themselves, their family, and the country in which they live. Cambodian women have been excluded from the political public sphere for centuries and their education has been valued less than the men’s education. In the Cambodian culture, women have not inherited the same quality and quantity of education as men. For these reasons the opportunities to tell their stories and to help them imagine a future as educated women may change their lives and those of their families and country. Evidence of this may be seen in the following narratives.

When these women spoke of their narratives, they did not extricate themselves from the historical process. Ricoeur (1986:281) states that “[w]e are always situated in history.” In telling their histories, these women did not explain who they were but rather they understood who they were. Ricoeur (1986:301) states that “[t]o understand is not to project oneself into the text but to expose oneself to it; it is to receive a self—enlarged by the appropriation of the proposed worlds that interpretation unfolds”. Ricoeur (1986:300) (1991) claims that the “[p]roperly hermeneutical moment arises when the interrogation, transgressing the closure of the text, is carried toward what Gadamer himself calls ‘the matter of the text,’ namely the sort of *world* opened up by it. This can be called the *reference moment*” (italics in original). The moment occurs when the matter of the text is understood by the reader who appropriates its meaning and reaches new understandings.

Each participant who presented herself in front of the story told about her world. In the process of narration, the conversation participants reconfigured her story on the basis of who she was and it is through the recounting and retelling that her identity may change. Kearney (2002:129) writes “[e]very human existence is a life in search of a narrative.” The Cambodian women’s voices reveal their individual narratives; at the same time, these voices belong to a greater and all-encompassing, in-depth story. Paul Ricoeur (1985:260) postulates that

[t]his mediating role of narrative is evident in the transmission of traditions. Traditions are essentially narratives. It is the recountable rather than narrative in the sense of an incursive genre that can be taken as coextensive with the mediation brought about by thinking about history between the horizon of expectation, the transmission of traditions, and the force of the present.

In the following paragraphs, through a critical hermeneutic lens, I present the Mimeses Category in terms of Mimesis₁, the past; then move into Mimesis₃, the future; and finish the presentation with Mimesis₂, the present. Paul Ricoeur (1983:7) states that “[w]e say that things to come *will be*, that things past *were*, and that things present are *passing away*” (italics in original).

Mimesis₁

The present of the past things is the memory (Paul Ricoeur 1984:11).

Ricoeur (1985:298) opines that “[t]he past is more like the order of facts, it is unalterable. The future is the possible. Experience draws a lesson from the past for the future.” We start with the past as our foundation when we tell stories.

The narratives that I gathered revealed some historical Cambodian social traditions that continue to exist in today’s world. These past societal traditions presently create impositions on the ability to gain an education while others create possibilities to

gain an education. Some women accepted the role that their mothers and grandmothers modeled for them during the past while other women unshackled themselves from those burdens to live as they imagined their lives to be lived. The culture reacts to the individual as the individual acts upon the society which is reached through the development of the *ipse*. Benedict (1934:253) stated that

[s]ociety in its full sense is never an entity separable from the individuals who compose it. No individual can arrive even at the threshold of his potentialities without a culture in which he participates. Conversely, no civilization has in it any element which ...is not the contribution of an individual.

The progress of a society depends on the individual contributions which may lead to stabilization of the culture. Cambodian rural village women, when allowed to expand their education, may contribute to the further advancement of their culture.

Each conversation began with an investigation of their past, the Mimesis₁ and the *ipse* of their being. In some conversations, the histories represented past victimization, personally or through victim witness traumas. Some historical memories indicated some reflections on the Pol Pot Regime or the after effects of the devastation that was caused during the Khmer Rouge Regime's dictatorship. Sometimes their powerful stories were told with clarity and other times the participants' eyes appeared to drift into a different sphere.

Kearney (2002:130) posits that "[n]arrativity is what marks, organizes, and clarifies temporal experience; and that every historical process is recognized as such to the degree that it can be recounted. A story is made out of events, and the plot (*mythos*) is what mediates between events and the story" (italics in original). As each participant related her story to me, we became persons of an unfolding life-story which was transformed into an event in the story of a life, hers and mine. "A person's presence in

the world becomes a full narrative when it is re-created” (Kearney 2002:132). The Cambodian women participants in this research re-created their presence in Mimesis₁ in the world through the medium of language. When the women told their stories, their lives became richer than the untold stories of the Other. The re-created narratives became a part of their present memory as the facts and experiences were revisited (Kearney 1999).

In conclusion of Mimesis₁, narratives are “open-ended invitations to ethical and poetic responsiveness” (Kearney 2002:156) and further states that “[e]very act of storytelling involves someone (a teller) telling something (a story) to someone (a listener) about something (a real or imaginary world).” Included in the act of storytelling, ethics play a role because storytelling “[m]akes possible the ethical sharing of a common world with others in that they are invariably a mode of discourse” (Kearney 2002:150). I end this category of Mimeses with the comment on ethics in storytelling.

Mimesis₃

The present of future things is expectation (Paul Ricoeur 1984:11).

Ricoeur (1998:148) states in *Poetics of Imagination* by Kearney that “[i]magination is linked to the productive power of language whose content plays a lessor role than the function of the images.” This linkage produces new meanings to the images that require verbalization. Through the conversations that involved imagination, the means of communication relied on oral language and that brought forth the images of ideas that the women value. Kearney (1998:55) states that “[t]hese poetic images are imaginings in a distinctive sense; not merely fancies and illusions but imaginings that are visible inclusions of the alien in the sight of the familiar.” The common threads of their

imaginings intertwined throughout the research conversations. Sopheak Phan and Hea Hea stated what their lives may be like in five or ten years from now. Their language expression of those images is not the main role of images. In lieu of the importance of the language expression is the importance of the effect of the statement on the person. Once a person states their imagination for a different future, the follow through (effect) takes precedence over the statement.

The text, based on the dialogue, opens up new horizons of meaning onto possible worlds which transcends the limits of their actual world. Gadamer refers to the concept of a fusion of horizons as a range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. Some women imagined their horizon to be different one or two years from the present year, while others imagined their horizon to be different ten years from the present. Others exhibited an imagination that restricts their ability to create a new world for their future lives. Kearney (1998:230) reminds us of Kant's definition of imagination as the faculty of representing a person or thing that is not itself present. Kearney (1998:147) recalls that Ricoeur posited that "[w]e have thought too much in terms of a will which submits and not enough in terms of an imagination which opens up."

For example, Hon Samnang and Tola Seng have images of themselves which open up their horizons and present ideas of how their lives may be. Gadamer refers to the horizon as something that we move into and that moves with us. The horizons change for a person who is moving. Hon Samnang and Tola Seng may or may not reach the point that they imagine themselves in a few years because their horizons may move as they move into a different direction. "The poetic productivity of imagination 'appears'

timeless precisely because it proceeds the chronology of linear time, prefiguring the future in terms of memory and refiguring the past in terms of anticipation” (Kearney 1998:54). The importance of creating possible horizons may supersede the definite direction of the horizon.

The timelessness of imagination continues to move in front of us toward yet another horizon. Imagination liberates the person to enter that free space of imagination and to contemplate different ways of being in the world. Kearney (1998:227) states that “[t]he universality of *u-topos* derives from the fact that it is the possession of no one and the possibility of everyone” (italics in original). As Chann Nath questioned me about my age, she may have been seeking validation that an imagined world exists in front of her that differs from her present world-life. Perhaps she had a fleeting moment of anticipation and hope that she may attend school once again, someday in the future, to regain the education that she lost during the war of the Khmer Rouge.

Kearney (1998:166) tells us that the “[s]ocial imaginary can function as an *ideology* to the extent that it reaffirms a society in its identity by recollecting its foundational symbols” (italics in original). Chann Nath has a collective history with her brothers, sisters, mother, and father but after they were gone, she did not have family members to help her continue to develop her *ipse* within the family structure. Her family traditions, which represent important elements in the Cambodian society, dissipated through the war years and after the war ended while she lived alone. She may remember her past and the faces of her family, thus, in turn, imagine a future time when she may encounter her siblings again. Malinowski (1948:67), as I stated in Chapter Three, believes that religion helps one endure “[s]ituations of emotional stress” by “[o]pening up

escapes from such situations and such impasses that offer no empirical way out except by ritual and belief into the domain of the supernatural”. Chann Nath’s powerful stress overcomes her ability to cope; therefore, she finds solace in the weekly church prayer groups and religious hymns they sing.

What the participants imagined for their future influenced how they saw themselves on the day of the conversation; however, as experiences were reinterpreted and newly imagined futures were explored, their Narrative Identities evolved. Ricoeur (1984:105) reminds us that when “[b]ig Ben in London strikes the current sound of cosmic time for the whole world, each of us are cognizant of the present time but instantaneously anticipate and imagine the next moment in our lives”, the future, Mimesis₃.

In conclusion of Mimesis₃, Kearney (1998:233) questions “[h]ow could we commit ourselves to utopian possibilities of existence, recount the stories of past heroes and victims, or respond to the ethical call of fellow humans, without the imaginative ability to *listen* to other voices from other times and places” (italics in original)? Our freedom of choice allows us to select the human values as expressed in the past stories to transcend through imaginations to become a new life-world story. The communicative actions achieved through the process of choosing lead to social solidarity.

Mimesis₂

The present of present things is direct perception (Ricoeur 1984:11).

The present time, Mimesis₂, represents a temporal state in constant change. Present time represents the tension between the past and the future. Mimesis₂ is the moment framed between the spaces of past experience (unalterable; lived) and the

horizons of expectation (yet to live). As I conversed with the women, I realized that the language usage provided the thesis of being in the present though they reminisced about the past and conceptualized about the future. The power of language creates the existence in the present world and interprets the events of the past world. Our conversations, at times, seemed difficult for some participants because the activities of the mind were stretched in opposite directions, between expectation, memory, and attention to the moment.

The older participants revealed a longer past than the younger ones. On the other hand, the older ones imagined shorter future plans than the younger ones. The women participants live and communicate in the present, Mimesis₂, but the world of the text is in front of them, the future, Mimesis₃. Ruth Benedict (1934:96) states that “[a] person with power is one who knows.” These women have the power because they know what exists now and what may exist but often they do not know how to traverse from the present, Mimesis₂, to the future, Mimesis₃ in order to reach those goals.

Herda (1999:79) affirms, as stated above, “[a]ll three stages of mimesis are creative acts and are interrelated. Although action is present in all three stages, it is most important at mimesis₃.” A person lives in and through the Mimesis₂ stage of time before reaching that important stage of Mimesis₃. Mimesis₂, the present dimension of time, summons forgiveness. It is this present time of forgiveness that bridges the memory and the expectations. The forgiveness in the here and now is created in the story of the past events that gives meaning to the present time.

The forgiveness of faults liberates the person so that she may create new and better possible horizons. Liberation manifests itself as a society that “places the request

for forgiveness and the offering of forgiveness on a plane of equality and reciprocity” (Ricoeur 2004:458). Forgiveness cannot be given unless there is an accusation against someone for something where presumption of guilt exists.

The rural village women who believe their socioeconomic status continues to keep them poor and the government does not care about them, may not be ready to forgive the government while the government may not be ready to forgive their own actions, thus, in turn, deny the depth of the fault. Ricoeur (2004:460) posits “[t]here can, in fact, be forgiveness only where we can accuse someone of something, presume him to be or declare him guilty.” The rural village women’s stories included beliefs that the government may be guilty of not recognizing their economic potential. Care must be taken when the words blame and fault are considered. Kearney (2004:91) allows that “[b]lame refers to evil that arises from within us and for which we are responsible.” Kearney (2004:97) records Ricoeur as he states

[c]athartic narration can help to make the impossible task of pardon that bit more possible. This is why amnesty is never amnesia. The past must be recollected, reimagined, rethought and worked through so that we can identify, *grosso modo*, what is that we are forgiving (italics in original).

Kearney (1999:27) posits in *Narrative and the Ethics of Remembrance* that “[f]orgiveness is a sort of healing of memory, the completion of its mourning period. Delivered from the weight of debt, memory is liberated for great projects. Forgiveness gives memory a future.” In other words, it seems to me that Kearney presents the idea that forgiveness comes from the recollection of why forgiveness needs to be given. Through forgiveness of others, the soul is liberated to move forward in life.

In a scenario of orientation towards reaching new understandings, Habermas in Herda (1999:71) asserts that this “principle of communicative action is characterized by

the validity claims of shared knowledge, trust, and shared values, and comprehensibility are always included in the act of communication.” Habermas (1984:278) also refers to the validity claims as “truth, rightness, and sincerity.” As Heak Hea stated, at this present time, Mimesis₂, the local leaders do what their superiors tell them to do, and so on up the ladder, until the administrator of education makes the decision based on the directions from top leaders. The education system currently is a top-down organization. The creation of new dialogues between the women of the villages and the village leaders may be worth consideration if the dialogue can be sincere, truthful and righteous. They cannot change the past but the future is open for new understandings.

Chandler (1999:13) states that Pol Pot demonstrated Angkor Wat as the symbol that proved Cambodians can do anything. If the leaders of the country applied this “can do” philosophy to educate equally all women who live in the rural villages and in the suburbs of the cities, they may raise the economic, social, and political systems sooner than if they continue on the same educational pathways.

Kearney (2004:88) reminds us that “[i]deology as a symbolic confirmation of the past and the utopia as a symbolic opening towards the future are complementary.” Between them is the here and now which is the starting point of forgiveness, the present, Mimesis₂. The present allows both to explore the hermeneutics of interpretation and an ethics of active forgiveness. To reach deeper understanding and to move forward, both parties may need to attempt to change the present. Herda (1999:88) reminds us that the “[m]ode of being opened up by the world of the text ... reside[s] in one’s imagination.” To block the thinking that encompasses imagination is being closed to the world of the text.

This concludes the interpretation of the Mimeses: Mimesis₁, Mimesis₂, and Mimesis₃ of the rural village and suburban women's stories about their past and present lives as well as their future aspirations.

Habermas, who is a dominant figure in social theory, addresses the importance of open dialogue conversations in *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1987 and 1984) because they could transform "[i]deologically frozen relations of dependence through critique." The Cambodian women's waiting for the government to come to their village may prolong the absence of conversations and perpetuate the frozen relations of dependence. Open dialogue may liberate the masses of rural women to have a voice in pursuit of equality. All but two women, Tola Seng and Hon Samnang, stated that the women have no voice and that the government does not care about rural women's education. Many Cambodian rural women face difficulty to unblock the traditional roles and think in terms of anticipation for a different life. Benedict (1934:254) postulates that "[m]ost people are shaped to the form of their culture because of the enormous malleability of their original endowment. They are plastic to the moulding force of the society into which they are born." In many cultures, including Cambodia, it is difficult to break the plastic mold but may be possible through Mimesis₃, imagination of a different future life-world.

An open dialogue between the government and the rural women, where both are speakers and hearers, may create a new emplotment to reach understanding by both parties. These dialogues may knit together the past and the present traditions and history for women's education and weave the conversations into a cohesive and authentic collective Narrative Identity for the future. As the frequency of the dialogues may

increase, the depth of the findings may occur; thus, in turn, the women may live their lives as Being-in-the-world rather than Being-with-the-world (Heidegger 1996) (1953). The importance of open dialogue needs to be recognized by all civic participants. Ricoeur (1991:107) asserts that we are always in community with others, and the “[a]ctions of each one of us are intertwined with the actions of everyone else.” Through face-to-face conversations between village women and village leaders, the women may challenge their expectations, leaders may come to different understandings, and both may establish new relationships with one another (Gadamer 2004:269; Ricoeur 2004:104; Ricoeur 1981:68).

The women who wanted to change their lives and create a different life-world in which to live talked the most explicitly and most earnestly about their lives. Their conversations reflected a life that stated they knew where they were going with a clear vision in mind. The following themes unfolded from the data analysis: (1) Habermas’ theory (1979:97) of authentic communication to reach understanding, (2) government policies that inhibit women’s empowerment for economic development through education and (3) Heidegger’s theory (1953) of Being-in-the-world rather than Being-with-the-world.

Summary

The text that has emerged through the interpretation of the data has allowed me to appropriate greater understanding of the elements that are needed to take current learning issues from theory to praxis. Ricoeur (1983) posits that the power of the narrative has the ability to determine the beginning, middle, and end of an action. Through Narrative

Identity and Mimeses, the women may bring new life into their culture and move from sameness to selfhood.

Chapter Six contained the analysis of the Data, the Narrative Identities and the Mimeses: Mimesis₁, Mimesis₂, and Mimesis₃. In Chapter Seven, the final Chapter in this dissertation, I present the Summary, Findings, Actions: Current and Suggested, and Implications. The Recommendations for Future Research, my Personal Reflections, and the Conclusion are found at the end of Chapter Seven.

CHAPTER SEVEN: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, ACTIONS: CURRENT AND SUGGESTED, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Chapter Seven, the final chapter in this dissertation includes a Summary, the Findings, Implications, Actions: Current and Suggested, Recommendations for Future Research, Personal Reflections, and the Conclusion. Chapter Seven is finalized with my personal reflections on this research and presents the unveiled opportunity for future explorations that involve rural women's learning.

In Chapter One, I posited these guiding questions: What is your story, and how has it changed over the past years? What in your past needs to be understood in a way that will lead you to imagine a different life today, one that could perhaps be realized through education? Chapter Seven addresses these questions as well as provides a summary of the research which includes the issue at hand, the literature review, the conversation partners, and the theoretical framework.

Research Summary

This document is the result of a study of how women may play a critical role in the development of Cambodia through the educational process. The opportunity for women to have an adequate education program that incorporates and strengthens their capacity to be effective contributors through social and economic growth may increase the human capital of the nation in the local, regional, and global world markets.

The literature review included concepts from anthropological studies and adult literacy, as they related to women's learning. The past and present anthropologists that I presented were Ruth Benedict, Bronislaw Malinowski, Clifford Geertz, David Chandler, and Ellen Herda. The theories that they offered were societal cultural changes, human

needs, cultural symbols, the Cambodian culture, and the critical hermeneutic theory, respectively. In addition to the anthropologists, I cited relevant educational theorists on adult learning and women's education such as Gail Weinstein, Norton Pierce, and Jackie Rosenbloom. For current literacy experts, I cited Malcolm Knowles, Skilton-Sylvester, Judy Ledgerwood, May M. Ebihara, Sondra Stein, and others.

All of the conversation partners lived in the villages or suburbs of Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. Their ages ranged from 20 years of age to 55 years of age and their education levels ranged from illiterate to literate. Dr. Judy Ledgerwood, the anthropologist conversation partner, offered insightful information into the world of the Cambodian women that would have taken a long time to gather by myself. Marilyn and Joseph Chan, missionary conversation partners, offered an understanding and appreciation of what the women's stance was before the war, what happened during the war, and what the women's current status in education reveals about the educational administrators' role in promoting women as human capital for the country.

Reflections on the theoretical categories and new interpretations to the research issue at hand were produced through the medium of everyday non-hermeneutic language that surfaced throughout the conversations and readings. The theoretical framework for this research included the two concepts of Narrative Identity and Mimeses. Both Richard Kearney and Paul Ricoeur expounded on Narrative Identity in their works. One of the most profound statements on Narrative Identity that influenced my thinking on this topic was by Ricoeur (1984:28) which says "[w]e have no idea of what a culture would be where no one any longer knew what it meant to narrate things." I included Ricoeur's idea on Narrative Identity as two parts: the *Idem* and the *Iipse*; one is the permanent state

and the other is the alterable state, respectively. Ricoeur explained that narratives clothe temporal times of the past, the present, and the future which are Mimesis₁, Mimesis₂, and Mimesis₃. Each Mimesis is a plot that requires emplotment to bring it together to make a whole story.

Narrative Identity and Mimeses portray the building blocks for the findings and implications in this study. In referencing the idea of Mimesis₃, Kearney (1998:170) posits that “[e]very poetics of imagining serves to supplement the work of imagination itself – a work in perpetual process, which began with the birth of humankind and will not cease until we cease.” For example, people create an image of what they visualize themselves to become. That image becomes a reality through the person’s actions. The process begins again with a visualization of what they may become. The process of this movement is poetry in motion. It is perpetual and has been since the beginning of time. Each development in the visualization process places the person in a different status, one that is in continual motion.

Findings

The conversations with research participants became a text that was analyzed in light of their Narrative Identities and Mimeses: Mimesis₁, Mimesis₂, and Mimesis₃, their history, their lives in the present life-world, and their imagination. The participants posited that the government leaders do not care about them because they are poor farmers. The following research based findings resulted from the conversations with participants: (1) rural village and suburban women play a minor role in the opportunities to participate in current economic development, (2) there is an absence of trained

educators with literacy based curriculum knowledge, and (3) authentic communications are frozen between government leaders and the rural village and suburban women.

There are no community and small group meetings that may initiate discourses about rural village women's education. If these identified meetings materialize, the authentic conversations must aim at reaching understanding. As I stated earlier, Habermas' claims for communicative action, according to Herda (1999:71) are "[c]haracterized by comprehensibility, shared knowledge, trust and shared values, is 'always already' implicitly raised in action oriented to reaching understanding." This type of communication may open the way for genuine relationships and trust between the government and the rural women.

Almost Non-existent Education

The past educational life for rural Cambodian women has been ignored by the educational leaders since the reign of the Khmer Rouge. Politics in small villages represent one of several actions that prohibit rural women from achieving an education. The village leader implements education programs as directed by the educational administrator. Heak Hea is discouraged from learning because she lives in a village of 1500 people and "[t]here are only two female teachers" for the whole village. She also stated that she believes the government does not care about the rural farmers, referring to the farmers as poor people.

Curriculum

A government policy may provide an educational program for rural village and suburban women that includes both educated and trained instructors, knowledgeable in the adult methodology (andragogy). Knowles, the father of andragogy, posited that

adults possessed interests and abilities that were different from those of children. To educate women, the curriculum is adjusted around the students' needs and interests. Adults are inspired by qualitative learning where the instructor facilitates the learning and the students own the class authority. In this manner, the Cambodian women learners may accept the responsibility in the learning process with the instructor. Knowles [2011:38-39 (1973)] presents a summary of Eduard C. Lindeman's theory in five points. He states that

[a]dults learn from experiences of needs and interests; their learning is life-centered appropriate to their life situation; adhered to the analysis of their experiences; self-directed with teacher engagement for mutual inquiry; and provided with different style, time, place and pace of learning.

Adults have greater volume and different quality of experiences from that of youth. They come ready to learn so that they will be able to cope more effectively with real-life situations. The five points, if adhered to, help the adult student become self-actualizing, a philosophy developed by Maslow. This direction of real-life style allows the learner to gain understandings of themselves; and skills, values, and attitudes. Andragogy may embrace changes in values and attitudes which are rooted in humanistic philosophy and are always open to change.

The andragogy programs center on furthering individuals' improvement in the life skills and improvement in society such as helping disadvantaged groups to raise their socio-economic positions (societal goals). However, Knowles states that many adults have deeply held internal images that may limit changes in ways of thinking and acting which may hamper their ability to overcome situations. If rural women are able to overcome the obstacles in their lives that limit their thinking and acting, their fusion of horizons may change.

Dr. Judy Ledgerwood cited the fact that in Phnom Penh there has been an “[e]xplosion for availability of books in the past five years. There are a few reading programs that take mobile (book mobiles) out to rural areas, and a mobile library and kids come there to read, but it is very limited.” This reading material does not reach the rural women because there are no instructors to teach literacy programs to women who cannot read or recite the written sounds of the Khmer texts. Previous tests have proven that knowledge and skills in one language transfer to another language. Learning for the Khmer rural women is more difficult because they lack the knowledge of their first language.

Women’s Minor Role in the Current Economy

Tola Seng stated that the rural women are not paid the same hourly wage as the men who do the same job; “[w]oman earns \$3.00 but a man earns \$5.00 for the same job”. In addition, Dr. Ledgerwood stated that “[m]any factory women workers are fired at the early age of 25.” She also stated that “[p]eople who live in the villages are realizing that their daughters have more opportunities to be hired in the cities if they stay in school longer.” Rural village women who sell food items at roadside stands barely make enough money for their families and to replant the seeds for next year. They cannot leave their children unattended, so they sit in their picnic houses and wait for neighbors or possible passing tourists to buy their produce. The leaders of the country devalue women’s role as human capital development by gender discrimination in wages, age discrimination on job sites and by not developing and enforcing an educational attendance policy for rural women.

Implications

If the government agencies do not implement policies of open communications for more adult education programs for women, their lives may remain the same for their future life-world as their lives are today, with no future paradigm shift. Currently, the rural village and suburban women are not included in conferences where decision-making policies occur that influence their education programs. Thinking of different ways that women may be involved in the implementation of policies may open fusions of horizons for them and may start improving their lives.

Once the communications are opened, the village and urban women may gain further knowledge and understanding of where they inhabit the political system and public spaces. When the doors between the women learners and the educators open, the women's future lives may change. Clarity in communications is necessary both to avoid an emplotment in which communications cease and to avert a setback due to interpretations of unfulfilled expectations. The perpetuating cycles of rural women not being able to contribute to the global economics of the country, not allowing women to become empowered for their own lives and perpetuating illiteracy may tie the women to the oxen yolk for many future years.

Against the background of previous setbacks in education and the rapid pace at which the world is progressing, it appears that the educational administrators would want to take steps to secure educational advancements for rural women so that the economic deficit does not become greater. If the rural women continue to be denied the right to participate in human capital development, they may fall further behind other women in the country; and thus, in turn, the country may fall further behind other developing

countries. To increase the rural women's learning through education is to help the women compete on a global scale.

A paradigm shift in the government's role for women's education and women's role in acquiring more self-governing power may need to occur before successful communications actualize. The paradigm shift must include acknowledgement of the value of village women's ability to contribute to the economic status of the country by learning through education.

Actions

Current Actions

P.E.O. International Scholarships

Currently, Dr. Ledgerwood and I are coordinating our efforts to help a Cambodian woman who teaches at the University of Phnom Penh to apply for an international scholarship to attend NIU for her doctorate in languages. Her studies may be made possible through a P.E.O. International Peace Scholarship that helps women from developing countries to conduct research at a university in the United States. They arrive with the agreement that they will return to their native country at the conclusion of their doctorate degree and help further develop that country through their new knowledge and experiences.

In addition, Chapter RR, P.E.O. is sponsoring a Cambodian female student enrolled at USF for a scholarship to earn her Master's Degree in International and Multicultural Education with a Concentration on Human Rights. She plans to return to Cambodia after she earns her master's degree in education to participate in the social, economic, and political venues in order to help other women.

Girls Be Ambitious

The American Assistance for Cambodia started a program called Girls Be Ambitious. Parents are paid approximately \$10 a month to keep their daughters in school. A similar approach to this philosophy has been used effectively in Mexico, Ghana and other countries around the world.

10 x 10: The Girls Education Project

A program named *10 X 10: The Girls Education Project* acts on a global scale. Their campaign raises awareness about the power of women and converting that power into action which can change the world by educating women. They partner with forward-thinking nonprofits, celebrities, policy leaders, corporations and concerned citizens to build a global movement to demand equal opportunity for women. They deliver a message that to educate women is to drastically improve the lives of entire communities. As of 2010, the *10 X 10* project improved the living circumstances for women in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Haiti, Nigeria, Egypt, and India through education.

Suggested Actions

Town Hall Meetings and Round Table Talks

A proposed action for the rural women in Cambodia may include town hall meetings with the village leaders where everyone has an equal voice to reach authentic understanding. The bottom-up development meetings may help women imagine new ways of being in the world and identify pathways to reach their new horizons. To choose other pathways through the *ipse* of their being is to deviate from the norm and choose the road less travelled by their mothers and grandmothers. Herda (2010:135) states that

[i]f enough people agree on what to do, then development will take place. Agreement is something that makes our work in development easier, but agreements only have staying power if a group of people change who they believe they are and hold on to what they believe they can do, both on a personal and communal level. Each person needs to hold to the belief that he or she can inhabit a proposed world.

The creation of round-table talks in an information gathering and sharing meeting may provide a network for women with a shared history. In *Questioning Ethics: Contemporary Debates in Philosophy*, Ricoeur (1999:16) postulates that “[t]estimony would be a way of bringing memory and imagination together.” These meetings may create excitable memories for the rural women because the outcome of the meetings represents progress and changes that may bring happiness into their lives. Herda (2010:139) reminds us that “[w]hen there are new things to talk about, and men and women dare to imagine, lives can change for the better.” This possible change and betterment for happiness may lighten their mental and spiritual burdens. I cite the story of Chann Nath, Kim Ken, and many unknown other women who suffer from the same causes.

Government

To combat the states of anxiety and stress that the rural women may experience, the government may act to implement social services in the rural areas that may enable women to learn in an educational setting. In a scenario between the women and the director of education, better channels of communication may open from on-going arranged meetings in the villages. It was clear to me from talking with Keav Ung (pseudonym) that government-led improvements for training educators would lead to more sustainability to the education process. The Cambodian leadership that focuses on meaningful collective action may propel the women into a new life-world. In this new

life-world, the rural women may need on-going government support until they have successfully advanced in their life-changes.

Recommendations for Future Research

During my research I experienced how critical hermeneutic theory transitions from text to action. This research became the open text to be continued for further development. Added research may include an investigation in the following areas:

1. How to implement developed literacy curriculum with andragogy theory of instructions in the rural villages and suburbs. Which methods may be used to evaluate the articulation of the various developed literacy curricula.
2. What are the government policies for rural village and suburban women's educational attendance. How do the current policies affect the women's economic status. Which paradigm shifts in women's education are attainable. Are the central policies and the lower-level policies synchronized.
3. How and where will training of team-teaching be developed and tested. What length of time may be required to achieve accurate results of the research. How many teachers and which population will participate. What will be the criteria in the study. Will a controlled group or a random sampling be more valuable in the study.
4. Investigate ways that Cambodian women and men suffer differently from the effects of war. How will you gain information from psychiatrists in various countries in the world including Cambodia. Explore the study of the men and women through both qualitative and quantitative methods of research.

Personal Reflections

Four central tasks of narrative are stated: (i) to realize our debt to the historical past; (ii) to respect rival claims of memory and forgetfulness; (iii) to cultivate a notion of self-identity; and (iv) to persuade and evaluate action. All four, as Ricoeur suggests, lead ultimately to a decisive hermeneutic threshold where a poetics of narrative converses with an ethics of responsibility. (Kearney 2004:99)

As a result of my research, I increased my knowledge about the women's learning programs in Cambodia and other parts of the world which enriched my foundation that I had gained through theoretical studies at the university. I found a wide disparity between

women who are literate and women who are illiterate because of their low economic status. Their narratives exposed the focus on their daily routines for food and on their children's education rather than on their own. Some women of the rural villages revealed that they have little hope of being rescued from the poverty cycle of their current lives; women continue to suffer the aftermath of the Pol Pot regime; and the support and nurturing programs for women need improvement.

When I began this study, I believed that I was entering an unknown world, a black hole on Earth that contained undisclosed areas of active land mines. In fact, travelling to Cambodia created an uncertainty yet strangely euphoric. At the beginning, this research presented significant challenges for me, as a citizen in the United States, who was studying a different culture in Southeast Asia, a place on the other side of the world, and one of which I had little knowledge. On my arrival in Cambodia in 1996, I was timid but I moved forward and created new fusions of horizons each time I met and talked with another Cambodian.

I am grateful to the rural Cambodian women's participation in the research and for sharing their experiences and their interpretation of their history with me. Their truthfulness about their reflections on the ways history and experiences have influenced their lives impressed me. I was privileged to be a part of their lives, even if it were for only one day.

As my doctoral studies progressed to 2011, the research carried me on an amazing international journey that has enriched my education beyond my youthful dreams. My horizons changed as I changed and my mind was opened to new ways of interpreting the

world. The conversations with the women added a wealth of knowledge and experience that I could not have gained from traditional research methods.

A deep understanding of my research relates to the inner strength and resiliency of the Khmer spirit demonstrated by those Cambodian women who continue to hope for a better world, though they continue to face drawbacks such as gender and socioeconomic biases. Kearney (1998:147) posits that the adoption of

[h]ermeneutics — as the ‘art of deciphering indirect meanings’ — acknowledges the *symbolizing* power of imagination. This power, to transform given meanings into new ones, enables one to construe the future as the ‘possible theater of my liberty’, as a horizon of hope (*italics in original*).

Hope is the indispensable component to this research, for without it, the researcher and the participants may have encountered thoughts and feelings that appeared too alarming to grapple. Hermeneutics presents a lens through which education may change women’s lives and help them re-imagine their future life-world. I have arrived at another plateau, but not a final plateau, for there are other knowledge and experiences for me to gain about Cambodian women’s learning.

I believe this topic has contributed to my knowledge and understanding of village and rural women’s education or lack of in many countries of the world which includes Cambodia, especially through the protocol of participatory hermeneutic inquiry. I hope that this dissertation brought different ways of thinking about education that will improve the quality of life for women in many marginalized countries. May this topic and findings offer understandings for others who wish to further their research on the learning processes of Cambodian rural women’s learning.

Conclusion

This research may be relevant to the improvement of education and quality of life for rural village and suburban women in Cambodia. I hope the dissertation shows potential to bring fresh and constructive perspectives to the history, theory, and practice of formal and informal education in other developing nations, especially those with similar history and culture as Cambodia. Research is necessary to improve education and the relation among education, social opportunities, and civic and personal lives. I have presented some practical challenges that may affect positive changes for a more just and prosperous society for human capital development progress. The critical hermeneutic theory provided a way to interpret the texts through analysis based on Narrative Identity and Mimeses. The interpretations were reasoned with consideration for justice, ethical power, relations, imagination, and action.

I conducted this research with and for others in a just institution. Ricoeur (1992:72) reminds the readers in “*One Self As Another*” that the definition of “ethical intention” is “*aiming for the good life with and for others, in just institutions*” (italics in original). This hermeneutic interpretation may be thought of as an antidote to both objectivism, something that is out there waiting to be found by someone, and relativism, something that might be in Europe but different in China and other countries, and as a theory that may be applied differently.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Table 2 *Traces of Cambodian History*

Historical Time Line (Criddle and Mam 1987:287–289)	
Period of Time	Event
1st Century A.D.	Dawn of known Cambodian History; India influences tribal culture
8th Century	Ancient Khmer Kingdom with god-kings
9th–14th Century	Angkor Wat built in Siem Reap; Kingdom reaches greatest size
15th Century	Thailand Conquers part of Khmer Kingdom
16th–18th Century	Ancient Kingdom declines; history is forgotten
1864	Cambodia becomes French Protectorate
Late 1800's	Angkor Wat rediscovered–history made known
20th Century	Sihanouk appointed puppet king by France; Japan occupies Cambodia 1941–1945 WWII
1945–1953	Sihanouk gathers world pressure for freedom From France
1954	Cambodia gains independence from France; Vietnamese defeat French; French leave; Vietnam divides into North and South
1955	Sihanouk becomes Prince and President
1970	Sihanouk replaced in coup; Khmer Republic established under General Lon Nol
Spring 1975	Khmer Rouge defeats Khmer Republic; citizens driven from cities; Communist rule in Laos and Vietnam
July 1975	Wet Monsoon "Killing Time" for royalty, top government, professional. and business men; food rations cut; widespread hunger
October 1975	Angka's private communique: former military and government leaders are expendable after fall harvests

January 1976	Communique: 1 million men...are enough. Prisoners of war (those expelled from cities)...dispose of as (you) please
July 1976	Wet Monsoon "Killing Time" for lesser military, government men, educated and skilled
July 1977	Wet Monsoon "Killing Time" for families of men already killed
July 1978	Wet Monsoon "Killing Time" for anyone who might threaten regime, e.g., Vietnamese–Cambodians
Fall 1978	Khmer Rouge war with Vietnam intensifies; repressive measures increase; many killed or moved
January 7, 1979	Vietnam "liberates" Cambodia

Source: *To Destroy You Is No Loss; The Odyssey of a Cambodian Family* (Criddle and Mam 1987)

Appendix B: Letter of Invitation

Sample Letter of Invitation

Date:

Participant's Name

Participant's Occupation

Address

Dear (Name of Participant),

I am a doctoral student at the University of San Francisco, California, USA, in the Organization and Leadership Program. I am conducting my dissertation research on the adult women's learning in the Mondulkiri, Rattanakiri, and Stung Treng provinces of Cambodia.

My research is grounded in interpretative theory and has a participatory orientation. In place of formal interviews or surveys, I engage the participants in conversations using guiding questions directed toward their past experiences and their future hopes. Upon our approval, the conversations are audio and/or video recorded and then transcribed. You may request the recording device be turned off at any time during our conversation. I will give you a copy of the transcript for your review. When you receive it, you may add, delete or change any of the transcribed text. After you approve it, I will analyze the data. Please note that participation in this research, including all data collected, the names of individuals, and any affiliations is not confidential. Before participating in the research you will be required to sign a consent form.

I am especially interested in exploring the existing learning programs and why or why not adult women attend. Some of the concepts related to this study are the ideas of identity through past and present stories as well as stories about the future. The following questions may be used to guide the conversation:

1. How many years have you attended the programs? How old are your books?
2. How do you divide your time between your personal learning and household chores?
3. Tell me how you see your identity as related to other women in your village.
4. Tell me how your identity has changed in the past 5 years. In the past 10 years.
5. How would you change that identity in the next 5 years? In the next 10 years?
6. What major setbacks have you experienced that negated the chance to learn?
7. Tell me a story (imagine) how women could help one another to raise their standard of living?

As a retired educator and a life-long adult learner, I am interested in discovering why some adult women attend or do not attend an educational program. More

specifically, I am interested in the group dynamics of the educational program for adult women in the Cambodian villages.

If you are willing to participate in this research, or if you have questions about this study, please feel free to discuss it with me. You can reach me through my email address at asheeley@hotmail.com or by personal contact.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Alvina Sheeley
Research Doctoral Student
University of San Francisco
School of Education
Organization and Leadership Program
707-425-5181

Appendix C: IRBPHS Letter of Approval

March 17, 2011

Dear Ms. Sheeley:

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your request for human subjects approval regarding your study.

Your application has been approved by the committee (IRBPHS #11-020). Please note the following:

1. Approval expires twelve (12) months from the dated noted above. At that time, if you are still in collecting data from human subjects, you must file a renewal application.
2. Any modifications to the research protocol or changes in instrumentation (including wording of items) must be communicated to the IRBPHS. Re-submission of an application may be required at that time.
3. Any adverse reactions or complications on the part of participants must be reported (in writing) to the IRBPHS within ten (10) working days.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRBPHS at (415) 422-6091.

On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success in your research.

Sincerely,

Terence Patterson, EdD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

IRBPHS - University of San Francisco
Counseling Psychology Department
Education Building - Room 017
2130 Fulton Street
San Francisco, CA 94117-1080
(415) 422-6091 (Message)
(415) 422-5528 (Fax)
irbphs@usfca.edu

<http://www.usfca.edu/soe/students/irbphs/>

Appendix D: Confirmation Letter

Sample Confirmation Letter

Date

Participant's name

Participant's Organization

Participant's Address

Dear (Participant's name)

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me about the research I am conducting for my doctoral dissertation. I look forward to hearing the interpretations and insights of your social world as we converse about the research topic.

This letter confirms our meeting on **Day, Month ##** at **Time**. Our meeting place will be at **Place** as we have agreed. If you prefer to meet at a different location or different time, please feel free to contact me.

I will be recording our conversation through audio and video devices, transcribing it into a written text, and providing you with a copy of the transcripts for your review. With your approval, I will take your photograph. You may add, delete, or change portions of the transcripts as you deem appropriate after you have reviewed and reflected upon them. Our conversations are an important element in my research. Please take notice that all of the data for this research project, including your name, are not confidential. Additionally, I may use your name in my dissertation and subsequent publications.

I appreciate your contributions to this research and look forward to discussing my topic with you.

Sincerely,

Alvina Sheeley
Research Doctoral Student
University of San Francisco
School of Education
Organization and Leadership Program
asheeley@hotmail.com
707-425-5181

Appendix E: Thank You Letter

Sample Thank You Letter

Date

Dear (Participant's name)

Thank you for speaking with me on ##### and exchanging your thoughts and insights about women's adult learning and how this applies to your life both personally and collectively with your peers.

I am including a copy of the transcript of our research conversation for our review. The transcript is a very important piece of my research. Kindly review the transcript for accuracy and make any notations on the transcript including changes, deletions, or additions you would like to make. I will get in touch with you within this week to discuss your comments and any alterations to the transcript. Once the review and editing process of the transcript has been finished, and upon your approval, I will use the revised transcript for my data analysis.

Again, thank you for participating in my research study. Your unique perspective about this topic is a valuable contribution to the research material I have collected.

Sincerely,

Alvina Sheeley
Research Doctorate Student
University of San Francisco
School of Education
Organization & Leadership Program
asheeley@hotmail.com
707-425-5181

Appendix F: Pilot Project Transcription

*Conversation with Kim Ken
November 19, 2010
Fairfield-Suisun County Library*

Narrative: Memisis₁ (Gray), Memisis₂ (Green), Memisis₃ (Yellow)

Alvina Sheeley: Will you tell me about some difficult moments you faced during the Pol Pot times?

Kim Ken: Pol Pot, I think I was 10 or 12 years old. They let me work. They separate me from my parent. Then I have to go work. They don't let me school or everything. Or how work hard and no food. Sometime, I don't have no food for a whole week. If I make something mistake, they can kill me and my whole family.

AS: Did they ever confront you to try to threaten you that they were going to kill you? Can you tell me about that?

KK: Yep. They just don't let you work, work, work, work, work, work. Sometimes they give you food a little bit. Sometimes they say don't have no food and then you have no food for a whole week, a long time. Then a lot of people die with no food, sickness, everything you know. It is kind of like what I am saying. You do something wrong, they kill your whole family, kind like a movie they say if you have food, grass, then you have to put on your roof, something like that. They don't keep you and your family too.

AS: Did you have to work all day, like when the sun came up until the sun went down?

KK: I have to wake up like 2 o'clock in the morning go to work until sundown. Sometime I work at nighttime too. We don't have much sleep. They work daytime and nighttime whatever. They don't give you no food. Sometime, my eye, at the nighttime by five or six o'clock my eye can't see, I am blind. And they still let me work too.

AS: Were you blind from being in the field all day or were your eyes really going bad, internally?

KK: The daytime I am OK only nighttime I can't see nothing.

AS: Because you did not have lights in the fields or you couldn't see?

KK: Even if they have light, I don't see anything. I don't know what is going on. Now, I am OK, I still seeing daytime and nighttime.

AS: When you were in the fields, can you tell me if you were encountered by one of Pol Pot's bad people?

KK: No, just to let you work. If you don't listen to them and you don't want to work, you get in trouble. And you cannot find your own food. If you find something, you have to hide it and eat. If they find you hiding something and you eat the food, you get in trouble. The first time, they hit you, dragging you, they don't want you to have the food that you find yourself. Are you hungry you steal something, the vegetable thing, they cannot kill you.

AS: Did you steal something?

KK: Sometimes, I stole something. I don't get caught, sometimes I steal. It is dangerous.

AS: Did you steal at night or during the day?

KK: No, I am not really stealing. I find my own food in the field, some fish, some crop, like that, but I hiding, I don't let them caught me. But I am not going to steal some.

AS: There is a difference, isn't there, between stealing and taking what is out in the field? Is the danger that you endured an everyday occurrence?

KK: One day I got in trouble too. I thought that place my house, you know, but my mom not there. I think all the plant is my mom they planted. Then my mom go work far away from the house and I separated from my mother, my brother, my sister, and then one day I am so hungry and I walk by my old house and then I saw sugar cane. I thought that one is my mom planting, right? Then I go get it and I eat it and they caught me. Then I got in big trouble. They let me work 24 hours a day and don't give me any food and when they have a little break, they keep a handcuff on my leg. They don't let me go anywhere for week.

AS: How many weeks?

KK: For whole week.

AS: Did they cuff two legs together or one leg to something?

KK: Just one leg. And sometimes they put the red ant on all me and let the ants beat me all over my body.

AS: How many times did they beat you?

KK: Oh, it is a lot. They all over my body all got beated by ants. All kinds like they call grass.

AS: Did this happen to you often?

KK: No, that one time that I do that. They say that everything is for everybody not just for me. Even my mother plant that thing, it still for everybody, not just for me. For the family, you know or the company, they put everything together, and that time they don't spend no money.

AS: How did they see you eating the sugar cane?

KK: I don't hiding because I thought my mother plant it and I am so hungry and then just go to the farm I think the field where they planted it rice. And they tell me go there for birds they come to eat the rice. And they tell me go scare the birds. One day they put me down and then I go every morning and I scare the birds. They bang, bang, bang, make the birds fly away, screaming and yelling.

AS: Did you scare the birds with a pot and a pan.

KK: Yes, and screaming and yelling.

AS: Was this punishment?

KK: No, just to scare the birds. The birds come to the farm and eat the rice. And then that time that road, they go there and they fight my old house. And then I saw Oh, the sugar cane. That's my mother plant that and then I go cut it. I give it to my friend too. Then, we all got caught. All my friend blame me. Because you, that's right, we got caught. Because you.

AS: Did they beat all of you or just you?

KK: They beat all of us. All three people.

AS: Did they take you down, fix your wounds, after that and put some medicine on you?

KK: No, they did not have medicine. They just beat you with a stick and leave me out in the cold and in the sun and work hard.

AS: And they handcuffed your ankle. What do they handcuff you to?

KK: A piece of wood and then they handcuff you and you stuck on there. And you have to sit there all day and all night. It is not all day and all night. When it time to go to work, they let you go work. Then you come back, they handcuff you right there. You can't go anywhere. You can stay outside, the cold, the rain, hot.

AS: They did that to you because you got the sugar cane or was it something else?

KK: Just the sugar cane.

AS: They beat you and put the handcuff on you and left you out there?

KK: Un hum.

AS: Did you know which one of those guys did it?

KK: Yea, those people.

AS: When Pol pot was in the country, how do you understand what happened? Can you tell me what you think happened. A lot of people have something that they think happened but what do you think?

KK: I don't know. That time, I kinda small. But the first time, my parents is a farmers. Then after that, I don't know what is going on. Kind of like a big war and we running around. Then after that, they say, OK, put everything together, food, everything, and stuff money, no spend money, no nothing, just put all vegetables, food, whatever you have to put together, even the gold, they take the gold away from you. They say that you don't need wear that. And the clothes you have, they take away. They let you wear all black.

AS: When you went out to the country, did you have only the clothes?

KK: Kinda like, I have my place out there. You don't run away from the place, the house. We run away and then we come back to the place. When the Pol Pot coming, we still there. We don't. Whatever we have, it still there. The cow, the plow, everything, They take it away. They say to put everything together. And they let you work.

AS: Was your family famers - cows, land? What happened to the land?

KK: They take away. They put all together. Like, your land is my land. Your property is my property, like that. I have to work, do whatever they want, do whatever they want you to do.

AS: You were quite young then, like 10. Do you remember what it was like before Pol Pot came in?

KK: Before Pol Pot come in, just everything OK. My mother, she work on a farm. That time, my mother, she work hard because my father always got drunk. Oh, he go drink, come home, and fighting with mother. I start to work, like I am 7 or 8 years old helping my mother. I don't go to school, and my brother too. And we don't go school because my mother, she kinda have not too much money because she work by herself and we all the kids. And my father, he don't care, he go have a good time with his friends, get drunk, come home, fighting. That is why I have to help my mom work. Right after that, we have like a war. Like I told you, we running and my mom digging the hole under the ground and we have to go in that hole every time that the plane thing come. And then we have to go in that hole and hiding in that hole and have make food and go eat in that hole

and when it is quiet we go back into the house. And then after when the war is gone, the Pol Pot coming. That's right, we have to put everything together, take away everything.

AS: Thinking now that is all in the past, thinking now of the future, what do you think what the possibilities are for a new life for Cambodians in Cambodia?

KK: I don't know because right now I don't go back I just left there in 1979 until now I never go back. I don't know what is going on.

AS: Without knowing what is going on, what would you imagine or wish for Cambodians in Cambodia?

KK: I wish to be happy, be normal, no trading, find some food by their own, they have to work. I just wish make them happy.

AS: How can that happen?

KK: I don't know what I can do. That is what I wish.

AS: I understand that you can't do that for them. They are in Cambodia and you are here. It has to be up to them but how do you think they can be happy? What do you think they can be back to do what they used to do. How can they do that?

KK: They have to work hard, no more fighting, Cambodian is different than here. The higher people, the government people, they always care about themselves. They don't care about the rest of the people, the poor, just rip off from the poor people. A lot of people they don't have food, no land, they can't do anything. Then the government don't care.

AS: What can move the government to do something for the people?

KK: I don't know. Maybe the government has to think and make all things work. Maybe the change the president or something they make things better. They care about more people.

AS: Cambodian women in Cambodia have the suffering that those women have endured as a mother of a family who can't afford to put food on the table for the children and women who are by themselves with no children - what do you think is going to happen to those Cambodian women?

KK: I really don't know. They have to work. But the most people right now, they don't have land, no property, they can't do anything. I don't know too. Most people I know, my family out there too, my cousin, my aunt, my uncle, they poor. They come to Thailand, they can't come over here too, and then they go back to Cambodia, they have no land, no property, those people over there, they take them all.

AS: How do you see your cousins' future life in Cambodia?

KK: I don't know. I wish the government can see that and they give them some property, some land, and they can plant something and make food.

AS: I read recently that Hillary Clinton who is high up in our government here in the United States, went to Cambodia. She spoke to the prime minister, Hun Sen, and questioned all of the corruption that is there in the country and the treatment of women. And there is another woman there named Mu Sochua and she has spoken out about the treatment that women in Cambodia are receiving. What do you think the women can do to stop the government from treating them like they do? They don't have jobs, they don't have money, they can't afford money for their children to give food for them. Sometimes they get rid of their children by selling them. What do you think can happen to change that?

KK: I think everybody get up and speaking and everybody making a strike, talking. They might be thinking how to. You want to help but you don't want to open your mouth, and you kinda scared. Nobody can know.

AS: What can happen to these women who are afraid to open their mouths? What can help them to not be afraid to speak?

KK: I think they have somebody they want to listen, go out there, and tell them, explain to them and don't be scared. But I think they are scared because if you open our mouth something, they can kill them or something. That is why they are scared.

AS: Even today, after all these days after Pol Pot, they are still afraid.

KK: They still afraid to speak. I think they are still afraid. It's over here, when you vote for the president every four years, you have to vote for a new president, you pick a new president. This here, you don't scared anything, you can pick whatever you like, right? Who you like. Over there, if you pick like that, you be gone. That is why, from now on, it is only Hun Sen to be president, nobody else. Until now, something happens.

AS: That would change the politics. If you can't vote for who you want and you don't want to destroy him, how can the women gather together and make a voice that Hun Sen will listen.

KK: Yes, I think. I don't know how they can do that. most people out there get scared. The poor people are scared more. Men have somebody else that tries to hurt them. They open their mouths and speak up and tell them what is going on and what you need, more people you know like a strike or something like that. But I think nobody can help them do that. They still scared.

AS: I saw a woman on the internet, Somaly Mam. She was one of the girls that was sold into the brothel because she didn't have a father, and her mother didn't have any money.

So she sold her into the brothel where she became a prostitute but she escaped. Now she has helped young girls get away from there. She started a school in Cambodia for these young girls where they have food.

KK: I watched that on TV too. That is sad. It make me cry.

AS: She is doing a lot of good work. What do you think can happen with her help, her work? What more can she do?

KK: I don't know. I really don't know what they can do. scared. You don't know what they do. You don't know what they charge you. You have to have money to give them. If you don't have money, you can do nothing. These poor people kinda

AS: Let's say you go back in 2020, what would your cousins' lives be like?

KK: The first time, they call me they need money or something. Sometime I send them money. The first time I give them more money, I think I give them more money. They buy some land, have some work but I don't have enough money to give them more so just give them a couple \$100, they can't do nothing, just buy food and later on, they ask me again and again. Now I just tell them I don't have no money, I work hard here and other there, can buy some food for free, find some food for free. You don't need to pay for everything for rent. You have your own place. I tried to help them but I can't help them all. They all poor.

Appendix F: Research Conversation Transcription

Location: Sunset Donut Shop in the Parking Lot in Kim's new Acura

Date: November 23, 2010

Time: 2:00 PM to 2:50 PM

The purpose of the second conversation was to reach an understanding of the meaning of some parts of the text.

AS: Kim, I think that I need a deeper explanation of what you meant when you said that "you have to put on your roof, something like that."

KK: I mean you have to put on your root. You know, when you pull the grass, you pull the root. That is like they won't kill the baby. But, if the baby grows to be like the parent, they kill the mother and the baby. The baby grow up to be like you, they kill you and the baby.

AS: I understand now. Thanks. When you said that they put the red ant on all me and the ants beat me all over my body, I didn't understand the verb beat.

KK: They beat you. (She picks at her face.)

AS: I understand now, the ants ate you. Later, you said that you got eaten by the ants. All kinds like they call grass. What you mean by grass?

KK: You know, like on the skin. The skin is red.

AS: Oh, I see. You meant rash. The ants bit your skin and you broke out in a rash. Something else that I did not understand is when you said "One day they put me down and then go every morning and I scare the birds." What does it mean to put you down?

KK: They put in the field to work. They put two or three girls in the field.

AS: Shortly after that we talked about your going back to Cambodia.

KK: I will go visit but I don't go back to Cambodia to live.

AS: When they put the black outfit on you, how did you feel?

KK: I feel OK but I don't have the xxxxx to change.

AS: Since you did not have an extra pair to wear, how did you stay clean?

KK: They can be clean some time, you know, you go in the water. You take it out, and wash it, and put it back when you get wet.

AS: What about when you were in the rain?

KK: Nothing. Just wet.

AS: How did you dry it?

KK: When the sun come and then when you go inside, you stay for awhile. You take it off and you what you call

AS: Wring it out?

KK: Yes, wring it out and then put it back. Then later on, a half hour or three hours, it dry.

AS: Did they show you a picture like this when you were a worker? (I showed her a picture of a group of workers in black dress.)

KK: I was 5 years old too.

AS: Five years old and in the rice fields like where you were? Tell me about the people that stayed in Cambodia when Pol Pot left.

KK: Yes, when Pol Pot left, the people stay there you know and they can't pick what they want. You know, your land is their land. Your land, like you not there, you leave the Cambodian. You leave. You come to Thailand and out there, I just pick your land. It is mine. It is not yours. It is mine now. And then when you go back, you don't have nothing. If you have money, you can buy the land. If you don't have no money, what you can do, you have no place to stay.

AS: The land was yours before you left.

KK: Yes, before, but it is not yours anymore because with Pol Pot, they put everything together.

AS: How do you feel about that?

KK: And a lot of people die, you know, they don't know whose land, your land or my land. They don't know. They just pick it.

AS: What can the women in Cambodia do to change that? Tell me about that.

KK: They so poor, they don't know what they can do. They can have them. No money, no food, no nothing. And then they sell the children. They think oh, my baby. And they sell the children. And the children can live and they can have some money and then they can have the family farm. You know, the poor people, they have more children than the rich people. Do you know why? The rich people, they have money, they can buy protection and the poor people have nothing. They cannot buy protection. That's why they have more . . . The poor people, they have more children, a lot of children, because they have nothing to protect. And then the people say why you so poor? Why you bring so much children? Why have a lot of kids? Because they don't have any protect them.

AS: You are talking about sexual protection. Does that cost money?

KK: Yes, they cost money too. You have to go there and ask them for something, medicine, whatever. They charge you and you don't have no money to pay them. And then you sleep together, you have baby.

AS: Well, if they say all of the food is for everybody, then they should say all the medicine is for everybody. What do you think about that?

KK: No, that is for Pol Pot not for right now. I say for right now. Now is not like Pol Pot. For Pol Pot, everything together. But for now, it is separate. Not everything together.

AS: Did you see this picture of Pol Pot? This is before he died.

KK: I don't know. That is Pol Pot?

AS: Yes.

KK: Wow. He is old now.

AS: He died. That is him in the countryside.

KK: Maybe I don't see him. I never see him. Maybe I don't recognize him. Maybe I see him but I don't know who is who and they don't tell me who is. You know.

AS: That is when he couldn't walk. He went up to the countryside, way up by Battambang, but way up in the hills. He died up there. He hid. He was hiding.

KK: But I heard some people say. He don't kill people. He don't care but he tell everybody to do it, right? So people honor him to do it. He didn't do it.

AS: Did you hear about all those people being killed when they took the people out of the high school, Thuel Seng? They took them out and took them to a field and killed them. Did you know that was going on?

KK: No. I never see on my own eyes to kill people in my own eyes, I never see it. But, I heard people they see it. My cousin, she scared to death. She saw like ten people. They tied up, they take it to the field and kill them and put them in one hole. You have to dig your own hole. You dig it, big enough for all of it and then they kill you and put you in the hole and then they bury it. My cousin scared to death.

AS: When I have this conversation with you, it brings back a lot of memories that are not very pleasant, I hope that it is not going to disturb you at night or when you think about it when you go away from me. Is it OK? Do you feel OK?

KK: I don't know. Sometime I have a lot of dream about it too. I dream sometime I have dream that in there.

AS: It is hard to erase a memory that is so painful and creates suffering. Now, you are not suffering, only in the mind, the memory, the past.

KK: Yes, my memory still there.

AS: Do you have some other type of memory? What about forgetting and forgiving these people? Did you forgive those people for doing bad?

KK: I think it is all the people, they do that and now they all dead. Only some left, you know. Most people is old and dying.

AS: Now they have four more men on trial. One is a woman that was married to Pol Pot's brother-in-law. Those trials will be next year. They just finished a trial for Duch. Were you aware of that?

KK: No.

AS: Well, I hope that you won't have any nightmares or bad dreams or bad memories that become present memories from our conversation.

KK: I am trying to but most of the time I dream. I don't want to go there you know. I don't want to dream there but just my brain still, I go to sleep I dream I am in there.

AS: I hope your dreams will go away. Do you think they will go away eventually?

KK: Oh, I don't know. I try to forget. My mother, too, she always dream she in there.

AS: Do you think that because distance and time has gone by and more time will go by that the future will hold something for you that say you won't have dreams anymore?

KK: I don't know.

Appendix G: Journal

Sample Journal Entry

After my return to the United States, I reread my journal entries about the bus trip from Phnom Penh to Siem Reap. The notes conjured up vivid sights and sounds of my recorded observations. We journeyed over newly asphalted highways at the speed of a roadrunner with the hum of the tires on the asphalt that lulled the children to sleep as they laid on their mothers' laps. Suddenly we journeyed over unimproved red dirt–rutted bumpy roads at the speed of a snail that caused the bus to rock from the left to the right. This jostling caused the children to stir and adjust their sleeping positions. Instead of the hums on the road, I heard what sounded like deep thumps as my dozing also was interrupted. The loud sounds of the tractors' engines that were used to bulldoze felled trees contrasted with the silence of the bicycles and pedestrians. No voices were heard. The bus horns' earsplitting sounds for the pedestrians, bicyclists and cars to move penetrated the bus's interior.

No road was wide enough for the long flat–bed trucks loaded with lumber as well as the tourist and transit busses. Each time the busses and trucks passed each other, one of them had to move to the shoulder of the road or highway. The flat–bed trucks were loaded with freshly felled and sawed trees that were being hauled somewhere to be cut into wood timbers for construction.

In addition to the truck loads of large tree trunks, there were families walking or riding bicycles and moto-tuks with bundles of long thin branches piled high but balanced delicately on their heads and on the handlebars of the bicycles. There was no surprise to see women and children walking in a straight line in silence while they shared the

shoulder of the road with bicycles and moto-tuks. Their long journey to and from the forested area to gather the branches for cooking or to sell to others occurred daily. Many women and children traipsed over the red clay ruts repeating their daily trips in the same grooves. They walked amongst the clouds of dust left in the air by the big busses and trucks while they breathed in and swallowed the exhaust fumes. A few wore their scarves or kramas over their mouths and noses.

Appendix H: Descriptive Settings of Conversations

Hon Samnang, 20 years of age, Nursing Student

Wat Phnom Park, Phnom Penh, near the US Embassy and across from the Bassac and Tonle Sap Rivers.

June 21, 2011, 2:30 p.m.

Setting: The young female nursing student stood alone on a sidewalk, facing west and watched the busy street with whizzing noisy cars, trucks, and busses. The late afternoon sun shone through the tree branches and leaves and cast varying shadows on the sidewalk. She blinked her eyes as she talked to me to protect them from the sun's rays. She appeared neatly dressed in a black skirt and white blouse but out of place with the other young females who sat on the concrete benches with darting eyes and shabby clothing. She focused her attention on the road and on me, making eye contact when she talked to me. Her long black hair, neatly pulled back and clean and translucent round face with no make-up created a doll-like appearance. During our conversation, she continued to face west and I faced southwest. Our conversation ended abruptly because her expected ride arrived and she hurried away.

Om Sen, age 50, vender

Phum Dai Et Koh Pas, Ken Svay District, Kandal Province.

June 22, 2011, 4:00 p.m.

Setting: The picnic area where I met Om Sen was located off the road about 30 yards. To reach the house, I walked down a deep rutted slope of dark reddish colored earth. Then the ground leveled but still contained many deep ruts. A young male, about 12 years old, came to meet me and introduced himself. We walked to the picnic area that rested on a raised bamboo slatted floor and under a bamboo roof made of bamboo fronds. The picnic area was open on all four sides. Three women, related to each other, sat with their legs folded to the side in a semi-circle. I placed the recorder on the floor between us. The youngest woman cradled a small napping child in her arms. The women were dressed in a customary Cambodian clothing of the wrap-around long skirt and a cotton top. Besides these women and the small child, an elderly man of approximately 90 years of age sat in a chair under a sheltered lean-to to my left. In addition, a young male stood next to the picnic floor listening to the conversation. An older male of approximately 20 years appeared momentarily from a closed room. A fenced garden near the picnic area contained a garden of tomatoes and corn. A turquoise painted house stood approximately 20 feet from the picnic area on my right. An appointment had been set; therefore, after I introduced myself and my interpreter, we settled in and began to talk. About one-half hour before we finished the conversations, a down-pour came and continued until I left. The rain had filled the ruts, making it difficult to know if I was on solid ground or not. The mud was slippery and I did not want to ruin my shoes so I took them off, raised my long skirt, and walked bare footed to the moto-tuk.

*Pheara Then, 38 years of age, a vender of sugar cane cones
Wat Phnom Park, Phnom Penh
June 21, 2011, 3:30 p.m.*

Setting: The city park sits along a busy road and across from the Tonle Sap and Bassac River. A museum, barely noticeable from the lower ground, stands on top of a hill which requires a visitor to climb a number of stairs to reach it. Pheara Then spoke softly but tried to talk loud enough to drown the noises of children playing in the area. Her other competition was the noise from cars, car horns, busses, and trucks travelling on the surrounding roads. People talked on their cell phones while they walked through the park and as they sat on benches; couples strolled through the park, arm in arm; and women walked with young children and pushed strollers. Other people appeared to walk without purpose through the park on the sidewalks and the grassy areas. In a short distance away, Cambodian children and several young American adults, both male and female, interacted in a large open and raised concrete gazebo. They danced in a circle and sang songs in English. A woman who appeared friendly and carried a pole with drinkable sugar cane cups walked nearby. I approached the woman and asked her if she would talk with me. After our conversation, I purchased a sugar cane cone.

*Tola Seng, age 24, Translator, Printing Assistant, Hostess in Christian Mission Field;
tola_sng@yahoo.com
#27 Street, Home of Joseph and Marilyn Chan, United Methodist Missionaries, Phnom Penh.*

June 21, 2011, 6:00 p.m.

Setting: This compound allows only women to enter with Joseph and Marilyn's permission. The double-door wooden garage-like doors conceal the happenings of the interior. The large cobblestone patio contains a large barbeque pit, a larger than normal round picnic table, and six metal folding chairs. A group of women and Marilyn Chan have finished eating their dinner. Shortly after I arrive, Joseph Chan arrives. A small white van is parked near the sliding glass door to the house. A lean-to that covers various items such as the barbeque pit stands behind the small van. The high stone fence that does not allow any person to see over or through it surrounds the grounds. The two-story house only uses the bottom floor for Joseph and Marilyn as well as activities for the women. The bottom floor contains a raised wooden platform with a dais and a chair. On the side of the raised wooden platform, an electric organ stands. There is enough room for a small chorus to stand and sing. Tonight, Tola Seng and other women sing Christian songs in Khmer while the other women, approximately 30 in all, dance a traditional Cambodian dance in a circle with the singing. The women normally participate in various activities after the barbeque. Tola's husband plays the keyboard to accompany the singing. Marilyn Chan greets me at the gate. She dismisses the moto-tuk driver by telling him that someone will drive me to the hotel later. She takes me to the picnic table, asks me to sit, and brings food to the table for herself, Joseph, and me. Then the young woman that I will interview arrives at the table and sits next to me.

Pen Sor, age 29, a vegetable farmer
Phum Dai Et Koh Pas, Ken Svay District, Kandal Province.
June 22, 2011, 3:30 p.m.

Om Sothea, 47 years of age, vegetable farmer
Phum Dai Et Koh Pas, Ken Svay District, Kandal Province
June 22, 2011, 2:30 p.m.

Om Sen, age 50, a vegetable farmer
Phum Dai Et Koh Pas, Ken Svay District, Kandal Province
June 22, 2011, 4:00 p.m.

Setting: The three women that I conversed with sat on the picnic floor with a quite elderly woman. All three of the women, related to each other, had pleasant looks on their faces. One woman held a small child approximately two years of age and napping in her arms. A very elderly man sat in a lawn chair under a lean-to about four feet from the picnic area. They sat with their legs folded to the side and I did the same. The recorder sat on the floor between us. They dressed in wrap-around cotton skirts and blouses. A young male who looked like the age of a fifth grade student stood on the ground next to the picnic floor. A young male, about 20 years, exited a room that had a hanging cotton cloth as a door and approached the picnic area. He introduced himself as the brother of the women and a college student. A wire-fenced garden near the picnic area contained two rows of approximately 12 tomato vines and one row of corn stalks. Two goats walked through the garden. A turquoise painted house stood approximately 20 feet from the thatch covered picnic area.

Heak Hea, 25 years of age, nut vender
Aranh Village, Siem Reap
June 26, 2011, 11:30 a.m.

Setting: As far as the eye can see, a one hectare field of lotus flowers floated on the water on the right side of the road. Some flowers have bloomed and others have not opened yet which created a mixture of green buds and light pink flowers. Among the field of flowers, a typical Cambodian house with a thatched roof; enclosed walls on three sides; an open door that faces the road; and a bamboo frond roof sat on four stilts that sank into the water. A man worked in the field on the west side of the house; waded in the water; bent his body over the flowers; wore an Asian bamboo hat; and picked the flowers to put in the basket that he carried. He continued to work without noticing me. However, a young male, approximately seven or eight years of age, spied the activity from the doorway of the house, exited the house, and ran hurriedly towards the road on the plank walkway situated over the water. He was dressed in slacks and a shirt but wore no shoes. A middle-aged woman and an elderly woman stood under the lean-to behind a counter filled with lotus flowers that had been opened to display the three colors of the three kinds of lotus flower nuts. A near-by tree displayed a sign that said "Welcome to Lotus". The moto-tuk was parked on the shoulder of the road and suddenly it began swaying each time a large tourist bus whizzed by the shoulder of the road. I felt the strong wind pressure on my body as the rush blew against me. Shortly after we began to

talk, a young man dressed in soldier uniform, though he was not in the army, approached from a lean-to located about 30 yards away. This man was Heak Hea's brother. The young man in the field looked up and saw a gathering of people. He sat his basket down and hurriedly came to the road. He was Heak Hea's husband.

Chann Nath, 52 years of age, shop worker

Rajana Siem Reap, #153 Sivatha Boulevard, opposite the street to the Night Market.

June 28, 2011, 1:00 p.m.

Setting: An NGO supervises this shop which sells items made by young poor urban and rural Cambodians. The women who work in this shop are trained and then earn money to support themselves and their families. Some of the profits are used to support poor women and women with AIDS/HIV. All items are handmade on the second floor of the shop and at a nearby village. I arrived in the after lunch and entered the store with my moto-tuk driver, Siey Sith Peisey. I saw only one man, an employee who happened to be the manager. When I told him why I was there, he went upstairs and returned with one of the employees. The employee agreed to talk with me. Lin, the manager, Chann, the employee and the conversation partner, and I sat in the back corner of the store so he could watch the store when customers entered. I sat on the next to the bottom stair facing a white wall; Chann sat on the floor at the bottom of the stairs leaning against a wall and facing the front of the store; and Lin sat on a short wooden stool with four legs angled so that he could face both of us. A rod iron baker's rack stood behind Lin and contained items made of cloth. A sign on the third shelf from the bottom stated that some of the proceeds would be used to help support poor women and those with AIDS/HIV. A fire extinguisher hung on the wall to the right of Chann. A mosquito buzzed around her head and face. She did not bother to swat at the mosquito. Next to the right side of her head, a cockroach climbed on the wall. Chann wore a pair of orange-brown cotton slacks and a white cotton blouse. Her saddened appearing eyes looked off to the distance at an object that was not present. At the end of the conversation, she slumbered slowly up the stairs.

Sokhan Ho, 29 years of age, a server

Siem Reap, Butterfly Garden Restaurant, across from the Old Market, Wat Bo area.

June 25, 2011, 12:00 p.m.

Setting: The beautiful garden restaurant with butterflies flitting among flowering plants and fruiting trees created a sense of being on the other side of Alice in Wonderland's looking glass. A young couple strolled on the cobbled pathway through the labyrinth of large plants and sat on a white painted rod iron bench with a small coffee-style table to set their drinks on. The large rectangular concrete fish pond measured about three feet deep, eight feet wide, and fifteen feet long and stocked both small and large fish. We sat on cushioned seats at a small rectangular varnished wooden table under a canopy. The warmth of the afternoon sun and the gentle breeze that waved the leaves on the swaying shrubs made for a perfect afternoon to have a conversation about life. I sipped on a delicious mango frosty which made the afternoon all that more delightful. The netting over the shrubs filtered the sun and corralled the butterflies within the boundaries of the garden. A group of children chattered and giggled excitedly as they prepared to release their butterflies into the garden from their blue netted butterfly-net cages.

Sor Sney Mom, 23 years of age, a cook

Siem Reap, Butterfly Garden Restaurant, across from the Old Market, Wat Bo area.

June 25, 2011, 12:30 p.m.

Setting: This beautiful garden with butterflies flitting among the flowing plants and fruiting trees created a sense of being in another land. The children were giggling and playing on a stage with their blue butterfly-net cages, filled with butterflies, strapped on their backs like a book backpack. Sor Sney Mom and I stayed at the same table where I had conversed with Sokhan Ho. This shaded area created a very serene and pleasant atmosphere that could lull any person into an afternoon nap. I sat on the side facing north and Sor Sney Mom and Sokhan Ho sat on the opposite side of the table next to each other. Sokhan Ho sat directly across from me and Sor Sney Mom sat on her left. The young couple had left and an elderly male had come into the garden. He approached the order window and began asking about the food and the prices.

Keav Ung (pseudonym), 21 years of age, an ice-cream server

Poeuk District, 15 km from Siem Reap via Route 6

June 26, 2011, 1:30 p.m.

Setting: The lush green grounds of the Artisans d' Angkor Silk Factory invite tourists to stroll through the walkways and enjoy ice-cream, sodas, or cookies before taking the inside tour. The entrance to the silk factory is a gravel parking lot with a shaded patio for the moto-tuk drivers and factory tour guides. The walkways curve on the grounds and pass by the open-air Blue Pumpkin Stand which posts a sign stating "Blue Pumpkin". A young woman and a young man stand under the roof and behind the counter. As I approached, they watched me walk towards them. When I reached the stand, I asked if they spoke English. After we determined that we could communicate through the English language, we started discussing women's education in the rural village. Under the shade of the canopy, Keav Ung leaned forward, placed her elbows on the counter, and began telling me about her educational experience in a classroom taught by two teachers, a native speaking Cambodian and an English language native speaker.

Sopheak Phan (pseudonym), 26 years of age, a silk weaver

Poeuk District, 15 km from Siem Reap via Route 6

June 26, 2011, 2:30 p.m.

Setting: Sopheak Phan sat at a weaver's loom inside the factory on a ground floor. Her seat had no back rest and her feet and legs stretched toward the loom. Her back and the upper part of her body swayed forward and backward as she moved the needle through the threads, pulled the bar on the frame towards her several times to pack the threads tightly against the others, and released it. Her steady attention was focused on the weaving as she repeated her methodical action. When I stopped at her station, which was the only one in that room, she continued weaving the threads but began to talk to me through the interpreter/tour guide. She agreed to talk with me but she never stopped weaving until the end of our conversation; and only then so I could take a picture of her. She wore a white face cloth mask to protect her lungs from inhaling silk fibers. Some weavers at stations in the other rooms did not wear cloth masks. Some rooms housed the cocoons of the silk worms in open-air boxes with mulberry leaves for food. Other rooms

housed the dye troughs and huge spools of colored silk thread that would soon be used to make an article of clothing or other item.

Any Sen (pseudonym), age 25, night market vendor-helper

Siem Reap

June 26, 2011, 7:30 p.m.

Setting: This conversation occurred in the middle of the Siem Reap Night Market, amidst many vendor booths that were located back to back and side by side. The vendor booths appeared to be no more than approximately nine feet wide by six feet deep. Some of the booths appeared even smaller. As I stood watching a weaver situated between two aisles and two booths, Any Sen stepped between two drawn and hanging blankets. Through the opening I could see stuffed animals sitting on staggered-step shelves. She took several steps toward me and began talking in a friendly manner. We stood on one side of the weaver and people walking through the market passed the weaver on her other side as if she were sitting in an open arena with people walking all around her.



Figure 6 Bengal Tiger in Mondulkiri Province
(<http://google.com>)