

# The True History of Khmer Krom

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## **[3] Oknha Son Kuy was brutally beheaded in 1841**

SLK  
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Oknha Son Kuy, who was the best example of all Khmer heroes, had sacrificed his life to save his Khmer race from the Atrocities and Genocides of Yuon leaders who were/have been/will be trying to erase the Khmer Map out of this world. The people in the outside world know nothing about the brutalities, oppression, genocides and Vietnamization of Cambodia. In here I don't even know how to find English words to be written and read by my readers around the globe because I found it in Khmer histories so brutal, so oppressive, so inhumane, so dictatorial...of Yuon treatments against Khmers are so disgusting and despicable . That's why the Khmer people really hate Yuon so far so worse. But Yuon Leader are so cunning who always go with the wind/world situation. Yuon leaders who always tactfully have sealed off their dirty pogrom plans against Khmer landlords in the eyes of world and Cambodian people so far so good.

### **[3] Oknha Son Kuy was brutally beheaded in 1841**

THE world must admit that it is lacking of the UN human rights and other independent human rights expert organizations in Vietnam. Therefore credible monitor and report of human rights and the civil liberty of the people in Vietnam could not go beyond what is observed from afar. In fact, the areas of human rights of all people in Vietnam, the Khmer Krom people and other minority have never been addressed seriously by any legitimate UN organizations. Additionally, the aggravating factors have been the history of hundreds of years of animosity between the Vietnamese and the Khmer Krom, and the former have absolute powers to control the later at all times. Therefore, it is imperative that, the human rights questions of the Khmer Krom people in Vietnam is a major issue could not be ignored.

This article is also intended to bring to the attention of the United Nations, the International Community and members of the Consultative Group about the brief history of Khmer Krom in Vietnam and their present situation. The purpose is to provide additional information from Khmer Krom's perspectives to such organizations and countries that have a formal relationship with Vietnam to seriously consider their policies toward Vietnam and at the same time to ensure the rights of Khmer Krom and other people according to international standards.

KKC is under the august leadership of The Honourable Son Soubert, KKC's Council President, the son of the late heroic Samdech Son Sann and great grandson of Governor Son Kuy [The great hero of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom], current Kingdom's member of Constitutional Council and former president of the Son Sann Party; The Honourable Thach Setha, the Kingdom's Senator and Executive Director of KKC.

Oknha Son Kuy, who was the best example of all Khmer heroes, had sacrificed his life to save his Khmer race from the Atrocities and Genocides of Yuon leaders who were/have been/will be trying to erase the Khmer Map out of this world. The people in the outside world know nothing about the brutalities, oppression, genocides and Vietnamization of Cambodia. In here I don't even know how to find English words to be written and read by my readers around the globe because I found it in Khmer histories so brutal, so oppressive, so inhumane, so dictatorial...of Yuon treatments against Khmers are so disgusting and despicable . That's why the Khmer people really hate Yuon so far so worse. But Yuon Leader are so cunning who always go with the wind/world situation. Yuon leaders who always tactfully have sealed off their dirty pogrom plans against Khmer landlords in the eyes of world and Cambodian people so far so good. It was very little written by foreigners in English books that I've read so far.

Was this the Second Killing Field that was made by the Khmer Rouge or by the Murderous Yuon Leaders? If we-Khmers didn't know very much about the *second killing field* that was made by the Murderous Yuon Emperors in the past was well-documented in Khmer History. We would still be blindly misled that Khmer Rouge who brutally killed their own people from 1975-79. And, who had created the second hatred and animosity against Yuon in killing Cambodians from the past up until today?

Siamese wish to abolish Khmer royal families for a long time. Now Yuon also wish to abolish Khmer royal families again.<sup>1</sup>

The history of nationalism in Cambodia is considerable enough to merit scrutiny. Son Kuy and his Khmer Krom people fiercely fought in the battlefield with Yuon landplunderers, aggressors and eartheaters to the day he was captured and beheaded by the murderous Yuon gangs.

- In the year 1738, King Ang So took up arms against the Annamites in an attempt to expel them from Hatien. In 1776, King Ang Nuon taking advantage of a Cambodian uprising in Lower Cochin-Chin as the same of the Tay Son revolt, seized Long-Ho (Vinh Long) and Mesar (Mytho). In 1859, the same monarch ordered his troops to march on Meat Chrouk (Chaudoc). The fighting was still going on when the French landed in Cochin China.
- In 1743, the Khmer Krom of Khleang (Vietnamized Soc Trang) province revolted and expelled the Vietnamese. Khmer army, in 1748, also crushed the Vietnamese army at Sap Angkam, in Cambodia's Pursat province.
- In 1776, people of Peam Me Sar (My Tho) and Long Hor (Vinh Long) provinces revolted and liberated their provinces. From 1835 to 1847, the famous people uprising took place in the province of Preah Trapeang (Travinh), under the leadership of Khmer governor, Chauvay Kuy.
- In 1841, as a pacifist Khmer Buddhist, Chauvay Kuy gave himself up in exchange for the Vietnamese court of Hue's recognition and agreement for the Khmer Krom to have their rights and freedom of worship, of following their traditional custom, and practice their education in Khmer language.
- In 1841, Oknha Son Kuy (Chauvay Kuy), one of Khmer Krom leaders and the ancestor of defunct Son Sann, was atrociously beheaded.

In front of such barbaric, Khmer people, under the command of Sena Sous, rose up, in 1859, against the Vietnamese first in the province of Srok Kleang (today Soc Trang in Vietnamese designation). After the murder of Sena Sous by a Vietnamese undercover agent, the revolt was pursued by two other Khmer Krom leaders Sena Mon and Sena Tea. In spite of the bravery of

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<sup>1</sup> History of Kampuchea (1970) P.122

Khmer Krom leaders, Vietnam managed to control all Khmer Krom territory thanks to military and demographic conquests.<sup>2</sup>

In the History of Superhero Son Kuy has reflected reversible acts of Yuon, in every class, who are planing to swallow up Khmer land, and violating against Human Rights in Khmer Krom who have terribly suffered so painfully of their blood criminal.

This is based on a true story of Son Kuy who was considered as a Khmer Superhero:

Before Son Kuy, who was brutally beheaded by the murderous Yuon gangs, didn't have much time to rest since he was appointed as a Governor of Province because of fighting with Yuon, was taken place nearly everyday.

Son Kuy, the leader of Preah Trapeang Province, who had five close colleagues who were well-known during the war. The first colleague, Deputy Kong, Mr Meun Ek, Mr Ta Mong, Mr Sena Som and Ta Monoros.

Meun Ek spoke up:

*We used to hearing Ong Leu (Ong Leu, Yuon commander) for a long time who is so brutal. If we are not going to find a mean to hunt him down, to kill him off this planet. He will, in the future, build troops to invade us for sure.*

Today, he uses every means from the swords of war to psychological war. He walks by explaining, instigating, deceiving, weakening our Khmer people's minds, to love their government instead. He isn't afraid to use money to buy the heads of small numbers of traitors who serve his dirty blind policy. To me, I have pure Khmer blood, warlord, do not sell my idealism, and am determined in resisting to the day of my life.

Son Kuy who loftily declared to all Khmers in every district not to believe their propaganda, and rise to destroy the aggressors out of our land.

To me! Son Kuy addressed to his colleagues, please keep record of me in your mind, for all my life, I would rather die for my beloved motherland is not to live under the oppression of our enemy at all. After taking the victory of Preah Trapeang province, Yuon-commander Ong Leu who was so happy had organized merry party and ordered his gangs to kidnap the beautiful Khmer girls who were for their brutal sexual pleasure.

One day later, he said publicly to Khmer-Yuon in every district to obey his (Yuon) custom and acknowledged him as the chief (Sdech Tranh) of the whole Khmer Krom. If any Khmer people who dared to resist against his dictatorial policy, would be killed tragically for sure. During that

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<sup>2</sup> People's Lively Forces Vietnam's Expansionism in Indochina Vietnam's Expansionism in Indochina: Strategies and Consequences on the Regional Security. By Kang Pol

period, some Khmers quietly hid, closed up their mouths was to let him trampling at his will. Everyday, the Yuon-commander Ong Leu who always implemented the brutalities inflicting on the gentle Khmers by massacring. The blood was spilled all over the place of the provinces.

This bad news made Son Kuy feel so painful in his heart. He ordered Ta Mong, Meun Ek, Sena Som and Monoros to educate the villagers all day and night to understand the brutalities and the nature of atrocities of Yuon Ong Leu inflicting on Khmer landlords.

Son Kuy tried to implement a psychological war of educating the soldiers and farmers about United Aims was to drive Yuon soldiers out of Khmer Krom that was Khmer birthright.

Son Kuy organised soldiers a bit stronger, using guerrilla war as hit-and-run tactics hitting Yuon every night was to disturb them not to let them sleep well.

This stratagem made Commander-Ong Leu upset like epilepsy who announced to his Yuon:

*If anyone who can behead Governor-Kuy or capture him alive will be rewarded as his/her wish and, will be also promoted as Commander-in-chief over Khmer Krom.*

At that time, there was a Yuon, Ong Bo, who volunteered to find Kuy to be beheaded being given to Commander Ong Leu.

Being appointed the Commander, Ong Bo then led a large number of troops travelling noisily toward Wat Pnoo Doong where the soldier's camp of Governor Kuy was. This battle of bloodshed was worse brutal upon brutal. Each Khmer chief of commander purely sacrificed their lives running to cut Yuon heads falling off their shoulders like uprooting the tree. Although seeing his soldiers were killed piling on each others, Ong Bo would not pull his troops out, either. He kept ordering his men to kill Khmers, even Buddhist monks who would not be spared too.

As to our Khmer's side even lost one by one without any help from the King who could send troop to rescue. These events made Governor Kuy so disappointed but could not tell a second person at all.

The landplunderers encroached, destroyed Buddhist temples, burning all Buddhist scriptures and Khmer literature in order to eliminate our Khmer national language.

Governor Son Kuy who was a clean Khmer Superhero when he was young. There were so many Yuon who offered him their beautiful daughters but he always refused, even they used every means. Governor who counted on an elderly man in Trapeang province to request Miss Phoeun in marriage who was the daughter of a gentle farmer in the Chab Phloeung village by the fence of Cetiya Temple became his wife since then.

After the approval of Preah Gru/archbishop, Governor Kuy went inside the temple, to pray before Buddha Statue who is the Symbol of Lord Buddha, to shelter under His Mighty and request bury weapons for the present from Yuon enemy.

Later on, he then collected the villagers to join in the meeting to form Village Committee and propagandist to explain to, educating all Khmers to know the value of Buddhist religion, to respect Buddhist religion because it is the most important organisation in uniting as one string.

After a good while, Meun Ek sighed sadly and then spoke clearly to his close friends:

*My heart wants to fight with Yuon alone even though I was killed like a lizard, I also do not regret because all my life is so bitter since I was a boy. At that time, when I grown up at once, Yuon landplunderers massacred all my family even my youngest sister slept in the hammock whose life was not spared, either. Because I suffered so much with the act of their brutalities. That's why I volunteered to serve in the army since I was the age of 10 years old.*

Lok Oknha (Son Kuy) saw his both close Sena came, and then softly told:

*According to our secret agents' report, who just came a while ago confirming Yuon Ong Bo's troops camping in that Wat Pnoo Doong was organising a party merrily to remember the day of their victory in our Preah Trapeang province. They shouted merrily and noisily encroaching in the temples by destroying Buddha Statutes and nailed in a large Buddha and then they hang loosely with animal bones meaning to look down on our Buddhist religion. After Governor Son Kuy recaptured Wat Pnoo Doong. Yuon always assigned their men to explain to Khmers in manner of psychological war to hate Chauvay Kuy. Yuon explained that Chauvay Kuy who is the bastard traitor of his motherland, to form as gangs to plunder everywhere, killing only Khmers. This time, they came to rescue Khmers from the danger of bandits.*

During the daylight, they-Yuon walked to propagandise in Khmer villages. At night, they disguised as the bandits to plunder the properties, to massacre Khmers, to kidnap Khmer girls for sex pleasure and killing at their will. And then they went on propagandising that the killing Khmers were all Chauvay Kuy's men. Be careful, brothers please. One day they will burn your houses down. This is the story of dropping of tears Khmer Krom brothers who have kept the bloody puss in their mouths for many centuries up until today because of the bastard acts of diversion of Yuon.

For Meun Ek, when Ta Mong who was very close friend was killed like this. He decided to kill the deputy governor chief for Ta Mong's avenge. Meun Ek remembered Ta Mong's word that "If I wasn't killed in war is killed, actually, by the Deputy Governor Chief Kong."

Meun Ek left here without letting anyone knows where he went. Within Khmer soldiers, there was a terrible turmoil because of losing the two strong and brave commanders-in-chief mysteriously in subsequence. Governor Kuy assigned someone to search for Lok Meun Ek to

lead the army again but could not find him at all. Only saw his written words on a board “I, Meun Ek, ask to fight with Yuon alone!”

A week later, Yuon Ong Leu heard the news that one Khmer commander died, the other one disappeared. They surrounded Ansa Som’s camp where was in Pra Chhum District noisily. Khmers didn’t have enough army to fight back against Yuon. And Ansa Som, who was captured alive, was ready to be killed straightway, but his leader stopped it just in time.

Ong Leu told someone to bring Ansa Som for interrogation in one phrase:

*You must tell me the truth. I will let you see your family again at once. You already know, Yuon nationals never kill anyone who is honest with Yuon. Our big aim is to kill only Chauvay Kuy beside we let all them free. Chauvay Kuy who instigates the people uprising against our Emperor of Hue’s policy.*

Before being killed, the brave Khmer commander who unshockingly warned to Yuon landplunderers:

*Even if I, myself was melted to ash. You can not find secret documents to arrest Chauvay Kuy and Meun Ek at all. Truly, you used dirty tricks by buying the head of Deputy Governor Chief Kong who had complicity to kill Ta Mong, but you must not forget that, if the Sun, the Moon still rise, all Khmer children, actually, will come to their senses, one day, to unite together to break your heads.*

Yuon came to an end, used a stick putting through Ansa Som’s rectum until he died tragically.

Yuon had changed policy from one phase to the other to wag psychological war with Chauvay Kuy. Because they knew the former head of Preah Trapeang province that was so much loved by the people. He truly dares to sacrifice his life everything for his people. Therefore, they-Yuon declared and then ordered his army stop fighting, and walk to kill, to torture Khmers so brutally. They went on declaring that the brutalities they implemented at this time. To end this, unless Chauvay Kuy dares take his life for exchanging death.

Could not endure the painful suffering of gentle Khmers, Chauvay Kuy then sacrificed everything by giving up him all to Yuon foe.

I give up myself to you, it is up to your wish, but please stop committing the brutalities on my gentle Khmers from today on.

Ong Leu heard the request of Chauvay Kuy, and nodded in an approval and spoke:

*To meet your need at this time, it’s easy to be end is up to you and me. We both only discussed this. My aim that I want to appoint you the representative of all Khmers in Khmer Krom because you are the only one person who have the most popularity.*

Chauvay Kuy shook his head to promptly refuse:

*I won't accept this position at all! You please give this position to some colleagues who you already have planned for a long time.*

*You can't refuse so! Because this is Drastic Order of Emperor of Hue.*

Not long, The Emperor of Hue who was ousted falling into other Yuon king, Emperor Ming Mang in 1821. This Emperor was so brutal, who at once reigned, drastically ordering the Khmer Krom were harshly forced to abandon their Buddhist religion, custom, tradition, and language. Oknha Son Kuy (also known as Chauvay Kuy), Governor of the Srok of Preah Trapeang had to give up his life in exchange for those rights. The Vietnamese Court of Hue recognised the facts and agreed to have the imposition lifted. When Oknha Son Kuy was beheaded in 1841, people rose up against the Vietnamese through out the country. The Khmer Krom had to stand alone and faced severely retaliations without any supports from King Ang Doung (1840-59) of the Khmer Empire (It was understandable that at the start of his reign, Thailand and Vietnam often attempted to impose their superiority over the Khmer internal affairs). The body of SON KUY was buried in the capital seat of the Preah Trapeang (Travinh), and his tomb is still standing in Bodhisalaraj (Kampong) temple until today.

Yuon Emperor's notice:

*All Buddhist monks in every Wat and Khmer people who live in Cochin China have to obey our Drastic Rule of Law.*

Khmer Buddhist monks must wear robes like Yuon monks. Must shave their heads like Yuon Monks to keep the eyebrows and eat dinner like common people. Must wear trousers, dress up red robes. When servicing, must hit the coconut shells, too. All Khmer people both men and women must keep long hair like Yuon do. If any monk/bonze or Khmer who do not obey our order as Yuon monks will be killed with all their family.

The Notice of Ming Mang made all Khmers who lived in Khmer Krom very angry, rose in protesting for Freedom everywhere. All Khmer Krom Buddhist monks in 507 temples made reports given to Chauvay Kuy in order to protesting against the authoritarian Yuon Emperor over Khmer Buddhist religion. This attitude really made Chauvay Kuy so angry but the time has come. He bit his mouth to tightly lowering his face to softly plead:

*Dear Commander! In the name of Khmer Krom and Buddhist Monks who live in Khmer Krom . I would like you to report being sent to the Emperor Ming Mang that all Khmer Krom people and Buddhist monks can't follow the Drastic Order of the Emperor.*

Commander Ong Leu, who heard quickly tapping on the table noisily, rose roaring like a wounded tiger. After awhile, then started to yell at the Former Head of Preah Trapeang province.

*Huh! I'm so sick of you. You talk the same things for many times. Or you can't listen to in Khmer! As I already told you that no-one can't oppose to the order of Hue's Emperor. On the other hand, just only change a little custom and the governmental regime. What's wrong with that making you so painful like that?*

These words made Chauvay Kuy can't hold back the anger that is boiling in his chest anymore. He stood up promptly answered bravely.

*Commander! You must know that if you would not give back all freedom to my Khmer Krom people to live as normal. I have to change for death in order to resisting against Drastic Order of the Emperor Min Mang.*

Commander Ong Leu heard these words of Chauvay Kuy's last decision, bursting out sarcastically in the camp. After awhile, he opened his mouth to speak:

*Then that meant you are sick of living...?*

*Of course! But I really don't want to die before the Sun rise or in the dark place, too. Moreover! I die is to die for my nation to live on.*

Commander Ong Leu could not understand the meaning, quickly asked:

*What do you mean about that? Please speak clearly. Because the language has secret meaning that I can't understand.*

Chauvay Kuy spoke slowly and clearly.

*My words don't have any secret meaning are just only to notify you that I, myself don't want to die by embracing injustice going with. If, before I die, I must die for my nation to live on, then I can close my eyes properly. How do you think about?*

The Yuon land plunderer, Ong Leu seemed to understand the meaning and then asked another phrase:

*Oh!...You meant to accuse the Emperor of Hue who is inhumane? Huh! Huh! Huh! That's better that you dare take your life changing with Drastic Order of our Emperor. What more, now, do you have quickly to say...?*

*For me is that I don't want anything besides requesting you to abolish the Drastic*

*Order of Emperor Ming Mang in order to keep Khmer tradition-custom and Buddhist religion intact. On the other hand, before I die. I request your permission of two things:*

*Please give the positive notice to tell all Khmer brothers in every village who live on Khmer Krom that Order of Emperor of Hue is invalid. All Khmer brothers must have Freedom of tradition-custom and Freedom of Buddhist religion again.*

*In the meantime, you walk me to be killed at anywhere or somehow. Please let me see my people for half an hour for a chat before I die.*

Commander Ong Leu heard nodding quickly in an approval:

*Your determination is really good! I do hope Hue's Emperor who would not oppose to your wish.*

A week later, Commander Ong Leu issued the public notice to let all Khmer brothers in every village and 507 Buddhist temples know about abolishing the Order of Emperor Ming Mang by letting all Khmers have Freedom as normal and clearly be reconfirmed:

*Chauvay Son Kuy who is the intervenor changing for death in this case!*

Lok Chauvay Kuy paid great respect and smiling as usual to Buddhist monks and Khmer Krom people for saying goodbye to die in the last minute. After eating a little food, with the lovely invitation of Khmer brothers. Chauvay Kuy then stood up telling Khmer brothers and respectful Buddhist monks with his dying wishes:

*I am so excited to see you the same blood before my life passes away. Please all nationalists and bonzes/monks forgive me because I don't have enough competence to serve our nation. Therefore, I must end my life to the nation without being regretful.*

*Now, our tradition, custom and Buddhist religion have been claimed back. Therefore, please all fully- blood Khmer brothers must preserve it forever, don't let the day to be eliminated.*

*Please all Khmer brothers must remember and understand clearly that our Khmer race is the Warlords, being used to have a good name around the globe. Therefore, we must have a firm determination, always uniting altogether. Don't believe the incitements and divisions of our foes or sell our heads to serve their dark-dirty policy by thinking of one's own ends, of promotion, money at all.*

*At the end, I do believe, I'm the one to die, and there are so many million Khmer next generations who have highly ideal daring to sacrifice their lives to protect our territory, freedom and Khmer Buddhist monks.*

*Please brothers live happily. I would like to say goodbye to die for today...!<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> Mr. Keo Sovathi: History of Superhero Son Kuy (Phnom Penh, August 20, 1971)

When Emperor Gia Long died in 1820, he was succeeded by his son Emperor Minh Mang. The privileged position that the Christians (both foreign missionaries and local converts) had enjoyed during his reign was destined to undergo great upheaval because the new Emperor was a Confucian scholar to whom Christianity was the perverse western religion with a corruptive influence. He completely brushed aside the part that Pigneau de Behaine and the French had played in installing his father (Nguyen Anh) on the throne of Vietnam and adopted a religious policy which was diametrically opposed to that followed by his later father. In his efforts to check the spread of Christianity, he forbade the entry into Vietnam of all Christian missionaries.

The tense situation exploded in 1833 when a wave of severe anti-Christian (Both local and foreign) persecutions broke out during which all Christian churches in Indo-China were demolished; missionaries executed; and the ports of Vietnam closed to foreign shipping. This policy was followed through the reign of Thien Tri (1840-47), son of Minh Mang.

When the events which began in 1843 are examined critically from the Vietnamese point of view, the action of the French comes under the banner of a master-stroke of planned strategy. This began when Christians were openly subjects to insults, persecutions and other unchecked acts of violence which included periodic public executions. Instead of taking positive steps to put an end to this chaos, the French responded by making overtures on the possibilities of signing a treaty of commerce, especially during the reigns of first three anti-Christian Emperor after Gia Long, Minh Mang, Thien Tri and Tu Duc.

As their patience had worn thin by this time, the French let loose all their pent-up fury and began by bombarding the Vietnamese coastal towns, including Tourane, which were levelled to the ground. Vietnamese naval vessels were sunk and the government forced to release missionaries from the very jaws of death. The Vietnamese proved no match against the force of the French gunboat diplomacy that were arrayed against them.

One factor that he was not able to ignore was the powerful Catholic Church of France. It was to gain their support at home that Napoleon III plunged into the affairs of Vietnam, where the Catholic missionaries were facing continuous persecutions. He did not waste time in despatching mission, but instead, sent a strong protest to the Emperor demanding that he stop his anti-Christian activities immediately. On receiving a negative reply, Napoleon III acted immediately. The harbours and ports of the country were soon made targets of naval bombardment-an action in which the French were joined by the Spaniards when the Bishop of Tonkin, a Spanish missionary, was executed. It was under these adverse circumstances that the French demanded that Christians be granted religious liberty and that French commercial and consular officials be stationed in Vietnam.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Joginder Singh Jessy: History of South-East Asia, 1824-1965 (1985) Pp.174-76

Missionary Pierre Borie, who had the same bad fate as Oknha Son Kuy, beheaded in Tonkin in 1838. (I felt like one of the early apostles cowering in the catacombs in the company of a few faithful followers, with the sword of the prosecutors for ever hanging over their heads. This is how Bouillevaux described his first contact with the Christian communities of Cochin China. He was luckier nevertheless than his fellow was.

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'marvellous ruins of Nokorvat' (the Thai name for Angkor Wat) combine a brief reference to the Cambodian legends regarding the origin of the temple with a vague description of monuments 'in chiselled marble' – repeating the error made by the early compilers, from whom Pallegoix had no doubt taken his description.

There were others, however, who were more curious. Several members of the British community in Bangkok ventured as far as the city, and one of their number declared that the unravelling of this 'marvellous enigma' was a challenge to the scholarly world. Europe at last had a reason for taking an interest in Angkor.

**A missionary at large**

For Father Charles-Emile Bouillevaux (1823–1913) arriving in Cambodia was something of a liberation, since he had spent the previous two years avoiding religious persecution in Cochin China. The warm welcome he received at the hands of a simple, open-minded people and a benevolent king and the freedom

•I felt like one of the early apostles cowering in the catacombs in the company of a few faithful followers, with the sword of the persecutors for ever hanging over their heads.• This is how Bouillevaux described his first contact with the Christian communities of Cochin China. He was nevertheless luckier than his fellow missionary Pierre Borie, beheaded in Tonkin in 1838 (below).



In 1840 the Cambodian mounted a rebellion against the increasing Vietnamese domination of Khmer life. The Vietnamese emperor, Minh Mang, charactered Vietnam's attitude to the Khmers in a letter to his general, Truong Minh Giang: "Sometimes the Cambodians are loyal, at other times they betray us. We helped the Cambodians when they were suffering and lifted them out of

mud. Now they are rebellious. I am so angry that my hair stands upright. Hundreds of knives should be used against them, to chop them up, to dismember them..." elsewhere he ordered that they be "crushed to powder." On this occasion the Khmer rebels used hit-and-run tactics against the better-armed Vietnamese, who were forced to withdraw from around Phnom Penh to the Delta. Even so, by the middle of the century the country was on the verge of disappearing altogether into the grasps of its neighbours; it would have happened had the French not intervened and imposed a protectorate.<sup>5</sup>

Like William Shawcross, who is a good Khmer History Writer, but can't clearly describe why Khmers became rebellious people against Yuon earth eaters/land plunderers.

### **During the Reign of Queen Ang Mai (1834-1841)**

Princess Ben who was so painful with Yuon's violation. She fled to Bangkok. This trip was leaked to Yuon who then captured Princess Ben and put second daughter of Preah Ang Chant II, Preah Neang Ang Mai on the throne. During the reign of Queen Ang Mai, Khmer didn't have power at all. All powers were under the grips of Yuon. Yuon stationed their troops in Kampuchea and demanded Khmers to feed them. All Yuon Governors of districts controlled all district Governors of Khmer. All Royal ministers had to wear clothes like Yuon did. Some provinces, districts had to be changed into Yuon language like Phnom Penh, was called Nam Yang/Vang. In the administration, had to use Yuon language. Yuon tried to destroy all Buddhist temples, Buddha Statutes, stupas, falling off Bodhi Tress and so on.

### **Ong Tuong Ku's plan didn't achieve**

In 1841, a Yuon Chief-commander, Ong Tuong Kun, who planned to swallow up Kampuchea. Ong Tuon Kun sieged to capture Preah Oparaac Ang Em/crown prince/heir apparatus, three ministers and all daughters of Preah Bath Ang Chant II, including Queen Ang Mai who would be sent to be tortured in Srok Yuon.

But the plan of Ong Tuong Kun didn't achieve. The act of brutalities of Yuon over Royal families made Khmers so painful in their heart. All People, Buddhist monks, ministers were so angry. All Cambodians in the Kingdom uprose, killing both Yuon soldiers and civilians everywhere for 8 days.

Afterwards, Khmer ministers met secretly and agreed that to request the help from Siamese and to request Ang Duong to come to reign over Kampuchea.

In 1841 the same year, seeing a good opportunity, Preah Chau Siam/Siamese King assigned Pa Din as the chief commander to escort Preah Ang Duong back to Kampuchea.

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<sup>5</sup> William Shawcross: Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia (1986) P.42

Being so angry with no luck, Yuon then killed Princess Ben by putting her in a bag and threw it into the river in 1842. As for Oparaac Ang Em who then died in Srok Yuon in 1843.<sup>6</sup>

### **War with Yuon**

Fighting with Yuon two times. First time, Siamese troops who had Chau Ponhea Pa Din as a leader who refrained Yuon and weak because Yuon troops were stronger.

Second Times, Yuon troops stormed into Udong but this time, Preah Ang Duong and Chau Ponhea Pa Din prepared all troops to fight back so bravely. Yuon troops didn't win, who agreed to sign in treaty to stop fighting between Khmer and Yuon in 1846.

After stopped fighting with Khmer, then Yuon recognised Prea Ang Duong as the King of Kampuchea. As for Queen Ang Mai and royal families who were detained in Srok Yuon before were released back to the country with gold sword and spear given to Khmer King again.<sup>7</sup>

Annam Emperor sent Sdech Tranh Yuon, named Truong Minh Giang (with 15,000 soldiers) to rule Cambodia to make love with 20-years-old Princess Ang Mai (Some words are true, other untrue...but later, when Princess Ang Mai knew being accused like this. She had gone mad). Princess Ang Mai was named in Yuon "Preah Neang Ngoc Hoang"...had a tittle as My Lam Khvan Chhuor (Princess of Srok My Lam. As for Phnom Penh was named "Nam Vang/Yang" in Yuon. Yuon also deceived Oparaac Ang Em (Big Brother of Preah Ang Duong) and his entourages to walk into Yuon traps in Phnom Penh and then Truong Minh Giang ordered to arrest Oparaac Ang Em being chucked into a iron cage sending to Hue...(1840). A big sister of Ang Ben, 32 years old, was also drowned to her death in Long Hor province (Vinh Long).<sup>8</sup>

### **Vietnam Imperial march and nationalism**

From "The Two Viet-Nams: A Political and Military Analysis", Chapter 2: A Glimpse of the Past

But the Vietnamese yoke on Cambodia was to take a shape far more direct than the highly theoretical suzerainty China still exercised over Viet-Nam. The declining Khmer state was split into three Vietnamese "residences" under the control of a Vietnamese Chief Resident at the Cambodian court at Udong. The Vietnamese began an acculturation process that, as in the neighbouring provinces and in the case of the Chams, amounted to veritable genocide: destruction of the Buddhist temples and shrines, compulsory wearing of Vietnamese clothing and hairdress, Vietnamization of city and provincial names, and, finally, abolition of the royal title of the Cambodian sovereigns. By the early nineteenth century, the queen, Ang Mey (1834-41), held

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<sup>6</sup> History of Kampuchea (1970) Pp.121-122

<sup>7</sup> History of Kampuchea (1970) P.125

<sup>8</sup> According to Angkor Borei, the Voice of Khmer Overseas, Revision of History, by Sot-Polin, 11/12/04

a virtual prisoner in her palace, was officially referred to as merely “chief of the territory of My-Lam.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Lam Saum’s battle (1841-1847)**

After the execution of Oknha Son Kuy in the province of Preah Trapeang, Tesa Saum, (Lam Saum) a provincial administrator, formed a force in Chab Phloeung (Tap Son), Tracu District, to battle against the Vietnamese. His army won a battle in Pnoo Doong (O Dung) that resulted a heavy casualty for the Vietnamese. He was later captured on another front, and brought to Hue to be executed. This happened under the reign of King Thieu-Tri, one of the Vietnamese emperors.

Following the Vietnamese beheaded Chauvay Kuy, in 1841, Khmer people through out the country rose up against the Vietnamese armies.

In 1858, the people of Moat Chrouk (Chau Doc) liberated their territory and rejoined it with Cambodia. In the same year, the Khmer army also drove the Vietnamese out the the provinces of Khleang (Soc Trang), Preah Trapeang (Travinh), and Kramorn Sar (Rach Gia). In 1859 was when Yuon were being terribly defeated in fighting against the Frenchmen. Preah Ang Duong who continued to organise fighting Yuon. Preah Ang ordered to build many soldiers camps near Moat Chrouk and Peam and he assigned a minister, Kep as the commander. The first victory made him to have very much hope. But by 1860, he died. Commander Kep then returned to Udong City.<sup>10</sup>

### **Sena Sous’s battle (1859)**

In 1859, the Khmer Krom of the province of Srok Khleang, under command of Sena Sous, stood up to the Vietnamese in the battles of Mahatup and Chong Ballang. During three years of fighting the Khmer Krom won most military engagements in the areas surrounding the province.

Unfortunately a Vietnamese undercover agent, belonging to other ethnic group, had infiltrated his rank joined the Khmer force and became Sena Suos's most trusted chief. Later, Sena Sous was poisoned by the man (his name was unknown).

### **Sena Mon’s and Sena Tea’s battle (1860)**

In 1860, under the command of the 2 bothers, Sena Mon and Sena Tea, the Khmer Krom in Srok Khleang once again stood up to the Vietnamese at Lum Pou Year (Thanh Fu). Sena Tea was wounded and died. His body was buried in the Kvang Krobol (Hung Oh) Buddhist temple in Pol Leave (ABC Lieu) province.

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<sup>9</sup> By Bernard B. Fall (Praeger Publishers, New York, 1971)

<sup>10</sup> History of Kampuchea (1970) P.128

According to Adhemard Leclere, in his *Histoire de Cambodge*, 1941, King Ang Duong, in 1857, secretly contacted the French Emperor Napoleon III, through a French Catholic missionary, Monseigneur Michel, invited the French to attack the Vietnamese forces stationed in Prei Nokor, with a promise to pay 500 (nen) after the victory.

In 1858, Napoleon III ordered Admiral Doude de la Grandiere to follow this request. King Ang Duong then sent Khmer Royal Army to liberate the southern Treang province, and others including Bassac, Preah Trapeang, Kramorn Sar, and Moat Chrouk, under the command of the Khmer General Kep. After, King Ang Duong passed away in 1860, his son, King Norodom came to the throne.

In 1864, the Khmer King with a promise from French Admiral de la Grandiere, that France will return Kampuchea Krom (known as French Cochinchina) solely to Cambodia upon France withdrawal, placed Cambodia under French protection.

However, in 1884, at a gun point, King Norodom (son of Ang Duong and grandfather of the current King Norodom Sihanouk) was forced to sign off Cambodia to become a French colony. However, under the French Khmer Krom enjoyed extent privileges, including having their rights to be Khmer citizen in Cambodia (same practice also adopted by the current Royal Government of Cambodia), their rights to follow Khmer educational system, their rights to worship Buddhist religion, their rights to hold governmental positions, including governorship of all Khmer provinces. Khmer Buddhist temple received direct order from Phnom Penh patriarchs.

Khmer Krom people have so fiercely fought against the Vietnamese aggressors, landplunderers, and eartheaters as Former PM Son Sann liked to call it. Son Sann who bravely had served his nation from the bottom of his heart until he died peacefully in Paris on December 19<sup>th</sup> 2000 as I have extracted this from Khmer Krom Websites as following:

Khmer Krom People in Vietnam mourning the Lost of Somdech SON Sann. Whereas, Somdech SON Sann (I), a native of Kampuchea-Krom and grandson of Oknha SON Kuy (II), passed away on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2000 at the age of 89 in Paris, France. His funeral service and cremation according to Buddhist tradition will be on December 31, 2000 at 9:00 AM in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Whereas, the lost of Somdech Son Sann is the lost of a precious Khmer's national treasure. His life-long dedication for the sake of peace and national interests have been recognized nationally and internationally; and Whereas, Somdech SON Sann and his circumstantial contribution to help the unfortunate Khmer Krom people has been fully recognized; Therefore the Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation humbly mourns the lost of Somdech SON Sann and appeals to all Khmer Krom around the world, including many millions of Khmer Krom People in Kampuchea-Krom or southern part of Vietnam to join the historic event of December 31, 2000 at 9:00 AM as the following:

1. Spend 2 minutes of silence dedicating for Somdech SON Sann and his life-long contribution to all Khmers. May the Khmer Krom peaceful struggle for human rights and the rights to self-determination be blessed by his spirit and noble deeds?
2. Dedicate the month of January of each year to study and research the history of struggle of Oknha SON Kuy and Somdech SON Sann for Khmer Krom identity.



Somdech Son Sann<sup>11</sup>

Former Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, former President of the Khmer People National Liberation Front, former Member of Supreme National Council, former President of the Cambodian Constitutional Parliament, and Privy Councillor to His Majesty Preahbath Norodom Sihanouk Varman, King of Cambodia. (II) Khmer Krom martyr whose head was amputated in 1841 at Travinh province for the peaceful cause to protect Khmer culture and religion in Cochinchina during the reign of Vietnamese Emperor Minh Mang and Thieu Tri. (Posted on Monday, March 18 @ 11:45:00 PST (Khmer Krom mourn the lost of Lokta Son Sann. Date: 2000-12-28 Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation 801 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Suite 800 Washington, D.C. 20004 December 28, 2000 for Immediate Press Release)

Honourable (Lok Ta) Son Kuy means many things. He is a symbol of freedom. A freedom that we Khmer Krom strongly oppose the Vietnamese oppressors, aggressors and colonialists. He represents hundreds of years of suffering, frustration and a hundred of years of being insulted, manipulated by the Vietnamese landplunderers, murderers and invaders,. If Khmer Krom could not stop the brutal colonization, oppression and violation of human rights of Yuon against Khmers. We are going to be locked in the communist Vietnam's iron cage for many years to come for sure.

It will be the same thing over again and again. We, together, are simply said “NO” one voice under the Khmer Kampuchea Krom Federation leadership. We are going to say “NO” to the continuation of present policy of communist Vietnam in the indigenous peoples. We are going to say “YES” to support the United Nation’s DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDENOUS PEOPLES.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.seasite.niu.edu/khmer/Ledgerwood/biographies.htm>

We want to be recognized as the first people in Cochin China and we know we are. Say “NO”; we will be recognized in the future. The Vietnam communist knows for a fact that the time will come when the world sees the true picture. Nothing will change if we are letting VN to push us around, push us to say “NO” in different time, different place and different direction.

Remember! We are the indigenous peoples and we have to have our rights to consider different, to govern different. Khmer Krom people have been through a lot of trauma in the past decades. We have been assaulted. We are not treated as equals under the Human Right Declaration and we are not recognized as the people. That is how we are treated. We say “NO”; the world will see that the Vietnamese policies are based on colonization, racism, assimilation, integration and genocide. Believe me! It does exist daily in our homeland.

What we have to do is talking louder across the globe, giving people information and speaking to many people, groups, organizations, foundations, and foreign leaders. Remember! Knowledge is very important. Knowledge is power. Knowledge understands. We have to inform people the key issues and develop an understanding of who we are. We don't have to be scared to talk about how the communist Vietnam taking control our lives. We, Khmer Krom, have to control our lives. Thank you for reading and please participate, support the “Khmer Krom Relief Funds”

Oknha Kuy is like the Liberty Statue in New York. He represents freedom of everything. We should build his Statue as the Liberty in Prei Nokor when Yuon leaders are going to be forced by handing back Khmer Krom to Cambodian people one day in the future.

This is the fourth roots of the reason that the Khmer people who really considered Yuon as their 3-Century-Old-Leech-Hereditary Foes who are the worst murderous violators of human rights on earth. And this was the Second Killing Fields that Yuon committed against Cambodians in the bitterest past. Yuon colonialists and imperialists are still trying to cover up their One Million Super-Dirty-Demonic Genocidal Plans against Khmer Krom before eyes of people in the outside world. Who created Killing Fields in 1975 to 1979 to brutally massacre more than 3 million innocent Cambodians, more 460,000 lives again from 1979 to 1991 in Cambodia like that? Tragic irony of history; their victims, the peasants of Indochina, will be unforgotten. They will join the countless millions of earlier victims of Yuon tyrants, intimidators, murderers and oppressors. And the killings still take place in the dark place very secretly. Why were about three million Cambodian lives spent from 1975 to 1979 like that? Without about 3 million Khmer Kandal lives were spent, can all Khmer Krom refugees who are living overseas reveal their Endless Past and Present Unforgettable Painful Suffering Tragedies to the UN and world like that?