

CHAPTER 2

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE THAI – CAMBODIAN RELATIONS

After the Siamese or the Thais found their kingdom at Sukhothai, the relationship between Siam or Thailand and Cambodia developed for centuries. The evolving history became a significant factor that formed the relations and sentiments between the two countries and peoples at present. This is the reason I wish to lay groundwork of knowledge on a brief history of the relations between Thailand and Cambodia which would help us understand at some level how the relations have developed and what kind of historical matters and issues have become influential factors in the course of bilateral relations between them and their people up to present.

I. Sukhothai period

Following the evidences of stone inscriptions, Royal Chronicles of Thailand and Cambodia as well as academic researches, we have learnt that the Khmer Kingdom in its glorious days possibly reached the Bay of Bengal in the west and the South China Sea in the east and included the present states of Thailand, Lao PDR, and parts of Vietnam within its boundaries. The Siamese (Thais) were therefore believed to be under suzerainty of the Khmers (Cambodians) and stayed in the land of present Thailand for hundreds of years. However, the origin of the Thais is controversial since there are earlier beliefs that the Thais had migrated from the Southern part of China before settling down at present Thailand. This should be proved academically before it could be concluded that is where the Thais originate.

In 1238, Khun Bang Klangtao, the first Phra Ruang, and a Thai chief of Bangyang, in league with the Thais of Sukhothai, led the Siamese people to oust the Khmer ruler at Sukhothai and promptly declared independence for the land and was

crowned the first independent King of Sukhothai.¹ Sukhothai waged the war further and expanded her territory to the edge of the Mekong River. Under the reign of King Ram Kamhaeng (1283 - 1317), the war was carried into the Western provinces of the Khmer empire itself, which was at that time being ruled by Jayavarman VIII. In 1296, Angkor Thom of the Khmer Empire was taken and devastated for the first time by the Siamese. According to the record of Tcheou Ta-Kouan, the Chinese envoy who visited Angkor only one year after this event, it was said that: “In its recent war with the Siamese, the country was entirely devastated, and that in order to repulse them, it was necessary to force the people to fight”. Henri Russier, in his book entitled “Histoire Sommaire du Royaume du Cambodge” also mentioned that while the Khmers had to fight the Chams in the East, they had now a more formidable enemy in the West - the Siamese.²

Although the Khmers did not lose their independence to the Siamese as the result of the attack in 1296, it significantly showed to the world that the Khmer Kingdom had become crippled and began to lose its greatness to the degree that it was defied by the rising Siamese. Then, Sukhothai gradually expanded its kingdom and replaced the Khmer influence as this phenomenon appeared in the Ram Khamhaeng’s Inscription on the fourth side between the lines 11 - 27 as follows:

“King Ram Khamhaeng was sovereign over all the Thai. He was the teacher who taught all the Thais to understand merit and the Dharma rightly. Among men who live in the lands of the Thai, there is no one to equal him in knowledge and wisdom, in bravery and courage, in strength and energy. He was able to subdue a throne of enemies who possessed broad kingdoms and many elephants. The places whose submission he received on the east include Sra Luang, Song Khwae, Lum Pa Cai, Sakha, the banks of the Khong, and Viang Can-Viang Kham, which is the furthest place. On the south, [they include] Khanthi, Phra Bang, Phraek, Suphannaphum, Ratchaburi, Phetchaburi, Sri Dharmaraja, and the

¹ Thanom Arnawat, “Turn to the Past: Thai - Cambodian Relations,” *The Relationship between Cambodia and Thailand in the Globalized Age*, ed. Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies (IAPS), (Bangkok: Srinakharinvirot University, 1995), pp. 41 - 57.

² Manich Jumsai, *History of Thailand and Cambodia*, 7th ed. (Bangkok: Chalermnit, 2001), p. 26.

*seacoast, which is the farthest place. On the west, [they include] Müang Chot, Müang, and Hamsavati, the seas being their limit. On the north, they include Müang Phlae, Müang Man, Müang [an], Müang Phlua, and, beyond the banks of the Khong, Müang Sava [Luang Phrabang], which is the farthest place. All the people who live in these lands have been reared by him in accordance with the Dharma, every one of them”.*³

The expansion of Siam’s influence and territory deep into the Khmer Kingdom during the Sukhothai period created a flaw in the relations between the two kingdoms and peoples ever since.

II. Ayutthaya period

After the Sukhothai period, the Siamese expanded their influence into the Khmer Kingdom and for some time seized and kept the latter under its control but all Siam’s efforts were short-lived as a result of the Khmer’s struggle for independence. According to the Siamese in the Ayutthaya period, the Khmers came to be recorded in the Thai history as perfidious and treacherous (Khom Prae Pak or ขอมแปรพักตร์). It was because whenever the Siamese were engaged in war with other enemies, particularly the Burmese, or when there was a change in the Siamese reign, then the Khmers would attack from the rear and take away booty and inhabitants from the outlying cities and provinces. As a result, it paved the way for the Siamese to rule Cambodia as a tributary state, and of course not always with success since Cambodia revolted from time to time and at last brought in the Vietnamese and then the French in the latter period. These actions further complicated the issues because it led to the

³ “ศิลาจารึกพ่อขุนรามคำแหงดำนที่ 4,” Ramkhamhaeng University, <http://www.info.ru.ac.th/Province/Sukhotai/srjsd44-4en.htm>, and “Reading paper for history course (Hist244: History of Thailand),” Cornell University, <http://instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/Courses/hist244/RKH.html#top#top> (Accessed on 9 February 2007).

dismemberment of Cambodia little by little and finally the complete loss of its independence under the French rule.⁴

During the Ayutthaya period and according to historical records, there were many wars between Siam and Cambodia. Examples are as follows:

1. In 1352, it appears in the Royal Chronicle of Ayutthaya of King U Thong, founder of Ayutthaya, that King U Thong (King Ramathibodi I) ordered Prince Ramesuan from Lopburi to attack the Khmers by saying that “*the Khmers had turned away, I would send you off to (pacify and) destroy them*”. King U Thong also asked his elder brother, Kunluang Pa-ngua or King Boromracha who ruled Suphanburi, to assist Prince Ramesuan, his nephew. Finally, the Khmers were defeated and their capital was seized. Great amounts of rice and a large number of Khmer families were forcibly removed to Siam’s capital”.⁵

The reason King U Thong said that the Khmers had turned away was that when he found Ayutthaya, he developed good relations with the Khmer king. However, King Leuthai of Sukhothai approached to become friends with Khmer kingdom and persuaded the Khmer king (King Lampong or Lampongsareach)⁶ to attack Ayutthaya and the Khmer king accepted. That was the reason King U Thong decided to attack Cambodia.⁷

2. In 1393, King Ramesuan attacked Angkor in retaliation for the attack of Chantaburi and Chonburi by King Dhammasoka (Thommo-Soccarach). The Khmer capital was seized by Siam for the second time and King Ramesuan took away a great number of Khmer inhabitants to Ayutthaya for construction works.⁸

3. According to the Royal Chronicle of Ayutthaya, King Boromracha II led Siamese troops to attack Angkor Thom and recaptured the Khmer capital in 1431. Following the defeat, Cambodia was so weak and not able to defy Siamese power.

⁴ Manich Jumsai, p. 35.

⁵ Richard D. Cushman, trans., “Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya, Book One, Early Ayutthaya, Abbreviated version,” Cornell University, <http://instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/courses/hist244/TRCOA01.html>. See a full version in Richard D. Cushman, Trans., *Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, ed. David K. Wyatt (Bangkok: The Siam Society, 2000).

⁶ Manich Jumsai, p. 28.

⁷ *The Royal Institute Thai Encyclopaedia Vol. 3* (Bangkok: Prachan Printing House, 1985), p. 1896.

⁸ Manich Jumsai, p. 34.

Since Angkor was located too close to the border and easily exposed to Siam's invasion, the new Khmer King, Srey-Souryophear or Soryopor, decided to relocate the Khmer capital first to Basan (បាសាន) in Srey Santhor, but due to inundations from the Mekong River, he again moved the capital to a place called Chaturmukha (or Chadomoukh which is Phnom Penh at present) in 1434.⁹ Phnom Penh was therefore considered as the starting point of the modern Cambodia as it was distinct from the old Khmer Empire of Angkor.

4. Whenever Ayutthaya was weak and faced difficulties, for example at the time when Ayutthaya lost to Burma in 1569, the Khmers attacked and took away properties and Siamese people along the border provinces. After King Naresuan declared independence from Burma in 1584, Cambodia sent envoy to establish relations with Siam. However, when Burma came to attack Ayutthaya again in 1587, instead of helping Siam, Cambodia sent its troops to raid Prachinburi and Nakhonnayok. After the war with Burma, in 1593, King Naresuan took revenge by attacking Cambodia and seized Siem Reap, Battambang, Pursat, Champasak (at present a part of Lao PDR). He also took control over Lovek, the Khmer capital in 1594. One could say that this was the first time that Battambang became Siam's center for expansion of her influence in Cambodia and, at the later stage, it played significant role in the relations between Thailand and Cambodia in 1800s and 1900s.

It is noteworthy that Siam's capture of Lovek marked the beginning of a significant decline in Khmer's glories in the region. One possible reason for the decline was the worker drain made by the Siamese conquerors as they took thousands of Khmer peasants, skilled artisans, scholars, and members of the Buddhist clergy back to the capital of Ayutthaya. This practice, as it was a common phenomenon in the history of Southeast Asia, crippled Cambodia's ability to recover a semblance of its former greatness. Afterwards, a new Khmer capital was established at Odong (Udong or ឧតុង), south of Lovek.¹⁰

⁹ Manich Jumsai, pp. 34 - 35.

¹⁰ Russell R. Ross, ed. "Domination by Thailand and by Vietnam," in *Cambodia: A Country Study* (Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1987), <http://countrystudies.us/cambodia/9.htm>.

The fall of Lovek also marked the recession of the Khmers as a powerful kingdom in Southeast Asia at the time. Siam annexed parts of Cambodia's western and northern territories and Cambodia gradually became vassal of the Siamese rulers. However, in the following years, the Siamese supremacy in Cambodia was challenged by Vietnam. After ridding itself of Chinese suzerainty in A.D. 939, Vietnam had embarked upon a career of expansion. It exterminated the Champa Kingdom and entrenched itself on the eastern flank of Cambodia by the middle of the seventeenth century. This new power, instead of serving as a counterpoise to Siam as the Khmer kings hoped, turned out to be more aggressive than Siam. Sometimes, on the pretext of aiding pretenders to the Cambodian throne, and at other times for the ostensible purpose of aiding Cambodia against Siam, it started interfering in the internal political affairs of the Khmer Kingdom.¹¹

According to historical evidence and studies, following the reign of King Naresuan, Ayutthaya began to decline and became a chance for the Khmers to rise against Siam by refusing to hand over the royal tribute articles in homage to the Siamese King as usual. King Songtham was displeased with the situation and ordered an army to pacify the Khmers, but his effort failed. Moreover, the Khmers turned their face to Vietnam as a counterbalance to the Siam's suzerainty as mentioned earlier. Vietnam began to cast its influence over the Khmer Court, which made the Khmers increase their connection and relationship with Vietnam gradually.

On the other hand, the Khmer royal family members and court people were often at odds and struggled for power. They were divided into two groups, pro-Siam group and pro-Vietnam group. Whenever the pro-Vietnam group rose to power, Cambodia would be under the sphere of Vietnamese influence and the pro-Siam group sought support from Siam to raise an army to drive Vietnam out of the Khmer Court. The said phenomenon continued until the Thais lost Ayutthaya for the second time to Burma in 1767 which liberated the Khmer Kingdom from the Siamese.¹²

¹¹ Ganganath Jha, *Foreign Policy of Thailand*, (New Delhi, Radiant Publishers, 1979), pp. 9 - 12.

¹² Bang-orn Piyapun, *History of Thailand's Administration, Society, Economy, and Relations with Foreign Countries from Pre-Sukhothai Period to 1932*, (Bangkok, O.S Printing House, 1995), pp. 155 - 157.

In conclusion, the relationship between Siam and Cambodia in the Ayutthaya period can be characterized as that of friend and foe, ruling and tributary states. However, it is most important that Ayutthaya adopted a lot of things from Cambodia ranging from the concept of “Devaraja” or the king as a divine universal ruler, the arts, culture, royal ceremonies and practices in the royal court, language, Khmer architectural styles, ways of living, etc.

III. Thonburi period

Following the accession to the throne of Phrachao Krungthonburi in 1768, the Siamese King requested the Khmer King to hand over the royal tribute articles as it used to be in the Ayutthaya period but was refused by Cambodia. As a result, he sent an army under the leadership of Chao Phya Chakri (who later became King Rama I) to attack Cambodia and Siamese army could conquer Siem Reap, Battambang and Pursat. However, there was a rumor that Phrachao Krungthonburi had passed away, then the Siamese army then withdrew. In 1771, Phrachao Krungthonburi himself led an army to attack Cambodia again. The Khmer King turned to seek assistance from Vietnam to counter the Siamese strike but unluckily, Vietnam at that time had engaged with the Tay Son rebellion and was not be able to send an army to assist Cambodia. As a result, Cambodia was defeated and a pro-Siam Khmer King was installed to rule Cambodia. Not long after, there was a fight between a pro-Siam and a pro-Vietnam groups in the Khmer Court and once again, a pro-Vietnam group won and seized power. The Siamese King prepared to send an army to attack Cambodia but it was cancelled due to internal turbulence in Krungthonburi.¹³

¹³ Thanom Arnamwat, pp. 42 - 43.

IV. Rattanakosin period

Siam, under the reign of King Rama I, wished to expand her influence into Cambodia once again on the grounds that Cambodia was in-between Siam and Vietnam. If Siam could control Cambodia, consequently Siam would be safe from the Vietnamese aggression by having Cambodia as a buffer state. Also during this period, the Khmers fought each other for power while Vietnam had been busy with the suppression of the Tay Son rebellion. This offered an opportunity for Siam to cast her influence over the Khmer court and enabled her to install a pro-Siam Khmer King to rule the country.

Under the reign of King Rama II, significant events took place in the reign of Cambodia's King Uthai Racha which made a rift between Siam and Cambodia. The Khmer King sided with Vietnam and challenged Siam which consequently led to the discord between Siam and Vietnam. Finally, Vietnam took control over the Khmer Court and expanded its influence over Cambodia again.

King Rama III wished to support Ang Em and Ang-Duong, pro-Siam Khmer royal family members who were in Bangkok. After the downfall of King Uthairacha of Cambodia, the King of Siam then sent both of them back to Cambodia and installed them to rule Khmer cities that were subjugated to Siam as a preparation for the expansion of Siam's influence into Cambodia in the future.

It was worth noting that during the period that Cambodia was under the Siamese rule, Siam just wanted Cambodia to hand over the royal tribute articles in homage to the Thai King annually as a symbol of respect which reflected the great honor and dignity of the Siamese King. In contrast, when the Vietnamese had influence over the Khmer court they squeezed Cambodia for taxes and duties and tried to impose Vietnam customs. When the Khmers could not tolerate the situation, they rose up against the Vietnamese and asked for support from Siam.

During the reign of King Rama III, Siam twice waged war with the pro-Vietnam Khmers and the Vietnamese armies; first in 1833 when Siam failed, and second in 1840 when Siam seized some Khmer cities including Phnom Penh which consequently made the Vietnamese retreat.

In 1842, Vietnam reinforced its army to strike back at Siam and the war took a long period of time which made all Khmers face difficulties to the extent that they could not grow rice. The war ended with reconciliation between Siam and Vietnam and both countries agreed to install Ang Duong (or Preah Bat Ang Duong - นักองค์ดวง) as the King of Cambodia and in return, Cambodia gave royal tribute and paid homage to both Siamese and Vietnamese Kings as a symbol of respect. Later on, Vietnam entered into war with France but was defeated and colonized by France.¹⁴

In the reign of King Rama IV (King Mongkut), after the death of Preah Bat Ang Duong, there was a breach between Ang Votha (นักองค์ตธา) and Ang Norodom (นักองค์นโรดม), Preah Bat Ang Duong's sons. At that time, Siam was going to promote Ang Norodom to ascend the throne, but the matter was interfered by the conflict between Siam and France. France wished to expand her influence into Cambodia from Vietnam and had no choice but to enter into conflict with Siam over Cambodia.

France realized the importance of Cambodia. The success of Sir John Bowring, representative of Queen Victoria and the British Foreign Office, in concluding a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Siam created anxiety with France since she was one of the powerful colonists like Britain. That was why France sent Monsieur de Montigny, French ambassador, to negotiate with Siam in 1856. The ambition of France control Cambodia became clearer when French politicians understood the significance of the Mekong river and desired to use the river as a new route to reach China and Tibet -- fertile territories that powerful European nations dream of -- as well as commodities that France could reap from Cambodia, such as abundant natural resources in Tonle Sap including forests and gemstones which would generate great wealth.¹⁵

France was successful in forcing King Norodom to be under French protection and ratification was made on 17 April 1864 to make effect of the treaty between Cambodia and France. Siam was forced to enter into a treaty with France on 15 July 1867 which had Siam acknowledge Cambodia as a protectorate of France, and

¹⁴ Thanom Arnamwat, pp. 43 - 50.

¹⁵ Krairerk Nana, "Colonial Magazine Exposed Treaty of King Rama V: Why Siam Abandoned Angkor Wat?," *Art & Culture Magazine* 27, issue 11 (September 2006). (in Thai)

declare that Cambodia should stop handing over royal tribute to Siam. In exchange, France accepted that Battambang and Siem Reap belonged to Siam and agreed to demarcate a land boundary between Siam and Cambodia. Siam had minor conflicts with France many times, but King Rama IV applied “bend-with-the-wind policy”, which satisfied France and the tension subsided.¹⁶

In the reign of King Rama V, Siam lost a great deal of territories to France including lands on the left and the right banks of Mekong River, Battambang, Siem Reap and Sisophon. Soon after, Siam did not rule the lands inhabited by most of Khmers, which meant that Indochina absolutely fell into the hands of France.

V. Policies of the Thai Governments towards Cambodia from 1953 to 1963

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the French switched branches of Cambodia’s royal family, replacing the Norodom with Sisowath. In 1941, it switched back to the Norodom, installing the nineteen-year-old Prince Norodom Sihanouk as the Khmer King. By the early 1950s, King Sihanouk had come to understand that the best way to strengthen his own position and defuse the republican sentiment was to emerge as champion of Khmer nationalism against the French. Through a skillful campaign replete with guile, bombast, threats, and feints, he finally succeeded in winning Cambodian independence from France on 9 November 1953.

To this end, Thailand promptly recognized the new state and was the first country to establish diplomatic relations with Cambodia.¹⁷ From the day that Sihanouk left for France to ask for independence from Vincent Auriol until he returned to Phnom Penh when Cambodia gained full independence from France, that time was dubbed by Sihanouk as “The Royal Crusade for Independence”.

Earlier, Thailand had supported Cambodia for her independence from France since 1867 when Thailand made France a promise in the treaty in that year, that France would regard Cambodia as an independent kingdom and not annex it into a colony of French Indochina. As seen above, France did not keep its promise.

¹⁶ Ross.

¹⁷ Jha, p. 113.

Therefore, as soon as Cambodia was granted independence by France, the Thai Government promptly recognized it and established the diplomatic relations with Phnom Penh.

During the year 1953 to 1963, Thailand was under the leadership of four prime ministers, namely: (1) Field Marshal P. Pibulsongkram, (2) Mr. Pote Sarasin, (3) Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn and (4) Field Marshal Sarit Dhanarajata.¹⁸

Under the administration of Prime Minister Field Marshal P. Pibulsongkram (1953 - 1957), the relations between Thailand and Cambodia was smooth as a result of Thailand's policy that gave importance to providing assistance to neighboring countries, particularly Laos and Cambodia. The government set principles for ministers in charge of telecommunication, transportation, aviation, education, healthcare, culture and related areas to consider providing the assistance to both countries and, if possible, proposing the projects to the cabinet for consideration and approval. It was noted that in November 1953, Cambodia asked for economic assistance from Thailand and the establishment of a Thai language school in Cambodia. In addition, the Cambodian Government proposed to purchase firearms to use for the suppression of communist insurgents. The Thai Government agreed to sell 2,000 guns upon the request and planned to construct railways linking Thailand and Cambodia by sharing the construction cost equally between the two countries.

From 1954 onwards, Thai - Cambodian relations were affected by controversy over the sovereign right of Preah Vihear Temple. Both sides could not settle the conflict and the Cambodian side brought the issue to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in Hague for consideration that (1) Thailand must withdraw her armed forces stationing on Preah Vihear Temple since 1954 and (2) Cambodia had sovereign right over Preah Vihear Temple. The said issue led to the severance of diplomatic

¹⁸ Field Marshal P. Pibulsongkram led the 9th - 10th and 22nd - 27th governments (16 December 1938 - 6 March 1942, 7 March 1942 - 1 August 1944, 8 April 1948 - 24 June 1949, 25 June 1949 - 29 November 1951, 29 November 1951 - 6 December 1951, 6 December 1951 - 8 March 1952, 24 March 1952 - 25 February 1957, 21 March 1957 - 16 September 1957), Mr. Pote Sarasin led the 28th government (21 September 1957 - 26 December 1957), Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn led the 29th, 31st - 34th governments (1 January 1958 - 20 October 1958, 9 December 1963 - 7 March 1969, 7 March 1969 - 17 November 1971, 18 December 1972 - 14 October 1973), Field Marshal Sarit Dhanarajata, led the 30th government (9 February 1959 - 8 December 1963). Source: Royal Thai Embassy, Washington D.C., <http://www.thaiembdc.org/index.htm>.

relations between the two countries in 1958 and the case was in the hands of the ICJ. Moreover, the good relations deteriorated quickly after Field Marshal Sarit Dhanarajata assumed office.¹⁹

After Cambodia had gained her independence from France, Thailand considered Cambodia as a sovereign state. However, the question of Preah Vihear Temple was really an unfortunate misunderstanding, leading to mistrust, discord, and prejudice on both sides to defend their rights. Sihanouk, who felt that Thailand was his enemy, was even more convinced by the Preah Vihear incident that Thailand had plans for his country. The temple was made an object of general attacks by mass media and as Marshal Sarit also came to prominence, Sihanouk broke off diplomatic relations with Thailand in 1958 and brought the case before the International Court of Justice at The Hague as mentioned earlier.

When Marshal Sarit was the Thai Prime Minister he appointed Seni Pramoj - an ex-Prime Minister, the Head of the Free Thai Movement, and a well-known Thai lawyer -- to defend the case. However, the French strenuously supported Cambodia against Thailand and provided all sorts of documents preserved in their national archives, which the Thais did not possess. This included the map annexed to the Franco - Siamese Treaty of 1907 made by Lieutenant Colonel Bernard with the acknowledgement of the Thai commissioners, who in 1907 had insufficient knowledge and technology of map-making, and rather relied on Bernard's hand to draw it up. Unfortunately for Thailand, what was depicted on the map was completely contrary to all expectations because it departed from the natural watershed and went round into Thailand at the point where Preah Vihear Temple was located. The Court would not consider any geographical reason or any international usage ruling, but adhered to what was to be found in the map. Therefore, Thailand lost the case on 15 June 1962. The breach between Thailand and Cambodia widened. Thai amour-propre (self-esteem) was hurt, especially when its ally, the United States, took the side of Cambodia. However, the Thai Government had to comply with the decision of the

¹⁹ Narong Puangpis, "Policy of the Thai Government toward Cambodia in 1953s," in *The Relationship between Cambodia and Thailand in Globalized* (Bangkok: Srinakharinvirot University, 1995), pp. 41 - 57. The article composed from minutes of the cabinet meetings, Cabinet Secretariat, from 1953 to 1960.

International Court of Justice.²⁰ The conflict between Thailand and Cambodia over the ownership of Preah Vihear Temple was tense and became a thorn in their relations. This contending issue became a big scar in their neighborly relations. The unclear court's decision left lots of room for both countries to interpret the decision and contest the whereabouts of exact land boundary in the areas of Preah Vihear Temple up to the present.

VI. Cambodia after 1975 and before the Paris Peace Agreement in 1991

In March 1970, Sihanouk was overthrown in a right-wing coup d'état led by General Lon Nol. At the end of April 1970, the United States and South Vietnamese troops invaded Cambodian territories on the eastern flank to attack the communist sanctuaries. The war spread and destroyed Cambodian society and only the Khmer Rouge prospered. In April 1975, a few days before the fall of Saigon, the Khmer Rouge was able to capture Phnom Penh. Throughout the Khmer Rouge period, Cambodia enjoyed the international support of China and North Korea. While the Khmer Rouge assaulted their own people and left nearly two million people dead from execution, forced work, malnutrition, or disease, they also made numerous attacks across the disputed border into Vietnam. These prompted the Vietnamese invasion at the end of 1978 and drove the Khmer Rouge out of Phnom Penh. In January 1979, Hanoi installed its own client regime, headed by defectors from the Khmer Rouge. The Vietnamese leaders had the full support of their major ally, the Soviet Union. That expansion angered China, challenged the United States and worried the non-communist states in Southeast Asia. For the Khmer Rouge group, it took safe haven along the Thai - Cambodian border and sparked the formation of non-communist resistance groups.²¹

²⁰ Manich Jumsai, "Turn to the Past," pp. 280 - 284. More details of the decision of the International Court of Justice regarding the case concerning the Temple of Preah Vihear, please visit the website of International Court of Justice at <http://www.icj-cij.org>.

²¹ William Shawcross, *Cambodia's New Deal* Contemporary Issues Paper No. 1 (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1994), pp. 5 - 9.

In July 1982, the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) was formally inaugurated in Kuala Lumpur following the agreement between the three movements which had in common the strong determination to liberate Cambodia from the Vietnamese occupying forces. Prince Sihanouk (United National Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia: FUNCINPEC) was elected as President of the CGDK while Son Sann (Khmer People's National Liberation Front: KPNLF) and Khieu Samphan (Party of Democratic Kampuchea: Khmer Rouge) were appointed as Prime Minister and Vice President respectively. After its formation, the CGDK led the resistance forces against the Vietnamese occupation in Cambodia. It also enjoyed increasing international support and recognition. For the Vietnamese installed government under the Heng Samrin regime or the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), other than the Soviet bloc, almost no country recognized it. The Chinese armed the Khmer Rouge, while the United States, Great Britain, and France helped ASEAN build up the non-communist groups. Thailand helped all groups.²²

In mid-1980s, with the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev, Soviet support for Vietnam's occupation began to wane. The cost of isolation and failure to obtain wider recognition for its client became increasingly hard for Hanoi to bear. In 1986, ASEAN and Vietnam began to discuss political compromise. Finally, Vietnam withdrew their troops just as the communist regimes in Eastern Europe collapsed in 1989. Hanoi left behind a government under Hun Sen.²³ In October 1991, the Paris Peace Accord was signed by all parties concerned which brought peace and national reconciliation to Cambodia. The agreement created the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) as a mechanism to control the administration of the country, supervise a nationwide ceasefire, cantonment and disarmament of the troops of all Cambodian factions as well as to prepare the general elections in 1993.

²² Department of Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, *Documents on the Kampuchean Problem (1979 - 1985)* (Bangkok: Thai Watana Panich Press Co., Ltd., 1985), p. 6.

²³ Shawcross, pp. 9 - 12.

VII. Conclusion

Throughout the history at the outset of the establishment of the Thai Kingdom at Sukhothai up to the present, we have witnessed that the relations between Thailand and Cambodia have evolved continuously and alternately between good and bad, friend and foe, ally and enemy, ruler and tributary. Moreover, we have learnt that foreign policies of many countries including Siam were systematically formulated and implemented from the past with the ultimate goal of preserving national identity and independence which are still applicable nowadays, such as, balance of power, bend-with-the-wind, neutrality, interference, nationalism, expansionism, hegemonism, etc.

What we have gained from this chapter is that Thailand's expansion of its influence into the Khmer Kingdom and Court in the ancient time was aimed to secure its national stability, political system and territorial integrity as well as to reinforce the greatness and high prestige of Siam and Thailand. Such a move badly affected the greatness of Khmer Kingdom and caused a number of conflicts and wars between them, as there are historical evidence and many stories to tell at present. Eventually, they become root-causes of bilateral issues leading to the notions of mistrust, discord, prejudice, the lack of mutual confidence and understanding in the present relations between Thailand and Cambodia, particularly those related to boundary, national prestige, tradition and culture.