

*Organizing the Revolutionary State:
Governance and Mass Death in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge*

by

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Abstract

In the 20th century the collectivization of agriculture led to the deaths of tens of millions of people around the world. Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge had one of the highest mortality rates of any communist revolution, with the deaths of approximately one quarter of Cambodia's population: half from direct violence and the other half from indirect means, in particular starvation. This dissertation asks why. Specifically, what explains the variation in indirect deaths, those that resulted from means other than execution, during the Cambodian genocide? I answer these questions through a study of collective agriculture and famine deaths at the commune level, based on original interview data collected over sixteen months of fieldwork in Cambodia. I argue that it was not just collective agriculture that led to high rates of starvation deaths, but the policies of family separation associated with the collectivization process that exacerbated the problems of famine. The decision to include social components was an ideological one, but those it targeted reflect a strategic logic based on the state's economic and security interests. These choices mattered: the types of policies put in place ultimately shaped the likelihood that a person could survive the revolution. By breaking up social ties, collectivization effectively removed traditional buffer networks that protected against crop shortfalls or policy failures in the past. Through this project, I demonstrate a logic of governing a revolutionary state and its consequences for the unintended victims of state violence.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Organizing the Revolutionary State

On April 17, 1975, when the Khmer Rouge forces took Phnom Penh and seized power in Cambodia, the residents of Ta Pun commune (Sangkae District, Battambang) had already been working in collective farms and eating in communal mess halls for two years. As evacuees from Battambang and Pursat provincial towns flooded in in 1975, conditions deteriorated sharply. The work groups that had been formed in 1973 became their living groups as well: men's work groups and women's work groups lived separately in makeshift housing in the forests, all children and babies were sent off to live with a few old women who were assigned their caretakers (B211). The Khmer Rouge officials and party members took over the houses in the village and confiscated any belongings left behind. In this community in the country's rice-basket, the new leadership implemented two additional rice growing cycles and demanded that people produce 5 tons of rice per hectare (B212). Despite the dramatic increase in rice production, people were given only watery porridge to eat and were left speculating where all the rice they grew was sent. Over time, the officials were replaced and killed for being too lenient, incentivizing increasingly extreme demands from new leaders who feared they too would be killed (ibid). By the time the Khmer Rouge lost control of the country in January 1979, over 10,000 people died in this district (CGEO 2001).

Just northwest of Ta Pun, in Kanteu Piir commune, collectivization was less severe. It started in 1976, three years later than in Ta Pun. The residents chose new leaders who created and ran work groups in the community. New evacuees from Battambang and Pailin cities were

integrated into the community. Those with ties to the old the regime were jailed or executed, but for most people in this community, they continued to live in the same homes, work in groups with their families and have meals with their families, albeit at the communal mess hall (B311). Residents of Kanteu Piir could grow gardens at home and eat what they grew. They were also given surplus cassava or potatoes that they grew communally, although they were never allowed to take extra rice. The land near this commune is more mountainous and was less productive than other parts of Sangkae district, so they were not given the same stringent quotas - instead they grew a mix of rice, potato, and cassava, depending on what could grow there (B312). While conditions were undoubtedly difficult and people were killed for their role in the Lon Nol regime or class status, collectivization in this community took on a drastically different meaning that it did only 25 miles away in Ta Pun. Both communities were subject to collectivization under the Khmer Rouge, but what that entailed were entirely different experiences that affected not only the daily life for those who lived through it, but the likelihood that someone would die as a result of direct or indirect means of violence.

The differences in these two communes demonstrate the puzzle that this dissertation addresses. Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge (KR) had one of the highest mortality rates of any communist revolution, with the deaths of approximately one quarter of the population: half from direct violence and the other half from indirect means, in particular starvation (Heuveline 1998). I ask why the Khmer Rouge period was so lethal. Specifically, what explains the variation in indirect deaths, those that resulted from means other than execution, during the Cambodian genocide? I argue that it was not just collective agriculture that led to high rates of starvation deaths, but the policies of social control as a part of the collectivization process that exacerbated the problems of famine. Further, I argue that the variation in implementation of collectivization

policies reflect a logic of governance, which shaped the types of collective practices that were established and maintained. The range of policies were determined through ideological goals – those that further the aims of the revolution –, but their implementation was based in a community's strategic value to the state based on both security and economic interests.

In answering these questions, I focus on collectivization in Cambodia under the KR regime from 1975 - 1979. An estimated 1.7 million people died in the course the KR regime, both from the direct exterminatory violence of the genocide and also from indirect means like starvation and epidemics as a result of their state project. Demographic estimates suggest that about half of these deaths were from indirect means (Heuveline 1998, Tyner 2012). I focus on the effects of collectivization as a means to address those deaths that occurred through indirect means. Collective agriculture was a central component of the KR's vision for a new communist utopia. Collectivization was a totalizing prospect: it entailed cooperative work groups, living communally, and collective ownership of all land, tools of production, and goods produced. Village life was reconfigured into village cooperatives. However, the collectives that KR policies created were not uniform. In some cooperatives control over all activities of daily life was ceded to KR officials, like Ta Pun, while in other collectives officials retained authority to moderate living standards or work quotas, like Kanteur Piir. These differences highlight the question of why some communities were better able to adapt and moderate the effects of KR policies while others saw increased repression.

Through this research, I build a theory that brings together social dimensions of survival with a strategic logic of mass violence and governance. In doing so, I emphasize indirect violence as an avenue of mass killing. I contend that the use of mass violence is strategic decision made by the central party. However these choices are shaped by the regime's ideology:

the decision to eliminate or repress population groups is based on the regime's goals. Further, the choices surrounding the use of direct and indirect violence are not made at random, but rather they are made in response to the regime's interests. Ideology can explain the turn to mass violence and the origins of policies selected, but it does not address the variation in implementation. Instead, the kind of control – or in this specific case, the type and level of collectivization – can be explained by the regime's security and economic interests in a given community. Further, I contend that the bureaucracy itself – the organization through which authority is decentralized – shaped the ways that policies were implemented across the country. The decentralization of authority is a critical feature of how policy implementation varied. I argue that political factors drove the decentralization process. The choices of which practices were implemented were deeply consequential. The inclusion of social control into the set of state policies was critical to the patterns of violence that unfolded. By targeting the family and community networks through social control, the regime removed critical support systems and isolated individuals. In isolation, norms of reciprocity and mutual aid were undermined: there was no source for aid and no structure around which to organize reciprocity. Therefore, I argue that social ties were necessary to buffer against the worst effects of conflict. Where policies – or actions taken by revolutionary agents - targeted social life, they undermined family ties, which made people more likely to die as a result of shortages and famine

In this chapter, I set out the questions driving this dissertation and the plan for answering them. First, I situate the collectivization famine in the context of the literature on famine and collectivization specifically. Next, I turn to the question of governing during periods of mass violence, which I situate in the literature on wartime governance. While the discussion of mass violence and natural disasters are critical to this project, I discuss those issues in the next chapter

which lays out the theory. After situating this puzzle in the literature, I turn to a brief overview of the argument put forward in this project. In doing so, I also outline the historical context of the KR regime and their rise to power, as well as give a sketch of the regime's ideology. I conclude with a discussion of research design and plans for each of the proceeding chapters.

Famine politics

In situating this project, I start with a discussion of famine as a man-made or politically rooted event. Following Sen (1981), I take famine to be a politically-constructed event and not one of natural causes. He presents a critical shift toward understanding famine as a the result of political factors, moving away from the neo-Malthusian approaches that focused on overpopulation and underproduction.¹ Sen argues that access to information (a well-functioning press) and an accountable government are key to preventing famine. De Waal takes this further, in saying that “famine is caused by failures of political accountability” (1997, p.85). In these cases, famine or indirect deaths are the result of a policy failure. However, both of these approaches presuppose that the government is interested in preventing famine. Instead, Devereux (2000) suggests that political will can go in both directions: there is the capacity to produce enough food to support the population if a government is willing to do so, but also that regimes are willing to withhold or extract food if it serves their political aims. What this means then for the communist famines is that they are both a man-made crisis, but also that they can serve as a deliberate political strategy.

Famine can also fundamentally shift the nature of a community or society. In several works on famine, there is a discussion of the dissolution of social networks in the process, that

¹ Devereux (2000) has a useful overview of the state of the literature

these were undone by extreme hunger, but their effects on the population are only implied (Davis 2001, O'Grada 2009, Wemheuer 2014). Famine, and eventual deaths of entire villages, dissolved social order and kinship networks themselves (Davis 2001, 68). Where they point to the dissolution of social networks as a result of starvation, they do not suggest specific mechanisms or pathways through which this takes place.

There is a separate literature that focuses specifically on the shortages in communist states, largely through the establishment of collective agriculture. State organization and bureaucracy play a critical role in Soviet and Chinese collectivization. The structure itself is seen as causing underproduction as well as incentives for extraction. Critically, Yang (1996) argues that the system of communal mess halls created a collective action problem, while Chang and Wen (1998) contend that they created inefficiencies, both leading to famine. Similarly, the state produced structural and political incentives to over-extract grain (Solnick 1999, Oi 1989), and politically created problems of redistribution (Conquest 1986, Tauger 1991). Others have argued that bureaucratization in the Soviet Union was a necessary step toward consolidating power (e.g., Suny 1998, Gregory 2004). For Suny (1998), these steps eliminated avenues of dissent and consolidated dictatorial control. Similarly, Gregory (2004) argues that the administrative system of the Soviet Union created nested dictators that were necessary to coerce those under them. For him, the structure relied on and was kept in place due to the nature of the economic system, not on political or ideological concerns. While these arguments demonstrate the role of central bureaucracy in communist violence, they do not address the observed subnational variation in collectivization and in mortality outcomes.

Additionally, evidence from the Ukrainian famine suggests that collective agriculture was used strategically to target political enemies in the Soviet Union. While the policy of collective

agriculture was the same across the country, the central authorities were able to manipulate production quotas and food aid to starve targeted groups (Applebaum 2017; Plokhy 2016). I take this a step further to address the mechanisms through which targeted policies affected the likelihood of survival in Cambodia. I discuss these factors further in developing the theory in the next chapter.

Wartime Governance

In addition to questions of famine, this project also addresses the ways that regimes govern during periods of violence. Throughout this project, I use the term governance to mean both the strategies and decisions made by the central party as well as the everyday administrative tasks carried out by local actors. At the central level, this includes high-level decisions and the management of a state bureaucracy. At the local level, this includes creating work groups, matching men and women into forced marriages, enforcing rations or quotas, and monitoring the population. Local level actors operated within the constraints and rules set by the central party and were therefore also shaped by the high-level priorities or strategies.

How the KR governed is puzzling in two key ways. First, the scholarship on Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge has focused mainly on the violence that took place. This is critical work, it is important that historians and social scientists have written detailed work about the mass killing and genocide that took place. This work has informed not only newer scholars, but has also shaped the way that the history of this period is taught to Cambodian children at school, as well as informed the tribunal that began its work in 2007. However, in many of these accounts the state, as a functional actor that made decisions about policies and their implementation, is largely absent. The exception is in those accounts of the prisons, particularly S21, which was the highest

level prison in the KR system, because of its impeccable record-keeping. The question of collective agriculture - the cornerstone of Khmer Rouge ideals - remained largely under-explored. The policies themselves may have been pronounced in official rallies or in the state's four-year plan, but their implementation is not considered. Therefore, I arrive at this question of governance in part to address this gap: how did these deeply ideological actors actually put policy in place? And what did its implementation look like on the ground?

Second, the KR regime continued to think of themselves as an insurgency. Even as they became the state and took on increasingly state-like functions, like foreign relations, their attitude at home remained one of wartime mobilization. The state stayed mobilized for war and framed all of its actions in militarized terms. In the areas that the KR controlled before 1975, they established communalized practices (Carney 1989, Ith 1973), which continued as they gained control over the state. They began governing as insurgents; they stopped doing so only after they lost territory after 1979. This conception can further discussion of how insurgents govern once they become a state. While there has been recent research on ideologically-driven insurgent groups, they tend to point to Marxist ideology as a source of moderation or restraint (e.g. Thaler 2012, Wood 2009). The Cambodian case, however, in contrast to more moderate Marxist insurgencies that became states, is a case where the extreme faction won out and wanted to establish their ideal state by any means necessary. This suggests that this explanation can also shed light on the ways that other extreme ideological regimes seek to govern and its potential effects on the population.

While I contend that revolution is a novel context, I build on the literature on wartime or insurgent governance. In the last decade, many have turned to explain the types and determinants of rebel governance in conflict. Wartime political orders are used to organize the population by

structuring their interactions with insurgents (Staniland 2012). Other studies of rebel governance have suggested that strategic interests become the primary consideration if the organization faces the threat of violence (Arjona 2014, Mampilly 2011). In part, this builds on Mampilly's contention to "view the provision of governance as a strategic decision by rebel leaders to generate collaboration among the civilian population in pursuit of their broader military and political agenda" (2011, p.233). While he emphasizes this during civil war, the shift to an interwar period (which is really what the KR era was), might put more emphasis on the political agenda. The group's political agenda – its ideology and revolutionary aims – shaped the kind of control established in a given region.

Ideological commitment can also shape mobilization and strategies of violence toward civilians. In the context of communist or highly ideological fighters, Marxist revolutionaries are seen as highly disciplined and deeply committed fighters (Balcells and Kalyvas 2010, Oppenheim et al. 2015, Wood 2009). Indoctrination or ideological training can also shape fighters' behaviors or deepen their commitment to the group (Eck 2009, Hoover-Green 2018). Further, Marxist discipline translates into restraint on violence against civilians and extended time horizons for incentives (Thaler 2012, Weinstein 2007, Oppenheim et al 2015). Moving to the organizational level, Gutiérrez-Sanin and Wood argue that group ideology can determine strategies, practices, and institutions of violence (2014). Similarly, governance ideology, shaped by the regime's understanding of its relationship to the territory and the type of state transformation, affects the institutions it establishes (Suykens 2015). These arguments about Marxist or other highly ideologically motivated insurgents would suggest a restraint on violence against civilians; however, this is not what I find, but rather I argue that ideology shaped which strategies or types of violence against civilians were appropriate. More specifically, I find that it

made the collectivization project possible, but also authorized other practices, like that of forced marriage.

Overview of the Argument

The argument proceeds in two stages: the first is an approach to governance as the result of a process of organization and decentralization, the second addresses survival in response to policies put in place. The first section asks how and why collectivization varied in practice. I argue that the establishment of collective agriculture responded to the regime's strategic incentives: where the regime faced security risks or had economic incentives in a given commune, they were less likely to decentralize authority. Further, I contend that it is the variation in decentralization, not decentralization itself, that drove the ways that policy was implemented. In practice, this meant that the central party had greater control over those communities with greater strategic value to them. I break these interests down into security risks and economic incentives.

Security risks include both physical threats of invasion from neighbors and ideological threats from groups that the regime finds politically or socially undesirable. I argue that security risks led to an overall greater level of control, administered through collectivization, with an emphasis on economic factors. More broadly however, I find that the security risks affected the level, but not the type, of collectivization. Further, I argue that security risks were more likely to lead to direct violence – execution was more expedient for a security risk – than indirect violence. Lastly, the regime relied on frequent political purges to close ranks and control the officials it feared may try to overthrow the regime. As a result of these internal security risks, particularly in the north and northwest zones, local officials (those from the areas they governed) were removed, executed, and replaced by officials from the southwest who were better trained

and more ideologically aligned with the central party. Therefore, facing internal security risks, the paths to centralized control were different than the increased oversight in areas with high economic value. Taking a step back, this suggests that security concerns were not as critical as economic incentives in shaping the likelihood of facing indirect violence during the KR period.

Economic incentives shaped the regime's strategies of governance, through control and oversight of the population's daily life. I use economic interests primarily to mean the areas of the country with the highest expected crop yields. The expectation of crop yields is based on a historical record of high outputs: the areas around Battambang in the northwest of the country were traditionally the highest producers of rice, the country's staple crop. As a result of these traditionally high yields, the regime emphasized rice production even more in these areas and sent large numbers of people from the cities, and subsequently the southwest zone, to the northwest as surplus labor. Khmer Rouge ideology suggests that targeted populations should be executed; however, a second wave of migration brought groups from the Southwest to the Northwest Zone, which I argue was due to demand for more laborers driven by high rice yields. In this case, the demands for labor were more important than eliminating the low status groups, which suggests an economic logic. In addition, areas with high rice yields had greater oversight through more frequent contact with central authorities.

Based on these incentives, authority was decentralized through two channels, direct oversight and replacement of local officials. Ith Sarin, an early defector from the KR, wrote that the organization's structure below the district level was shaped by the commune's importance (1973). He observed that the central party sent additional officers to those communes that were

important or whose leaders they did not trust (1973, p. 38).² I take this further to disaggregate what made a commune important or untrustworthy. Direct oversight was more likely in areas with high value resources (economic incentives). Oversight was carried out through frequent site visits by senior officials or a presence of military actors (which was more hierarchically structured) to ensure progress was being made toward the regime's goals. Replacement of local officials was more likely in places where there were political purges – a result of internal security threats. Replacements meant that cadres from the southwest, those who trained or had greater interaction with the central party, took over administrative control from officials who were from those regions. The introduction of non-local officials also suggests that they were likely to have greater loyalties to the party and few or no loyalties to the populations in their new commune.

The second section addresses the ways that populations could survive given the type of governance in their community. I argue that famine deaths should vary systematically, in response to the variation in governance. I posit that the *type* of collectivization, not the *level*, affected the likelihood of deaths from collectivization. More specifically, I argue that they were less likely to survive if there were policies targeting social life – social collectivization – in place in that commune. I focus on the role played by communal and family ties, which would ordinarily insulate people from famine and shortage; however, given the policies of family separation, forced marriages, and separate living groups these ties were fractured. In effect, this meant that those populations who faced social collectivization were more likely to be isolated from their networks. As a result, they were cut off from those who would be most willing to face risks to help them survive the shortages caused by collectivization. Therefore, people living in

² While this was written in 1973, prior to the KR becoming a state, there is little evidence to suggest that the administrative structures in areas already under KR control or the logic behind them would shift.

communes with high social collectivization were more likely to die from indirect means, like famine, than those with only economic collectivization.

Historical Overview

The KR period was as destructive as it was, in part, due to the historical context. Their rise to power ended a civil war with the US-backed Lon Nol regime and was in part aided by instability brought on by bombing campaigns aimed at the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which ran through eastern Cambodia. From 1970 to 1975, the Cambodian Communist Party (to become the Khmer Rouge) were engaged in civil war with the Lon Nol government and moved ever closer to Phnom Penh. During this time, the Cambodian communists also began to cut ties with the Vietnamese with whom they allied against French colonialism in the 1950s. They began to purge the Vietnam-linked leadership and as well as the moderates within their ranks. The early purges during the civil war allowed the clique lead by Pol Pot to ensure its position at the top of the Cambodian communists and get rid of moderates (Kiernan 1996). Territory near the capitol was particularly volatile and control changed hands between the communists and republicans several times before 1975 (Chandler 1991). In this course of the 5-year civil war, an estimated 250,000 people were killed, and about 2 million are estimated to have been displaced, largely due to the US bombing campaigns (Kiernan and Owen 2007). The post-independence turmoil in Cambodia created an environment of instability, shifting control, and ultimately chaos that enabled the rise of the Khmer Rouge.

Immediately upon seizing power on April 17, 1975, the regime moved to empty the cities across the country – sparking forced migration of over 2 million people out of Phnom Penh on April 17 and Battambang, the second largest city, on April 20, 1975. Residents were forced out

of their homes as KR soldiers moved through the cities, which began a chaotic process of dispersing across the countryside. As the population moved to the countryside some were questioned or self-identified at checkpoints as former doctors, teachers, bureaucrats, and they were taken to be killed. For everyone else, they were sent to rural villages that had varying capacities to house and feed the new arrivals. These urban evacuees were labeled New People or “depositees” to denote their status in their new villages. Those people already living in rural areas were renamed Base People and they were given higher status in the new regime framework, in some areas they were called “full rights people” to clarify their status and eligibility to join the party.

The first few months of the KR period were chaotic and violent as the new regime consolidated power and established order. By December 1975, they established a new constitution and set out their vision for the new state to the members of the communist party, based on principles approved in April.³ They remained shrouded in mystery, the central party was referred to only as *Angkar*, or the organization, and leaders used code names in all communication. The new regime drew up lines to administer the state based on old military divisions – instead of the provinces that traditionally divided the country, it was turned into 6 administrative zones based on the cardinal directions from Phnom Penh. Below those zones were 32 regions and four autonomous zones. The regions were made up of approximately 5 districts, but the district boundaries remained similar to the pre-war borders.

The new state was organized through the Assembly, State Presidium, and the government, all of which were under the control of the Central Committee. The party’s March 1976 meeting lays out clear steps and guidelines to meet the goals of the 4-year plan and

³ The new constitution is available in English in Chandler (1976)

strengthen the revolution (Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, 1988). The meeting put forward specific policy goals for agriculture, education, industry, social welfare, and security that it tasked the government with implementing. The government was organized by sector under the control of the central committee. The collectivization of agriculture in many ways was the heart of the KR's ideological imperative. Despite the hierarchical structure of the state, the collectivization of agriculture was the only core area of the state left without a specific ministry: there was no Ministry of Agriculture created in the new constitution (Mertha 2014). This structure meant that in practice, the structure of command over agriculture left final control in the hands of the top leadership to determine production goals and the plans for implementation. As a result, collectivization was a highly decentralized process meted out with specific goals and tasks from the top. This is where my theory intervenes: I argue that the central committee decentralized authority unevenly, based on its own strategic incentives.

Following rumblings of rebellion toward the end of 1976 and factional in-fighting, the KR cracked down on its own members in 1977 through waves of purges taking place across the country. The North zone was the first to face a widespread purge after the failed rebellion in Chi Kraeng, a district just south of Siem Reap city.⁴ During this first wave of purges, there were several high-level arrests of zonal leadership, which led to further arrests of their entire networks.⁵ Purges followed in the Eastern zone as well, which were some of the bloodiest sites of KR violence, leading mid-to-lower level cadres to defect and flee to Vietnam. These defections, along with violence on the Vietnamese border, led to a Vietnamese invasion in late 1978.

⁴ This is discussed in greater detail in Vickery (1984) and Kiernan (1996). I also have a more in depth discussion of the effects of the rebellion in chapter 3.

⁵ see Chandler (1999) for a further discussion

The invasion itself was relatively quick, with the Vietnamese forces taking control of Phnom Penh on January 7, 1979. This marked the end of the KR period, the regime and its military were defeated and began a retreat west toward Thailand. While the KR regime fell, the village cooperatives were disbanded and people were free to return home. The journey back was often slow and it took quite a longtime for families to reunite, searching for any known relatives, and trying to decide where to go. However, the fall of the KR was not an end to violence, but rather began a decades long civil war between the KR – once again a guerilla group – and the Vietnamese and Vietnamese-backed groups. The civil war came to an end in 1998.⁶

Overview of KR Ideology

Throughout this project, I refer to KR ideology to discuss their alignment and their goals. In discussing the role of ideology, I draw on Swidler's conception. She defines ideology as “a highly articulated, self-conscious belief and ritual system, aspiring to offer a unified answer to problems of social action” (1986, p.279). Further, she contends that ideology teaches new types of actions over the short term; and in the long-term can create new strategies of action (1986, p. 282). In a context like Cambodia under the KR, other ways of thinking were prohibited, reinforcing the power of the regime's ideology to constrain behaviors and determine choices.

In this section, I give a brief overview of the regime's ideology and worldview to give context to the goals that they set forward.⁷ When the KR came to power, their ideological vision was to create a pure Khmer population, rid of ethnic minorities, the urban population, and those with foreign exposure. The KR were a Marxist-Maoist regime, but also had deeply racialized

⁶ There is a timeline of key events in appendix 2

⁷ This is a brief overview of the regime's ideology, for further detail on the KR's ideology, see: Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua (1988), Khieu (1979), and Locard (2004).

ideals that shaped their utopian vision. The core beliefs stressed an elimination of private property, the removal of all foreign elements from society, and a return to the past of the Angkorian empire.

As a first set of goals, the regime sought to eliminate private property, ownership, and any semblance of a capitalist economy – going as far as to eliminate currency within the country. Reaching this goal meant that the state would claim ownership over all goods produced, but also that they needed to provide for the population. This element underscored the need to establish the cooperative system in order to do so. The senior leaders claimed that cooperative production would be more efficient as well as enable more efficient distribution of goods (Locard 2004). In part, this also drove the removal of all urban populations out to the countryside so that they could take part in cooperative production. Once the state reached its agricultural goals, there were plans to establish cooperative production in industry as well (Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua 1988).

The second component of their core beliefs emphasized the removal of all foreign elements. This built in part on the belief that foreigners had been exploiting the country for decades – first through colonialism, then through trade and political influence in the post-colonial decades. Khieu Samphan, the head of state and a long-standing member of the standing committee, claimed that all of Cambodia's problems were caused by foreign influence. Therefore, the way to solve these problems was to get rid of any vestige of foreignness. This drove the emphasis on self-reliance, as well as closing the state off from outsiders,⁸ that pushed the regime to the extreme (Khieu 1979). As a result of these beliefs, the regime sought to eliminate those people it viewed as foreign – ethnic minorities like the Cham, Vietnamese, and

⁸ Again, this was selective – foreign delegates from friendly countries as well as Chinese technical advisors (see Mertha 2014) continued to travel to and from Cambodia

Chinese populations, and class-based groups, like the urban populations or those who were educated abroad. For the latter groups, their crime was contact with foreigners.

The third component, a return to the Angkorian empire, drove further racial ideals but also promoted agriculture and irrigation above all else. The KR leaders looked to the Cambodian past, to Angkor at its peak in the 12th century, as a path toward restoring the glory of empire. The Khmer (or Angkorian) empire, now thought to be the largest empire on earth during its time, was based largely on rice production that was bolstered by a tremendous network of irrigation canals.⁹ Trade, iron, and technology were also important elements of the Angkorian empire's rise, but the KR overlooked those. This drove the idea that if the population were purely Khmer and emphasized rice production and irrigation, then Cambodia could reclaim its past (Locard 2004). The regime saw the Base People as closest to that past – they were ethnically pure, worked primarily as rice farmers, and lived in the countryside.

Along with the economic goals, the KR followed other communist regimes in banning religion. Religious minorities were explicitly targeted with violence. Buddhism, the dominant religion in Cambodia, was banned and the KR denounced the institution of monkhood (Locard 2004). As early as 1973, they forced monks to defrock, decrying them as a drain on society, prohibiting the practice of alms-giving, and threatening to punish anyone found giving them food for alms: essentially giving monks the choice to defrock or starve (Vickery 1984).

The new categories of population are based on these central ideals. The top of the hierarchy, the Base People or “full rights people”, were those rural populations of ethnic Khmer

⁹ Recent research has confirmed the larger size of the Angkorian empire, see “Revealed: Cambodia's vast medieval cities hidden beneath the jungle” *The Guardian*, June 11, 2016. Available through <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/11/lost-city-medieval-discovered-hidden-beneath-cambodian-jungle>

who had never lived in the cities or abroad. Below them were the New People or “depositees”, those urban populations who had been moved to the countryside, political or class enemies, and ethnic minorities. The fear with New People was that they were exposed to foreign ideology, but also that they had no idea how to farm rice, so they might not be useful in the new society.

Political enemies were those who either worked for or were thought to be supporters of the Lon Nol regime. Class distinctions were made toward those who were educated or were seen as exploiting the rural populations (in whose name the revolution was based). Those who were thought to be wealthy or educated were particularly hated. Lastly, ethnic minorities were seen as not Khmer and therefore part of the problem, they needed to be eliminated for Cambodia to once again be a flourishing, self-sufficient, agrarian utopia.

Mass death in the Cambodian Genocide

The use of both indirect and direct means affected the population as a whole, not only those undesirable populations. Across direct and indirect means, 29% of all New People were killed, as well as 36% of the Cham, 50% of the ethnic Chinese, and all of the ethnic Vietnamese (Kiernan 1996, p.458). Based on Kiernan’s estimates, this suggests that 987,000 people, about 30% of all people from undesirable population groups, were killed. But there were also 684,000 Base People, 15% of those from preferred status groups, who were killed (ibid). In total, these deaths represent about one quarter of the total population of Cambodia. These estimates only include deaths, they do not include victims of forced marriage, other types of violence, or physical or psychological injuries. The inclusion of indirect violence in this discussion is not what makes this a difficult case to label as genocide, but it complicates the issue of intentionality. The UN Genocide Convention (1948) specifically considers the creation of conditions unsuitable

for life as a part of the definition of the crime of genocide (article 2c). The difficulty in talking about collectivization or of man-made famine is that it is more removed from direct execution or even an act like displacement. The case of collective agriculture, as a set of policies, was not necessarily a strategy to kill, but was rather a tool of repression. I argue that the policies of collectivization, including rations, expropriation, forced marriages, and family separation, are all deliberate policy choices. However, the effects of these policies, particularly deaths from starvation, were not necessarily the direct aim of these choices. Instead, I argue that the regime deliberately instituted policies that led to conditions that made mass deaths possible – but the evidence is, to my knowledge, insufficient at this time to determine the intent of the senior leaders with respect to the collectives beyond the economic program. In practice, this means that I cannot determine that there was a deliberate creation of conditions unsuitable for life, which would constitute an act of genocide, but I also cannot rule it out.

Demographic estimates find that roughly half of the deaths came from indirect means, while the other half are attributed to execution (Heuveline 1998). De Walque (2005) disaggregates among the total deaths. He finds that during the KR period, working-aged men had the highest risk of violent death, while those from families with urban backgrounds and/or were educated were more likely to die in general. Further, he finds that religious minorities were more likely to be killed, with the highest rates affecting the Muslim population. His disaggregation of the data confirms the estimates in Kiernan's study as well. The data do not allow for disaggregation between direct or indirect means in his sample. The results from de Walque's study conform largely to the expectations for total deaths based on the KR's ideology.

Beyond the disaggregation of the general number of deaths, the most reliable source of data on local numbers of deaths is in the Geographic Database (CGEO) put together by the Yale

Cambodia Genocide Program and the University of New South Wales, with the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam). I refer to this database as the mass graves database or the CGEO database. Based on the CGEO data, there are remains documented from 106 of Cambodia's 163 districts. The proportion of indirect deaths out of all remains found in a district range from 0% to 100%, with an average of 44%. In terms of numbers of remains, these range from 0 remains to 25,000 for non-execution deaths, with an average of 2000 in a district. I have a more in-depth discussion of how I use these data in this project in Chapter 5, where I rely on CGEO data to discuss the indirect deaths in a community.

Why Cambodia?

I use this case as a most extreme example of communist revolution. Following Gerring and Seawright (2007), this type of case is particularly useful to generate hypotheses and develop theory. Therefore, an in-depth study of Cambodia is useful to better understand the policies of revolution and the patterns of violence that ensued. Essentially, the magnitude and scope of policies put in place and the violence used in this case magnifies the pathways to indirect deaths, making it observable through careful process tracing. While the policies themselves may not be replicated in other contexts, as extreme versions of other types of state policy, they shed light on important processes that take place in more ordinary cases. As an extreme case, I mean that this is a case where the types of policies and the types of violence used were intended to be a more extreme version of previous communist revolutions. The leadership saw themselves as building on the experiences of the Soviet Union and of China's Great Leap Forward, calling for a Super

Great Leap.¹⁰ The nature of the policy choices, which were intended to speed up and magnify the effects of other communist revolutions also serve to exaggerate the ways that similar dynamics may have worked in other cases.

In the scope of violence, the Cambodian genocide and collectivization famine affected an enormous portion of the population. At the end of the four-year period that the KR was in control, about a quarter of the country's population had died. Among those deaths, demographic estimates suggest that about half from direct execution and half from starvation, disease, or exhaustion. This is only taking into account mortalities – others were undoubtedly harmed, physically and mentally, but those numbers are harder to pinpoint. About 12.5% of Cambodia's population in 1975 is estimated to have died from indirect means - starvation, exhaustion, or epidemic - during the KR period. Comparing indirect mortality under the KR with the famines during soviet collectivization and the great leap famine, that's about double the percentage of the population that died from collectivization famine. In a comparative context, while it is only about 1 million people in Cambodia, in context those same rates of death from collectivization would have meant about 86 million deaths in China during the Great Leap Forward Famine (more than double the ~5% estimates of those who died from starvation) or about 20 million in the Soviet famines (again, more than double the estimated 7-8 million famine deaths during the Soviet famines). As a proportion of the population, only North Korea's famine in the 1990s is estimated to surpass the death rates in Cambodia, with an estimated 12-15% of the population dying from starvation (Devereux 2000). Therefore, Cambodia is an important case to understand the ways

¹⁰ The phrases “super great leap forward” and “great leap forward” are both used in party documents, but without explicit mention of China (Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua 1988)

that collectivization caused shortages that led to famine deaths and to theorize the pathways from policy to indirect deaths.

Why emphasize governance?

The state constructed and perpetuated the famine that emerged during collectivization, killing off a population it ostensibly set out to govern. At the broadest level, my project aims to understand how this happened. The empirical motivation is to understand why the policies put forward under the KR were implemented unevenly and why they caused so many deaths in different ways across the country. Traditional explanations of the KR regime do not focus on the issue of governance or at times do not acknowledge that there was a functional state at all. The emphasis on governance below the district level introduces new insight into how the KR governed. There are some explanations that suggest simply it was an ideological decision (Ponchaud 1978), that those populations were deemed enemies and that the regime viewed their deaths were part of the greater pursuit of a Khmer utopia (Kiernan 1996), or that the regime was responding to paranoid leadership (Chandler 1991, Heder 1997). However, none of those explanations fit the patterns of deaths that emerged during this period. Instead, there seems to have been a leadership that reacted and responded to crises that emerged in other aspects of the state, particularly the security environment, and took careful steps to hide the facts that it knew about the conditions in the rest of the country when foreign delegates came to visit.

The state had infrastructure in place to report back to the center and to receive information from the central party committee, reports on production in the zones were telegraphed back to Phnom Penh. They may not have had the information for each commune or village, but they did have mechanisms in place to collect and deliver goods to and from the

district (e.g. TK212) and the region (e.g. Ministry of Commerce 1976). Accounts also vary in terms of the work requirements and quotas, work conditions, and general environment across the DK period - unlike the monolithic picture of the period that others have painted, there were shifts toward both repression and moderation along with variation in the initial starting conditions across the country. I expand on the historical explanations by emphasizing the variation in KR practices across space and time through the emphasis on the state as a functional actor, not just one limited by weak capacity or ideology.

Subnational Case Selection

Within the country, I draw on twenty-five cases, each a commune in Cambodia, to build a theory of population survival during periods of mass violence – focusing specifically on indirect causes of death from collectivization. The communes in this dissertation were selected to capture as wide a range of experiences as possible – they are not intended to be nationally representative, but rather were selected because they are extremes. At a broad level, I focus my research in the Northwest and Southwest zones because these were areas that had the greatest variation in violence and governance. Accounts of the KR era highlight these two zones for having had the harshest conditions as well as the areas with the most open treatment. Often these areas bordered each other with only a creek or a train track dividing them (e.g. Region 3 and 4 in the Northwest or within Chhouk in Kampot). I focus on the former North, Northwest, and Southwest zones (to use the DK labels) because they saw the most extreme forms of collectivization.

The Southwest zone (modern day Kampot, Kandal, Kep, and Takeo provinces) was dominated by the KR and had districts under their control as early as 1968, as a result they had relatively lenient and gradual shifts toward cooperative agriculture in parts of the zone. Despite

these gradual adopters, there were also sites in the Southwest that received the initial influx of urban evacuees due to the proximity to Phnom Penh who were subject either to the harshest conditions, relocated across the country, or executed. Within the Southwest zone there were many of the most lenient communities, as well as some of the highest levels of direct exterminatory violence.

The Northwest zone (present day Battambang, Pailin, and Pursat) had some of the harshest living conditions during the DK period. This region remains the country's rice-basket and was known to produce the most (and widest crop variety of) rice that supported other lower producing regions of Cambodia. This set the expectations that the NW would be an even more productive region with higher work quotas, many sites of forced labor in construction projects supporting agriculture, and received an influx of evacuees because of the high production quotas.

The North zone (present day Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, and Siem Reap) could be seen as a foil to the extremes of the Southwest and Northwest in the first half of the DK period, but was the site of a widespread purge of leadership in 1977. Following the purges, there was a zonal crackdown in the region that introduced new officials from Takeo province (likely trained at Tram Kok or Bati districts) and considerably increased oversight of all practices.

Below the zone, I first selected districts based on the timing of KR control. I used two well regarded and authoritative historical texts, Kiernan (1996) and Vickery (1984), to select districts that were early allies or late additions to the KR. Based on these accounts, I use the timing of KR control (early allies or late joiners) to proxy for ideological support. In an earlier version of this research, I expected to find that the type of control in a given commune would be related to the support for the regime – early or strong supporters would be given autonomy, late or weak supporters would have greater oversight – which is how I designed the sample. This led

using a random selection of communes within a district would yield the most complete picture of what daily life looked at the local level. This was done using a random number generator to select 1/5 of the communes in each district.

Moving from selection to practice, there were seven communes where it was not possible to conduct interviews because I was denied permission by local authorities. In each of the thirty-four communes that I selected, I first approached the commune chief (roughly equivalent to a mayor) to get permission to do research in his or her community. What this meant, in practice, was that I went to each commune in person and met with the chief, explained what I was doing there and what kinds of subjects I planned to discuss, and hoped that they would allow me to do so. The responses however varied: in some locations the chief agreed, volunteered to be interviewed, and suggested others with whom I could speak, while in others the chief gave permission but sent a commune staff person (usually a clerk or a party official) to keep tabs on me,¹² and in others they declined permission. As the political situation worsened, there were more declinations. Similarly, as I got closer to Phnom Penh, leaders were less willing to have yet-another researcher come through their community – requests to see official paperwork and to justify that I was not from the court increased. In the areas nearest to Phnom Penh, about 50% of commune officials refused permission, in contrast to the roughly 20% in the north and northwest. Beyond the simple question of permission, the realities of limited infrastructure also eliminated two sites – one being accessible only by canoe during the rainy season and the other having no road passable by car or motorbike.

¹² In some instances this prevented effective interviewing. For example, in the last commune that I visited, the chief sent an official from the ruling party, a police officer, and a clerk along with me, which effectively prohibited interviews – informants were much too uncomfortable to speak with me and I felt that it imposed an unfair burden on informants to continue to speak with them.

Interviews in Practice

In each commune, I used snowball sampling to find interview subjects. I explained to a local leader (usually the commune chief or a village chief) that I was looking to speak with older people who had lived through the KR period and would be comfortable speaking about their personal histories.¹³ Among the population, I tried to find a balance between men and women as well as those who were adults or teens during the KR period – forty years later this meant the age range was typically about 55 to 80. Whenever possible former officials were included. However, many former officials had either fled or been killed, which made this particularly challenging.

Interviews themselves focused around daily life during collectivization. Questions focused around categories of living, eating, working, and meetings. Living included where people slept, if they could stay in homes with their families, childcare, eldercare, with whom they could socialize, and how (if) they observed festivals or weddings. If they responded about weddings, I would also ask more specific questions about the conditions under which they were married. Questions about eating focused on who made decisions about rations, who worked in the mess halls, whether people had enough food, and whether people could keep gardens, forage, or fish. The discussion of working included questions about work groups, quotas, punishments, training, and assignments. Questions about meetings focused on the ways that officials interacted with ordinary people, how they assigned groups, oversaw progress, if denunciations or reporting on others took place, and which kinds of officials (local or regional) were involved, as well as

¹³ In part, the political sensitivity at the time meant this was the language I had to use: I was told specifically that asking about politics directly would scare people from speaking with me, but talking about history was acceptable. Additionally, the words for history in Khmer connote either an official or national history (ប្រវត្តិសាស្ត្រ) or a personal history (ប្រវត្តិ). I specifically asked about the latter.

the frequency of meetings. In addition to these more structured categories, I asked how daily life changed or which changes were the most profound – this is where many interviewees focused on the shifts within their own families.

Types of data

This project uses original interviews with former officials and survivors of the KR, as well as archival documents, and historical data to explain the relationship between state organization, local governance, and mass deaths during periods of revolution. I conducted semi-structured interviews with approximately 100 people, who were survivors of the regime and former Khmer Rouge officials, across districts in the North, Northwest, and Southwest regions. The interviews were used to gather information about everyday life under collectivization and its effects on the individual and community. Interviews with former officials focused on their experiences and responsibilities during the KR period. Based on these interviews, I measure the type and level of collectivization in each commune. In doing so, I assess which practices were put in place and how strictly they were upheld – allowing me to compare the experiences of collectivization at a communal level across the country. This expands on studies that measure collectivization as an amount of land or percentage of the population under cooperative production.

For information on where people died from direct and indirect means, I use the CGEO mass graves data, which includes forensic data on the remains found in mass graves. It is a geolocated database of mass graves across Cambodia, which includes data on nearly 19,000 mass graves that are located in 309 sites. This data includes the number of bodies in each grave, the type of grave, and an indication of whether the dead were executed. The numbers range from

6 in one site to 70,000. Cheung Ek, Cambodia's most well-known killing field, for example, had 13,000 bodies over 129 graves. The types of mass graves include pits, wells, and rice paddy.

In an ideal data world, I would have used several other measures to verify the interests and risks in a given community. First, I would use nationally-representative data to draw inferences on a wider set of experiences and use the broader sample to test the theory built on the cases where I conducted interviews. Ideally, I would use demographic data to track the influx of New People and ethnic minorities in a given community, as well as the movement of population more precisely. Additionally, I would use the internal documentation on rice transfers to track how much was produced, sent to the center, and left in the communities themselves. However, to my knowledge, no such data exist. Therefore, I rely on interview data and narratives from my informants to determine what kinds of people were brought to the community and when they arrived. Unfortunately, the period immediately preceding the KR's rule was one of mass population movement, so earlier demographic records would not be likely to be accurate. The closest approximation comes from Sliwinski (1995), which estimates the province-level populations in 1975. Similarly, I rely on accounts of how much rice was demanded in the area – and corroborate with accounts in Vickery (1984) and Kiernan (1996) where possible. While there are some records of rice and other goods sent to and from the center in the National Archives of Cambodia, these records are at the zone level. Given the emphasis of the KR on producing documentation to confirm the party's line, and not necessarily to verify reality, I am doubtful that such records would even be reliable.¹⁴ Further, a majority of records kept by the Ministry of Commerce focus on international trade, which is also more verifiable with corresponding Chinese, Thai, or other second country records should exist. Therefore, I rely on historical

¹⁴ See Chandler (1999) on this phenomenon in the prison system

production information as well as the accounts of my informants. I use the informants' responses in aggregate – not relying on one account alone – to confirm the responses that I received. Based on the limited data available, my study presents novel data on the populations and economic interests in the communities that I have sampled. Additionally, the timing of this research, 40 years after the KR period, means that the window will be closing soon to interview those who lived through it as adults.

In addition to interviews and CGEO data, the on-going tribunal trying the Khmer Rouge leadership is an excellent source of data. The tribunal, formally the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), is trying the remaining senior leaders of the KR for crimes committed from 1975 – 1979. From the Standing Committee, only Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan, the former number 2 and number 3 in the regime, are still alive. An earlier case at the ECCC also tried and convicted Kaing Guek Eav, the former head of S21 prison. The acts they are trying include: genocide against the Cham and Vietnamese, crimes against humanity for forced labor, forced marriage, and forced migration, torture, and inhumane treatment, among others. Testimony from these cases includes the model district at Tram Kok district in Takeo province for general collectivization, as well as testimony on three worksites in the northwest, and forced marriage nationally. The charges for Tram Kok district cover the administration of the district (officials' roles and responsibilities), the treatment of minority populations, and the district level prison. Following the 1977 purges, officials were sent from Takeo province out to the 'rebellious' northwest. Thus, the model district played an important role, not only as an exemplar for the leadership in Phnom Penh, but also as instructional for officials who were sent around the country. The testimony has details on the responsibilities of local officials as well as how they changed over time. Most are at the district or commune level. While policy per se is

not delivered in written documents, the practices of a model district were meant to be instructive and its practices should reflect most closely the center's plans. While there are issues of memory and interviews after the fact, the court testimony has several advantages. It is given under oath, which should mitigate concerns and it is corroborated by a number of people. The testimony should provide a more reliable source of data on the standard practices (as policy) during the DK period. The trial testimony provides critical information about the policies surrounding collectivization, forced marriage, and labor outside of the village.

Building on these data, I use within-country comparisons in order to develop a theory that can explain the strategies of direct and indirect violence, and their effects, were used to build a new revolutionary state. Throughout each chapter, I use process tracing to draw out the key factors that determine how collectivization was implemented and its effects on the population. The two sections of the dissertation both focus on the commune level. However, there is a distinction in the analysis of each section. The end goal of this dissertation is to explain the rates of indirect deaths – those who died from non-execution means. In the second section (chapter 5), I rely on a proportion of indirect to total deaths as the outcome of interest. The key determinants, I argue, are the type and level of collectivization in a given commune. The first empirical sections (chapter 3 and 4), aims to explain the type and level of collectivization in a given commune. Put otherwise, in the big picture, the type and level of collectivization are key determinants, and the proportion of deaths from indirect means is the main outcome of interest.

The choice of Cambodia is as an extreme case; however, the logic of comparison at the subnational level relies on most similar cases if possible. In the first empirical chapter (chapter 3), which emphasizes security threats and collectivization, the communes discussed are selected among the sample because they vary on the type of threat that they faced. In the second empirical

chapter (chapter 4), the communes used vary based on their economic history. Finally, in the third empirical chapter (chapter 5), the communes selected vary in their type and level of collectivization. By selecting cases that are as similar as possible, other than the key variable in each chapter, allows me to more clearly draw out the effects of each factor (based on Gerring and Seawright 2007). I use this approach in order to generate a more broadly generalizable theory from the cases in each chapter.

Measuring Collectivization

There is an extensive literature that has taken on the issues of Soviet and Chinese collectivization both from both top-down and bottom-up approaches. In those accounts that take either a top-down or state-centric approach, there is a unified vision of the state and of the policies involved in collectivization. Other studies have presented compelling arguments for the individual and system level explanations for famine. There are systemic or institutional explanations (Lin and Yang 1998, Solnick 1999) to policy-specific arguments (e.g., Bernstein 2006, Yang 2007). Building on these opposing approaches, I bring together micro and macro approaches positioning state structures as the mediator of individual actors' actions and preferences. Additionally, I draw on work on China and Russia that has focused at the most specific level (e.g., Fitzpatrick 1994, Thaxton 2008), presenting deep ethnographies of a village or region, as well as economic analyses that rely on national level data (e.g., Ash 2006) to address broad trends. I have drawn on both types of analyses in constructing a measure that gets at individuals narratives, but also presents a metric that can be used across the country.

My project offers a way to address sub-national variation in collectivization from a micro perspective, with individual narratives and experiences of everyday life, while also presenting a

comparative approach. I use type and level of collectivization as a way to measure collectivization more holistically. In doing so, I introduce a new way to address policy implementation surrounding collective agriculture. The totalizing cooperative project in Cambodia can be broken down into social and economic factors. Instead of standard measures like population or total land under collectivization, I conceptualize the types as economic or social, and level as high, moderate, or low. The social components include group living, group meals, child and eldercare, and most critically, state-designated forced marriages. The economic elements relate primarily to work groups and assignments, as well as the confiscation of private goods, production quotas and rations. The level measures the extent of each type of policy put in place and how strictly it is upheld. For example, if all components of social collectivization are put in place (separation of families, forced marriages, separate child and eldercare) but are weakly enforced, it would be a moderate level of social collectivization. In cases where each component of economic or social collectivization is present and enforced, it would have a high level of that type of collectivization. Similarly, if few (or none) of the components are present and weakly enforced, it would be a low level. Moderate levels reflect either weak enforcement of all components or a mix of practices upheld. In each of the communes, I measure the level of both economic and social collectivization. Of the communes included in the sample, the levels of economic collectivization are: 13 low, 5 moderate, and 7 high. For social collectivization, I find that there are: 7 low, 11 moderate, and 7 high. These two broad categories capture many of the key components of the process and help to break down the conceptual blackbox of collectivization.

Social and economic components of collectivization

The policies in question throughout this project are the suite of practices that make up the collectivization of agriculture. The establishment of collective agriculture in Cambodia included both social and economic components, which I separate into two distinct, but interrelated, concepts. The inclusion of social factors – at least to the extent that they did in Cambodia – is extreme. It goes beyond the practices of collective agriculture in the Soviet Union or in China. But it is also these social practices that I contend made the policy of collective agriculture extra lethal in the Cambodian case.

The first set of practices are grouped together as *economic collectivization*. The economic components are more often discussed and more common in cases of communist transition. I conceptualize this set of practices as those intended to transform economic production and consumption within the state. Practically, this meant that state agents took control over all facets of economic life. This includes practices of: centrally-planned quotas and requisitioning of crops, rationing, establishing work groups, eliminating private property, and confiscating private goods. These set the stage for shortages.

The second, the components that governed social life, are what I call *social collectivization*. I conceptualize the social components of collectivization as the means through which the state took control of private life. In theory, these practices were intended as a way for the state to manage the daily lives of the population and implement their social engineering goals. In practice however, these were the ways through which state agents took over family and community life, including childcare, marriage, and eldercare. Specifically, these practices included: the establishment of living groups in lieu of family units, forced marriages of civilian

men and women, and communal childcare and separate housing of children. Through these practices, regime agents were able to manage the minutiae of daily life and control the most fundamental elements of community life.

Scope Conditions:

This project focuses on the collectivization project undertaken by the KR regime across Cambodia from April 17, 1975, to January 7, 1979. While the Khmer Rouge economy was more varied than originally understood, particularly in the on-going reliance on imports of industrial and chemical products and the export of rice, rubber, and goods for traditional Chinese medicine, collectivization of rice production was the core economic policy of the KR regime. There were other types of cooperative agriculture both before and after the KR, I am particularly interested in the ways that the regime acted as a state and governed its population while in control until 1979. Prior to the KR's control of the Cambodian state, there were varieties of mutual aid groups that developed semi-organically in small pockets around the country as well as the beginnings (or even testing grounds) of village cooperatives put in place in early KR strongholds (like Bati district in Takeo). There were also forms of cooperative labor in the post-KR period, especially in the immediate aftermath where rural populations were scrambling to meet basic needs for tools or seeds to produce sufficient crops to sustain themselves and created solidarity groups of several families share input resources. However, these forms of cooperation were distinctly different than the state-directed collectivization because they were both ad-hoc and emerged at least semi-organically.

I focus only on the areas that were involved primarily in rice production. I emphasize rice crops because it was the main subsistence crop and an existential concern of the KR regime.

Prior to the KR period, Cambodia produced mostly rice and rubber, with smaller crops like corn, cassava, and pepper (especially for exports). Rice production was the first and foremost concern of the KR economy. Other staple crops like cassava and corn were grown in large numbers but not as readily traded with China or North Korea - the KR's two largest trading partners. Further, my project directly takes on the issue of famine that ensued from collectivization projects, therefore it would be less directly tied to the production of crops like rubber. The production of rubber and other non-food commodity crops (e.g., Jute in the NW) was not newly imposed by the KR but preceded their regime by decades and was common practice in those parts of the country. There were also other agricultural and forest products traded by the KR, particularly those used in traditional Chinese medicine, but those played a smaller role in the economy than rice as the primary export and staple food crop.¹⁵

Alternative approaches in Cambodia

The research in this project builds on the critical historical work that established the record on the Khmer Rouge period - particularly those historians who worked throughout Cambodia and the refugee camps in Thailand in the 1980s, the first to approach the immediate aftermath of the KR violence. These accounts focus on the extraordinary violence that took place - the massive loss of life, the flight of hundreds of thousands of refugees, and the horror stories that came out of this period. More recent scholarly work, as well as legal research and analysis related to the trials, has focused more on the KR as a regime, not only on the causes of violence,

¹⁵ The one exemption to this is the production and trade in salt, which was produced at Sre Ampul in Kampot and the process by which it was produced relied on forced labor conscripted from previously agricultural groups. However, Sre Ampul was under the purview of the Ministry of Industry, which was a different structure of control than rice production.

but also on the ways that it was carried out and sustained. A few other have begun to more directly engage with the KR as a regime - as a government that maintained foreign relations, a bureaucracy, and worked to produce an infrastructure of a new state: this is where the research in this dissertation fits within the broader picture of scholarship on Cambodia.

The foundational work on Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge largely came from historians Ben Kiernan, David Chandler, Michael Vickery, among others, and journalist Elizabeth Becker's accounts. Becker, one of the four Western journalists allowed into the country during the KR period, had a particularly close account of the factional and political fighting in the KR period. Both Kiernan and Vickery built their accounts through extensive interviews with refugees who had recently fled to the Thai refugee camps due to the violence of the second civil war - Kiernan emphasizing the genocidal and racist roots of the regime; Vickery, in contrast, focused his account on the communist and Marxist elements of the KR period. Both, however, point to variation in the violence and experiences of repression across the country. The works of Ben Kiernan and Michael Vickery in particular represent a critical response to the earliest wave of scholarship on this period of Cambodian history.

Early Scholarship and the Standard Total View

The "Standard Total View" (STV) to use Vickery's terminology, was a dominant approach to understanding the KR regime -- how they were perceived by historical and journalistic accounts. This is where the dominant image of the regime as an unchanging monolith comes from. The Standard Total View became the dominant discourse in news and early writings about the KR period. This view was based in the early accounts of refugees who fled during the KR period; however, it was also informed by Cold War politics. This is the view that

Vickery positions himself (and others writing at the time, like Ben Kiernan) against, their work breaks down this monolithic image of the regime as uniform and extreme.

The Standard View, so to speak, was that the KR aimed to exterminate any and all members of former governments, military, or civil service, along with anyone who had been educated or lived in a city. While these were the standard groups seen to be class enemies, it is the uniformity and unchanging nature of these labels that is problematic. Under this view, a political enemy in 1978 was a political enemy in 1975 - there was no shift or political purge that changed that view; further, everything came from the top-down. This view allowed no agency and was agnostic as to who was carrying out these policies, let alone how. It is also this view that first portrayed the regime as irritational and crazy. Critically, he argues that the early STV found that policies and their implementation was “invariant as to time or place; the scenario was true everywhere, all the time, between April 1975 and January 1979” (1984, 37). This comes out of Ponchaud’s 1978 *Year Zero* and Barron and Paul’s *Murder of a Gentle Land*, and came through the adages like “all educated people” or “all Lon Nol soldiers” had been killed. Among the narratives based on early refugee accounts were some who claimed that the regime aimed to eliminate Cambodians to make space for Chinese settlers to take over (Vickery 1984, p. 36), a view reiterated by some of my informants in the Southwest in particular (e.g. A2). Among early accounts, Martin (1983) is particularly attuned to the organization of local life; however, the picture he presents is more uniform across the country. He points to the distinctions between mobile and sedentary groups -- those in mobile units and those who remain in the villages -- but he writes that they are separated out by age and marital status. In his conception, this was not varied across the country.

The STV is not the only early scholarship that painted a particular picture influenced by Cold War politics. In the wake of the Vietnam War, some American scholarship was particularly sympathetic to the rhetoric of the Khmer Rouge, especially the anti-imperialist strain. Notably, Hildebrand and Porter's *Cambodia: Starvation and Revolution* contends that the KR saved Cambodia from American imperialism and certain famine - arguing that the evacuations were a pragmatic solution to real limitations imposed by limited infrastructure (1976). Others in the Anti-war movement, particularly Chomsky and Herman, echoed these sentiments and praised the KR leadership for their pragmatic and merciful solutions (Chomsky and Herman, 1977). However, the all or nothing perspectives that characterized the early scholarship on the era gave way to more nuanced scholarship based around accounts of refugees who fled only after the KR lost power, as well as documents and archival data.

Second generation scholarship

The scholarship that came after the KR period, what I call the second generation, built off of the accounts of refugees in the camps on the Thai border as well as those who were able to enter Cambodia in the 1980s. These are the core texts, seen as the authorities on this era, because of their access to informants, information, and careful attention to details as the first to reconstruct what happened during the KR period.

Kiernan's history of the KR period, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge 1975-1979* (1996), details the experiences of ordinary people and cadres across the country and demonstrates not only the brutal violence, but also that there was variation within that violence. In the regions where information makes it possible, he delineates executions and starvation. In addition, in an earlier essay, he outlines the variation in

treatment of the population across the Eastern Zone. Importantly, he points to a variation in fealty to the regime -- there was political and regional dissent to central policies, which was met with different types of repression from the center (1983). My emphasis on indirect violence is building the questions implied in this variation and the division between execution and starvation as it is discussed. Why were there regions where people were dying from starvation and not execution? Why was execution the preferred strategy in other communities?

Becker's *When the War Was Over* (1986) emphasizes the political dimensions at the center and the creation of factional competition. She begins with a discussion of her experiences in Cambodia during the war in 1973 and growing disillusionment among the population. Her view of the KR fits some of the traditional STV, however she emphasizes the role of secrecy and isolation in shaping KR practices. She writes that "secrecy, distrust, and isolation became the *modi operandi* of the Khmer Rouge, and spawned their theories ... they believed the "enemy" was everywhere, and extreme measures were their only answers to thwarting and defeating that enemy." (p. 211). However, she was one of the few foreigners to be able to visit the country in 1978 - she notes the many absences in Phnom Penh and the strict control over where she could travel. She emphasizes her feeling of confusion and insecurity throughout the visit, and describes what she saw as a true Potemkin village (p.414). Her account is critical not only because of her firsthand view of the Potemkin village tour, but also because of the emphasis on the creation of political factions and on-going infighting.

While these historical texts are often seen as the main resources on this period of Cambodian history -- limitations on scholarship by Cambodians during this time period, were in part due to the targeting of the educated groups in the KR period, fear of reprisals, and population flight. However, since the 1990s there have been more Cambodian researchers who

conducted archival, oral history, and interview-based projects to document this period. In large part, this has been done through the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam), beginning its work in the early 1990s; and more recently through national educational efforts promoted by the tribunal and local NGOs. In the last two decades, DC-Cam has been a focal point for Cambodian researchers and foreign researchers studying Cambodia – either using their archival resources or working with the organization. They have helped to promote a generation of young Cambodian scholars and genocide educators. In particular, Farina So and Ly Sok-Kheang are shaping the direction of their new research. So (2011) emphasizes the Cham during and after the KR period and suggests that the ethnic minority group has a shared victimhood narrative that brings them closer to Khmer Buddhists who survived the KR. Her work builds in part on earlier research from Ysa Osman on the Cham and Cham rebellion during the KR period. Ly (2017) turns to the post-KR era and sheds light on the ways that reconciliation and revenge took place over two decades. DC-Cam has also collected cadres and survivor interviews all over the country, as well as working with schools to teach youth to collect oral histories within their own communities. Perhaps most critically, they have published a monthly magazine *Searching for the Truth* that highlights not only new research on the KR period in Khmer and English, but also legal issues surrounding the KR tribunal, and a space for people to share their families' stories and experiences.

In addition to these discussions of the violence committed or the international dynamics shaping how the KR were interpreted, some have also pointed to Cambodian culture as the root of violence. More specifically, Ponchaud (1989) argues that the traditional organization of society enabled the KR to carry out violence: he contends that Cambodia's "Buddhist beliefs facilitated the rise and dominance of the Khmer Rouge" (p. 152). He finds that KR specifically

exploited the hierarchical organization of society to maintain control. In newer work, Hinton (2005) picks up the cultural line, although he focuses specifically on perpetrators. He argues that what he calls disproportionate revenge was embedded into the culture and drove people to participate in violence. However, neither of these approaches can explain is the variation in time, place, or strategies used.

Governance and the KR state

The question of governance however has remained outside of many of the standard accounts. Some, like Chandler (1999), look at the establishment of order through the prison system and focus on S21 – the highest level prison in the KR order – to address the use of torture, production of confessions, and political enemies killed. Others, like Ea (2005) focus instead on the military and the production of order through its distinct hierarchy. In recent years, there has been a shift toward the KR as a government that engaged with other states and functioned in some productive ways. James Tyner (2008, 2012, 2014) devotes a significant research agenda to the productive capacity of the KR regime, addressing the physical transformation of the land under their regime through lasting infrastructure projects. His 2014 paper, which discusses the production of mass graves importantly presents the KR state as “administratively top-heavy,” (p. 72) in contrast to the dominant view that the regime abandoned formal state structures. This view however centralizes power in the Central Committee, which does not fully explain the ways that this control was spread across the country or varied. In contrast, Mertha (2014) finds that there was variation in the degree of autonomy and capacity across state institutions. His work approaches the regime through the question of foreign policy and the aid from China – however this is, to my knowledge, the first to engage the bureaucracy

of Khmer Rouge Cambodia. While the book primarily focuses on Chinese foreign aid to Cambodia during this period, and he argues that that aid was crucial to the KR's survival, it helps to establish the variation in organizational capacity across the KR regime.

A note on terminology

Throughout this project, I refer to the Khmer Rouge period as both the Cambodian genocide and the Cambodian revolution. I use these terms in different contexts, but both, I believe, are accurate ways to describe this period of Cambodian history. First, this time period is most commonly referred to as the Cambodian genocide,¹⁶ so my usage here is in part colloquial. Others use the term auto-genocide, but I think that undermines the explicit work that was done to distance the groups. There was an explicit othering process that distanced the targets of violence from *proper Khmer* citizens (Tyner 2008). From a legal perspective, the use of the term genocide is limited in this case: the violence against the ethnic minorities fits the definition, but the majority of the violence was against class-based or political groups. Economic and political groups were the primary victims of the Khmer Rouge, alongside ethnic and racial groups. Therefore, this is a case of both genocide against the Cham and Vietnamese, as well as mass killing more broadly. I use both terms throughout this project; however, references to the Cambodian Genocide talk about the time period (as it is commonly referred) and mass killing (or communist mass killing) is used to describe patterns of violence.

The term revolution has a trickier position in the Cambodian case. In English, it is not a telling term, but rather its usage refers more broadly to the social and economic changes that the

¹⁶ In English. In Khmer, the terms most often use translate to “the Khmer Rouge era” or “the Pol Pot era,” the latter being the most pejorative and often said with a derogatory declension, with only a handful using terms for genocide or civil war

regime aimed to make. It is used mainly to suggest that it was a period of extreme social change and upheaval. However, in Khmer, it connotes sympathy for the Khmer Rouge agenda. It was a useful cue in interviews, if an informant used the term *padevat* (បដិវត្តន៍), revolution, it underscored their sentiments or alignment with the Khmer Rouge agenda. By no means is that my aim. Throughout this project, however, I use revolution as an analytical category and do not use it to connote the usual sympathies that it might in a Cambodian context. In both cases, I try to use Khmer Rouge period as it is the most neutral in both languages.

Plan for the dissertation:

The next sections will proceed as follows. I first discuss the theory that this dissertation is building. Next, I move to the first empirical section (chapters 3 and 4), which follows the implementation of village cooperatives across communes with different strategic value to establish how each arrived at its level and type of collectivization. Next, chapter 5 addresses the effects of those policy choices. In this section, the outcome of interest shifts to indirect deaths, based on the type and level of collectivization established. Lastly, I conclude by putting Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge in a broader communist context.

Chapter 2 introduces a theory of how revolutionary regimes govern and the consequences on population survival. This theory builds on the literature on genocide and wartime governance, as well as natural disaster and the agrarian societies. I find that revolution matters because it is a context that is neither at peace nor at war and is shaped by ideological beliefs, bridging the gap between wartime governance and state repression. Based on this governing logic, I draw out the expectations for policy implementation. The variation in policy implementation however has downstream consequences for population survival. I draw on literature on social isolation and

disaster to explain the centrality of social ties to strengthening the likelihood of survival. In doing so, I highlight the importance of social control and its role in making man-made shortages more lethal to the population.

Chapter 3 asks how security risks shaped policy implementation. I argue that security risks, as both internal threats (undesirable populations) and external risks (foreign threats), shaped the ways that collectivization was established. The type of threat determined whether local leaders were trusted with autonomy or if they required greater oversight from the central party. This control manifested in both economic and social components of collectivization; however, the type of threat informed the strategy of control. Where there are external risks, the regime aims to consolidate its control over the physical space as well as the people -- this makes it more likely that they will use economic collectivization, controlling the production and consumption of goods constrains the population that may or may not be in need of reform. Where there are undesirable populations, they are either reformed or executed – this decision is based on economic incentives. I derive this logic from cases with external, internal, and no security threats, as well as trace the experiences of communes that were rebranded as threatening over time. This chapter demonstrates that security risks played an important role in determining the policies implemented in a given commune, but decisions over social control relied on economic incentives as well as security.

Chapter 4 demonstrates how rice production, the regime's core economic incentive, affected collectivization. This chapter compares across two paired comparisons of high and low yield communes to show how economic incentives shaped the type of control put in place. In doing so, I highlight the second wave of forced migration of New People from the Southwest to the Northwest zones, which sheds light on the use of forced labor instead of execution to control

the ideologically undesirable population. I find that in areas with high prior rice yields the expectation of future productivity had two key effects: first, it made social collectivization more intense, and second, it drove demand for New People as additional labor. I argue that the demand for labor to produce rice drove the demographic shift; the regime's labor needs overcame the ideological threat of those New People. I contend that the expectation of high rice production shaped the types of collectivization and its effects on daily life.

Chapter 5 addresses the effects of collectivization on the likelihood of population survival. I argue that in communes where social collectivization was high, there was a greater likelihood of non-execution deaths. Economic collectivization also affected the likelihood of survival; however, the social element compounded these elements and exacerbated the problems brought on by limited and highly controlled access to resources. High levels of social collectivization targeted pre-existing social network and communal ties, fracturing those networks that would ordinarily have acted as a buffer against poor policy or economic downturns in a community. As a result, individuals were more vulnerable to the effects of overwork and over-requisitioned crops, making deaths from indirect means (starvation and exhaustion in particular) more likely. As addressed in earlier chapters, the communes where high levels of social collectivization are most likely are those that had high economic values. Therefore, the patterns of repression and control through social collectivization can help to address the patterns of non-execution deaths across the KR regime.

I conclude with a brief discussion of indirect violence as a strategy within the broader KR objectives and a comparison of Cambodian-style collectivization with the Soviet and Chinese models. Bringing together the findings from the rest of the dissertation, this explains why so many died from indirect means in Cambodia and sheds light on the ways that the Khmer Rouge

case, as an extreme example, demonstrates how social dynamics – the family and community in particular – are critical to understand who is best able to survive during periods of violence.

Chapter 2

Governance in Genocide and Revolution: Man-made disaster, survivability, and social ties

In this chapter, I present a theory of population survival during periods of mass violence that incorporates social and family dynamics with a logic of governance. Throughout this project, I ask why collectivization in Cambodia was so lethal and how to understand the variation in excess mortality from famine. The short answer to these questions is fractured community ties; however, that process takes place in a larger context. I argue that the inclusion of policies that targeted social life made people more likely to die from indirect means. The policies themselves were implemented in response to changing security and economic incentives.

The research in this dissertation is intended as a theory building project, putting forward a novel explanation for the ways that revolutionary regimes govern but also for the survival of populations governed by those regimes. In doing so, I build a theory that brings together literature on mass atrocity and wartime governance with natural disaster, agrarian societies, and collective agriculture. What I contend is that famine deaths were the result of deliberate policy choices that targeted social ties. In the case of collective agriculture, there were choices made about the kinds of practices put in place within that suite of policies. I argue that economic collectivization – those controls over economic factors – made famine possible and set the stage for a crisis. But it was the social dimensions – those controls over family and community life – that made deaths from starvation or exhaustion more likely. More broadly, what I argue, and expand on through this chapter, is that social and family dynamics played a critical role in survivability: without family or community networks, people were more likely to die as a result of the regime's policy choices.

I approach this project through two broad theoretical steps. First, I address who was most likely to be targeted by violence – both direct and indirect – to explain the variation in patterns of excess mortality. In doing so, I present what I call a *logic of revolutionary governance*. Put simply, this is a question of how revolutionary regimes govern. Based on the variation in governance – the variation in practices put in place in response to the same policy directives – I look at the differential effects on the population. I argue that the variation in policy implementation was driven by the regime’s strategic interests. The strategic interests fall into security risks and economic incentives, as understood through the regime’s ideology. Facing economic incentives, the regime was more likely to use indirect measures of social control, but when facing security risks was more likely to use direct violence.

The second step of this theory approaches the question of excess mortality by asking who was most likely to survive. What I argue is that the family and community networks, underscored through agrarian subsistence ethics, were the primary buffer against indirect sources of violence. The centrality of family and community networks is reinforced in the natural disaster literature as well. In this step, I introduce the core mechanism – social isolation – that I argue exacerbates crises. Where the emphasis on surviving natural disaster finds community networks to deepen protection or subsistence ethics establish the centrality of family and community ties, my theory suggests that the strategic removal of these ties was used as a means toward mass violence. Ties themselves emerge organically, but their removal is a deliberate choice in response to strategic interests. Taken together, this theory suggests that where there were historically higher crop yields, the regime was more likely to use social measures to control the population and less likely to execute valuable laborers. Therefore, people were more likely to

die as a result of indirect violence. In practice, this means that those areas that were historically the most agriculturally productive became the most likely to have famine deaths.

There are a few important prior components to this theory. The first is revolution. By revolution, I rely on the definition of revolution that Skocpol puts forward as “rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structure,” (1979, p.4). The two key components of this definition are the speed and scope of change. The speed of change is important because it precludes a gradual or incremental process, instead revolutionary transformations are sweeping. The scope is critical as they are fundamental changes to the social and political order. In order to transform society, there needs to be a clear ideological framework that dictates the policies and framework of the new order. My use of revolutionary regime is based on Levitsky and Way’s definition as those regimes that “emerge out of sustained, ideological, and violent struggle from below, and whose establishment is accompanied by mass mobilization and significant efforts to transform state structures and the existing social order” (2013, p. 5). I use the term revolutionary regime to refer to those regimes that aim to establish a new order. While perhaps a tautology, I mean those regimes that implement policies intended to fundamentally remake social and political order. Their consolidation of power coincides with the establishment of a new political and social order: the process of remaking the state to fit the new ideological vision. This puts ideological beliefs at the forefront of the new state. As will be explored in this chapter, the context of revolution frames not only the ideological choices of a regime, but also the ways that threats are perceived. This is where ideology gets its central importance.

Ideology is discussed as a prior assumption that shapes strategic interests. This is not an oversight, but rather intended to highlight the ordinary elements of how revolutionary groups govern. Despite their extraordinary ideology, the regime responded to economic and security

concerns – common strategic interests. Additionally, a revolutionary state can be in an in-between space, between war and peace, in which new orders are established. In the pursuit of that new order is where the use of mass violence often comes into the picture (e.g. Melson 1992). Given the ideological framing of the regime, the use of mass violence is in pursuit of their ideological goals and in response to threats determined through an ideological lens. I build on the work on mass atrocity to understand the sources and scale of violence as a result of the revolution, but I emphasize the indirect means – violence that occurred as a result of state actions, but through means like man-made famine or shortages – as a tool of mass violence. While the use of indirect strategies of violence (e.g. displacement in the Armenian genocide) are discussed throughout the literature on mass atrocity, I aim to explicitly highlight how these tools present new strategies through which mass violence can be carried out. In practice, this means an emphasis on the policy choices that regimes are making – the decisions that lead to indirect violence. Therefore, I build on the research on wartime governance and insurgent governance to develop a logic that guides revolutionary regimes.

Additionally, throughout this project the family is used as a critical unit within society. This is positioned between the community and the individual – while the family is not as commonly used as a unit of analysis in political science, it is a unit that plays a specific role within society that may not be traditionally understood as political but serves as the primary set of reciprocal and trust-based relationships within a community. The nature of the Cambodian revolution brought many of life's traditionally private functions under state control – but these issues are not only political in a most extreme state, but rather have important implications for family and communal life during and after periods of mass violence.

Direct and indirect violence:

The puzzle underlying this project starts from the observation that large numbers of people were killed not only through direct violence, but also through indirect means or strategies of repression. It is not only who a regime is deciding to shoot at, but those who are cut off from access to clean water or medical supplies. The civil wars in Syria and in Yemen today are lethal not only because there is violence targeting civilians, but a far greater number of civilians are at risk because they are cut off from water or food. This is what I mean by the issue of indirect means of violence. Its consequences underscore some of the greatest risks to civilians today.

Throughout this dissertation, I refer to *direct* and *indirect violence* to distinguish between strategies that the regime uses to establish order. The usage of direct and indirect follows from Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay (2004), who contend that mass killing includes “*direct* killings such as executions and massacres, but also deaths caused in more indirect ways when perpetrators deliberately create conditions expected to cause widespread death among civilians” (p.378).¹ What I term indirect violence comes about as a result of conditions of scarcity that are man-made. More specifically, these conditions are conflict-made: without the on-going conflict, there would not be famine, drought, or inhumane conditions. Indirect violence can come through repression, displacement, dispossession, or prevention of access to basic resources. The aim of

¹ The terms direct and indirect violence have appeared elsewhere with a different meaning. Most notably, Laia Balcells’ *Rivalry and Revenge* distinguishes between the two terms as more a question of military technology. She defines each in saying: “indirect violence is perpetrated with heavy weapons (e.g., tanks, fighter planes) and is unilaterally carried out by the armed group, while direct violence is perpetrated with small weapons (e.g., machetes, handguns, rifles) and is produced by armed groups in collaboration with local civilians” (2017, p. 6). Essentially, she makes this distinction based on technology and information. While I acknowledge that these terms are used elsewhere in the literature, I use indirect violence to mean violence that is carried out through indirect means or secondary means.

this dissertation is explicitly to understand the use of indirect violence and the variation in its implementation. In this distinction there is also the question of agency. For direct violence, there is clearly agency on the part of the regime ordering its use. While it is possible to see the famine that ensued as a policy failure, I contend throughout that it was a deliberate strategy of repression and not an accident of bad policy-making. It is uncertain if the senior leadership knew the extent of the disaster taking place; however, the continuation of or expansion of the same policies suggests that the regime supported its use: either as willful ignorance, or more likely, a deliberate choice. There is some evidence to demonstrate that the central party was aware of the conditions in the countryside, in particular reported discussions with senior officials about child labor, living conditions, and disease in the cooperatives (ECCC 2015).

I contend that the state used strategies of indirect and direct means of perpetrating violence in the pursuit of the same revolutionary goals. This also raises several smaller puzzles: First, why would a state choose to use indirect means instead of direct execution against a population that it seeks to eliminate? Second, and perhaps more puzzling, why would a state allow its preferred population group to face both direct and indirect violence? As is discussed in detail in chapter 4, the answer is an economic story. First, indirect means of execution were far more cost effective than execution. Forced migration of undesirable populations meant that they were used as a surplus labor force – slave labor – until they were worked to death. They were not fed or supplied adequately, so there were few costs associated with their being kept alive. They continued to produce for the regime until they died from starvation or exhaustion. Second, I posit that the preferred status groups who were targeted with both direct and indirect violence were determined by geography – those who lived in high production areas were more likely to face famine conditions, but also physical violence that was used to coerce their compliance into the

new order. While they were ideologically aligned with the regime, their perceived economic value won out. What these smaller puzzles represent however is an example of what I refer to as the *logic of revolutionary governance*, which I expand on theoretically in this chapter and demonstrate empirically in chapters 3 and 4.

Why mass killing?

The violence that took place occurred through direct and indirect means. I draw on the literature on genocide and mass atrocity in particular to explain which populations were likely to be targeted with direct violence, as well as generate expectations about indirect violence. It would be impossible to adequately discuss the Khmer Rouge period without seriously engaging with the extreme violence that took place. This was a regime, that in the service of its revolutionary goals, sought to exterminate large groups of its own population, as well as those they considered to be other.² However, I discuss these patterns of violence as mass killing and mass violence. This project remains fundamentally motivated by the use the mass violence both as a means to elicit control and as a strategy of governance. Much of the discussion of mass atrocity and the causes of mass violence has emphasized the direct violence side of the story. Additionally, the emphasis on indirect violence can explain the subnational patterns of mass death more so than a cultural explanation (e.g. Hinton 2005), as well as why preferred status groups were also killed.

² The KR period is sometimes discussed as an auto-genocide because of the nature of ethnic Khmer killing other ethnic Khmers, while I do not take on this question directly in this theory, I contend that the regime worked to differentiate between groups on the basis of class and politics – a process of othering that created distance and violence was used based on those labels, violence was not used explicitly to target ethnic Khmers because they were Khmer.

In this section, the purpose is to establish not only who or what is likely to be targeted by violence, but also which strategies - direct or indirect means - will be used towards those targets. Throughout this project, I contend that the use of mass violence is a strategic decision stemming from the central command of the party. This builds on a tradition of approaching genocide as a strategic tool of violence. Valentino (2004) demonstrates how mass killing can be a strategic tool deployed rationally by a regime for military or strategic advantage. I build on this claim, but in doing so rely on a broad conception of strategic interests – the threats to which mass killing responded were interpreted through regime ideology, given a different ideological frame, they would likely not have been understood as a security risk. Moving beyond a division between security or ideology, Straus (2015) brings together security and ideology, arguing that the historical narrative, around which a state identifies, frames which strategies of violence are appropriate or possible. This argument is in contrast to Midlarsky's (2005) conception of state interests. He argues that genocide is a “particularly noxious form of brute force - imprudent realpolitik” (p.389); however, what he describes as imprudent or disproportionate, I contend can only be understood as such through an outside lens. From the perspective of the regime, those making the strategic decisions, it was a question of survival, accepting risk could undermine their new utopian vision. Therefore, I argue that ideology cannot be separated from strategic concerns. Instead, ideology shapes the regime's strategic interests.

Within the broad category of strategic decision-making, the targets fall into different categories of threat or value. Chalk and Jonassohn’s definition of the victims “as that group and members in it are defined by the perpetrators” is particularly important (1990, p. 23) because class divisions were reinforced as a function of the new regime. Further, targeted groups become even more subjective in the cases of communist mass killing – the targeted groups were political

and class based, which are more malleable and faster changing than ethnic, religious, or national groups that have stickier labels (Zheng 2006).

Social ties can also serve to explain patterns of violence – who is or is not targeted during genocide. Beyond the group-labels or targeted violence from a macro-level, Fujii (2009) highlights the role of social ties and local networks in patterns of recruitment and violence. She points to the types of connections as critical to motivate or to implicate, through local knowledge, and in shaping who was targeted by violence. However, in her argument, social ties could work both ways, friends or patrons would be mobilized to engage in killing, but also “even the most active killers [would] save the lives of Tutsi friends” (p.139). Therefore, at the local level social ties helped to mediate direct violence. Drawing on her findings, this suggests that other types of ties may play a broader role during conflict. Building off of research on genocide and mass killing, I contend that the regime was a strategic actor, using direct and indirect means to target those it perceived as a threat.

Communist Violence: man-made shortage and factional politics

Much of the indirect violence taking place stems from problems of communist revolution through man-made shortages and factional politics. More specifically, I am concerned with the effects of man-made famine that ensued from collectivization. Building on earlier work that emphasizes the organization of the state as a cause of over-requisitioned crops and undersupplied cooperatives, I start with an organizational approach. The decentralization of authority is a critical feature of how policy implementation varied. However, decentralization was not uniform. It is the variation in decentralization, not decentralization itself, that I argue drove the ways that

policy was implemented. Further, I argue that political factors determine that decentralization process.

The emphasis on political incentives in driving decentralization builds on research on political manipulation in other communist famines. In particular, I build on work on the Ukrainian famine that suggests that bureaucrats created problems of redistribution targeting areas or people that the state either wanted to harm or who had lowest priority. Plokhy (2016) and Applebaum (2017) demonstrate political reasons for the differential rates of famine and starvation. Regions that were home to opposition or nationalist groups were targeted with higher quotas and received less food aid. While the policy of collective agriculture was the same across the country, the central authorities were able to manipulate production quotas and food aid to starve targeted groups. I draw on their work as a way to explain regional patterns of variation, but also to emphasize the ways in which famine was, or at least could be, a politically manufactured problem.

While a question of direct violence, Yang Su (2010) posits that political opportunities and factional competition drove patterns of violence at the subnational level. Competing political groups were enabled by the changing political environment. In his argument, essentially, violence emerges where there is a space to do so given the type of political competition. This framework is helpful to situate political dynamics in the process of mass killing. I borrow from this framework in places to conceptualize the ways that political logics shaped the violence that emerged: this is particularly useful to explain the political purges and crackdowns due to intra-party competition. Bringing this framework into my broader theory, what this suggests is that political dynamics changed the calculation of risk: factional shifts could change which populations and which leaders were considered a political, or internal, risk. Work on communist

violence gives more insights into the tools used by communist regimes to use indirect violence against political targets; however, these explanations do not get to the question of who was most likely to die from famine or why.

Revolutionary Governance:

The decisions surrounding the use of direct and indirect violence were not made in a vacuum, but rather they were made in response to the regime's strategic interests. Specifically, I am concerned with the decisions to include social dimensions – those policies that targeted the family and community – alongside economic components of collectivization. I argue that it is those social dimensions that tipped the balance from scarcity to deaths, therefore it is important to understand why they were implemented in some communities and not others. This can be explained by the logic by which revolutionary regimes govern. This is conceptually distinct from wartime governance both because of the central importance of ideology to revolutionary regimes and the in-between status as neither at war nor truly at peace.

Building on the literature on strategic violence, I argue that the establishment of collective agriculture was meant not only to meet the regime's economic vision, but also to impose revolutionary order. The specific policies involved in establishing control however are determined by a regime's ideology. The questions of policy choice and implementation are separate: once policies or priorities are set, they are implemented in order to meet strategic goals. Drawing from the literature on ideology in conflict, I argue that strict adherence to ideology does not necessarily lead to an absence of violence against civilians but different strategies with which it had to be carried out that fit with the party's ideological vision. Further, if a policy were implemented based only on revolutionary aims then one would expect the practices to be

uniform. Therefore, I contend that a strategic approach explains why implementation varied despite the pursuit of uniform ideological goals. As in many states, these interests were based in economic and security interests. The types of interests themselves may not be novel, but their centrality in the study of a revolutionary context is.

Ideology and Strategies of Violence:

The literature on ideology in shaping strategies of violence and causes of mass atrocity suggests that ideological aims shape the strategies and organization of armed groups during periods of mass violence. The content of insurgent groups' mission matters to the strategies of violence they rely on. Melson (1992) explicitly positions revolution with genocide, writing, "revolutionary governments... want to impose their ideology on society, but they also need to create a new order that will support the revolutionary state" (1992, p. 18). However, genocide becomes the path forward only after other options have been exhausted (p.20). While the link between revolution and mass violence is critical, this argument overlooks a key component of regime ideology: central to the revolution is the removal of those undesirable groups. The ideology of the regime itself is utopian and exclusionary, which, following Fein (1993) and Harff (2003) makes genocide or mass killing more likely. Bringing together the revolutionary characteristics and primacy of utopian ideology, Weitz (2003) argues that racialized nationalism, utopian idealism, and crises causing domestic turmoil underscore the instances of mass atrocity across the twentieth century. Not only are these factors making an outbreak of violence more likely, but they present the contours of the new regime –who they target and how they will do so. These approaches are useful to understand the targets of violence at a national level; building on these expectations, I address the sources of subnational variation, given which populations were

more likely to face direct or indirect violence. Building on this literature, I contend that ideologies frame practices and institutions of governance during periods of violence.

Strategic aims and governance

Ideology can explain the turn to mass violence, the policies selected, and the types of populations targeted, but it does not address the variation in implementation. An approach determined only by ideology would suggest that highly committed revolutionaries would adhere to the policies closely and practices would be relatively uniform across the country. Empirically, this is not what I observe. Instead, it shaped the policies the regime chose, and it framed the nature of risk. Policies varied across the country, which I contend can be explained by the regime's strategic incentives. The kind of control – or in this specific case, the type and level of collectivization – can be explained by the regime's security and economic interests in a given community.

I propose a broad conception of security interests. Security factors in this instance are not only external military aims, but also internal risks like rebellions or undesirable (ideologically risky) populations. The physical security concerns come from a fear of invasion or overthrow. The external factors were particularly salient for the military. Taking a broad approach to security, including both internal and external risks, I argue that the security risks can overcome other political factors. Following from Kalyvas' finding that "military resources generally trump the population's prewar political and social preferences in spawning control" (2006, p. 111), I argue that strategic interests can take priority over a community's political allegiance or demographic characteristics. Internal risks are more malleable as a category: they include the

political and demographic groups that were undesirable to the regime, but they also were changing to adapt to new political realities.

Economic incentives can also shape the patterns of violence that take place. In the context of collectivization, it is a question of grain production or other agriculture goals (e.g. irrigation, secondary crops, etc). Elsewhere, the relationship of rebel groups to civilians is more closely patterned to recruitment strategies. Weinstein (2007) argues that rebels who rely on civilians for resources are less likely to use indiscriminate violence against civilians, in part, because they rely on those populations for support. While this is in part reflected in the restraint on direct killings in the areas with high production, this is not reflected by the indirect violence in those areas. Instead, in areas that had historically high crop outputs, people faced the greatest risks of indirect violence – in part because of the labor demands and in part because of the social collectivization measures imposed to control those populations. Economic interests were based primarily in commodity crops that could be traded to other communist countries for vital supplies like guns, weapons, chemicals, and consumer goods. In a situation where grain exports were traded for weapons, the continual expansion of agriculture was as an existential issue.

Communist revolution, at the end of the day, is a fundamentally economic project. While racialized and utopian ideology plays an important role in shaping the strategies of the regime, they become less important than increasing productivity. In my argument, when faced with a choice between a loyal population group or the chance to produce slightly more crops, the latter wins out. Politics and paranoia drove a lot of the direct violence that took place, but it was economic incentives that primarily drove choices about governance and indirect violence.

Decentralization of authority

The bureaucracy and centralization of authority are also critical to the ways that violence took place. Earlier studies on genocide emphasize the role of bureaucratic and centralized organization (e.g., Fein 1979, Horowitz 1976) and more recent works posit that modern bureaucracy enables the state to more easily carry out mass projects, like mass murder (Bloxham 2008; Gotz and Heim 2003). I contend that the bureaucracy itself – the organization through which authority is decentralized – shaped the ways that policies were implemented across the country.³

I argue that the central party decentralized authority based on the incentives or values in a given community.⁴ What this means in practice, is that the central party exerted more direct control over those communities with higher levels of strategic importance - either economic or security. At a broad level, this is not surprising. However, breaking down these interests suggests the kinds of policies - social or economic - were likely to be put in place.

Economic incentives - areas that were historically high producers of commodity crops - made it more likely that community would face indirect violence. Specifically, what this means is that social controls were more likely in places that had higher production expectations. The logic here is pragmatic: the regime needed laborers to continue growing crops, but also the

³ I hesitate to say that the source authority needs to be a state per-se, while in the Cambodian case the regime has just become the state authority, it was their ideology and not a character of their role as state that led to the use of mass violence. They began their programs of collectivization in districts that they controlled prior to becoming a state.

⁴ I speak about the central party as a unified actor: this was not always the case. The regime was often fractured and fraught with factional division. In the empirical chapters that follow, I demonstrate the consequences of this factional in-fighting. However, the senior leadership – the inner circle of the Standing Committee – remained relatively consistent.

regime needed those laborers to be well-disciplined. Therefore, they were more likely to use tools like social control, instead of direct violence. Further, the forced marriages that were a piece of social controls also promoted population growth in these areas that were facing the greatest risks from a population shortage. In contrast, security risks - both internal threats, like rebellion, and external threats, like invasion - were likely to lead to higher rates of direct violence. Facing internal threats, the regime was likely to implement social controls in order to reform or remake the undesirable population groups. However, reforming those populations could be costly – so, absent economic incentives to keep those populations alive, it was more expedient to execute them.

Centralized authority was established through oversight and through centrally aligned cadres. The use of centrally aligned cadres – replacements for local actors – meant those who demonstrated adherence to party policies: those who are more ideologically indoctrinated or better trained are more likely to implement policies more stringently.⁵ Oversight was carried out by frequent site visits by senior officials, or through the replacement of local officials with their better-trained counterparts from other regions. Conversely, where there is no specific risk, the central party grants greater autonomy for local leaders to govern as they see fit. Local autonomy leads to a more open set of practices: those that adhere to the concept but do not use coercion or force. I assume that where individual leaders were given greater autonomy, they were less likely to use extreme violence against their community. I base this assumption on an expectation that

⁵ Indoctrination and training will be further examined in a paper on the role of model villages as disciplinary and promoting adherence to the central party. I argue that the model villages served as a training ground for new cadres. Further, I contend that those cadres who were trained at model villages, particularly Tram Kok district in the Southwest Zone, were used a means of centralizing authority: they were loyal the party and sent to specific areas of the country to replace old leaders during political purges.

individual leaders tried to limit the use of violence, when possible, as a means of self-protection: if they were more lenient, they were less likely to be overthrown or killed. Essentially, the shadow of the future here acted as a restraint on present violence. This is also something that local-level leaders explained in talking about their own motivations when I was able to interview them.⁶ This is likely not a universal, some individuals likely were more predisposed toward the use of violence or an interest in vengeance or trying to signal unwavering authority through an extreme use of violence (e.g. reports of cannibalism). However, I find that those are outliers and should not change the expectations of behavior for the average leader. Within the framework of decentralization, individual leaders could implement the set of practices as they saw fit.

Moral economy and the subsistence ethic

The inclusion of social control into the set of state policies is critical to the patterns of violence that unfolded. I emphasize the role of social dynamics in mass violence as a way to explain patterns of survival. Work on mass atrocity has not overlooked social dynamics, particularly social interactions and local ties (e.g. Fujii 2009); however, I invert the lens by emphasizing social dynamics as survival strategies. I argue that the inclusion of social control – e.g. the components of collective agriculture that reordered social life – can explain the variation in non-execution deaths during a period of mass violence. This centrality of social ties comes out of the literature on agrarian societies and natural disasters.

⁶ This could introduce a problem of selection bias among surviving leaders, when asked about those leaders who were stricter or used violence more freely, the response I received is that they were killed in the 1980s during a wave of revenge killings. For details on the revenge killings in the post-KR period, see Ly Sok-Kheang, 2017. *Reconciliation Process in Cambodia: 1979-2007 Before the Khmer Rouge Tribunal*. Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia.

The subsistence ethic and the moral underpinnings of informal (or sometimes formal) institutions in agrarian economies are critical to the theoretical framework presented in this research. I draw primarily on James Scott's (1977) *Moral Economy of the Peasant* to theorize the ways that social relationships – particularly the community and the family – served to insulate people during periods of crisis. Recent work building on Scott emphasize that moral economies are a set of expectations about economic practices embedded in "moral obligations and social norms" (Palomera and Vetta, 2016). Therefore, the key element here is not only the moral economy, but also the effects of a subsistence ethic.

The subsistence ethic gives a clear framework to understand the need for mutual aid and norms of reciprocity within a rural community. As communities whose survival was often precarious, the expectations of behavior were shaped by a “safety first” principle – as Scott demonstrates, these norms operated only in those communities that shared the same existential risk and precariousness of survival (1977) . Namely, these expectations and norms exist amongst those rural farmers who were poor and were at or slightly above a subsistence level. Those who had more land or access to other resources simply did not need to engage with these kinds of strategies to survive.⁷ He presents a hierarchy of networks and institutions available to the rural farmer – patronage networks, friends, extended kin groups, and immediate family (from most to least social distance) – on which he or she can rely for assistance. Further, he contends that these resources are by their nature reciprocal. This is spelled out more clearly in saying that “there is a consensus about reciprocity, and their assistance is as good as money in the bank against the time

⁷ However, facing a crisis or other downturn, I would expect to see that there is a similar response that relies on any set of values and expectations of behavior: while they may not face the same existential concerns, they are still embedded in the same community and participate in the communal institutions of social insurance.

when the situation is reversed” (1976, p. 27). The expectations of mutual aid come out of the shared values within the community itself. In the most distant networks, patronage relationships, a patron is willing to aid a poorer client because of the obligation of future labor. Implicit in this discussion of family and community ties is the question of trust and reliability: the discussion of distance in patronage, communal, or family networks includes an implicit element of trust. While Scott is writing about Vietnam and Lowland Myanmar, these same structures in society were reflected in agrarian Cambodia. The caveat however, would be that Cambodian society traditionally relied on immediate family more directly and had less emphasis on broader kinship networks than other Southeast Asian societies (Ebihara 1967).

The moral economy is however presented as an explanation for revolt: uprisings or revolutions in response to threats to the basic right to subsistence (Scott 1976, Thompson 1971 or 1991, more recently, Edelman 2005, Hann 2018). This is where my theory departs from traditional concepts of the moral economy – the revolution in question was in the name of the peasants, but not by them. Moreover, the revolution itself was the key threat to the population’s access to subsistence. Instead, the revolutionaries (the regime) explicitly undermined those traditional means of survival by separating families and communities. In my research, there is no popular uprising or revolt. While one answer is that the fear of violence and retaliation made uprising impossible, this does not tell the whole story.⁸ Instead, the shared norms and expectations in a given community were not only moral, but functional – they would have served as an organizing structure for those uprisings that are surprisingly absent.⁹

⁸ Empirically, we see uprisings in the face of violence around the world.

⁹ This is not the point of my theory; however, the atomization of life during this period can help to address the lack of revolt against the KR

The concept of moral economy is not limited to an agrarian or pre-industrial context, but rather has since been applied broadly to describe the set of expectations, norms, and values, in which economic exchanges are embedded. Thompson's key study emphasizes the establishment of the British working class, neither agrarian nor Southeast Asian. Importantly however, Edelman (2005) explicitly points to the work that class is doing: moral economy relies on a specifically subsistence morality. In the agrarian context, that morality is the set of expectations of mutual aid and norms of reciprocity.

The informal institutions established through the subsistence ethic and expectations of mutual aid are central to my argument. The discussion of these concepts has been largely in the positive – where these ties are present; however, I use these concepts to understand the risks in their absence. Without ties to family or communal networks, those same survival mechanisms of reciprocity or mutual aid are also absent. The inclusion of these survival mechanisms also serves to give agency to the victims of violence as well. They are able to engage with survival strategies as a means of resistance, they are not only passive recipients. Further, the discussion of shared values and distance to the person in need suggests an element of trust – or at least an assurance of reliability – to make these mechanisms function. Without those preexisting ties and without a basis for trust or an expectation of reliability, there is no reason to expect that someone outside of those circles would provide aid. In isolation, the subsistence ethic is undermined: there is no source for aid and no structure around which to organize reciprocity.

Social Isolation

A second core component of the theory that I present builds on the concept of social isolation. Social isolation as a concept has been used widely to discuss the causes and effects of

being cut off or removed from others in a society. Social isolation has been discussed as a cause and effect of issues ranging from civic engagement to psychological well-being. As a simple definition, I use the term to mean those who are cut off or removed from interactions with other people, both close family relationships, community networks, or even casual acquaintances.¹⁰

This is not a novel concept, but rather has deep roots in sociology and more recently in public health and medicine. In recent public health research, a broad survey of about 17,000 adults in the US found that social isolation has significant effects on mortality: isolation poses a similar risk to mortality as smoking or high blood pressure (Pantell et al., 2016). In itself, this suggests that isolation can weaken a person's likelihood of survival during ordinary times, but also has implications for this mechanism might function in extraordinary conditions.

Those who are the most likely to be socially isolated remain similar across urban and rural contexts. In general, those who are most likely to face isolation are those who are already vulnerable: in particular, the elderly and the poor (e.g Fischer 1982, Klinenberg 2003). It is important to keep in mind the context in which these studies are taking place: these are largely western and urban settings.¹¹ Therefore, I bridge the insights from these studies with the work on agrarian subsistence networks to explain the centrality of family and community ties in agrarian society as well.

¹⁰ Klinenberg is explicit in differentiating between isolation, loneliness, and being alone. Importantly, he clarifies that isolation stems from "having limited social ties" as compared with a psychological feeling of loneliness or the phenomenon of living on one's own (2001, 505).

¹¹ Much of the discussion of social isolation has focused around the perceived decline of social ties as a problem of urbanization. However, Fischer cautions not to view social networks as a magical cure-all (1982, p. 132) and pushes back on the urbanization story that is put forward in many western contexts. Instead of urbanization leading to a decline in overall social connectedness, perhaps there is an element of specialization, but mainly, the effects of social networks matter most on the margins (Fischer 1982). However, it is those margins that matter during times of disaster or crisis.

This is demonstrated most clearly in Klinenberg's *Heatwave*, which I draw on to understand the ways that social ties are not only central to survival, but also can be shaped by the city (or state) and its infrastructure. His findings demonstrate that those who are cut off from their social ties – for example, through an inhospitable landscape, demographic factors, or socio-economic factors – are the most likely to die as a result of a natural disaster. Essentially, there was less of a network to turn to in the face of an emergency and no one to check-in during that period of vulnerability. Importantly, the lack of social ties can be constructed by an external actor: the built environment in the Lawndale neighborhood was structured such that it was less hospitable to those who were most vulnerable, compounding their isolation and likelihood of dying during the heatwave. Beyond the demographic factors that make a population vulnerable, Klinenberg finds that neighborhoods that were “institutionally depleted or politically neglected” compounded risks to individuals (p.80). These factors meant both fewer emergency services and fewer public spaces where community members could meet to form social ties. He finds that these factors helped to explain the geographic concentration of deaths caused by the heatwave, more than the traditional risk factors for vulnerable populations alone. Taken more broadly, this means that the built environment and political dynamics shape the social structures in those communities.

Social ties matter, but which ones?

Building on work on social isolation and subsistence ethic, I highlight the role played by familial and communal ties. Both literatures point to the strength and distance of social ties. Unsurprisingly, research on social support has found that strong ties among those sharing similar characteristics are more likely to result in support. Hurlbert, Haines, and Beggs test these

arguments and find that routine interactions structure how people perceive their available informal support in nonroutine (disaster) contexts. Put simply, they argue that a strong basis in routine interactions, and a history of support, leads to a greater degree of informal support during disasters (Hurlbert, Haines, and Beggs 2000). Similarly, Scott (1977) spells out that close family ties – which are both strong and sharing in similar characteristics, to use the same language – are likely to be more reliable than patronage or community ties.

Following on their findings, I take the family unit as the primary set of relationships and the community as the secondary set of ties that are likely to bolster a person during a time of crisis. What this means in practice is that I separate the analysis into the family and community level and argue that the family level is the more important to survival.

In part this is a question of a history of support or reliability, but it is also a question of willingness to take risk. The context of mass violence significantly raises the stakes for taking these kinds of actions to support others. Measures to protect a friend or family member during conflict is costlier. I see the costs being raised in two ways. First, if you are in a period of extreme scarcity, there is much less for one to draw on – e.g. either through stealing or concealing food – to help someone else. Second, in a context of mass violence, those same actions would be more dangerous – stealing or concealing food, especially during communist revolution, could be a crime that leads to one's own imprisonment or death. In turn, the same conditions of scarcity would also make it more lucrative to turn someone in, which exacerbates the conditions of distrust. These conditions serve to isolate individuals and prevent the development of new ties during the period of violence. Therefore, I contend that the context of mass violence makes the strength of pre-existing ties even more important: people are more willing to undertake serious risks to help their family or close friends, but they might not be

willing to do so for a casual acquaintance. Further, a lack of routine interactions or history of past support would limit the viability of support from new connections (those made during the conflict).

Bringing together these two concepts, I argue that social ties are necessary to buffer against the worst effects of conflict. This is the second central claim: where policies – or actions taken by revolutionary agents - targeted social life, they undermined family ties and people were more likely to die. More specifically, they were more likely to die from indirect means instead of direct violence.

Alternative explanations

There are several alternatives that are often used specifically to explain the behavior of the Khmer Rouge. Many of the arguments used to explain the patterns of death in Cambodia focus on the senior leadership and take an explicitly top-down approach. Most often, they focus on explaining direct and genocidal violence, with deaths from collectivization or disease as a byproduct of war. In contrast, work on Soviet and Chinese collectivization suggest that individual incentives to perform, in this case to produce grain for the state, led to over-requisitioning and caused starvation. The senior Khmer Rouge leaders themselves, through their legal defense teams in the on-going tribunal, argue that they did not know the severity or scope of the crisis and it was lower level actors who went rogue.

The commonly held view of the Cambodian genocide emphasizes the totalizing control by the senior leadership and monolithic behavior of the Khmer Rouge. This argument pointed to the regime's leadership as the primary cause of the period's extremism (Etcheson 2005, Heder 1991). The total standard view, to borrow the term from Vickery (1984), refers to the argument

that the Khmer Rouge was a monolithic organization that functioned in strict accordance with the goals and preferences of the senior leaders. If this perspective were to be the case, we should expect to see limited variation across the country in the ways that policies were carried out as well as uniformly strict punishments for noncompliance. In a similar vein, others argue that the Khmer Rouge was governed only by its ideological core. In one of the earliest works, Ponchaud (1978) reflects the explicitly ideological aims of the regime. Similarly, Kiernan (1996) argues that the policies under Democratic Kampuchea were designed to meet the Khmer Rouge leadership's utopian and racist ideals that called for genocide against all non-pure Khmers. If this were to be the case, we would expect to see direct extermination and indirect policy targeting only of ideologically defined populations - targeting of former urban groups, Lon Nol officials, or ethnic minorities. Additionally, one could infer that the accidental deaths of 'proper' populations would be punished harshly. However, there is a consistent trend across the country of the deaths from both direct and indirect means of non-enemy populations.

The argument put forward by the senior Khmer Rouge leaders has been consistently that individual officials, far removed from Phnom Penh, were responsible for the deaths that took place - they were too extreme or misinterpreted state policies (ECCC 2017a, ECCC 2017b)). Similarly, in a counterinsurgency context, individuals can be incentivized to kill civilians as part of a broader strategy to target embedded enemies (e.g. Downes 2008). While I argue that individual incentives did play a role in the ways that collectivization was put in place, they were constrained by the policy environment as well as the broader context. There were patterns of tempering more extreme local officials as well as a broader trend of leveling out more extreme zones following the 1977 purges that suggests that extreme actions were punished or discouraged. These explanations suggest the political and institutional factors of administering

collectivization, but they cannot explain the types of collectives that emerged and their ensuing patterns of reform or repression.

In addition to the explanations for KR or communist famine specifically, there are several other explanations for famine based in either natural disasters or the state's structure. The first explanation is simply that a weather shock – be it a drought, heatwave, or flooding from monsoons – caused a downturn in production. However, this does not address the disparity between the actual amount produced and the rations that went to the population. Shortages due to weather shocks can also be explained through the traditional lens of a food availability decline (FAD) (Classically: Malthus, Thomas 2015 [1798], more recently: c.f. Chang and Wen 1997, Ó Grada 2009, Osmani 1995).¹² However, In many parts of the country, they produced more rice than ever before; but, it was taken by the state to export in exchange for arms and other goods. Thus the food availability arguments do not explain the disparities between crops produced and rations distributed to the population.

Alternatively, state structures could be seen as driving the shortages due to state appropriation of crops. As discussed above in the section on collectivization famines, the structure of collective agriculture incentivized local cadres to over-requisition crops (Solnick 1999, Oi 1989), created collective action problems for workers to produce enough grain (Yang 1996), or led to political problems of redistribution (Conquest 1986, Tauger 1991). Each of these mechanisms could explain the variation in rates of famine; however, they do not address which people are more likely to die as a result of such a famine.

¹² Devereux (2000) provides an excellent overview of the shift from Neo-Malthusian approaches to those following Sen's work to emphasize political factors limiting access to food.

Chapter 3

A Logic of Revolutionary Governance Part I: Security risks

In this chapter, I address how security concerns affected the level and type of collectivization. Security concerns in a revolutionary period can reflect a range of concerns, which I break down into physical and ideological threats. Security concerns were paramount to the regime: all actions were viewed through a lens of wartime preparation. It was through this lens that economic production was turned into a strategic offensive. Populations were meant to be mobilized to engage in revolutionary struggle to grow the crops necessary to fight off invasion.¹ Establishing collectives, as a means of increasing production and controlling the population, was central to fighting off the internal and external threats to the KR's control.

Throughout this dissertation, I argue that the type of security risks, along with economic interests, are the key determinants of the level and type of collectivization in each commune. In this chapter, I focus on the security concerns through external and internal threats to the KR's control. I find that perceived security threats led to greater economic collectivization. This suggests that the security risks, while changing throughout the KR period, shaped the kinds of practices that were put in place in order to establish the necessary control over the population. Here, regime ideology plays an important role in not only shaping the policy choices that the regime is making – the establishment of collective agriculture – but also what, or who, is deemed

¹ E.g. Broadcasts from the “Voice of Democratic Kampuchea” throughout this period framed these activities as strategic mobilizations and revolutionary struggles.

a security threat – the population groups and political factions deemed enemies. Further, this suggests that risks from physical and ideological risks had similar responses. While the intuition that security risks, both physical and ideological, lead to stricter control over the population is not surprising, this chapter suggests that the emphasis was on economic control. Further, I find that the regime faced a telling choice surrounding New People. Faced with the urban evacuees, the regime decided whether to execute or to try to reform these undesirable groups. If New People were kept alive, the commune where they lived faced more stringent control. If they were executed, the commune was less likely to have strict social control. I expand on the decision to keep New People alive in the next chapter - it depends on their role as critical laborers – but unpacking the treatment of this population in this chapter, as a source of internal or ideological risk, demonstrates that the presence of undesirable populations was a key determinant in the establishment of collectives.

This chapter demonstrates how the nature of security risks shaped the type and level of collectives established. I do so through three sets of paired comparisons to highlight the differences between those communities that posed either ideological or physical risks. I compare the ways that the KR established control over communes that posed each type of risk to the regime. By ideological risks, I mean those populations that were undesirable to the regime: New People and ethnic minorities. By physical risks, I mean those areas that were at risk for violence from Vietnam, as well as those areas that were seen as likely sites of rebellion. I treat the question of rebellion separately with a discussion of two communes in Chi Kraeng district, one of the few sites of armed uprising during the KR period. In addressing the question of political risk, I follow the change over time in one commune that was relabeled as a potential risk during

the purges in 1977. The makeup of the community itself did not change, but how it was perceived shifted in response to changing political dynamics.

This chapter fits into the broader argument of this dissertation by demonstrating the logic of revolutionary governance while facing security risks. What the cases in this chapter demonstrate is that the KR governed responsively: they were guided by political interests - both security, as discussed in this chapter, and economic incentives, as will be discussed in the next chapter. Policies and practices responded and reacted to changing conditions on the ground, they were not static once put in place. In part, this challenges traditional views of the KR as a monolithic and paranoid regime - demonstrating the variation in policy implementation pushes back on this image and shows the logic of governance. These security risks, broadly, include both physical threats of invasion from belligerent neighbors and ideological threats from groups that the regime has constructed to be politically or socially undesirable. What I find is that the security risks led to an overall greater level of control, administered through collectivization, with an emphasis on economic factors. More broadly however, what I find is that the security risks affected the level, but not the type, of collectivization. Expanding out to the effects of collectivization, this suggests then that security concerns were not as critical as economic incentives in shaping the likelihood of population survival during the Khmer Rouge period.

Breaking down security risks:

The physical security risks are the most straightforward. They are communities that are in areas that have military value. In this case, that would include if it is on high ground, near heavy jungles, as were useful during the KR's guerrilla origins and continued training, as well as being near the Vietnamese border where the primary external threat came from. The threat from

Vietnam however was consistent throughout the KR period. A second component is the threat of armed rebellion. I deal with rebellions separately from other types of physical risks as they are both a political and an armed threat. There were very few uprisings during the KR period, in part due to an organizational structure of the regime itself which made it difficult for lower level leaders to coordinate action and because of the risks associated with political disobedience. However, rebellions were very rare and did not play as large a role in determining the collectivization strategies as other types of threat.

Ideological threats to the regime's goals pose a more complicated story of threat to the regime. These ideological threats include both demographic – ethnic minorities and urban evacuees – as well as political groups. Ethnic minorities and urban evacuees were seen by the regime to threaten the purity of the Khmer state, while political factions were a threat to the regime's power. In theory, both groups could be redeemed through strict control and reeducation, if necessary.² Some, like members of the Lon Nol regime or the ethnic minority men, were more irredeemable; others, like the urban poor or ethnic minority women, could be transformed into the right kind of citizens or at least made useful for the regime.³ Expectations about these groups could make the difference between execution or targeting through social policies.

In practice, security and ideology are linked. Regime ideology framed those who were considered to be an internal threat – either demographic groups or political enemies. Even an ideological rift between the Cambodian and Vietnamese communists contributed to the split

² In the next chapter I discuss the logic driving the second wave of evacuations which relocated New People from the Southwest to the more agriculturally productive Northwest Zone. New People were brought in as surplus labor, while elsewhere they more likely to be executed.

³ Recent work on gender-based violence during this period finds that ethnic minority men were more likely to be targeted for execution, while women were targeted for forced pregnancies carrying Khmer children (e.g. Braaf 2014, Lobato 2016).

between Vietnam and Cambodia. While Vietnam was the perennial threat (c.f. Chandler 1991), the fear of invasion was not purely physical risk, but an also an ideological fear. An early analyst of the KR, Kenneth Quinn, writes about the four core goals of the regime. He finds that their priorities are: first, to break the system; second, to transform the society and economy; third, to protect the regime from rebellion or coups; and fourth, to prevent Vietnamese encroachment (1989, p. 180). What I refer to as internal security threats fit with the third objective and external threats with the fourth. Lastly, I discuss security concerns as both physical threats and ideological risks not only because they are mutually constitutive, but also because they are dynamic and change throughout the KR period. These components were flexible and changed over the course of the 4 years, security threats grew or shrank, while political risks were created or destroyed in some areas. Therefore, how the regime used collectivization, through which they established control over the minutia of daily life, was more flexible in response to these factors. In contrast, the expectations of rice yield were static throughout the KR period, which meant that the implementation of policies in response to economic incentives was less likely to change over the course of the 4-year period.

Case Selection:

In this chapter, I use four core cases to demonstrate the effects of different types of security risks on the ways that collectivization was put in place. The cases were selected based on the type of the threat that they pose. Each of these cases is meant to isolate the ways that the KR regime responded to external and internal threats. The first type is low or high external threat – these are physical threats that are posed by the risk of Vietnamese invasion. Both cases of high external threat are located in the Southwest Zone between the border of Vietnam and

Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh. The low external threats are both cases in the North and Northwest Zones – far from the Vietnamese border – which did not face similar threats of invasion from Thailand. Where the cases vary is in their internal threat. Internal threats are determined to be either low or high. However, within the high threat category, I also divide the cases into demographic and political threats. Additionally, I use one case of change over time to demonstrate the shift in control in one commune before and after the purges that began in 1977. This case is useful to show how political calculations – even without changing populations – shifted the social and economic conditions in a given commune.

At the extreme end of both the ideological threat and physical risks spectrum is armed uprising. While the threat of rebellion underlies much of the calculation about internal risk in general, actual armed rebellions were a very rare event. I address the question of armed uprising in this chapter through two short cases from Chi Kraeng district, one of the few, well known rebellions during the KR period.

Table 1: Selected Cases

		Ideological Threat		
		<i>Low</i>	<i>High: Demographic</i>	<i>High: Political</i>
Physical threat	<i>Low</i>	Varin (1975-1977)	Praek Khbop	Varin (1977 - 1979)
	<i>High</i>	Krang Thnong	Trapeang Bei	

Physical threats: Southwest zone and the Vietnamese invasion

The nature of threats and the responses to them in the Southwest zone were a reflection of the increasingly contentious border with Vietnam, which were markedly different than the internal concerns in the North. In addition to the nature of the security threat, this area was not as economically productive (which will be expanded upon in the next chapter) and faced far greater polarization prior to the KR's control. Further, the proximity to Phnom Penh had a twofold effect

on the demographics. First, many poor farmers from these areas moved to Phnom Penh during the civil war in order to escape the increasing scarcity of rice and the frequent bombings. Second, many of the earliest sites to receive evacuees from the cities were throughout the Southwest and it saw dramatic demographic shifts throughout the 1970s. Finally, many parts of the Southwest as a whole were under more centralized control as it was home to several early training sites for KR officials. Each of these factors are likely to change the type and level of collectivization that was experienced in the Southwest's communes and help to explain why the zone had both the most relaxed and some of the more extreme experiences under the Khmer Rouge leadership.

Throughout the KR period, there were skirmishes with soldiers on the border. In part, this was fueled by the KR's belief that southern Vietnam was Cambodian territory and needed to be restored to Cambodia. The disputes over Cambodia's border are not unique to the KR, for example some of the most contentious boundaries were assigned by the French at independence (e.g. the status of Phu Quoc/Koh Tral island in the South China Sea). While the border remains a contentious issue in Cambodia, the fear of Vietnam and the belief that they were trying to take over Cambodia (as has happened in the past and as reflects the political arrangement during the colonial period) is also present throughout most periods of Cambodian politics. The on-going border skirmishes, for the most part provoked by Cambodian soldiers going over into Vietnamese territory, escalated through 1978 until the Vietnamese military invaded toward the end of the year. This was also carried out in part through the defection of several high-level Khmer Rouge officials in East zone, most notably Hun Sen (now the Prime Minister of Cambodia), who fled to Vietnam in 1977. I find that the external nature of the threat in the Southwest zone is the important feature. Vietnam represented a clearly defined enemy, in contrast to a constructed internal class enemy. The population had preexisting expectations and

beliefs about Vietnam as a hostile neighbor, which lent greater support to the KR's practices of control as a form of protection, despite the harms that the regime imposed on its own people.

In this part of the country, the security logic drove many of the demographic shifts that took place.⁴ The areas surrounding Phnom Penh were also the first site of evacuation. As a result, many more people died along the roads during the first few days of the regime, in what were targeted mass killings of urban evacuees.⁵ During this first phase of evacuation, many people were executed along the roads for their roles in the Lon Nol government, demonstrating both a willingness to use violence and an intolerance for people who the regime opposed. It was also the first space that needed to accommodate New People who were dispersed throughout the region and there were different practices meant to house and feed them. Most importantly is the proximity to senior leadership in Phnom Penh and the physical sites of training grounds at Tram Kok and elsewhere in Takeo province. Urban evacuees were not sent to all communes in the zone, despite the widespread evacuations. Instead, they were sent to those communes that were either previously uninhabited or that were late to support the KR. Based on these factors, I would expect to see careful economic control in the zone. These were areas of the country that were never particularly high producers of rice, but this was made worse during the KR period when many expressed that there was simply no food. In some cases, the Base People were moved to areas that were historically better producing and New People were expected to make rice grow in

4. The Ho Chi Minh trail ran through these areas during the Vietnam war and saw frequent American bombing campaigns. The bombings drove support for the Khmer Rouge and changed the demographics as many were pushed to the cities to seek safety. There were also aerial bombing campaigns designed to slow or target the Khmer Rouge after 1973 as they moved closer to the capitol (Owen and Kiernan 2007).

5. The evacuation of Phnom Penh has been treated separately by the ECCC for the forced movement of a population and those who were died in the process. In the framework of this project, I consider those deaths to be the result of direct/extrematory means.

places where it never had before (e.g. Koh Anlong Chen commune). ECCC testimony and historical accounts place the central party leaders throughout the Southwest zone with relative frequency and even greater communication with district and regional officials.

Krang Thnong Commune (Bati District, Takeo)

Krang Thnong commune is in Takeo province, about 15 miles from Phnom Penh and 30 miles to the Vietnamese border. This was an area in the heart of KR control from 1970-1975 (Kiernan 1996), as well as some of the poorest soil quality in the country (Vickery 1984, p. 83). During the civil war, many people from this commune were forced to flee to Phnom Penh to seek safety, but they returned during the 1975 evacuations. The commune had mainly Base People, although some had fled to Phnom Penh but returned to their families in this commune. One of my informants was adamant on this point, repeating to me three times in a row that there were “no city people here” (TK222). His assertion that there were no city people is echoed in Kiernan’s account, his informants reported having no interactions with New People and that those New People were soon transported to Pursat (1996, p.178). The commune’s proximity to the capital also meant that the senior leaders would pass through or visit more regularly. Krang Thnong faced external risks, but no ideological threats.

New officials were put in place at the commune and district level, but the village leadership did not change in 1975. This suggests that the village chiefs were already loyal to the KR regime. There were frequent visits from senior officials. For example, the zone leader Ta Mok would stay in this commune on the way to high level meetings in the capital (TK222). There were region-wide meetings twice a year; otherwise information came from *kong* [company] leaders. The officials met more regularly with the commune and district.

Work groups were established in 1975 and divided the population into those who stayed in the villages and those who were in the mobile units. Working age adults were put into mobile units that were sent throughout the district. Treatment was very different among those who stayed in the villages and those in the mobile units. Among those who stayed in the villages, there were no controls on rations. The village chiefs would tell the cooking group how much to make, but they were flexible about increasing rations (TK222). They also were able to keep gardens, fish, and raise chickens at home; however, all of the food needed to be shared with the commune (TK222). All of the food was stored at a central location for the commune, but utensils and cookware were not confiscated. In the mobile groups however, they were given poor rations. They were given only watery porridge (TK221) and were mobile, so they could not have grown gardens or raised chickens. The mobile units grew rice, moved soil, or collected waste for fertilizer. Work quotas were not strictly enforced; however, there were punishments for not working, even if you were sick (TK221). The mixed treatment of the population, overall low work requirements, but limited food for the mobile units make this a low to moderate level of economic collectivization.

Social control was mixed between the two groups. In the village, there were not many changes – people lived in their homes with their families (TK222). However, the mobile units lived in their work groups and slept out at the worksites. Workers in the mobile units could not acknowledge their families. One woman explained her sister was punished for getting sick, but “she pretended not to recognize me so she wouldn’t get us [both] in trouble” (TK221). She feared that had she acknowledged her sister, she would have also had a degrading and humiliating punishment. Neither of them could see their parents during the KR period, and they

were in separate mobile units. Even though they couldn't see each other, their mom would hide potatoes for them to take when they came back near the village for meetings (TK221).

Marriages, like everything else in this community, depended on the type of group. In the mobile groups, it was stricter. There were typically 20 - 50 couples at a time, many of whom were forced. The company leader would arrange the couples, matching people with someone of like status. Parents could attend the ceremony, but it was just people sitting and making a declaration. They built a longhouse for all of the couples with separate rooms for each couple. The *chhlop* [militia member] would follow them back after the wedding and hide underneath to spy on them, to see if the couples were getting along and actually had sex following the weddings. If they did not, or the *chhlop* thought that couples were disobeying the regime in some way, they would be killed (TK221). In the villages, weddings were lenient. Couples could request to married. There were no monks, but it was festive. Couples were not followed, but if an unmarried couple was caught sleeping together, they would be killed (TK222). However, most marriageable people were in the mobile units, so their experience would be the more important for this community. The mobile units faced much higher levels of social control. Despite the control over marriage and separation of families, the mixed treatment of the mobile units and village populations make this commune a moderate level of social collectivization.

Once the Vietnamese invasion began, the KR gave up on governing this area and instead returned to the forests and regrouped as a guerrilla force. In some accounts, many of the residents in the broader region (damban 33) followed the KR into the forests out of fear of Vietnamese soldiers (Vickery 1984, p. 191). The mobile groups returned to their families, work groups disbanded, and new officials took power in the commune. However, daily life remained upended due to the periodic violence and raids in the community. This continued throughout the 1980s,

KR forces would come into the villages at night to take supplies, but they were not trying to govern the population.

Trapeang Bei commune (Chhouk district, Kampot)

Trapeang Bei commune is part of a district that was split by the Khmer Rouge and Lon Nol forces relatively early on during the civil war. Parts of Chhouk district fell early and came under KR control in the early 70s, while the rest remained violent and contested until 1975 (Vickery 1984). Trapeang Bei was one of the later ones. The civil war was fought primarily between the KR and Lon Nol armies, not many Vietnamese or external forces were involved as they were closer in to Phnom Penh. About 100 new evacuees came from the cities (KM111). The New People were put in different groups that were treated worse - they had to work harder and were given less food. Often, men were separated from the rest of the family and taken to be killed (KM111). Many reported that the new people died more frequently because they were either executed or just "didn't know how to work" (KM113). The urban evacuees were removed quickly and did not continue to pose an ideological threat in this commune. However, the proximity between early KR control and late adopting communities within Chhouk district increased distrust and hostilities between the two sides (Vickery 1984, p.96).

As the KR took control in 1975, they established new leaders at every level. They were picked because they were likely to be loyal to the regime, they picked uneducated and poor farmers. Meetings with higher level authorities were regular. The kong leaders would meet with the *damban* [region] every few weeks to get instructions (KM112). Ordinary people met with the whole *damban* annually. It was treated like a celebration. As one man explained, "they had music and dancing, would play music. The leaders could give a speech during the meeting, [but] they

just told us to work harder to produce 3 tons of rice per hectare (KM112)." Actual work orders were given by the group leaders for each specific task, not in large meetings. Control was established through these meetings and the damban directly oversaw progress in visits to the commune.

Work groups were established after the first few months of 1975. There were different types of groups: the young people were in mobile units, the New People were in separate groups, elderly people stayed in the village, and the children were all in one group. The children's group mostly just made compost. The kong also decided whether the group could be given a day off from work. The work groups did several different tasks: ploughing fields, digging irrigation ditches, making hills for rice, planting, and harvesting rice. A typical assignment would require one person to transplant 100 bunches of rice seedlings in one morning (KM113). However, some also commented that women's groups were watched more carefully, and the leaders were stricter with them (KM113). If a group missed quotas, the kong leader was held responsible. He or she would be punished for not making people work hard enough (KM112). Personal property was confiscated and everything belonged to the state. As one person explained, "We had to share everything, even a scarf or a comb, you had to cut it in half" (KM111). Cookware and utensils were taken to the central mess hall. Even clothing was confiscated, people were given a uniform, one set per year, from the *me krom* [work group leader] (KM112). However, as the fighting with Vietnam picked up in 1978, groups began to fall apart and people stopped eating communally (KM113). The strict control over production and consumption of goods, punishments and observations of work, and confiscation of all goods constituted a high level of economic collectivization until control fell apart after the Vietnamese invasion.

Social control was more mixed. Families were able to live together in the village, but marriages were forced. The kong had a fair amount of autonomy to decide if groups could sleep with their families or had to stay in the group. This was more likely to be reflected by the type of group - mobile groups would sleep wherever they worked, but in the village people stayed by families. There were some weddings in this community, which started to increase as the war with Vietnam started to accelerate. There were the most in 1977-1978 and fighting started near here in 1978 (KM113). The number of weddings and people married increased with the threat from Vietnam. There were about 10 couples who were married at a time. They had no ceremony, they just stood and held hands during a speech. Most matches were made by the company leader. However, men were able to request matches if there was a particular person to whom they wanted to be married. Women were not given the same option. As elsewhere, most people reported that they were afraid to say no to a match. However, no one reported post-wedding observations in this community.

This area was nearer to the Vietnamese border, so the fighting started sooner here than elsewhere. Soldiers were recruited from this area throughout the war and they were stationed along the border as early as 1977 (KM111). The community was contested long after the Khmer Rouge lost power, with guerrilla forces hiding in the nearby mountains and the state forces backed by Vietnam throughout the 1980s until the arrival of peacekeepers in the 90s (KM113).

Responses to external security risks:

The response to threat from Vietnam reflects the ways that external security risks were taken into shaping the ways that collectives were put in place. While the cases in this section have focused on shifts that emerged in the wake of border conflicts with Vietnam, those changes

reveal the ways that security concerns shaped how a community was governed. Comparing the response to internal security threats from ideological enemies or risks of rebellion with the border war with Vietnam shows that there were competing security logics based on the nature of the threat. While ideological commitment shaped who could be determined an internal threat and worked in tandem internal security risks, it was subordinate to external security concerns.

Table 2: External Security Threats

<i>Commune</i>	Zone	External Risk	Internal threat	Economic Collectivization	Social Collectivization
<i>Krang Thnong</i>	SW	External	No	Low - Moderate	Moderate
<i>Trapeang Bei</i>	SW	External	Demographic	High	Moderate

In both of these communes there was a greater presence of the military and central party officials directly observing conditions and even leading regular meetings. Further, the hierarchy and chain of command for the military was strictly ordered and maintained by the central command, particularly in the Southwest zone where it was reinforced by clientelist ties to senior leaders (Ea 2005, Nhem 2013). The presence of military and high level leaders was discussed in interviews in both cases in this chapter and, more practically, meant that there was a baseline of greater direct observation throughout this zone. In Krang Thnong, there was a longer history of KR control and a greater assurance that the population would remain loyal – it was also a base of KR power during the first civil war, therefore it was seen as relatively safer. In contrast, Trapeang Bei was a late adopting commune and had on-going hostilities with the communes to the north in Chhouk district. Therefore, it was a security risk not only for its proximity to Vietnam, but also because of the local tensions within the district itself.

The demographics of the communities also matter to the construction of threat. Trapeang Bei started the DK period without prior control by the Khmer Rouge and an influx of urban evacuees. The demographic concerns were, like many other places, addressed early on with the executions of most New People. Directives came from the regional authorities as well, but they were primarily focused on economic production - oversight was carried out through the group and company level. Group and company leaders were given autonomy over both economic and social decisions, for which they were held responsible by their superior officers. However, informants commented that once fighting began in earnest there was a shift away from collective life -- they stopped storing all of their goods together and eating in the communal mess halls -- in all aspects but forced marriages. As the war with Vietnam worsened, the frequency of marriages increased and men were able to request matches. While initially puzzling, this difference can be explained through a xenophobic push that respondents categorized that the KR threatened the population that the Vietnamese were going to take all of the women and girls for themselves, so there was an impetus to get everyone married off as quickly as possible (KT121). In Krang Thnong however, it was the mobile units who faced higher rates of forced marriages. These were the populations who were more valuable as a labor force. The treatment of the mobile units is also very telling of the regime's priorities: in both cases, with and without undesirable populations, the work groups that were most important for productivity faced higher levels of social collectivization. This suggests that the ideological component did not matter as much as the labor needs.

The cases in this section demonstrate that there was, unsurprisingly, a greater level of control and oversight overall over those populations that were seen as risky. However, they also suggest that the use of economic collectivization, as a means to dominate a population that was

perceived as risky, became less critical in the face of an actual armed invasion. What I find is that where the use of social control was highest was over the populations that were important for labor and populations who were seen as potentially malleable. The populations who were undesirable, but unchangeable (ethnic minorities) faced high economic control and monitoring, but these practices became less important in the face of a potential foreign invasion. However, the use of social measures - forced marriages in particular - increased in both cases as the threat of invasion became a reality.

Armed Rebellion:

I address the question of armed rebellion separately from internal ideological and external physical threats. I do so, in part, because the rebellion can be seen as a catalyzing event that led to the round of purges in 1977. The repression in Chi Kraeng preceded a wave of crackdowns, purges, and wholesale replacement of officials in the North Zone with better trained or more loyal officials from Takeo in the Southwest. I deal with it separately because it constituted a different type of security threat – an internal and physical security threat -that was very rare during this period. Its effects however led to a change in political perception throughout the North and Northwest Zones. In doing so, I demonstrate the ways that internal security risks shaped the practices of collectivization and the timing of shifts in treatment of the population.

The Chi Kraeng Rebellion is one of the few armed rebellions that took place during the KR period. Chi Kraeng is a district just south of Siem Reap city that was inhabited mainly by rural farmers when the KR took power. However, there was a violent uprising that occurred at the end of 1976. The exact origins are disputed, but KR officials in Chi Kraeng district were disarmed and unable to quell a group of citizens who revolted against those officials. There are a

lot of theories about the rebellion, including one common theory that purports it was a set up by the more senior authorities to usher in the purges to a rumor that Sihanouk would return that month.⁶ There are some who claim that the rebellion itself was a set up put in place by the KR faction from the Southwest to remove their rival clique; explanations range from their alleged arming of the population to simply disarming the officials (Kiernan 1996). Those former officials I was able to interview claim that the people coming in from the southwest were stirring the pot and trying to create dissent within the community itself (SR212). What is known however is that there was a rebellion against the KR leaders, which ushered in a wave of violent repression by soldiers from the eastern zone and set the stage for a wholesale purge of the region.

Siem Reap province remained largely autonomous during the violence of the first civil war. In these communes the leaders they put in place in 1975 were all from their respective villages or communes. It was not until after the rebellion in the district that the KR brought in new leaders from the Southwest zone and initiated what became a zone-wide (and spread to the Northwest zone) purge of leadership. I discuss briefly two communes in Chi Kraeng district to demonstrate how the regime responded to rebellion.

Kampung Kdei

First is Kampung Kdei commune, which was primarily made up of Base People and had low levels of collectivization. The commune was allied with the KR during the civil war and came under their control early. Work groups were formed around 1974 (SR211). The groups were only working groups, people still lived in their homes with their families. Economic collectivization was relatively limited: the work groups were given new seedlings for rice crops,

⁶ Vickery (1984) has a more complete discussion of the range of conspiracy theories

but their work was not strictly monitored. Social units were not divided, there were no forced marriages, and people remained in their homes with their families.

Despite the open collectivization environment, there were militia members alongside the low-level officials. One former village chief explained that, “they were trained to be loyal only to Angkar and would consider their own families as the enemy” (SR212). There were rare meetings with the whole damban, but they were shrouded in mystery. One person recalled that “they would cover the leader’s entire body [with sheets of cloth], so you could only see his shins, but you couldn’t see who he was” (SR212). Despite this air of mystery, the meetings were used to convey control over the community. There were regular meetings that were led by the *me sahakaw* [cooperative leader] that were informational: it was in these meetings that work quotas and assignments were given (SR211). Work groups were not required to report on progress but were given assignments weekly. Both meetings and the presence of militia members in the commune reinforced the KR’s authority.

Following the revolt, new leaders reestablished control without changing the practices of collectivization. Where there had been violence, they served as a central restraint on violence as well, commenting that “if they [the commune] thought the new leader was too strict, they would appoint a new one... the strict ones were killed” (SR212). Following the rebellion, the commune and district tried to calibrate the treatment of the community to the “right” level of strictness.

Pongro Kraom

In contrast, Pongro Kraom commune, which was adjacent to Kampong Kdei, faced increasing control after the revolts. The commune started off with mixed collectivization levels. Economic control was low and social controls were moderate, however after the 1977 purges it

became a high economic and high social collectivized commune. As one informant commented, it was the “same laws, but different regulations” (SR222). Many New People from Siem Reap and Phnom Penh were evacuated to this community. New People were moved into the villages and integrated. This area, like many of its neighboring communities, saw high levels of violence and suspicion from old people of those newcomers to their community.

Control was established through work groups. Group leaders met with the commune chief weekly (SR221). New officials or party members also had training with the district and regional officials (SR223). Party members were taught to “to be loyal, [which meant] ignore family and kill if you need to” (SR226). However, much of the violence that took place early on was from the bottom-up. The Base People’s newfound responsibilities included training the New People, which led to tensions and animosity. As a result, there were often denunciations, as an informant explained that “there was also a prison in the forest here... usually, poor people would denounce rich people that they had problems with [and] most of them were killed” (SR225). This was not the result of leaders’ actions, but rather the effect of intergroup dynamics they created.

Economic controls in this commune were open in the first period of KR control. Work groups were formed in 1975. While assignments were disseminated through the groups, punishments were rare. A former commune leader explained that “they never reached the quotas, but people weren’t punished for it” (SR221). However, denunciations and spying were common. Social controls, however, were stricter. Families were able to live together as a unit, often in homes with several families. Marriage matches were under the purview of the state. Usually they would have 5-10 couples but sometimes as many as 30. The former commune chief explained that group leaders would work out the matches themselves, if men wanted to marry someone they could ask, and the group leader would ask the woman’s group leader if it was suitable. Only

people of the same status could marry each other, either new with new or old with old. The weddings were just an hour, there was no ceremony and families didn't participate (SR221). Another man described his own wedding in saying: "They observed couples and persuaded them to sleep together. They would have chhlop [spies/militia members] stand under the house and observe if the couple slept together. They would also ask the man in the morning, so they knew if he lied. People feared that they would be killed if they didn't sleep together" (SR224). Collectivization in this commune was moderate overall. Economic collectivization in the first period was carried out mainly through work groups. Social control was moderate: they were strict in the enforcement of marriages but tempered by families that remained together.

Violence increased sharply after 1977 when the new leaders from Takeo came in. The district officials were replaced and increased work quotas while trying to pit political groups against each other (SR223). In addition to the work quotas, they also measured progress more closely and punished those who missed work goals. While the practices in the village did not change, the ways that they were upheld shifted. The new officials were quick to kill people without the benefit of the doubt. They treated the population more harshly and more quickly executed people for minor infractions (SR221, SR224; Kiernan 1996). Where leaders turned a blind eye in the first period, post-purge leaders intensified their monitoring of the population.

Comparing the effects of rebellion

The patterns that emerged in Chi Kraeng communes after the purges show some of the ways that the logic of security and ideology worked after armed rebellion. Within the context of a single district, one of the very few to have an open revolt, the standard explanations of the Khmer Rouge's behaviors would have suggested a uniformly harsh crackdown across the board;

however, that is not the experience that people lived through. The three factors that emerged in these cases were the demographics or fate of new people in the commune, the role in the revolt, and pre-revolt levels of violence.

In Kampong Kdei, the population remained only Base People. It was a community that had more interactions with and received political education from higher level authorities. These factors help to explain why the district or regional authorities restrained on the levels of violence in this commune. There was a moderating effect from the new leaders who came in and tried to eliminate those officials who were reported to have been too violent.

To contrast Kampong Kdei with Pongro Kraom, even though there was an effective purge of new people within the first 18 months, it still faced different conditions with the new leadership. The communities had been integrated, which led to a higher level of social control as the population had been exposed to the New People. However, the new leaders invoked greater economic control as well. The little space that had been established for commune and village actors to turn a blind eye to noncompliance were closed. The question then remains of why the Base People in Pongro Kraom were different than those in Kampong Kdei - no one in Pongro Kraom reported having any political education or exposure to higher authorities (anyone above the district level) as well as the history of having been integrated and living alongside the new people. Following the revolts, those factors could be interpreted as being tainted by exposure to New People - those who were considered enemies.

Ideological threats: ethnic minorities and class enemies

In this section, I focus on two communes and the change over time in each to address the responses to internal security threats. The first, Varin commune, began the KR period as neither

an economic nor a security priority. However, the commune was relabeled during the 1977 purges and became an internal security threat as it was now seen as a politically risky population. In contrast, Praek Khbop was not an external risk, but it received many New People, making it a demographic risk throughout the KR period. I first compare these two communes, and then focus on the change over time in Varin between 1975-1977 and 1977-1979. The emphasis on change over time within one commune allows me to keep the population, distance from the center, and zonal leadership constant.

Varin Commune (Varin District, Siem Reap)

Varin commune is in the far north of Siem Reap province. This area was under the KR control earlier than 1975 and remained a stronghold long after 1979. Varin district and neighboring Anlong Veng were under the control of Pol Pot and Ta Mok until their respective deaths in 1998 and 2006, through a mix of patronage and guerrilla violence. However, this commune experienced two distinct periods of KR rule: before and after the 1977 purge. This was a community of loyalists and Base People. The population did not change, but the perception of them did. As a result, the type of control shifted between these two periods: the regime established greater control over social life – it was necessary to reform the newly undesirable population.

This commune was made up of primarily rural farmers and received few urban evacuees. During the evacuations in 1975, there were a few new families from Siem Reap city that were evacuated to this commune, but not many. As one woman explained to me, the “New People and people with [Lon Nol] army positions lived separately from the Base People, they were just used to work and then they were killed” (SR312). Another informant commented that “the group of

new people used to live just next door to us, [but] I woke up and looked for them one morning and they were just gone. They must have taken the whole group” (SR314). There were no other New People or ethnic minorities brought to this area.

The KR centralized control in this commune with a change of leadership in 1975 that lasted for the first 18 months. Authority here was decentralized to the district or commune officials who made decisions about promotions and demotions (SR312). District officials would visit the commune and the worksites themselves to inspect the progress that was being made. In addition to these oversight visits, each work group was required to report on their group and group leader. Within the village itself, work group and village leaders changed often. However, these demotions did not lead to prison or execution, simply a new leader was put in place (SR314). There were no high-level authorities that visited or oversaw daily life or rice production during this period. The work group was the primary unit in the community and they were overseen by the district.

People began working and eating in groups in 1974. A group of old men were responsible for repairing or making new tools. The children’s group was made up of kids from 7 - 12 who collected compost and waste for fertilizer. There was a small group of 5 women who cooked. Young adults were put in a mobile group that traveled around the district and sometimes the province to work on larger scale projects. In the mobile groups, they worked, ate, and lived together. The mobile groups were also watched by the militia who wanted to make people work faster. A woman who was in the young women’s group explained that “even if you’re just planting rice and you’re too slow, they would hit you... if you were sick or [if you were] hungry, you always had to work more” (SR314). There was also a militia in the commune that came into the village to check on people, but they were not under the control of any village officials

(SR311). Outside of the specialized groups, everyone in the community worked growing rice. A woman from the cooking group explained that the commune chief would give her rice for the entire village, usually about 150 cans of rice 2 times per day for the 60 families in the village. He also decided how much of other produce she could take per day. Despite the strict control over rations, people were allowed to take food home (SR312). Additionally, people secretly grew gardens, so they had additional food at home. People could also catch fish and could keep them if they brought it to the central mess hall to share. The group leaders were able to request more food for the village (SR314). Utensils and private property were not confiscated. In this first period, production was strictly controlled, but the work quotas were not as high as elsewhere. Control over the consumption of goods was more relaxed. While there was centralized control over rice consumption and physical punishments for missing work quotas, economic collectivization was low to moderate.

After 1975, young adults were separated into mobile units. A group of older women were in charge of watching the village's children who did not work out in the rice fields yet. Among the mobile units, people were given permission by the group leader to leave the worksite to see family about every 10 days, but they needed permission from the village as well to get food while visiting. When they were moving around and working throughout the region, work groups slept at the worksites in hammocks (SR314). In the early part of KR control, before 1977, there was only one wedding in this commune and it was not forced. As the woman who was married at that ceremony explained, "mine was special...it had a ceremony with my family, we ate pork and had cake" (SR314). It was a traditional wedding, although there were no monks to officiate. Living conditions were not strictly controlled: in the village, families lived together, children

were returned to their parents after work, weddings were by choice, and the mobile units had regular visits back to the village. This first period had a low level of social collectivization.

After 18 months, in early 1977, the purges began throughout the North Zone and the once loyal commune of Varin was viewed with suspicion. Even KR soldiers who were stationed elsewhere but known to be from the north were taken as political prisoners (SR313). New leaders were introduced from Takeo – they were better trained, sent by the central party, and had no ties to the community. Once these new officials took over, they held meetings with the group, village, and commune leaders every three to four days. In these meetings, the new district officials threatened the lower level leaders into making reports on their groups, not only to get information about progress but also about people's behaviors. A former group leader explained that he was required to report on his group and how everyone was working. If he did not report on them, he would have been punished (SR311). The introduction of non-local officials also introduced greater oversight over production and daily life within the groups.

The changes in daily life that took place after the purges were largely based on the increased control over production and daily work, but also through the introduction of forced marriages. There were a few weddings per year in this commune. Group weddings did not start until after 1976, the first wedding in the commune was a single couple. The woman from that couple explained that she and her husband knew each other from the village but he had to ask permission from the group leaders. She knew that her wedding was not the norm during the KR, but it was the first one in the village. Forced marriages began after the purges. She continued that “after my wedding there were usually groups of 10 or more couples” (SR314). In most of the other couples, the group leaders matched couples. Some of the couples were able to request a match, but others were forced. There were no ceremonies or family involvement, couples just sat

in rows while the village chief gave a speech. Outside of marriage, men and women were separated. One of the younger women explained that they could not sit together or talk when the groups are together for meetings, and there were harsh punishments if they found out about unmarried couples sleeping together (SR314). In the post-purge period, the changes in force marriages, increased control over daily life, and more frequent oversight visits from district officials led to a moderate level of social and economic collectivization.

Praek Khbop Commune (Ek Phnom District, Battambang)

Praek Khbop commune is in the Northwest Zone and bordered Battambang City, the second biggest city in the country. During the civil war, violence began around 1972; people moved into bunkers or trenches to escape the fighting at night. The KR took power in 1975 and quickly centralized their control by killing off remaining Lon Nol soldiers and relocating urban populations. Many people were moved here from Battambang city, in part because they were so close. Those new families did not survive long, as an informant recalled, “there were 350 families of new and Cham people and only 3 left after the KR” (B112). This commune is at the beginning of the country’s ricebasket and remained an economic priority area, it also became an internal security threat - a demographic threat -because of the introduction of New People and Cham families. As a result, there is a greater need for a high level of social control in this area as a way to establish greater control over these populations that were necessary for rice production. Control was established through civilian and military leaders: the work groups and village leaders reported to the cooperative, but there were also soldiers and a militia in the commune that was outside of that chain of command. The militia reported to the damban and had relative autonomy within the commune itself. Within the commune, there were also children’s militias

that were spies and worked for the chiefs, but they were not armed (B112). The spies were trained and taught the code of conduct, which one informant boiled down to “don’t steal, kill, or cheat Angkar, and no improper sex” (B112). The civilian officials held meetings weekly where they assigned work quotas. Less regularly, the district officials would hold meetings at the community Wat (Buddhist temple) with a representative from each family, at these meetings people would be required to report on others and some recalled that people would be taken and killed afterwards (B114). While there was turnover of village officials, there was no commune-wide change in behavior during the purges: control in this commune did not change after 1977.

Control over the production and consumption of goods was strictly monitored, but there were some avenues for people to supplement insufficient rations. The commune confiscated all private goods and all cookware was taken to the central mess hall. In some cases, even wood from houses was taken in order to build other structures in the community (B111). Rations were strictly controlled by the kong, who determined which crops and how much could be taken to the commune. Within those rations, the spies and militia members got better treatment - they were given rice, while everyone else was given watery porridge (B112, B111). Quotas were assigned in frequent meetings with the kong leadership. *Krom* [work groups] were required to produce 3 tons of rice per hectare. Work assignments were strictly monitored: not only were there meetings where groups were required to report on each other (B114), but there were spies embedded in every group of four people (B111). Outside of the work groups, families could keep gardens at home or covertly catch fish. *Krom* leaders, like the woman interviewed in B112, would turn a blind eye to these acts to supplement the meager rations they were given. She commented that every few months she tried to give workers some small food to take home (e.g. surplus potatoes) (B112). Therefore, this commune had a moderate level of economic collectivization: the strict

control over rations, work quotas, and personal property was tempered by access to supplemental food sources.

Social control was more mixed in this commune with forced marriages but no family separation. Families, even of those groups that were politically undesirable, were not separated – although those population groups were targeted and almost entirely killed (B112). Weddings were more frequent in the beginning here, in 1975-1976. After 1976 the weddings slowed down. Most women were forced into a match, but men could make requests. The village chief made or approved the matches, sometimes men would go to the group leader instead to ask permission to marry someone. In theory, women could ask too, but men could decline a match (B112b).⁷ Matches were based on background, and “only like-classes were able to be matched” (B112). Base People were matched with Base People, and remaining New People were matched with New People. Soldiers could marry either soldiers or party members. The chhlop would hide under the houses to make sure the new couples slept together the first night. They would also ask the men in the morning to be sure. If they did not, they would both be killed. Based on the strict controls over marriage and observation of new couples, but maintenance of family ties and ability for families to live together, this commune had a moderate level of social collectivization.

Comparing internal threats

In comparing the internal risk cases, I find that social collectivization was used more often to target political risks who could be redeemed by the regime. In Praek Khbop and in Varin, the New People were mostly executed within the first 18 months, which suggests that they

⁷ Interview B112 was primarily with a woman in her early 60s, however there was a man of a similar age (unclear if it was her husband or a friend) who was part of the conversation and would comment during the interview as well.

were not a necessary population and it was easier to execute them or let them die from other means than to use social practices to control these populations. The change over time in Varin is the most telling, even though the population does not change, the regime increased practices of social collectivization. Forced marriages were introduced after the commune becomes part of the ‘rebellious north’.

Table 3: Summary of Internal Threats

<i>Commune</i>	<i>Zone</i>	External Risk	Internal threat	Economic Collectivization	Social Collectivization
<i>Varin (1975-1977)</i>	North	No	No	Low - Moderate	Low
<i>Varin (1977-1979)</i>	North	No	Political	Moderate	Moderate
<i>Praek Khbop</i>	NW	No	Demographic	Moderate	Moderate

The rebellion that took place in the North had a ripple effect across the Northwest zone as well. In both zones, the nature of threat was still an internal one. The experiences of these two zones come together with the purges of 1977 and the replacement of local leaders with those from Takeo, trained at the model districts and ideological bases. While the north on average became more stringent after the replacement of officials, the Northwest’s violence was somewhat moderated. In both zones the central authorities were responding to a suspicion that the organization had been infiltrated by traitors, leading to the removal of officials and a purge of northern members of the military (Vickery 1984, Kiernan 1996 and SR313). Despite the reach of the purge, the way it was carried out varied. In many communities in the North zone, leaders were executed or jailed before being replaced by new officials. However, in the Northwest, many communities received new officials from the southwest who shadowed and observed the officials who were there to begin with, but they were never removed or executed. These are both ways to

recentralize control after too much authority was devolved below the district, however they differ in the scale of the response.

Taking a step back from these cases, what the response to rebellion shows is that the KR's use of repression was not random or a result of weak governance, but rather it reflects a deliberate strategy that could be calibrated in response to the perception of threat. The tempering of violence in Kampong Kdei, as well as compared with the increase in control in Varin after the purges, both communes with primarily Base People, suggest the ways that perception of political threat affected the style of control in a given commune. While these findings are neither novel nor surprising, it does push back on common portrayals of the KR regime as paranoid, monolithic, and using extreme violence in a random manner: instead, these cases suggest that there was an order to their use of repression and violence.

Broader trends:

In comparing across the cases in this chapter, the treatment of New People and the practices of social collectivization are the most telling of the regime's priorities and the logic underlying the establishment of collectives. Generally, the presence of internal and ideological threats made it more likely that there would be greater oversight of both economic and social life. In those communities that received New People, there was a choice to execute or reform them. In those cases, there was a greater likelihood of execution for ethnic minorities (e.g. Praek Khbop) or sex-selective executions (e.g. Trapeang Bei). Social controls were more often increased for population groups seen as more malleable, like political risks, or those groups who were more critical for labor (this will be expanded upon in the next chapter). What this suggests is that the social controls were meant to reform the populations who were seen as more

changeable - ethnic or religious differences would be more difficult to alter through social practices (e.g. forced marriages or family separation). Therefore, these practices of social collectivization were used to temper political enemies more than ethnic minorities.

The type of risk that a community faced also affected the dynamics of bottom-up violence. Where the risk was an outside invasion, sexual violence increased as a means of “protecting” women (e.g. Trapeang Bei, Chheu Teal); where the risk was internal because of the population group itself or the increased strain it put on an already struggling group (Base People or poor farmers), denunciations and execution were more likely (e.g. Pongro Kraom). While this is not explicitly about the establishment of collectives, the dynamics of violence in a given commune had an effect on the community. Higher levels of denunciation and execution suggest that there was much more stringent oversight and increasingly harsh punishments for mistakes or missed work quotas.

Lastly, the practices used in the cases in this chapter also suggest the role that economic and social collectivization played. Economic collectivization was sold as a means to increase production; however, the treatment of the population suggests that the social dimensions were more important to increasing productivity – social collectivization was used to control laborers, who were critical to achieving the state’s economic goals – and economic components were meant to exert discipline onto the population. More broadly, the cases in this chapter reinforce the role that economic incentives and security risks play in the logic of governing: while security and ideology are important to explain the timing of crackdowns or shifts in practice, economic incentives, as is expanded on in the next chapter, are key to the treatment of population groups.

Chapter 4

A Logic of Revolutionary Governance Part 2: Economic incentives

“He who has rice possesses absolutely everything”
«អោយតែមានស្រូវគឺមានអ្វីៗទាំងអស់¹ » (Khmer Rouge Slogan)

Rice was the central concern of the Cambodian revolution. It was the staple crop, the cornerstone of the revolution, and the basis of dreams of self-sufficiency. Cooperative agriculture was first introduced as means to increase rice production² and meet the goals of self-sufficiency. Historically, rice was an important crop not only as the staple grain, but also because of its centrality in supporting the ancient Khmer empire. As the slogan above demonstrates, rice was fundamental to everything else the regime sought to achieve. While village collectives were the primary means of organizing the population, collectivization was a fundamentally economic policy. It was also necessary to support the Khmer Rouge military: rice was the primary export exchanged with China for arms and technical advisers (Mertha 2014). These factors made rice an existential crop. In this chapter, I ask how high rice yields affected the establishment and administration of village cooperatives. Throughout this dissertation, I argue that the Khmer Rouge ideology shaped the regime’s policy choices, but those policies were implemented differently across the country in response to security and economic incentives.

I propose that underlying the implementation of KR policies was a logic of governance. I argue that the KR, as a revolutionary regime, framed their policy choices through ideological

1. in Locard 2004, p. 238

2. Alongside collectivization, the KR introduced several changes in agriculture that were intended to boost the amount of rice — e.g. changing seedlings to a more productive type (SR211, SR122) and introducing the use of fertilizers.

goals but their implementation corresponded to economic and security interests (both internal and external). Put simply, I contend that the regime responded to ordinary political interests in establishing out of the ordinary policy goals. The variation in implementation had lasting effects on the population's ability to survive the worst effects of the revolution's policies. I focus on the role of economic incentives—rice production—and how they shaped the type of collectivization, and ultimately control, established in a given community.

This chapter puts forward the second piece of the logic of revolutionary governance, how economic incentives shaped governance. In the broader context of the dissertation, this represents half of the strategic incentives; however, it is also the more consequential half. Building on the findings in the previous chapter, I argue that economic factors determine where social control was used to reform undesirable populations instead of execution. I find in this chapter that economic incentives were more likely to lead to the use of social collectivization, which I argue in the next chapter, made deaths from indirect means more likely. More broadly, this means that economic factors shaped the strategies of violence, as well as the strategies of control.

Past economic performance and governance outcomes

Past economic performance shaped the regime's strategies of governance, through control and oversight of the population's daily life. I argue that the practices of control over both parts of collectivization are shaped by the previous rice yields. A history of high rice yields prior to the civil war shaped the expectations of high production in the KR period. I find that high rice yields had two key effects: first, it made collectivization more intense, and second, it drove demand for New People to be kept alive as laborers. Areas with high rice yields had greater

oversight through more frequent contact with central authorities. Khmer Rouge ideology³ suggests that targeted populations, would be executed or left to die of neglect after the first wave of evacuations. However, a second wave of migration of New People brought groups from the Southwest to the Northwest Zone, which I argue was due to demand for more laborers driven by high rice yields. This shows that demands for labor took priority over the New People's status as ideological enemies.

As discussed in the previous chapters, the establishment of collective agriculture included two interrelated processes: economic and social collectivization. Economic collectivization is made up of the practices that established cooperative production, state expropriation of goods, and eliminated private property. Social collectivization includes practices that targeted family and community life through new living groups, family separation, and forced marriages. I discuss these components as separate processes, but in practice they are related and often respond to the same pressures. The treatment of the New People suggests that the KR used social collectivization to control and reform ideologically constructed enemies. Social collectivization was therefore a necessary tool for management of daily life of a population needed to produce as much rice as possible.

The treatment of New People in high yield areas is telling of the regime's priorities. This is most clearly seen in the communities in the country's ricebasket — the areas in Battambang, Pursat, and Banteay Meanchey provinces between the Tonle Sap lake and the forest line — where quotas for rice production were almost double the three tons per hectare required

3. Recall from Chapter 1 that the KR envisioned an agrarian utopia, which they tried to achieve through forced migration from cities to rural zones, collectivization of agriculture, and the attempt to eliminate culture and tradition. They targeted urban populations, ethnic minorities, and those who were involved in the previous regime: these constituted the New People. The rural peasants were considered Base People and were favored by the regime.

elsewhere. Groups were moved from the Southwest Zone to the Northwest Zone in a second wave of forced migration. The people moved to the Northwest were likely to be resettled in communities in Cambodia's ricebasket, those areas that grew the majority of the country's rice. Once New People arrived in the Northwest, they were put to work in the rice fields. In contrast, those moved to the Central and North Zones following the evacuations were often executed or left to die within the first two years of the regime (KT121, SR221, SR225. See also Kiernan 1996). I argue that they were kept alive after their transfer to supplement the labor force, which was necessary to meet the goals of the new regime. I also find that evacuees brought to communities with high rice yields were more likely to be integrated in the same work groups with Base People. As a result of their integration with Base People, the community was then more likely to need greater social control. What started as an economic consideration, demand for labor, therefore led to greater social collectivization through the introduction of a less desirable population.

Governance in the ricebasket gives a clear picture of the regime's response to economic incentives. The expectation of high rice yields drove strict practices of collectivization. Some of the patterns of violence in these communities can be explained through intergroup dynamics prior to the civil war. Prior to collectivization, the close proximity of landlords who ran the large rice mills and those who worked for increasingly poor wages during the civil war led to intergroup resentment. As a result of resentment there were revenge killings and denunciations in the early part of the KR period (Chandler 1991, Hinton 1998). As is the case in other instances of mass violence, denunciations of other community members, like participation in the conflict, can be a means to gain better treatment, settling interpersonal conflicts, higher status, or private goods (e.g Bergemann 2017, Kalyvas 2006, Petersen 2001). In Cambodia it was no different -

people reported that their family members were denounced for having been wealthy (e.g. P114, SR225), to seek preferential treatment (KL113),⁴ but also because they were coerced (e.g. P113). In addition to interpersonal dynamics, landlords or wealthy rural groups were also considered by the KR to be enemy groups (much like the Kulaks in the Soviet Union and the wealthy peasants in China). The long history of ethnic Chinese traders in Cambodia (Chandler 1991) added to the regime's understanding of these groups as foreign and threatening. As part of the elimination of landlords and wealthy peasants, KR cadres targeted the Chinese-Khmer population for execution (Kiernan 1996). The intergroup dynamics in the high yield ricebasket contributed to the initial setting of public and visible violence. The kinds of violence used helped set the stage in each commune and shaped the means of coercion used to establish control.

The goal of this chapter is to address the effects of prior rice yields on the type and level of collectivization enforced by the central government. I address this through two paired comparisons of communes: one pair with high past rice yields and one pair of average past production. As outlined in chapter 1, the communes are assessed based on reported information from interviews. Economic collectivization is addressed through work groups (assignments, quotas, punishments) and group meals (rations, access to food, foraging, confiscation of cookware, fishing or keeping livestock). Social collectivization is addressed through group living (assignments, family visits, childcare) and weddings (matching practices, right of refusal, post-observation). Control and oversight from central authorities is determined through information about meetings (participants and content, frequency, presence of central authorities) and visits from military or outside actors. Next, I use the same four communes to compare across the high

4. KL113 articulated this very clearly, she commented that denunciations were voluntary but “every society has people who want to seek honor and benefits” that drove them to report on neighbors.

and low yield areas to draw out other patterns of how they were governed that may have emerged. All four of these communes were considered to be communist loyalists at the start; based on initial security risks alone, these communes should have had similar low levels of both social and economic collectivization. The point of departure for these four communes is the historical production and the implications that it had for the imported labor of the New People. The accounts of each commune are structured through the experiences of economic and social components of collectivization, as well as the ways that the central party established oversight at the most local levels.

Through the case analysis, I find that the need to produce as much rice as possible was prioritized over internal security concerns where the New People were relocated and kept alive as laborers.⁵ I argue that the second effect, keeping New People alive, reinforced the need for social collectivization which made living conditions in communities where they were integrated were more stringent. This chapter, along with the discussion in Chapter 3 of how security concerns shaped local administration, shows that the Khmer Rouge regime responded to ordinary political incentives (as defined by the regime's ideology). Unlike security concerns, economic priorities based on rice production were static and unchanging throughout the KR period. This chapter also provides a link between the regime's economic priorities and the ways that collectivization affected a population group's survival, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

The Cases:

5. As demonstrated earlier in this dissertation, internal and external security concerns also shaped local administration. Internal threats - ideologically constructed enemies - needed to be eliminated either through execution or strict social control to reform them.

In this section, I compare two pairs of communes that had high and low rice production prior to 1975. The two pairs of communes have similar initial conditions except for their history of rice production: all four communes were early sympathizers with KR ideology and all were populated by Base People prior to the evacuations of urban centers. Based on the expectations of internal and external security concerns alone, these communes should have had uniform experiences of low collectivization. However, two of the communes, Ta Pun and Kanchor, had high levels of both economic and social collectivization, while Chheu Teal experienced low-moderate social and low economic collectivization and Kampeang faced low economic and moderate social collectivization. I first compare between both high yield communities, Ta Pun and Kanchor, based on their experiences of social and economic components of collectivization. I next compare the two low-yield communes, Kampeang and Chheu Teal, which had similar social and economic practices. After establishing the types and levels of collectivization in each of these pairs of communes, I compare across high-low pairs to trace the effects of past production levels. In these cases, I find that the expectation of high rice production shaped the types of collectivization and its effects on daily life.

Table 4: Economic Incentives Cases

<i>Commune</i>	<i>Zone</i>	<i>Start</i>	<i>Ideological Risk (before 75)</i>	<i>External Security Risk</i>	<i>Expected Yield</i>	<i>Economic Collective</i>	<i>Social Collective</i>
Ta Pun	NW	Pre-75* ⁶	No	No	High	High	High
Kanchor	NW	1975	No**	No	High	High	High
Kampeang	SW	Pre-75*	No	No	Low	Low	Moderate
Chheu Teal	Central/ North	Pre-75*	No	No	Low	Moderate	Moderate; Low (77-79)

6. *The KR took control in 1975, anything prior is deemed early commitment

** Pursat province was a holdout with Lon Nol soldiers, although Kanchor was aligned with the KR

High production areas

Ta Pun commune and Kanchor commune were given some of the highest production quotas in the country during the KR period. Both communes were in an area that had been the center of rice production and was part of a government rice buying scheme during the Lon Nol era to feed the booming urban centers, which instead deflated the prices for the critical commodity (Chandler 1991). The seeds of economic anxieties and class animosity made it a supportive area for the communists. The two communes were in different administrative regions (damban) within the KR system but under the same zonal command. The security and ideological concerns discussed in the previous chapter would suggest that these communities would be left alone by the regime and authorities given space to govern as they saw fit. However, both communes had high social and economic collectivization with oversight from central authorities at the damban level. Where they diverge is in the use of direct exterminatory violence within the commune to demonstrate control; in both, there were displays of violence but in Ta Pun it was public while in Kanchor it was through a process of denunciation and imprisonment.

Ta Pun Commune (Sangkae district, Battambang)

The first commune, Ta Pun, is located in Sangkae district in Battambang province. The commune is located about 30 kilometers from the provincial city of Battambang, which was then (and remains) the second largest urban center in the country. The proximity to the city was a contributing factor in the first wave of evacuations: many people from Battambang ended up in Ta Pun immediately after evacuation. The urban evacuees were integrated into the community and lived alongside the rural populations who were already living in the area. As a community

that became populated with urban evacuees, it became an ideologically hostile community. As a traditionally high rice yield community, it was also a critical economic priority.

Control over daily life and rice production was established through direct oversight from the region. There were regular meetings at the kong and damban level. While the orders that people were given came from the kong leaders (B211, B212), the kong leaders interacted with and received instructions in frequent meetings with their superior officers. Meetings in this commune happened at every level: there were “kong, commune, district, and damban meetings. The regional officials came to each village” (B212). This meant that the central officials had a lot of oversight over what happened in this community and saw what was going on in the fields. Either they gave the orders of how to treat people or they saw how people were being treated and gave approval for it. Further, this was a space where executions were public and horrific. It was explained to me that “They [the company leaders] would kill people slowly by first cutting out and eating their organs. Some left organs out to send a signal to others of what could happen” (B212). In this context, officials were often the targets of violence as well. The earlier local officials were killed when they were to be replaced, “four *me kong* [company leaders] were killed. They were killed for being too lenient... The new ones were too afraid to be nice to the people” (B211). The kind of violence and public replacement of ‘nice’ officials suggests that the more central authorities — those doing the replacing — were not only aware of how control was being demonstrated, but also increased that control and environment of fear in the community.

Economic collectivization started early in this commune and remained strict throughout the Khmer Rouge period. The working conditions were reinforced by the strict oversight in the commune. Work groups were formed before 1975 and became the central form of organization in the commune. The groups were separated out by age and gender: children, young able-bodied

men, young able-bodied women, new mothers, older adults. Kong leaders assigned work quotas once a week at meetings with all 30 members of the small kong. The production of goods was conducted by assigned groups and maintained largely through fear. Punishments were not explicitly tied to missing work quotas, but rather there was an environment of fear and uncertainty (B211, B212). The kong leaders used fear to coerce the population to keep working, even though the goals were unattainable. Private goods were confiscated as part of the transition in 1975 (B212). There was further control over the consumption of goods through communal mess halls. Meals were collectivized in mess halls where the whole population ate at the same time, meaning that rations were under the control of the state, stores of food were held by the commune (not allowed in personal homes), and that all cookware or utensils were confiscated. These steps prohibited individuals cooking even foraged or hidden goods that would ordinarily be consumed to supplement poor rations. These practices were upheld and got worse with the officials from the Southwest,⁷ which constituted the strictest economic collectivization.

Social life was under stringent control and collectivized throughout the Khmer Rouge period. While the regime's interests in the commune were economic in nature, ensuring productivity required strict control over social and family life. This is demonstrated through the living groups and the state control over marriage. Living groups were established with the arrival of the New People in 1975. The residents were moved out to the forests where they lived with the New People in their assigned work groups — not with their families. The commune leaders sent children to be taken care of by a designated group of older women, colloquially, the

7. As discussed in the previous chapter, there was a purge of officials in the North and Northwest zones in 1977. They were replaced with new officials from the Southwest, often trained at model districts and seen as more ideologically aligned with the central party.

grandmothers (yiey kla យីយក្លា ខ្លះ) who taught children and watched them while the able-bodied adults worked the fields. In the early days of the regime, kong leaders would allow people a day off of work to visit family every few months; however, this ended with the arrival of the Southwestern officials in 1977 (B211). Weddings in this commune were under strict control by kong leaders and enforced by the chhlop, preteen boys in the militia. Kong leaders matched people with like status in an attempt to balance out the community. Both men and women were matched, although on occasion a man could request a specific woman to whom he wanted to be matched. One woman explained that “the soldiers wanted things to be equal, they made pretty girls marry ugly guys to make fun of them” (B211). There would be 20-50 couples matched at a time, without the ability to say no. After the weddings, they would be followed by chhlop for several nights and interrogated to ensure that the newly married couples had sex. Failing to do so would result in both people being killed (B211). This gave the commune’s leaders authority to engineer and enforce not only the social relations that the regime called for, but also to produce the kinds of people it required. The totalizing control over social and communal life continued throughout the Khmer Rouge period, making this a high socially collectivized commune.

Kanchor Commune (Kandieng district, Pursat)

The second case of a high production commune is Kanchor, in Kandieng district, Pursat province, which is south of Battambang province and borders the Tonle Sap lake. Pursat was a poorer province and remains poorer on average than neighboring Battambang. During the civil war, the visible inequality between the provinces led to an early affinity for communist ideology and animosity toward the few wealthy landlords and the taxes imposed by Lon Nol (who overthrew King Sihanouk) that they felt impoverished the community (e.g. P111). Civil war

started in this area around 1972. As an informant in neighboring Veal commune explained about the civil war period “they went in good people who loved the King and they came out the Khmer Rouge” referring not only to soldiers, but also supporters who gave them food and supplies (P121). Pursat province was seen as a holdout area where Lon Nol soldiers continued to fight into 1975 and were executed within the first week of KR control (ECCC 2014).⁸ This is a first sign that governance across Pursat, even in communes with KR affinities, would be under careful supervision. Like Ta Pun, people were expected to produce 5-6 tons of rice per hectare (P114), but as their production increased rations given to the community declined (P111). Kanchor was an area that produced a lot of rice at the beginning, which made it a priority for the regime to meet its existential goals despite the dwindling rice yield as time went on.

Control was established in this community through the frequent meetings and the presence of soldiers in the area through the KR period. Some work groups had daily meetings with their kong leaders and were required to report back (P113). More specialized groups that worked throughout the commune met weekly (P111). A group leader explained that he had authority to grant people one day off to visit family or if they were sick, but not much else (P112). He went on to explain that district officials went from kong to kong to give information and instructions (ibid). While there were no mentions of regional officials coming to the meetings, there were *chhlop* and soldiers who were outside of the command structure of the district. During the 1977 purges, new officials were brought in from the southwest who were more loyal to the KR than local officials who preceded them (P113). Throughout the DK period

8. There was also a notorious prison at Tuol Po Chrey neighboring this commune that housed many people who were soldiers of the Lon Nol regime, arrested as enemies, otherwise affiliated with the old regime, or viewed as a risk to the revolution. The soldiers executed in this event were not from this district, but rather were rounded up and transported to a prison in the neighboring commune.

the district officials were in the commune regularly and saw the way that people were being treated. The frequent visits and the direct instructions from the district suggest that there was a high level of oversight and control from central party officials. It was a different context than other high production environments because of proximity to Toul Po Chrey prison, but the increased presence of central or district officials had the same effect of greater oversight and stringency in how collectivization was administered.

Economic collectivization in this community was strict from the beginning. Work groups were made up according to status and capability: all young adults were moved into mobile groups who lived, worked, ate, and slept separately, children and the elderly were left in the village to grow vegetables and support the mobile units. Base and New People were mixed in these groups, although New People were treated far worse. Work quotas were enforced by the district through group leaders who had to assign more work to those who did not meet their previous day's goals (P112). Group leaders also had incentives for their groups to meet quotas: they would be punished alongside their charges for unfinished work (P112). Individuals were further incentivized by a promise that growing more rice would lead to better food or the ability to exchange surplus rice for cloth or other goods, although that never happened (P114). Those who stayed in the village were able to grow vegetables and catch fish; however, they were required to turn all goods over to the commune (P111). Rations were distributed through the communal mess hall and under the control of officials who told the cooking group how much they could take from the central warehouse (P113). These rations were minimal and declined across the DK period, typically they had a single pot of watery porridge with one cup of rice per

25 people (P111, P114).⁹ This commune had a high level of economic collectivization based on the low rations, enforcement of work quotas, and confiscation of all goods produced.

Social collectivization was strict from the start and got more intense throughout the KR period. Once the mobile groups were established, children were moved into a central unit that was under the care of the old women left in the village. New mothers were allowed to stay in the village with their babies until they finished breastfeeding, at which point the babies were sent to the children's unit (P114). Working-aged men and women were housed separately in their work groups. Weddings in this commune became stricter over time. A couple I interviewed said that they married early in the DK period (in 1976) and were able to choose each other. They explained that the man needed to get permission from the cooperative chief and marry in a group (P114).¹⁰ This changed over time, as a former official explained, the cooperative leader made the matches of men and women from like status groups. Even as a party member and low level official, he was not able to request a match (P112). Couples were assigned to stay together for four days before they were sent back to their mobile groups, during which time they were observed by *chhlop* who hid underneath the house. Observations by the *chhlop* also implied the threat of being killed for non-compliance. The separation of families, childcare unit, and strict control over marriage show that this commune had a high level of social collectivization.

In addition to the strict control established through the high level of economic and social collectivization, there were other factors that contributed to the environment of fear in Kanchor. There were denunciations of those who were thought not to be working carefully enough (P111)

9. P114 was an older couple, the woman in this couple had been in the village cooking group throughout the DK period.

10. In Kandieng district: the smallest groups were the small company (*kong*), followed by big company, commune, then cooperative, which was the level below the district

and also of those who had money prior to the DK regime (P114). Officials required people to report on others in their groups during regular meetings and those who were named would be reeducated or imprisoned. Group leaders were also punished if the members of the group did not report on each other, so they had a vested interest in making people speak out against each other (P113). There was a military presence at the district prison near Kanchor which was outside of the commune and cooperative administrative structure. As mentioned earlier, the prison at Toul Po Chrey was an execution site where Lon Nol soldiers were rounded up and killed early on in the KR's rule, but was also in continuous use throughout the DK period and known to the residents of this area. Each of the people I spoke to talked about the notorious site in the forest nearby (it was located in the next commune), under control of separate authorities and soldiers. The constant threat of denunciations and awareness of what punishment would entail at the prison led people to cooperate with the impossible work orders.

Comparing within high production areas

In both high yield communes, strict control was established through direct oversight by central authorities. However, control was reinforced by an environment of fear, stemming from the use of violence, either in public displays or through frequent denunciations and imprisonment. In both communes, people closer to the central party – either regional officials or soldiers (who were part of a more structured hierarchy) – were present and known to the population. Where the communes diverge is in the way that violence was used. In Ta Pun, an environment of fear was established through a spectacle of public violence carried out by kong and commune leaders. In Kanchor, there was an omnipresence of soldiers and knowledge of a prison in the forest, but violence was carried out in private. However, each established fear of a

different actor: violent spectacle established fear of local leaders, denunciations fostered fear among the population.

The reports of cannibalism in Ta Pun (and in other communes in Sangkae district) an area that produced more food than it ever had before, are on the surface puzzling. In other cases of famine or food shortages there are reports of humans being eaten as a means of survival as a desperate last resort (c.f Davis 2001, Snyder 2010). This was not the case in Sangkae district, these were the communes producing the most food in the country and reports of cannibalism were by officials who were given access to better rations. In the KR case there were also rumors that human livers and hearts were consumed as a means of gaining their enemies' strength.¹¹ However, here it seems to be meant as spectacle. The acts of cannibalism in these communities serve as a case of extra-lethal violence. Fujii (2013) theorizes extra-lethal violence as a performative display as well as a meaning-making act. She argues that extra-lethal violence is driven by a logic of display. Using her typology, the acts of cannibalism by individual leaders would be a "one-man show," which is meant to demonstrate and reinforce the director's (leader) power and control (2013, p.420). In Ta Pun, this demonstrated the kong leaders' irrefutable control over the community and established fear to coerce residents into compliance with the regime. Further, the introduction of outsiders, the New People brought in both waves as laborers, may have compounded the need to publicly exhibit control. This was also visible to the regional officials who frequented the commune, which I contend meant at least tacit approval. Central

11. E.g. Wright, George and Kuch Naren. "Cannibalism, Khmer Rouge, and the Horrors of War" *Cambodia Daily* 4/25/2015 <https://www.cambodiadaily.com/archives/cannibalism-khmer-rouge-and-horrors-of-war-82653/> KRT Trial Monitor Case 002/02 "Hearings on Evidence Week 4: 2-6 February 2015" Issue https://handacenter.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/report-documents/issue-7-wk-7_2-6feb151.pdf

authorities permitted the horrific violence to occur and reinforced strict control through their support for such acts.

In Kanchor the means of establishing the party's control over the space were through more traditional means, the presence of soldiers and the not so subtle execution of prisoners. Unlike other communes near district prisons, the prison in Kandieng was well known to the community.¹² The presence of soldiers who were outside of the district chain of command meant that there was a constant source of central party oversight, as well as the sense that their authority was unchecked by those in the community (as was reflected by interviewees, e.g. P112). The commune itself however also had incentives for residents to publicly demonstrate compliance. Denunciations were common in this community as reporting on your neighbors in public sessions was required (P111). It was also known to the community that those who were reported were taken to be reeducated or executed. The fear of denunciation would significantly raise the stakes of noncompliance. Therefore, this further eroded any trust among community members. In the two high yield communes, frequent meetings with district or regional officials and military presence established central party oversight that led to strict interpretations of collectivization. While direct exterminatory violence was used throughout the KR period, the two particular forms that were highlighted in these communities are suggestive of the ways that oversight and strict collectivization were established at high costs to ensure control in critical production areas. I will return to this issue in the comparison between high and low production zones, which should clarify why New People were moved in a second wave of migration from low yield to high yield areas. This suggests that where additional laborers were needed to grow rice, they

12. For example, Banan prison was located in Kanteur Piir commune, however people reported very little information or knowledge about its activity and did not often see the soldiers who administered it (B311, B312).

were used as a slave labor force instead of an ideological enemy to be executed outright. Further, the use of direct violence in both communes, although different in form, elicit compliance through fear as well as incentivized participation in enforcement of KR ideals. The next section will focus on low production communities and emphasize the relative autonomy that local level leaders were given in those contexts, as well as comparing the administration of both high and low communities.

Low production areas:

Chheu Teal and Kampeang communes are low yield communes that had few incentives for central oversight, which resulted in lower levels of collectivization. They had similar initial conditions other than being in different zones: both collectivized prior to KR rule and are in areas that were training sites for the early KR. The level of collectivization varied between low and moderate in both economic and social dimensions; some of these shifts as a result of zonal trends. They diverge on the question of political education: Chheu Teal had more contact with central authorities and a formal practice of indoctrination while Kampeang had little interaction with central actors. In both of these cases, the expectations based on security factors and economic priorities would suggest that the officials in these communes have relative autonomy to govern as they saw fit. Further, the relative distances of each commune from Phnom Penh¹³ suggest that this was not merely an effect of the state's limited reach. In this section, I establish the practices of oversight and control that led to low or moderate levels of collectivization.

13. Chheu Teal is approximately 240 KM and Kampeang approximately 65 KM from the capital in Phnom Penh

Chheu Teal Commune (Sandan district, Kampong Thom)

The mountainous forests of Kampong Thom province were an early site of the Khmer Rouge's activities. The topography provided effective cover for them to hide and the traditionally poor rural areas were supportive of the communists' goals. There was heavy fighting in the early 1970s between Lon Nol soldiers and the Khmer Rouge (Vickery 1984). At that time, young people were drafted to be soldiers (although they were later put into mobile groups). Communist control started early in this commune. By 1972 they had already started eating communally. Even though the young people were moved to mobile groups or were soldiers, they stayed with their families and lived in their homes as usual while in the village. When the Khmer Rouge took control of the state in 1975 things shifted in the villages. There were New People from Siem Reap and Phnom Penh who were housed separately from the rural base population. The young adults shifted from soldiering groups to mobile units that worked out around the district. There were limited economic or security incentives for the state to intervene.

Control in this commune was established through reporting in group meetings and political education. Despite the early commitment to KR ideals, there were a few leadership changes in this commune. The first purge was in 1976 and the second in 1977, as a part of the broad purge of the North and Northwest zones. The second purge led to an overall shift toward less violence and less collectivization. Meetings within the village and with work groups were common. People could speak up and were often asked to report on the progress of work. It was in those meetings that punishments for missing work quotas were doled out (KT121). In the less frequent district meetings, they would have political education. As it was explained to me, "They brought us to listen, we couldn't talk.. Sometimes it was a recording [news broadcast] and other times it was a person behind a curtain. They talked about politics and needing to work hard to

support soldiers” (KT121). A former official from a neighboring commune in the same district explained, that at those meetings he was able to push back on quotas from the district that were unattainable to set more reasonable expectations for work groups (KT111). He continued that he knew there were other communes in the district that overworked their people, but those leaders were reported on and demoted (KT111). The interactions with the region or district party focused on ideology and not the organization of the commune. Instead, those decisions were largely left to the officials within the commune. I contend that this relative autonomy for the village and commune officials reflected a belief that Chheu Teal’s citizens were more aligned with the regime's ideals both as early adopters and recipients of political education.

Economic collectivization started out low but incrementally moved toward moderate throughout the 1970s. Cooperative work groups were established when the KR took control in this community in 1970. In the first few years, they were able to store all of their own goods for the group — more like a mutual aid group, they kept rice, vegetables, and fish that they caught for the group and sent rations to support the soldiers in the civil war. Once the KR took power in 1975, work groups became more formal. Work groups in the village grew rice and cleared the land. Quotas were established and assigned by work group (krom) leaders (KT121).¹⁴ There were punishments for the whole group, although not the leaders, if they missed quotas. Punishments for failing to reach a quota were increased work quotas the next day and people were not given food until the work was completed (KT121). Rations were determined by the village leaders, which were set at 24 kg of rice per month and half per child (KT121). Families were permitted to have gardens or catch fish on their own, but everyone ate together in their

14. KT121 was a group interview with 7 community members who lived through the DK period. While I preferred individual interviews, people felt more comfortable speaking in a group

group. Those who were too old or ill to go to the commune mess hall were able to cook for themselves at home. People with positions ate separately from everyone else and it was assumed that they got better food. During the harvest seasons, people were able to have regular rice instead of the porridge that was cooked in the rest of the year. The communal eating and rations constituted low economic collectivization and the use of punishments for missing quotas brings the commune to a moderate level.

Social collectivization was moderate in this commune, although it shifted toward low after the removal of New People. Urban evacuees were housed separately and not integrated into the community. They were killed off within the first 18 months of the regime's control (KT121). Base People lived in their own homes with their families throughout the KR period. Children were all in the children's unit during the day, which put kids to work collecting human waste, leaves, and compost to make fertilizer. However, they were returned to their families at night and slept at home. Weddings started later in this commune, sometime around 1977. They would have 30 - 40 couples married at a time, but most couples were not (mutually) forced. Typically, men could pick who they wanted to marry and request the match. Women however had far fewer choices. As the war worsened with Vietnam, weddings became increasingly common here. People worried that the Vietnamese were going to take all of the women and girls for themselves, so there was an impetus to get everyone married off as quickly as possible (KT121). This is significant because it shows there were alternative motives underlying the uptick in marriages in this commune. Xenophobia drove participation in these marriages, not coercion. There were no reports here that couples were monitored after weddings. The daytime children's unit and instances of forced marriage makes this commune a moderate to low social collective.

This commune was not kept under collectivization for the entire KR period. Once war with Vietnam started, “they were too busy fighting with Vietnam to govern” (KT121). At that point, work groups began to come apart and mix together. By 1978, people worked with their families, cooked, ate, and lived at home. While collectivization efforts ended in this commune around 1978, the Khmer Rouge remained in this area throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Kampeang Commune (Prey Kabbas district, Takeo)

Prey Kabbas district was under KR control early on in the 1970s and this commune saw soldiers from every side during the civil war and American bombing campaigns. This commune was under complete control of the KR by 1971. All of the young people in the community were recruited to “fight in the opposition to Lon Nol” (TK121). Other parts of Prey Kabbas were inaccessible by land after 1968 as the fighting closer in to the mountains and to Phnom Penh was intense: the forested areas in this district were training grounds for the communists and the Lon Nol soldiers used roadblocks, landmines, and bombing (with assistance from the US Air Force (Kiernan and Owen 2007)) to block them (TK111). However, as a result of the ongoing fighting in this area there was low production and limited food throughout the civil war and KR period. The civil war and heavy fighting are likely the cause of limited food supplies — this area is now a highly productive agricultural zone, with even higher outputs of rice per hectare than the area in the Northwest’s ricebasket (National Committee for Subnational Democratic Development 2011). During the first wave of evacuations in 1975, many evacuees moved here from Phnom Penh. This included rural people who had fled the fighting to live in the relatively safer cities. In the second round of evacuations, most of the evacuees were sent out to Battambang and

Kampong Speu to work in labor camps. Collectivization was not particularly strict, but starvation occurred as a result of limited food availability.

Control in this commune was established through meetings with the village and district officials. Meetings were relatively infrequent, usually information was transmitted from the commune leader to the village and krom leaders via messenger. The krom leaders then gave their respective work groups instructions and quotas. When they had meetings, they were with district officials who oversaw three communes all together. Only those people with official positions were able to speak in meetings to offer their agreement with the plans put forward (TK121). There were no soldiers present in the community, although many of the young adults were sent to join the military. Cooperative and village officials changed a few times throughout the DK period. Former officials would be demoted or relocated, they would not be executed if they were removed from a position. As elsewhere in Cambodia, it was a mystery to many who was in charge. At the time of my visit to the commune in 2016, this community had an elderly man who was introduced to me as the commune's unofficial historian, he was the go-to person for questions about the area, its past, or its stories. When I asked him what he recalled from the KR period, he began to explain "*Angkar* made the decisions. *Me phum* [village chief], *me khum* [commune chief], they made the rules. I'm not sure who they were" (TK121) before the current *me khum* came by to ask again if I was sure I was not from an NGO,¹⁵ which curtailed the interview. There was no discussion of incentivized or coerced reporting on peers in this community, as well as no discussion of denunciations. Based on other interviews in this commune (TK122 and TK123), which were not visited by commune officials, there were no

15. There was a growing skepticism of foreign NGOs, particularly surrounding human rights or politics, as a result of an ongoing chill in Cambodia throughout in 2016. As of 2017, the chill has become a crackdown and several NGOs and broadcasters have been barred.

incentives to report on neighbors and no denunciations. Despite the commune's proximity to Phnom Penh, the officials involved in this community were primarily low-level sub-district actors, not those from the central party. As the information from my interviews suggests, after the second wave of evacuations, this commune was left alone for the village and commune officials to manage.

Economic collectivization was gradual in this commune. The community started to get rid of private ownership as early as 1972 (TK121). They first started to work and eat together in 1973. By 1975, groups were merged into one big kong. Groups were established based on status and age - children all went together to the children's place - but adults were divided by class, age, and gender. There were young men and women's mobile groups that were sent out of the commune to work seasonally. They would return to the village during the rice harvest. In the village, work was very different for Base and New People. New People were used to do harder work like digging irrigation canals or building dams. The Base People usually grew vegetables and rice. The Base People were also treated better in general. The New People, including rural people who were from an important or wealthy family, were watched more carefully (TK122). One person explained that they were targeting those that "had an easy life before" and deliberately gave them quotas that were not possible (TK121). For those groups (urban evacuees or wealthy peasants), punishments for missing work quotas or making a mistake were execution. The favored population groups, the Base People, were neither monitored closely nor given impossible work requirements (TK121).¹⁶ In the village, rations were distributed through the

16. While the conditions for New People were harsh and strictly enforced, the coding of communes' level of collectivization is based on the treatment of Base People as they were the population the regime set out to govern. The repression of targeted populations is a factor in the experience of collectivization, but only where they are integrated and not kept separately from the community.

communal mess hall. The commune grew rice and vegetables and people could try to catch fish or crabs; however, there was not food in this commune. One person who was evacuated first to Kampeang and then north to Battambang province explained the paradox that in Kampeang, “there was not much work but there was no food. In Battambang, it was very hard work but there was food” (TK122). It was not a question of over-requisitioning of rice, but rather that there simply was not much rice growing (TK121, TK122). What these examples demonstrate was that the cooperative was not the cause of food shortages, but a problem that likely stemmed from soil or crop degradation from the civil war.

Social collectivization was relatively low in this community throughout the KR period. People lived with their families in their own homes, even those who had been evacuated from Phnom Penh were allowed to live with family (TK122). However, the second wave of evacuations removed whatever remaining urban evacuees and wealthy peasants and relocated them to work camps in the Northwest. Those remaining in the villages were early loyalists and people who the regime saw as rural populations untainted by urban influence (TK122) or foreign ideologies.¹⁷ There were no days off to celebrate festivals or holidays. There was one wedding in this commune during the entire 4-year period (likely as a result of population movements). A woman who was married in that ceremony explained to me that her wedding was mixed, some couples requested each other and others were forced (TK123), although she was unsure why some people were able to pick their spouse. The wedding was held at the local Buddhist temple, despite its destruction, and there was a festive meal after the ceremony. There were neither

17. The woman interviewed in TK122 was born in this commune, however she moved to Phnom Penh to escape the bombings. While there, she married a man who worked as a security guard at Lon Nol's home. Her husband was killed during the KR's seizure of Phnom Penh but she and her children evacuated to her parents' home until they were relocated to Battambang 7 months later. She and her three children returned to Kampeang after the KR lost power.

monks as they had been defrocked prior to the KR's consolidation of power nor parents involved in the ceremony. She did comment though that her parents held a traditional ceremony for her and her husband after the KR lost power and they remain married today (TK123). The inclusion of some forced marriages is what constitutes social collectivization in this commune, the other practices allowed families to live at home and remain intact.

Comparing across past production types

In this section, I compare across both high and low yield types to assess how rice drove the different patterns of oversight in communities that were otherwise similar and would be expected to have the same type and level of collectivization based on security factors alone. I highlight the different patterns of oversight and control to demonstrate that the high economic production communes had greater central oversight and low autonomy. As a part of the question of control, the practices of direct violence demonstrate the center's authority over the communes. I also address the question of the forced migration of New People from low production zones in the Southwest to those areas with high demand in the north. The patterns that emerge across high and low yield types suggests the ways that expectations of rice production shaped the kinds of policies and the ways that they were put in place.

The pair of communes in low production areas demonstrate several trends across the communities with lower levels of collectivization. I find that lower overall oversight gave commune officials more autonomy to impose the practices that they felt were necessary or appropriate. While the two communes have similar initial conditions, in particular their role as training bases for early KR soldiers, they diverge at the question of political education and the fate of the New People. Following the logic of ideological security threat established in the

previous chapter, I find that these two factors are related and the treatment of New People is the cause of this divergence. In both communities, once the New People were removed (either through execution or forced migration) social collectivization was relaxed. I find that the patterns of openness in this pair of communes reflects the expectations for an early aligned community made up of the kind of people the KR sought to promote.

The two high yield communes discussed in this chapter share many broad similarities, which conveys that patterns of authority corresponded to their expected yields. In many respects, the communes were similar: both are in the high production ricebasket, were under control of the Northwest Zone leadership,¹⁸ integrated New People into the community, and both imposed high levels of collectivization. I find a pattern of more central oversight as well as the use of direct violence as a means to enforce control outside of the administrative means used to govern in both communes. However, where they diverge is in the interactions with higher state officials and the ways that control was established. This pair of communes demonstrate the effects of past economic output as they are both demographically and historically set to be low collectivized communities without the past history of high rice production.

Patterns of authority across the two commune types are more telling about the ways control was established or delegated to commune authorities. Both high production communes (Kanchor and Ta Pun) reported frequent oversight and involvement from district and regional authorities. Ta Pun had meetings and regular visits from the district and regional officials who oversaw the commune's productivity (B211). Kanchor had additional soldiers coming in and out of the commune as well who were under the control of the central party through the military

18. Zonal leadership is often cited as a source of variation in violence under the KR and in-fighting between zone leaders to curry favor with Pol Pot has been seen as a cause of more draconian measures (Becker 1986)

chain of command (P112). In both communes, the former village and commune officials claimed to have little autonomy beyond the frequent central control mechanisms. The low production areas (Chheu Teal and Kampeang) had limited interactions with the central party. In Kampeang, the residents reported that the meetings with the district were infrequent and typically information was communicated via messenger: the group and village gave orders in the community (TK121). Chheu Teal was more organized during the time that it remained collectivized, but did not emphasize strict work. Interactions with district or regional officials were largely in the form of political education not work quotas, and they did not often go to the commune, instead the residents went to the central meetings (KT121). While the question of control is not limited to the practices surrounding collectivization, it is plausible that the increased oversight and involvement of those more involved in the central party would be more determined to adhere to strict practices.

The Treatment of New People:

The second wave of forced migration from the Southwest to Northwest zones sheds light on the treatment of New People as a labor force. The treatment of New People across high yield communes offers some insights into their role and why they were kept alive despite their enemy status. Where economic demands required more labor, new people were integrated, which also reinforced the need for social control in a commune. This occurred in both high yield communes. In Ta Pun, they were kept alive: not treated well, but also not outright executed. It was bluntly explained to me that "they kept people to work as long as possible" before taking people one-by-one to be killed (B212). This suggests that they were a necessary workforce and were kept around as labor as long as needed because this was a high production area. Vickery (1984) gives

an account of Kandieng-Sya districts¹⁹ that claims that New People who were known to the cooperative were protected if they were useful to the community — a doctor who had been evacuated to Kanchor commune explained that “the cooperative chief had protected intellectuals by registering them as workers. Only those who "were lazy" or who were thieves were in danger of execution “(p.118). However, Vickery also claims that total production in the district declined by half (ibid), therefore there was less reason to keep around unwanted people if they did not have work for them. While the conditions in which they lived were precarious, both of these communes suggest that individual leaders could keep the groups of New People alive if they were necessary.²⁰

<i>Commune</i>	<i>Initial Evacuation</i>	<i>Second Evacuation</i>	<i>Rice Yield</i>	<i>New People Outcome</i>
<i>Ta Pun</i>	Received	Received	High	Forced Labor
<i>Kanchor</i>	Received	Received	High	Forced Labor
<i>Kampeang</i>	Received	Sent	Low	Evacuated
<i>Chheu Teal</i>	Received (few)	N/A	Low	Killed

The treatment of the New People in low yield communes is made explicit in the opposing kinds of work the groups were sent to do. In Kampeang, the Base People were assigned work and not monitored that closely (TK121) while the New People were given impossible quotas before they were relocated as forced labor in the Northwest zone within the first year (TK122). In Chheu Teal the New People were never integrated into the community, but they stayed longer

19 His informants spoke of the district, not the specific communes within those districts

20 The treatment of ideological enemies at forced labor sites fits a similar pattern. In the construction of the Kampong Chhnang Airport there were groups of prisoners from the Northwest purges who were instead used as forced labor instead of facing execution for their alleged treason (e.g. SR312).

until they were executed in 1977 (KT121). Even with the introduction of new commune leaders at that point, collectivization started to fall apart by 1978. The question of political education is more surprising that it targeted friendly communities who were already ideological compatible. There is no data on timing to determine if this was before or after the removal of the New People, but other communities in the North zone with few New People also reported similar types of political education (e.g. SR212). The decision to remove the New People through forced migration instead of execution remains a question in this pair which can be better addressed through a comparison between high and low production areas.

The experiences of populations moved first to the Southwest and then north several months later suggest the economic drivers of keeping the urban evacuees alive. In Kampeang, I interviewed a woman in her 60s (TK122), who recalled that there was little work for them to do in Kampeang after she was evacuated from Phnom Penh but also little food; after several months, she and her children were relocated to Battambang with the other undesirables (New People and formerly wealthy peasants). Many of those relocated survived, although most did not return to Kampeang - they either stayed in the Northwest, went to the cities, or emigrated (TK122). Like the New People in Ta Pun, they were integrated and lived alongside Base People. But Vickery's (1984) informants also recalled that the commune chief hid the identities of those New People who were useful and productive for the community. In both high yield communes, ideological enemies were kept around as forced labor if they were useful. As seen in Chheu Teal, New People were kept separate and simply exterminated. In low yield communes, there were fewer incentives to integrate New People, let alone continue to clothe and feed them. The data are limited on why Chheu Teal had a strategy of execution instead of relocation; however, the practices in the Northwest Zone made it clear that the population was kept around only so long

as it was useful. In the North and Southwest, those populations were no longer useful. There are however limitations to the information that is available, without records kept of populations and timing of movement, there are only a few inferences to be made about patterns of migration.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown that a history of high rice production prior to 1975 affected the type and level of collectives that were put in place. Using the two high production cases, I examined the way that high levels of social collectivization as well as public violence were established in these communities through control and oversight by central party members. In the two low production communes, the company and commune officials were given relative autonomy, which led to lower levels of economic and social collectivization. This is demonstrated in the shift from moderate social collectivization to low social collectivization in Chheu Teal commune (North zone) after the extermination of the community's New People. I highlight the second wave of forced migration of New People from the Southwest to the Northwest, which sheds light on the use of forced labor instead of execution to control the ideologically undesirable population. In doing so, I argue that the demand for labor to produce rice drove the demographic shift; the KR's labor needs overcame the ideological threat of those New People. In the next chapter, I shift the focus from the governance of village cooperatives to the effects of collectivization on famine deaths.

Chapter 5

Buffers against famine: Social ties and the effects of collectivization

In this chapter, I extend the logic of governance to the resulting levels of excess mortality. If, as I demonstrate in the previous chapters, there was an underlying strategy in how the Khmer Rouge governed, then this variation in governance should be seen in the patterns of excess mortality from indirect (non-execution) means. The primary focus of the chapter is to explain the connection between governance and non-execution deaths; in doing so, I highlight the role of family networks and communal ties in protecting against the worst effects of famine and epidemics. This suggests that famine related deaths should vary systematically and correspond to the variation in governance. I argue throughout this chapter that the type of collectivization, not the overall level, affected the likelihood of famine related deaths. More specifically, I find that social collectivization — the policies that gave the state control over the family and community life — was the more consequential. In effect, this means that the more elements of social collectivization were present (e.g. forced marriages, separated living groups, enforced family separation through displacement or prohibitions on visitation), the more that social ties were undermined. As a result of those weakened ties, I argue, people were more likely to die from indirect means.

The practices of social collectivization were intended to reshape village life into the ideal village cooperatives that the KR envisioned; however, each step was a move away from traditional village life.¹ Instead of communities organized around family and kin group ties, life

¹ The KR envisioned a new social organization that was completely level, centered on Angkar (the KR organization) as the rightful parent of the nation and head of the community. Thus, other family ties were no longer relevant in the new society, children were taught from an early age

was reorganized into cooperative work and living groups. This served to cut people off from their social networks and foster isolation. Isolation and weak ties are, I propose, the primary mechanism that weakened the likelihood of survival in the face of shortages. I argue that as a result of weakened ties, traditional mechanisms to buffer against famine or other disasters (not only those resulting from poor policies) were unable to function effectively. Therefore, people living in communes with high social collectivization were more likely to die from indirect means, like famine, than those with only economic collectivization.

This chapter builds on earlier studies of collectivization in the Soviet Union and China's Great Leap Forward that have pointed to political and organizational factors to explain famine. Traditional explanations of collectivization famines do not explain the patterns of starvation deaths in Cambodia; however, they do suggest the ways that economic collectivization made the onset of famine more likely. In previous cases, official state narratives surrounding collectivization famine have pointed to weather causing a grain shortfall (e.g. Li and Yang 2005), which has been refuted (e.g. Conquest 1986; Meng, Qiang, Yared 2010). Others have pointed to a collective action problem created by the system of communal mess halls (Yang 1996, Chang and Wen 1998), structural and political incentives to over-requisition grain (Solnick 1999, Oi 1989), and politically created problems of redistribution (Conquest 1986, Tauger 1991). Evidence from the Ukrainian famine suggests that collective agriculture was used strategically to target political enemies in the Soviet Union. While the policy of collective agriculture was the same across the Soviet Union, the central authorities were able to manipulate production quotas and food aid to starve targeted groups (Applebaum 2017; Plokhly 2016). I take this a step further

that they were purer than their parents and they can (and should) turn them in for violating Angkar.

to address the mechanisms through which the variation in policy implementation affected the likelihood of survival in Cambodia.

As established in chapters 3 and 4, communes were more likely to have high levels of social collectivization if they were viewed as an internal threat or an economic necessity.² This also suggests that governance was used as a tool to control or reform undesirable populations much in the same ways as direct violence in some instances. Where they diverge are in areas of high economic value: where laborers were needed to grow rice, they were not executed as readily but many still died from indirect means. The economic factor compounded the need for laborers, who were undesirable populations, who would have otherwise been exterminated but were instead in need of reform. In some respects, famine was the side effect of a policy intended to produce as much rice as possible, build large infrastructure projects, and create a new social order without the input from those involved in the process. More simply, the regime set its priorities and the people working to carry them out were expendable. As a result of these policies, about 12% of the population died from indirect means, like starvation. While the intent of the agricultural policies was to increase production, and not to deliberately create famine, the regime also did not change course or respond to information that people were dying.

In this chapter, I use four case studies to expand on the mechanisms at work based in each type of commune. Earlier in this dissertation, I introduced the concepts of economic and social collectivization: core concepts that break down the suite of policies involved in the establishment of collective agriculture. Economic collectivization established cooperative

² Recall from Chapter 2 that the KR envisioned an agrarian utopia, which they tried to achieve through forced migration from cities to rural zones, collectivization of agriculture, and the attempt to eliminate culture and tradition. They targeted urban populations, ethnic minorities, and those who were involved in the previous regime: these constituted the New People. The rural peasants were considered Base People and were favored by the regime.

economic production and control over consumption of goods. Social collectivization reshaped communal and family life through the creation of living groups, forced marriages, and separation of families. I address each of these sets of practices on their own, but in action they are not so neatly divided - they are related and often result from the same process of control. I compare across cases with equal levels of economic collectivization, but divergent levels of social collectivization. From a theoretical perspective, this chapter aims to bridge the gaps between the literature on perpetration of violence and survival of atrocity with those of famine or natural disasters. I emphasize stories of survival, not only from genocide or atrocity but also natural disaster, as a way to address the defense mechanisms that exist within a community, regardless of the intention or cause of a crisis. Additionally, the inclusion of the natural disaster perspective is useful to address those who may view famine as resulting from causes like weather shocks. Through these cases I demonstrate that the elements of social collectivization that undermined family and community ties made populations more vulnerable to indirect causes of death.

In practice, what this looks like is that in places that had high levels of social collectivization, there are fewer links between families in the community and ties to the old social order to remain intact throughout the KR period. Conversely, in places with weak levels of social collectivization, there are signs that social ties were intact — including patronage ties and family networks. While I cannot directly measure the social ties or social networks from the KR period, I use several observable implications to proxy for the family level and community level. The case studies in this chapter suggest some of the mechanisms through which village collectives – both economic and social components –made communities more or less likely to experience famine and to survive it.

Economic collectivization played an important role in setting the pre-conditions for mass deaths: practices of economic control were critical to creating the conditions under which a famine could take place, draconian working conditions made possible deaths from exhaustion in an overworked population, and state control over rations made the man-made famine a reality. However, the places where people were able to withstand the worst effects of the KR's policies are the ones where social ties persisted among families and communities.

This chapter addresses the effects of the different types of collectivization through process tracing across different types of communes (municipalities). I walk through cases in each of the four types: high economic and high social collectivization, high economic and low social collectivization, low economic and higher social collectivization, and low economic and low social collectivization. These pairs are organized based on their level of economic collectivization to demonstrate how variation in social collectivization made the difference. In each commune, I focus on observable implications of social ties at the family and community level. At the family level, this includes the separation of family units, visitation between family members, and forced marriages. The first two focus on the extent that family units remained intact, while the last also suggests the creation of new, albeit weak, replacement ties. At the community level, this includes non-local officials and the integration of outsiders into the community. I focus on the separation of families and existence of patronage ties as a way to observe the effects of social collectivization: if these policies were intended to break up the family and undermine traditional social organization, then this is where they would be observable. These cases are critical to demonstrate the processes by which social collectivization was effective at undermining family safety nets. Through these case studies, I demonstrate that the establishment of living groups and state coerced marriages effectively limited the strength of

social ties in a given commune. Family visits and interactions were cut off, social acceptability norms were undermined, and associational ties were disrupted by leaders from outside communities. These are the mechanisms by which I argue social collectivization affected mortality rates: it was not just that social collectives changed the course of daily life, but that they disrupted the interpersonal exchanges that characterized village life. Cut off from family or neighbors, these disruptions made it less likely that people would take risks to protect others.

Both aspects of collectivization were necessary for the famine that ensued. The economic components of collectivization undoubtedly played a role in making famine possible: overwork, unattainable quotas, and over-requisitioned rice played a critical role. However, I find that the social components made the difference. In a community with strong social ties, particularly among family or close friends, people are more willing to undertake risky behaviors – in this context, stealing or concealing foods or medicine – in order to protect each other. However, where those ties are weak or absent, there are fewer avenues for support that someone can rely on while facing a crisis. In my argument, the economic components of collectivization made the conditions of shortages or crisis possible, but social components undermined ties within the community and therefore cut off access to support networks. Further, the narrative accounts demonstrate the breakdown of social networks. In this chapter, I assess each of these elements through original interview data. These factors are not exclusively destructive to social networks, but in the context of collectivization, they undermined pre-existing social structures. I use these factors to observe the extent to which community networks were undermined in a given commune.

While these effects are important to the likelihood of indirect deaths, they do not necessarily shape the likelihood of execution or prison deaths. However, extending the logic of

governance to the ways that the regime reacted to non-execution deaths also sheds light on the relationship between direct and indirect killing in the Cambodian genocide. I argue that the two phenomena are related, but the same factors that would lead to increased control through governance may not translate to increased execution where the populations are economically necessary.

Unpacking social ties in crises

To understand the effects of social ties during crisis, I bring together discussions of social isolation with discussions of survival stories during periods of upheaval or disaster. Social isolation has become a familiar term in wide-ranging discussions from natural disasters to aging and mortality, as well as among sociological studies of disaster, economic downturn, or the decline of the American city (most of these studies are done in an American context).³ While the contexts are completely different, it is particularly telling that there are serious and long-term consequences on the physical well-being of the socially isolated. Social isolation during natural disasters, as Klinenberg's (2004) work shows, also increases the immediate likelihood that someone would die. He finds that patterns of mortality following the Chicago heat wave reflect problems of social isolation and poverty. Poverty compounded the problems of social isolation among the elderly but having no social ties or contacts (friends or family) made people more likely to die from the extreme weather. A similar situation unfolded in the heat waves in Paris in

³ A meta-analysis of the medical research on social isolation, Holt-Lunstad J, Smith TB, Layton JB (2010) Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review. *PLoS Med* 7(7): e1000316. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316>

or in more popular media, e.g., Kullar, Druv "How Social Isolation Is Killing Us" *New York Times* (December 22, 2016) <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/22/upshot/how-social-isolation-is-killing-us.html> accessed May 24, 2018.

2003, elderly people faced greater mortality risks if they were socially isolated (Canoui-Poitrine, Cadot, and Spira 2005). Beyond heatwaves, Sanderson (2000) suggests that strong community networks provided lifesaving interventions in floods in Venezuela, where neighborhoods with weaker networks had higher mortality rates. These studies fit in with some of the classic discussions on the broad implications of associational life and its decline in Western society and its broader negative effects (e.g. Putnam 2000), but these same kinds of associational ties can be seen as promoting stability in preventing ethnic violence (Varshney 2001). Broadly speaking, social isolation can be a consequential issue both for individual mortality but also potentially destabilizing to society.

Turning to discussions of survival, particularly during famine, social ties become less clear cut. As discussed earlier in this dissertation, a few studies on famine have pointed to the dissolution of social networks during famine, finding that social ties can be undone in the face of extreme hunger (Davis 2001, O'Grada 2009, Wemheuer 2014); however, they do not explain their effects on society or the mechanisms at work. New research on the Siege of Leningrad suggests as well that social dynamics alongside starvation were main drivers of excess mortality. Peri (2017) posits that intact families (those that lived together and were not separated by conscription) fared worse under starvation because members competed for individual resources and being confronted with each other's suffering made conditions worse. However, the process that she describes, parents giving most of the family's rations to their children (2017, 95), reflects a similar willingness to take on risky behaviors -- here sharing a disproportionate amount of limited rations, in Cambodia it was stealing or concealing food for family members. This suggests a relationship between social ties and surviving famine, but the direction of those effects, let alone the mechanisms, remains unclear from past studies. However, taking into

account the issues of social isolation in other types of crises, I argue that weaker social ties exacerbated the existing problems of famine created by the KR's failing economic policies.

Throughout this chapter I emphasize a broad category of social ties through either community or family networks. These ties, or links between individuals and their respective networks, are what holds a village or commune together. Traditionally, rural villages relied on norms of reciprocity to survive during periods of hardship. In James Scott's critical study of lowland Myanmar and southern Vietnam, he finds that family, friends, and even patronage networks served as "shock absorbers during economic crises" (1977, 27). Family were the most reliable, but community and patronage networks were secondary sources of support (*ibid*). Further, I build off of a central insight here that individuals are more willing to undertake risky behaviors to protect family or close relations than they are for strangers.

Stories of crises, famine, or conflicts around the world highlight the question of survival: people survive in part due to the risks that others take for them, like hiding people or stealing food, that insulate them from danger. Narratives of survival demonstrate the centrality of family and community ties as a buffer against crises in contexts around the world (e.g. Ung 2000, USHMM interviews Schiff (March 23,1993), Rothschild (September 27, 1994), TK221, Fieldnotes 2/28/16, 3/10/16 which demonstrate the willingness to undertake risky behaviors for family, interviews B222, P111, that show the role that community ties and acts of selflessness played). Not only were these the narratives that came through interviews, but these were also the stories that my Cambodian counterparts would share when I told them I was researching everyday life under the Khmer Rouge: discussing my upcoming research plans over breakfast with a friend in Phnom Penh, as mentioned at the start of this chapter, she responded with stories of her grandmother – a seamstress who was based in a provincial city – sending packets of extra

food and medicine to her mom and her aunts when messengers were bringing clothes out to the areas where the children were sent (Fieldnotes 2/28/16). Another explained how his older siblings looked out for him and his younger siblings, protecting them or telling them what to say when officials questioned them about their former life in Phnom Penh (Fieldnotes 3/10/16). Therefore, I center the roles that family or community networks were playing in the communes to question whether these were systematic outcomes or just casual anecdotes.

Data and measurement

Outcome of interest and sources

The outcome of interest throughout this chapter is the proportion of non-execution deaths to total remains found in a given commune. This is meant to capture the patterns of direct or indirect violence: the higher the percentage, the more that there was indirect and less discriminatory violence, the lower the percentage, the more direct executionary violence occurred. Ideally, I would like to be able to use the number of indirect deaths as a proportion of the population to measure the overall effect of famine in each commune. However, given the limitations on data, I use the proportion of indirect deaths to the total number of remains as a way to capture the more likely strategy in a given location. I am not trying to capture a measure of how many people were likely to die from a given strategy of violence in a community, but rather I am trying to approximate the ways that people died. There are also total numbers for each execution and non-execution deaths at the district level, however the ratio gives more context to what these numbers mean for the strategies of violence. There are also practical purposes for this measure: the data are based on remains found in mass graves throughout the country. The chaos of the evacuation from the cities – undocumented movement of over 2

million people (about 30% of the total population) to the countryside – makes it impossible to estimate the number of people in a given commune. Therefore, relying on the total number of deaths in mass graves is a more reliable way to estimate the excess mortality in a community.⁴

The total number of remains are from mass graves included in the Cambodian Genocide Program Interactive Geographic Database (CGEO). These are geocoded data that include the remains found in mass graves, the number of graves in a given location, the type of grave (e.g. a pit designated as a grave vs a rice paddy where people were left), and the cause of death (execution vs. non-execution). These data also include the location of 158 prison sites, US bombing sites prior to 1975, and present-day memorials. In this database, there are 309 mass grave sites with 19,000 grave pits (CGEO). Pits are located in 108 districts across the country (ibid), out of 165 total districts. .

The status of grave pits as execution or non-execution deaths was determined by the CGEO team, including forensic anthropologists– these determinations were made on a site by site basis (e.g. if a mass grave site had 6 graves with 1000 bodies, they would all be determined execution or not).⁵ There are several communes that have no mass grave sites, but undoubtedly had people die during this time period. The other complicating factor is that these data represent where the bodies were buried, not necessarily where people died. Therefore, it is possible that bodies were moved or taken to a central location to be buried that is outside of the commune. In general, there was a lot of forced movement in this period, as mobile groups worked at the district, province, and national levels, going where workers were needed. Similarly, big

⁴ Here I also expect that the sick or the elderly, those who would die under normal political conditions, would not be buried in mass graves and should therefore not affect the estimates of excess mortality.

⁵ For more information, see <https://gsp.yale.edu/cambodian-genocide-program-interactive-geographic-database-cgeo>

construction projects (e.g. January 1 dam) required greater numbers of laborers, working in more intense settings, and with fewer potential protection or safety measures, making it more likely they would die. Lastly, as these are mass graves, they do not include those who died individually, which again might suggest a bias away from famine or exhaustion deaths. While the sites themselves are geolocated, the data is at the district level -- which is one level up from the commune level that the rest of the dissertation focuses on. Where possible, I estimate the commune from GIS.

Despite the greater specificity available in the CGEO data than in other sources, there are some limitations: mass graves are more likely to reflect those who were killed in prisons or execution centers as they were more centralized (and therefore more likely to be buried in a mass grave), which could skew the data toward the execution deaths. Demographers have suggested the total deaths were about 50/50 execution and non-execution means (Heuveline 1998). However, in the sample included in my study, there are about 33% non-execution deaths and 67% direct executions (including prison deaths) based on the remains in the CGEO data. The discrepancy in direct and indirect deaths may be, in part, driven by my classification as all prison deaths as direct. It is unclear how Heuveline addresses prison deaths. In the CGEO data, prison deaths are treated as ordinary grave pits, which means they can be counted as either execution or non-execution. From a forensic position, that makes sense; however, from a theoretical perspective, I would argue that all prison deaths should be considered direct violence. Across the 25 communes included in this study, they found remains from 138,591 people: 46,624 were determined to have died from non-execution means, 12,240 from execution, and 79,727 were in mass graves located at prison sites. This suggests that there is an underrepresentation of the non-execution deaths among this sample

In addition to the CGEO data, the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) compiled a measure that they refer to as the “Brutality Index” based on the number of remains found in mass graves. The measure is based on the proportion of victims as a part of the total population at the province level. According to their findings, the most brutal conditions were found in Kampong Chhnang, where they estimate that 88% of the population was killed (Etcheson 1999) – however, the population estimate does not include the prisoners who were transferred in 1977 to work as slave labor at the Kampong Chhnang airport, although they were a significant number of the victims here. In part, I am less confident in the DC-Cam data because it was gathered around the same time as the CGEO dataset but remains significantly higher – it has 380 sites where CGEO has 309 – and in its disaggregated form uses very broad estimates. For example, the remains in one site are sometimes given as a precise number, but some are presented as “20,000-25,000 victims” or “500 families” (Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2005). These are useful data for locating sites of violence and the general scale of violence across the country, which are very important issues, but they are less precise than other available data.

Assessing family and community ties

At the family level, I address whether families were separated, marriages were coerced, and if visitation was permitted. Each of these factors suggests a different aspect of the breakdown of family ties, but they all show the extent to which the regime took control over the family – the most primary of social interactions. At the commune level, I address the introduction of outside populations and non-local leaders to capture the social ties or fractures. In

assessing the level of social collectivization in a given commune, I combine both of these levels, but give greater weight to the family ties.

The first of these factors, separation of the family, is the most straightforward. Living groups, as established earlier in this dissertation, were those work groups that were designated by the regime and became the primary social unit in society. A family is considered separated when individuals lived in a home with their living group: the work group was the set of individuals with whom a person would work, eat, and sleep. In such a group, there were no outside options for social interactions. A family is considered intact when individuals are able to return home from their work groups and see their families, even if it was only to sleep. In these groups, people were able to interact with family members. Intact families maintained links between members. Conversely, separated families had weaker ties between members. Ties between family members were the most likely to protect against famine because family members were the most willing to undertake risky behaviors to help each other. For example, several informants explained that they survived, in part, due to food or medicine hidden for them by a parent or sibling (e.g. TK221, Fieldnotes 2/28/16). This is measured as separated, mixed, or intact.

Visitation rights are secondary to family separation. In some living groups, particularly mobile units, people were allowed to return to their village to see family. This occurred semi-regularly in some cases (e.g. SR314) or sporadically. Where families were intact, this question is not applicable, but I address this issue for each of the communities where families were separated. This is measured as either visitation, no visitation, or not applicable (where families were intact).

The third of the family-level indicators is coercion used in enforcing marriages. This serves two purposes, the first shows the depth of the state's control over the most fundamental of social institutions, and the second is the creation of new social ties based on regime preferences.

Those who were married in forced marriages were matched by state agents, based on the social and racial hierarchy that the regime established – these matches were not ones that would have been made, let alone socially permissible, under normal times.⁶ Therefore, forced marriages are a step beyond the separation of existing families, they are the process of creating new social units to replace the ones that had been undermined. This measures the extent to which the state (through local actors) took control over matching, arranging, and enforcing couples into marriages based on the right of refusal (of either party) and observation by armed spies to ensure the couples slept together. It is measured as either forced, mixed, or not forced.

Community level ties are addressed through the inclusion of non-relative new populations and non-local officials. The addition of outsiders, or the integration of urban evacuees more specifically, captures the effects of outside populations, New People, who were brought into communities during the evacuations. As the KR established their control over the country, there were millions of people evacuated from the cities to the rural areas. During this process, New People were integrated into the community (e.g. B211 and KM122), some went to communities where they had family living already (e.g. TK122 or Ung 2000) or were kept separately from Base People (e.g. SR313 and KT121). I do not systematically address those who were integrated into communities where they had relatives, but these accounts also reinforced the importance of family ties to survival. The introduction of New People into a community, particularly where they had no pre-existing connection, changes the dynamic of the population and can serve to weaken whatever ties were previously in place. It is unlikely that new ties would form between the New People and Base People given the context of fear and violence in which they lived. Further, introduction of these outsiders was often met with suspicion or resentment, in

⁶ I thank Anne Hansen for this point (3/25/18)

some cases leading to denunciations within a community (e.g. P113, SR225 and KL113).

Therefore, the introduction of New People into a community served to weaken communal level ties because they were distrusted or seen as a burden in the new community.

The last of these factors, non-local leaders, is meant to capture the likelihood of an individual leader exercising preferential treatments for some in the community. Local officials were more likely to offer better treatment to the community, either because of pre-existing relationships to the population or because they were planning to stay in that community and wanted to engender more positive rapport with the people. These types of patronage ties are deeply rooted in Cambodian politics.⁷ While they are looked at as a hindrance to democratization efforts, in the context of mass violence and famine, the same mechanisms of inequality could mean survival for some in the community. In some communities, informants openly discussed ties that they or their families had to leaders (B311), or ties between low level and senior officials (B312), which enabled their preferential treatment. In others, these relationships were more implicitly discussed through a comment that a leader was from a particular place, so he/she wanted to treat the population better (e.g. KT111). However, this was most often discussed in the negative: an official was from the outside, so they treated people worse (e.g. TK212 and SR221). The presence of local officials was important for citizens to have an avenue to lower the risks of pushing back on demands as well as ties between leaders to negotiate greater protections for the community. Therefore, I use this factor to address whether patronage ties were in place during the KR period because local officials were more likely and able to make concessions or give preferential treatment to community members.

⁷ For more on patronage networks in Cambodia politics, see Un 2005, Pak et al. 2007, or Öjendal and Lilja 2009

Case comparisons

I use two pairs of communes to address the effects of collectivization and the mechanisms that drive these outcomes. Each pair has the same level of economic collectivization but diverge based on their social collectivization. The first pair has high economic collectivization, the strictest work requirements and quotas. These are the communes that have been most primed for starvation deaths. Where they diverge is the components of social collectivization: in Veal, there were high fractures to the family, as well as moderate fractures to the community; in Pneoe there were moderate fractures to family ties and high fractures to the community itself. The second pair has low levels of economic collectivization, which meant relatively open work requirements and lower quotas. As in the first pair, they diverge in the ways that social components were enacted. In Kanteur Piir, residents retained family and communal ties, there were low levels of social and economic collectivization. In Snao, however, there were strict controls over the family and moderate fractures at the community level.

Table 6: Chapter Case Selection

		Economic Collectivization	
		<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>
Social Collectivization	<i>High</i>	Veal	Snao
	<i>Low</i>	Pneoe	Kanteur Piir

In both cases, I focus the analysis at two levels: first, at the level of the family, and second, at the level of a community. Each of the family and community level factors reflects a different piece of a commune's social structure that could be broken down by collectivization. Taken together, these elements present a picture of the community's interconnectedness and the observable implications of social ties. I do not think that these factors are substitutable, but rather

they are nested – ties at the family level are primary and the stability of all else relies on them; while community level ties build on those core social relations. However, I argue that they are cumulative: a commune with each of these elements present is most likely to experience famine deaths. I will address each of these behaviors in the cases below to expand on their effects during collectivization.

Table 7: Summary of Collectivization Types and Indirect Mortality

<i>Commune:</i>	<i>Economic Collectivization</i>	<i>Family Aggregate⁸</i>	<i>Communal Aggregate⁹</i>	<i>Non-execution deaths (proportion of total)</i>
<i>Veal</i>	High	Highest	Moderate	87%
<i>Pneoe</i>	High	Moderate	Low	39%
<i>Kanteur Poir</i>	Low	Low	Low	0%
<i>Snao</i>	Low	Highest	Moderate	100%

High Economic Collectivization

High Economic and High Social: Veal Commune

Veal (*Kandieng District, Pursat*) was in a part of the country's ricebasket that was responsible for producing enough to feed the rest of the country as well as support the rice export that was vital to the arms trade, had high economic incentives for control. The commune's population was removed from their homes and any pre-existing social ties were fractured by the imposition of collective agriculture. Without those ties, as I show in this discussion, there was nothing to protect individuals against the effects of famine and disease. In this case, I demonstrate how traditional family or communal networks were destroyed by the regime's

⁸ Appendix 1 (table 1) shows the breakout of family level factors

⁹ Appendix 1 (table 2) shows the breakout of communal level factors

emphasis on control over an economically necessary population. As a result, the population is less likely to have been executed, as they were required as surplus labor, but they were more likely to die from non-execution means.

Veal Commune was not a security risk, it was a stronghold for the monarchists, who were allied with the Khmer Rouge, during the 1970 - 1975 civil war. Supporters in this commune not only fought alongside the communists in the forests, but they also fed and supplied those hiding in the forests (P121). When the commune came into full KR control in 1975, the community was separated into groups of supporters (party members and soldiers) and everyone else. After about 5 months of KR control the whole village was relocated and the existing village was used to house evacuees, New People, from the Southwest. The two were not integrated (P121). Because the work was primarily by mobile groups, they did not have fixed rice production quotas for the commune. However, they worked in areas that had the highest production quotas in the country where the KR demanded five to six tons of rice per hectare instead of the usual three (B211, P112). Further, that the population was removed from their home village and separated into mobile work units to be used explicitly as surplus labor in areas with unattainable goals, even though they were Base People who were ostensibly higher status in the regime, suggests that they were an economic necessity.

Unlike previous chapters where the aim was to understand how control was established, I discuss control here to demonstrate that central party members had information about what was going on in the commune and did not take any course of action to prevent against the deaths, even though they were occurring through indirect means. This supports the idea that famine itself may have been a political tool or a more cost-effective way to eliminate population groups (bullets were costly, slave labor was free). Control in this commune was established through

regular meetings with central actors and replacement of non-compliant officials. There were a few local officials who would try to protect their people, but they were replaced when higher ups found out that they were being “too nice” (P123). There was regular oversight from the district and cooperative, as well as less frequent visits from the *damban* leaders. The district meetings took place monthly, which typically consisted of a speech from the leader and assurances that people had enough food and supplies. Speaking out during these meetings would typically get that person killed (P121). Supplies were controlled by officials at the cooperative level - an individual officer was responsible for the distribution of salt, rice, and cloth (P121). The *damban* meetings were similar but took place less often. In between the meetings with the whole commune, individual leaders would meet with officials at the district and *damban* (P123). These exchanges were a mechanism of control over the commune’s activities as well as the main source of information to and from the commune.

Economic cooperation was strict in the commune: both the production and consumption of all goods were under control of local authorities. Most adults were separated into mobile units that traveled around to different work sites to work as additional labor. Work days were treacherous because of the conditions in the area. Every morning, they would be called to a meeting at 4 am to sing songs glorifying the revolution and receive their daily work assignments (P123). They were moving around to less familiar terrain and often started work when it was still dark. As a result, as one person recalled, many people died in the fields because of poisonous snakes that they could not see in the dark (*ibid*). This anecdote is not just a one-off case, but rather suggests that the work itself came with risks people were unprepared for and often died from, similar to high rates of malaria in other areas where mobile groups were sent. Conditions were difficult in the village as well. All private goods, particularly cookware and utensils, were

confiscated by the cooperative (P121). All meals were in separate groups and other goods, like uniforms, were distributed annually (P121, P123). The conditions in this commune demonstrate complete control over daily life by the KR - economic collectivization was consistently high across the work expectations, confiscation of all private property, and cooperative oversight over all consumption. Harsh conditions and limited access to rations meant that the conditions were primed for famine to turn into starvation deaths.

Social collectivization was strictly enforced through the separation of families, control over marriages, and introduction of non-local officials. The nature of the work groups meant that they were also living, eating, and sleeping groups: people ate meals and slept in make-shift housing at the worksites. Social interactions were limited to those groups. Children were separated from their families into their own mobile unit that collected waste to use in the fields. Because the population was shifted into mobile groups, there was little activity that took place outside of the work group.

The ceremonies that typically dot the countryside throughout the year in Cambodia were silent during this period. There were no funerals for those who died during the KR period, as one man recalled, adding that he snuck out at night to see his family after news that his mother had died, but there was nothing to honor or remember her (P123). And Khmer New Year, typically a 3-day festival, was instead marked by the broadcast of political speeches from the Angkar (P121). There was only one wedding during the 4-year period of KR rule, but it was a group wedding with 40 couples (P121). Both men and women in these couples were coerced, there was no way for someone to request a particular match (P123). However, if an unmarried couple slept together, they would be burned (P123). This served to demonstrate not only complete control over the population, but also that breaking with the regime's code of conduct was not to be

tolerated. The complete shift away from village life to state-managed mobile groups made it impossible for family ties, let alone pre-existing patronage networks, to remain during this period. While local officials at first tried to protect their people, they were rooted out and replaced with new officials with no ties to the community.

Based on the CGEO mass graves study, there were high rates of deaths from indirect (non-execution) means: in the remains found in mass graves, there were 8000 remains found to have died from non-execution means of a total of 9100 remains.¹⁰ While the exact causes of death are unspecified, this distinction clearly suggests a pattern that most of the deaths in this area were indirect - most likely from exhaustion, disease, and famine. The work groups became the new unit of social organization in service of the state's economic and social goals. Leaders were brought in from outside of the community, they had no shared past with the people under their control. Elsewhere, family and community relationships help to buffer against some of the worst effects of failing KR policies. Similarly, patronage ties served to lessen the harsh treatment: officials with ties to their community often tried to protect their people or those with particularly strong ties could request better treatment. The signs that social networks or community ties were still present — family links or even patronage ties — are not observable at all in this community. What this commune demonstrates then is that the need for surplus labor, economic incentives, drove the demands from a community that had previously been allied with the regime.

High economic and moderate social: Pncoe Commune

¹⁰ These data are from the CGEO dataset. In the DC-Cam records, they put an estimated 12,000 deaths but they do not differentiate in the causes of death.

Pneoe (Santuk district, Kampong Thom) was an early stronghold for the KR as it was a forested area along the edge of the Tonle Sap lake. There was heavy violence from 1970-74, with bombing campaigns in support of Lon Nol and Vietnamese assistance in support of the KR. During the fighting, many families were evacuated to Kroya, a neighboring commune, for about a year. They started moving people back in groups, first the working-age (fighting-age) men who grew rice and held the village. The rest of the community moved back once the war ended in 1975. Along with the villagers' return in 1975, waves of New People were moved to the commune. The New People were temporary, they were separated out from the rest of the community after a year. An informant explained that they were mostly Cham or "Chinese people from the cities," stressing that they were a different type of people (KT211). However, these differences were reinforced through work requirements. Another person explained that the New People did not have the know-how to survive in the countryside, laughing while telling me that "they didn't even know what leeches were" (KT213). They were supposed to learn from the Base People, but this bred resentment from the Base People and who would sometimes denounce the New People. After it was claimed that someone did not know how to work, the denounced person would be killed (KT213). These outsiders who were brought to the community created an us vs. them mentality because they were kept separately and treated as the responsibility of the Base People, making them second class citizens within the commune. This commune had high economic cooperation but a moderate to low level of social collectivization. According to the CGEO database, there were a mix of direct and indirect deaths in this commune and district, but the majority were direct.

Economic collectivization was high throughout the KR period here. Everyone worked in groups from the start and they were split up by the types of work that they did. The elderly grew

rice, caught fish, or made palm sugar (KT213). Children worked with the children's unit that was responsible for collecting human waste to use as fertilizer. One informant explained that the kids made special toilets for people to use to make waste collection easier, adding that "if people did not use them they would be considered enemies [of the state]" (KT211). Working age adults were put into mobile units that were sent to the January 1 dam, a major public works project built by forced labor of thousands.¹¹ At the dam site, missing a work quota would result in a cruel and humiliating punishment, like having to carry around human feces (KT212a). Even with the village, there were denunciations and strict punishments for not working hard enough or meeting quotas. Consumption of goods was under the control of the cooperative: the chief would decide how much food people got, distributed cloth for uniforms, and provided tools necessary for work (KT212a). The *me sahakaw* (cooperative leader) had final authority, he made decisions about which people did what work, set the assignments, and could give preferential treatment to those he favored (KT212a, KT213). My informant continued, that ultimately the *me sahakaw* "could kill people or save people" (KT213). The strict work environment, steep punishments, and centralized control over consumption gave this commune a high level of economic collectivization. These conditions primed the community for a potential crisis.

Social life however was not as tightly controlled. Among the people who stayed in the village, they were able to stay together with family in their own homes. The mobile units were not as fortunate, they slept at the worksites with their work group (KT212a). The children's units moved around and were separate from the adult groups (KT211). Therefore, living groups were mixed – some people were able to go home and interact with family or friends, but some were

¹¹ The January 1 dam site is currently under investigation at the ECCC for the thousands of deaths that took place as a result of overwork, poor work conditions, and executions of political classes (Case 002/02)

kept separately. Weddings were also mixed. Some couples were forced, arranged and coerced by work group leaders, but others were able to pick a spouse and request a marriage (KT212b). Once they married, they were given a small house to live together in – even at the worksites (ibid). However, *chhlop* checked on all couples after the wedding, forced and voluntary alike, to ensure that they consummated their new marriages (ibid). The men and women in those couples worked in separate work groups, but they were able to live together. Most practices in this commune were mixed – living groups were established for some, some couples were forced to marry – but others, like the observation of married couples and separation of children, were consistently upheld. Social life was moderately collectivized for most Base People in this commune.

The establishment of collectives in this commune partially undermined family ties through the establishment of the children's unit and some forced marriages, but local leaders maintained some patronage ties within the community. The separation of children from their families broke some of the most fundamental social ties. However, couples, once they were married, lived together both in the village and at worksites. These new couples, both forced and voluntary, became the new primary social unit in the commune. Marriages, again had a mixed effect: where they were coerced, they undermined social ties; where they were voluntary, they reinforced them. New People were introduced and shifted some of the social dynamics, but only temporarily. In other communities, like Ta Pun, the New People were integrated into the population; however, in Pneo, they were separated out from the commune after a few months (KT211). Further, Commune officials remained local – there were no leaders brought in from the outside – and they continued to give preferential treatment in work assignments to those that they favored (e.g. KT213). Far more than social factors, this commune saw denunciations and harsh

punishments for work infractions. Economic control, particularly given the role that denunciations played, made it more likely that someone would be directly executed before they reached starvation.

The partial fracture of social ties led to moderate to low rates of indirect deaths. Of the 1550 total remains found, 600 were determined to be from non-execution means (CGEO). Conditions were difficult in this commune: work conditions were intense, and the risks of denunciation were high. However, things like patronage ties and limited family ties served to buffer against some of the worst effects of KR policies. In the case of one of my informants, she explained that the presence of local officials meant that she had pre-existing ties to the cooperative leader, and this meant she could undertake the risk to ask him not to send her parents to a labor camp (KT212a). What this meant was that she relied on pre-existing ties and undertook risk to help her family survive. These factors only served to insulate the Base People, New People were separated out from the commune, more likely to be denounced, and most likely to be sent into inhumane working conditions at sites like the January 1 dam.

Comparing strict economic control:

The two communes discussed in this section demonstrate the effect that social controls had on communities that were already primed for economic disaster. In both cases, there are strict controls over production and consumption of all goods, not just the rice that they were growing but the distribution of other goods like medicine, clothing, and work tools. These conditions set the stage for a crisis: people lacked access to adequate food supplies, medical care, or even the tools to do their work properly. In both communities, there were risks of denunciation and fear that made it even more challenging for people to forage or conceal what they found.

However, the main point of departure between the two is the treatment of family units: the families in Pneeoe were able to see each other and some lived together, even out at the worksites where control was the most stringent, while in Veal the commune itself was relocated to a new space where work groups became self-contained living and social units. At the communal level there are fewer differences, in both the New People are kept separately, but Veal had non-local officials introduced to replace local administrators who were considered too lenient. Economic controls were relatively equal in establishing control, severely limiting access to food, and overworking the population; however, the rates of non-execution deaths diverge.

The high level of social control corresponds with its higher rate of indirect deaths, over 80% of the deaths were from non-execution means in Veal. Alongside the draconian work conditions, there were no networks left in place to protect the population from its worst effects. The few local officials were replaced for being too lenient when they tried to protect the commune's people, which, given the level of central oversight in this commune, suggests that it was part of deliberate strategy to undercut protective networks. There were several waves of New People brought north to the commune from the Southwest as surplus labor, however they were kept separately from the Base People, which allowed some weak communal links to remain because they were not explicitly broken by the integration of outsiders. In all other aspects of family and communal life though the regime successfully introduced measures to undermine them: forced marriages broke traditional ties and created new ones of which the state approved, family separation isolated individuals from their primary support networks, and the lack of visitation ensured that they remain apart. In the absence of family or communal networks, there were few alternatives that existed for people to turn to for support.

While the outcomes in Pneoe were mixed, there were a majority of execution deaths. production and consumption of goods were completely collectivized, but social life was only moderately controlled by the state. Families in the village lived together and even some of the mobile units allowed married couples to stay together as well. However, marriages were sometimes by force – some couples were designed by state agents while others were allowed to pick a spouse. As in Veal, New People were kept separate and did not have much time in the community to potentially undermine communal networks. Officials were from the commune, and many stayed in the commune after, which extended their time horizons and was an incentive to protect the population from the worst of the KR's policies. However, economic conditions did create a potential crisis by overworking and over-requisitioning rice, which led to a number of starvation deaths.

In comparing the to two types, it suggests that where families were kept together, or at least able to visit as in Pneoe, people were able to undertake riskier behaviors ensure their family's survival – be it a parent stealing extra food for their children or convincing a local official that a family member needed medical care and rest. Where local leaders remained, like in Pneoe and even more apparently in Kanteur Piir (in the next section), they could offer preferential treatment to the people from the commune and they had an interest in trying to protect their community by pushing back on central demands. Both communes had strict economic controls with high risks of denunciation, but the overall levels of execution and non-execution deaths are quite divergent. Further, this suggests that in areas with high levels of economic control were more likely to lead to direct execution – likely spurred by denunciations or reports of those not working hard enough. In the next section, I test how these mechanisms work in an environment with low economic collectivization that were less primed for famine.

Low economic collectivization

Low economic and high social: Snao commune

Snao commune (Prey Kabbas district, Takeo) was an early base of support for the KR by 1968 and was training site for their military. As a result, all of Prey Kabbas district saw roadblocks, landmines, and heavy fighting from the Lon Nol army. This was also a site hit hard by American bombing to target the Vietnamese soldiers who came through this area. Once the fighting ended and the KR took control, this commune had a low level of economic collectivization but high social collectivization. It remained both under the control of the military and an external security threat.

Snao received many New People in the first wave of evacuations, but they were subsequently moved to Battambang. After the second evacuations, the only people left in the commune were those who grew up there (TK112) or had a relationship to the KR before 1975 (TK111). The people who stayed in the village worked in group and ate at the communal dining hall. The whole village was one group and mostly grew rice, but also had to build houses and clear land for a road. For those who stayed in the village, work quotas were given daily but not strictly enforced (TK112). Others were split up into various mobile units; some were sent to the salt processing sites in Srey Ampul (TK113), which were known to have awful conditions. Other mobile units worked within the district or throughout the Southwest Zone as needed. For those who remained, no one mentioned confiscation of goods or prohibitions against growing gardens at home. The limited enforcement of work quotas and few prohibitions on private goods suggest that economic collectivization was low.

Social life was under stricter control. Children were separated from their parents and lived together in a children's unit (TK112). Among the mobile units, work groups slept at the

work sites without fixed housing. Both groups had few, if any, opportunities to visit family. Within the village, people were able to live with their spouses in a house with two or three other couples. Weddings were all forced in this commune (TK113). One of the women in such a marriage, and several others, commented that she didn't know her husband before, no one in the matches knew each other but no one dared to say no (ibid). Even the men were not allowed to request a match in this commune. Weddings were most frequent in 1976 and 1977, but there were a few in 1978 as well. If a couple did not consummate their marriage, they would both be executed (TK112, TK113).

The process of collectivization undermined family ties through the establishment of both a children's unit and adult mobile units. These two functioned to limit interactions between family members and their physical separation prevented informal protections. In a neighboring district, a woman who had been in a children's unit that stayed within the community explained that her mom would hide potatoes for her and her sister to take when the children's unit was nearby (TK221). That could not have been possible in Snao because the children's and adults' mobile units were sent out separately. Additionally, village and commune leaders were part of the KR military, not a leadership that came out of this community. The last measure of social ties, New People, is also mixed in this community. There were many New People in the first wave of evacuations, but this was short lived. They were brought north to Battambang after a few months. Based on these observable factors, it suggests that social ties were effectively limited by efforts to collectivize social life. While the New People may not have been part of this process, the separation of families and the promotion of leaders from outside of the commune served to undermine family and communal ties. The separation of children from parents, forced marriages, but mixed living situations make this a moderate to high level of social collectivization.

The remains from 4336 people that were found in this commune were all found to be non-execution deaths (CGEO). What this suggests is that, at least of those who were buried in mass graves, indirect means – famine, exhaustion, epidemic – were the cause of death. Given that this was not an area known for malaria and that work quotas were not as stringent as elsewhere, it is likely that these were mostly from famine. An informant elsewhere in Prey Kabbas district commented on the cause most of the deaths that she saw, she said that “here, in Takeo, there was less work but no food. In Battambang, it was very hard work but there was food” (TK122). Without the support from family or other informal protections, there was not much in this commune protecting against the effects of famine.

Low economic and low social: Kanteur Piir

In Kantuer Piir (Banan District, Battambang), the low level of control was shaped by the nature of the commune. It was a low security risk - far from the Vietnamese border and lacking any population deemed a threat - and a low economic priority as an unexceptional producer of rice. There was no need for the regime to enforce strict control over the space. No New People were evacuated to the commune after the cities were emptied because there was no demand for surplus labor. There were low levels of both social and economic collectivization. There were neither incentives to control undesirable population groups, the New People, because they were absent in the commune, nor a need to enforce high production quotas, because it was not a critical production area. Therefore, family and social ties were largely left in place. Further, this meant that here, pre-conflict patronage ties were still place, both between ordinary people and local leaders (B311) and between commune and district officials (B312).

Economic collectivization was low throughout the Khmer Rouge period. Communal eating in central mess halls was the first practice put in place in 1975. While everyone ate at the same time, they were not required to sit with their work groups – they could socialize and sit with whomever they wanted. In practice, this small detail meant that people maintained the interpersonal connections that they had before the KR took over. People were also able to keep gardens at home and forage in the forests for additional foods (B311). These small, practical decisions also meant that there was more leeway in what was produced in the commune. The village leader explained that “I could make decisions about what to grow in which land and made reports back to the commune. The commune checked in on the village and the officials, [but also] tried to protect each other...they didn’t give me a lot of quotas. When it grew, I gave each family corn to take home. I couldn’t give them rice though, that had to come from the group” (B312). Critically, he explained that he could push back on the district because he knew them from before. In talking to him, he stressed that he was from this commune and still lives there, these were his people – he did whatever he could to protect them (ibid). In part, this was possible because of the context in which he was a village chief – elsewhere in the country such a person could be replaced or killed. The low level of economic collectivization in this commune meant that there was less likelihood of famine deaths here because people had better access to food, but the mechanisms that allowed people to have gardens or take corn home were in part through pre-existing patronage ties between the village and district as well as the village and its people.

Social collectivization was also low in this commune. People lived at home with their families. There were few New People in the community who needed to be housed or controlled. Weddings were not forced in this commune either. One of the men I interviewed explained that his parents had organized a match for him and his brother with the families of the women they

were to marry in 1978, a practice in keeping with traditional Cambodian marriages (B311). He explained that his parents knew the kong leader from before, so they were able to ask for better treatment like traditional clothing for the couples to wear — including hair and makeup for the women, he was excited to note — and celebratory feast (B311). Other than the group wedding and the conspicuous lack of Buddhist practices, the wedding was as close to normal as it could be. This story illustrates a few of the mechanisms at work: family ties were still effective, parents were still carrying out the same roles for their children as they would have outside of the revolutionary period, leaders were local and gave preferential treatment, and those same leaders could use their ties to the district to get better conditions overall.

Community life was largely left intact in this commune. Officials were from the commune, they were not brought in from the outside. During the purges of the North and Northwest zones, officials from the Southwest were brought in to supervise the existing administrators who were neither executed nor replaced. Families lived together, people ate meals with whomever they wanted, they were able to socialize. Most telling, patronage networks remained intact, which enabled families' preferential treatment but also allowed low-level officials to solicit provisions and protect their community.

Despite the relatively open atmosphere in the commune itself, Banan district had a large prison where the remains of 15,700 people were found. This is a very high number of people, but the nature of the prison – the single largest burial site in Battambang province¹² - suggests that this was not a local institution but one that housed prisoners from all over the province.

¹² Battambang was the second most populous area of the country, home to significant wealth disparities prior to the KR's control because of the commercial rice mills, and the biggest recipient of evacuees: all conditions that make it likely many were denounced as class enemies and sent to political prisons.

Critically, the prison was also not part of the same administrative structure as communal life (Ea 2005). These were the only remains in the area in both the CGEO mass graves study and the DC-Cam mass graves project. I include these deaths as executions, even if the means in the prison were not explicitly direct, the conditions at the prison targeted the population that had been specifically sent there. Therefore, indirect or non-executions deaths that took place in this commune did not happen on a mass scale. People undoubtedly died in this commune from both direct and indirect means, however the relative autonomy of leaders and the persistence of family networks that could insulate themselves from the policy failures elsewhere in the country played a critical role in limiting the likelihood of mass deaths from famine or epidemics.

Variation across low economic types:

The two cases in this section demonstrate the effects of collectivization with low levels of control over production and consumption of goods. The first, Snao, represents the types of commune where social life was strictly controlled and collectivized, but the production and consumption of goods was relatively open. At the other end of the spectrum, Kanteur Piir represents the most open types of communes, both economic and social collectivization were low. The rates of non-execution deaths suggest that even in the absence of economic controls, there were serious consequences from the policies governing social life.

The separation of families and communities was the primary avenue by which social ties were weakened, even without the added impetus of work quotas to drive demand for work groups. In Kanteur Piir, families were able to live together and socialize much as they had prior to the KR. Families were involved in the planning and celebration of their children's weddings, as they would be in traditional Khmer culture. Even among those few who were sent to work in

mobile groups, they were able to live with spouses and able to travel back to their home villages. In Snao, economic demands were limited, but the community was split into mobile groups for adults and children, while a few older adults were able to stay in the villages. Children's groups were sent far from their homes and had limited opportunities to see their parents or siblings. Marriages were all forced, there was no space for input from anyone (not even men of high status, the most likely to be given a voice). There were no opportunities for visits or days off from work. For those put into mobile groups, the practices of social collectivization were quite strict. For those who remained in the villages, the experience was more mixed. These were the central strategies that undermined existing social networks and the enforcement of forced marriages created new ties that promoted the regime's vision.

The introduction of outsiders – be it officials from outside of the community or New People affected the overall level of social collectivization and oversight, which were secondary concerns but still weakened community linkages. In Snao, the outsiders who stayed were the military. Because it was under the control of outsiders, there was not much concern for a leader's ability to stay in the area after the war which shifted the incentives that led to better treatment in other communes. There were New People brought in in multiple waves of migration, but they and those who may have had more privileged lives during the Sihanouk era were sent north in the second wave of evacuations. Kanteur Piir never had many New People and the few outsiders that came in were officials from the Southwest who mainly supervised the existing leadership, without replacing or executing any of them. Taken together, family separation, forced marriages, and the introduction of non-local officials, undermined the traditional buffers against starvation even in communes that were not primed for famine.

Processes of Social Fragmentation:

In these comparisons there are a few areas that demonstrate the extent of social fragmentation caused by the social components of collectivization. In the two communes with low social collectivization in this chapter, as well as the others that I include in the sample, people discussed their families and their connections within the commune; however, in those with high levels of social collectivization, these discussions were noticeably absent. This absence suggests that family and community networks did not persist in those communities, at least not to an extent where they were a viable option for support during the KR period.

In the two communes in this chapter with low levels of social collectivization, people talked about the actions that their families took and reaffirmed the ties were ones formed before the KR period. At the family level, this meant relying on family and traditional patronage networks. As one of my informants in Kanteur Piir explained, “my parents knew the *kong* leader from before, so they were able to ask for better treatment” (B311). Here, his parents were able to request that my informant and his brother were brought back from the mobile work sites to live in the village where they had a better life with more abundant food and less work. Another one of my informants, a woman living in Pneoe, explained that she stood up to her cooperative chief’s demand to separate her family. She explained that “They wanted to move my parents very far away [with a mobile unit] but they were already old, so I asked the me sahakaw [cooperative chief] to let them stay here and work not so far away...he let my parents stay” (KT212a). For her in particular, this was a risky choice: the mobile units in her area were sent to the January 1 dam, a site known for its harsh punishments and impossible work demands. Pushing back on a cooperative leader was often a punishable offense, but she was willing to do so in order to

protect her family. This was not a phenomenon only in these areas, but rather was present in the other communes in my sample where families were left intact.

In part, this was possible in either of these communes because of the community environment. Another informant in Pneo explained that “it was safer here because of the commune and cooperative chiefs. It depended on them. The *me kong* [company leader] was from this village” (KT211). This process worked both ways: local officials had ties to the community, but it also meant they could have pre-existing ties to the district officials as well. Both of these factors would lead to better treatment. A former official explained to me that one of the other communes in his area had a lot of people die from starvation because, as he explained “most importantly, the chief did not have any connections, so he could not make requests [from the district]” (B312). His interview revealed that those ties to the district allowed him to be flexible in giving rations to the community, planting surplus crops, and pushing back on work assignments. The officials who were from a particular area not only had longer-standing ties to the community, which made it more likely that they were already embedded in the commune’s networks, but also it meant they were more likely to want to stay in a commune afterwards which incentivized better treatment of the community. This is not only a patronage story; as discussed earlier in the dissertation, these pockets of local autonomy were based in the regime’s logic of governing: autonomy was delegated based on the security and economic interests in a given commune. These two communes provide examples of the way that social ties functioned during this period at both the family and community level, demonstrating the ways that limited social collectivization enabled ties to persist.

In contrast, in the two cases of high social collectivization the discussions focused primarily in the absence or removal of family ties and the environment of fear from increased

observations. At the family level, this would be observed through statements about how infrequently they were able to interact with each other. One of my informants in Veal explained that he was in a mobile unit living out at his worksite but, “my mom passed away, so I secretly ran away [when I heard about] her death. There wasn’t a funeral, but I ran home to see my family for one day” (P123). That was the only visit to his family that he recalled to me. Similarly, a woman I met in Snao described the conditions in her mobile group. At each worksite, she remembered that “the food was the same, all porridge, and we slept on the ground just the same. [I] rarely had a day off or a break to visit my family” (TK113). However, compounding the problems of worksites, she explained that “both of my parents and siblings died from starvation because there was just no food” (TK113). The absence of family ties is reflected in the relative lack of accounts of interactions or visits between family or friends.

At the commune level, both minor officials like cooks and village or commune chiefs were exchanged for newer, stricter replacements. In Pneo, my informant summed up the situation very clearly saying, “every year it got stricter: people were observed more, and the leaders were trying to catch more mistakes... the leaders changed a lot [too], especially the really good me kong [company leaders] who tried to help people. They were just killed” (P121). This environment compounded the risks and fear in the commune. Speaking more directly to starvation, I was told that in Snao “the first cooks used to steal [extra] food for people, but they were replaced by stricter ones” (TK113) – at first, those who were from the community stole extra food from the central storehouses for the community, but they were killed and replaced with new officials, not from the village, who were not willing to undertake that risk. This demonstrates that non-local officials brought into the villages and communes served to undercut

the existing ties that predated the KR period and elsewhere allowed for some protections; instead they enforced the regime's policies and furthered the environment of fear.

Expanding beyond the cases in this chapter, I was particularly compelled by the way that people talked about their families in reflecting on this period in most interviews. An overwhelming majority of interviews (about 75%) discussed their family: some in framing the particular hardship, others talking about mitigating factors, or in how they experienced loss. It became clear to me that this was particularly salient to their understanding of the period. Further, the lack of responses that were common to questions about visiting or their families was telling. I remain particularly compelled by the way that people answered questions about how often they saw their families. Official rhetoric claims that workers were given a day off out of every ten to see rest or see family (Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua 1988) -- to many of my informants, this was a laughable proposition. Some could pinpoint one or two occasions where they undertook a risk or faced danger to see their families for a special occasion, but for those in strict communities it was nearly impossible. One went as far as to tell me that visiting the next commune to see his family, or even get news about them, was about as "far away as leaving for America" (SR112). I believe that had the absence or loss of family interactions been less significant, the reactions that I got would have been less severe.

The emphasis on local or non-local officials also through interview accounts. In practice, this was expressed to me by former officials that they were constrained by expectations of the future - if they used too much violence or were cruel, they would be killed - as well as local knowledge that could improve things like crop outputs. My interviews also directly asked about leadership turnover and whether officials were local or not. In answering this question, many of my informants then compared the two groups and highlighted either the ties that local officials

had to the community or their interests in living safely in the community. Some of this was retrospective, but insight that local officials' behaviors were shaped by the expectation of future interactions in their home community was also quite intuitive.

Outside of formal interview settings, discussions of the role of family during the KR period have pervaded the conversations that I had with Cambodian friends and acquaintances. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, conversations with my friend Solyka pointed to her grandmother as undertaking dangerous risks to help her mom and aunt survive. Firsthand accounts more often came from teachers or coworkers of friends, as they were older and had been alive during the KR period. Socheat, who was my language teacher in Phnom Penh, told me about the ways that he and his sisters would be separated out by the authorities and questioned during the KR period, the leaders hoping that the young kids would break and admit that their father was not only an urban evacuee but also educated and a musician. Instead they stuck together as best as they could, following the lead of his older sister who held firm that he had been a bicycle rickshaw driver (fieldnotes 4/26/16). At another time, he talked about breaking away from his mobile group when he was in an area near his mother's work group to see her and she had kept some better food for him as well (fieldnotes 2/12/16). His entire immediate family survived, despite being educated and urban, they reunited in Phnom Penh after the KR fell and they made their way back to the family's former home. Similarly, Sophie, my friend's boss, told me about how she and her siblings made their way to the Thai border, she had worked as a translator prior the KR period and would be considered a spy – however, her siblings lied to protect her identity and they all snuck across the border together (fieldnotes 2/19/16). While these were anecdotal accounts, they were the first to suggest to me that there was something to family and community ties as a form of protection.

Extreme ends and alternative explanations:

The two extreme ends of the spectrum, Veal (High/High) and Kanteur Piir (Low/Low) suggest at broad strokes the effects of different levels of collectivization. The differences highlighted by both cases also respond to two common alternative explanations about the information problem and capacity question within the KR regime. Importantly, these communes show that the low/low commune was not without KR victims but rather had one of the biggest sites of prison deaths. The question of the role that prisons played in establishing control is central to both cases. Further, this pair shows that the underlying logic of governance had implications for the patterns of direct and indirect deaths. The incentives that determined where and how control were applied did have an effect on the likelihood of excess mortality.

The two extreme cases are also useful to respond to two common alternative explanations. The first, that famine mortality was the result of an information problem, and the second, that the famine was caused by limited capacity. In each of the extreme communes there was oversight from the central party with an awareness of the production and mortality outcomes in each. However, despite the information about the conditions, the central party took opposing approaches to the communities. In the more open community, local officials were left alone. In the more controlled community, local officials were replaced for being too lenient. If this were a story only about information, then one would expect that once the central party learned that people were dying from starvation in the more tightly controlled community, they would push for more lenient control or measures to correct a situation leading to deaths. The second alternative, capacity, has a similar logic. Some have suggested that the cause of many deaths under the KR was the lack of capacity to respond to the crisis that unfolded from the

collectivization of agriculture. However, in neither of these cases does there appear to have been a capacity problem. Both communes are in the Northwest Zone, a similar distance from the capitol in Phnom Penh, and had interactions with the central party from the oversight of the prisons. Where leaders were replaced – potentially a step to introduce better trained or better able officials – they were more stringent and sent to enforce unlivable conditions. What this demonstrates then is that the alternatives, while plausible explanations for the disaster of the KR period overall, do not explain the patterns that emerged at the local level.

Prisons are a critical feature across both cases that affected the sense of control in both cases. The prisons were administered separately by the military (Ea 2005), not by the officials who controlled the community. However, they vary in their relationship to the commune in question. In Kanteur Piir, non-local officials were sent to the community to manage a prison and execute many of those kept there, the prison administrators did not intervene in the relatively open treatment of people in the commune. This suggests that there was central party knowledge and approval of the relatively open environment, and its relatively limited effects on the population. Most telling, in the interviews in this area, people made no mention of the prison as they did in other communities. Critically, this suggests that the people sent to this prison were not local – they were not the friends, family, or neighbors of my informants – but rather, they were from all over the province. Further, the prison was physically located in the mountains, separate from the commune itself. This suggests that its activities were not only administered separately, but that its activities were out of sight for many who lived in the community.

At the other end of the spectrum, in Veal the outcomes were more mixed. Like Kanteur Piir, Veal was also located near a site administered by military and outside officials – meaning that they too had a firsthand glimpse into the many people who were dying from starvation and

disease in this commune. Interview informants here commented on the prison and remarked on its brutality, meaning that they were aware of violence taking place nearby and the people who were sent there. They made explicit reference to people who were sent there after being denounced by other community members (P123, P111,P113). In Veal, local officials who were seen as “too nice” were routinely replaced with non-local officials who the central party believed could better govern the commune (P121). Unlike Kanteur Piir, here the central party officials had a vested interest in upholding strict control that in many cases made famine and exhaustion deaths more likely. Both of these communes had oversight and those outside of the local (below the district level) government knew what was taking shape in both places. However, this comparison also suggests that it was a deliberate choice to not only enforce greater control in strategically important communities, but to allow people to continue to die as a result.

Focusing only on the extreme cases suggests there was variation in the ways that communes were administered and the likelihood of survival. These cases are meant to illustrate the broad strokes differences between levels of collectivization and non-execution deaths. These two communes serve to test the alternative explanation, that it is only a question of level – how extreme collectivization was – that drove patterns of mortality. Level does matter, however, the ways that it matters are also suggested in these cases. While the negative case, Kanteu Piir, is much more open than the other cases in this chapter, it demonstrates that autonomy translated into a continuation of traditional social structures in addition to more relaxed work demands. It also highlights that autonomy was the result of a strategic choice, not a lack of information. Most importantly, it suggests that absolute levels of mortality – particularly when prisons are included – are not necessarily the result of local administration. The question of direct execution will be

addressed in the next chapter, but these two extreme cases complicate the intuitive assumption that more relaxed governance would signal lower mortality.

Bigger picture:

The effects of family ties as a primary buffer against famine are reflected in other communities and stories of survival across the country. In this chapter, I have demonstrated the ways that the level of social collectivization, those policies that undermined the ability of family units and community networks to stay together, affected the likelihood that someone would die from starvation or disease. Informal conversations and formal interviews alike point to family ties as the mechanism critical to the ability to survive the worst effects of KR policy.¹³ This chapter sheds light on the ways that these mechanisms worked: survival stories point to parents or siblings secretly foraging, hiding food, and even at times concealing their identities in order to protect each other. Each of these were punishable offenses, actions that would not be undertaken lightly in the context of mass violence. Therefore, strong social ties make it more likely people would engage in these behaviors, which also serve to buffer against the worst effects of KR policy. More broadly, this suggests that the same kinds of mechanisms – family ties, community networks, and associational ties - play a vital role in protecting populations not only from natural disaster, but also from mass violence. The KR had a stated goal of upending the state's traditional social structures, but by taking aim at these core social units – the family and the village – they ensured that the effects of these policies lasted far beyond any shift in economic production.

This chapter also addressed the claims put forward in alternative explanations that famine deaths resulted from informational or capacity problems. Drawing on the two extreme cases,

¹³ Fieldnotes 2/28/16, 3/10/16

Kanteur Piir and Veal, both in the Northwest Zone and both with prisons in the area, I demonstrate that both cases had a similar level of oversight and information from the commune sent back to the central party; however, the mortality outcomes could not be more different. Therefore, in neither case was the central party unaware that people were dying, or how they were dying, nor were there steps taken to change those conditions.

Beyond the cases discussed in this chapter, the incidences of indirect deaths suggest a pattern that aligns with the areas that would be targeted for higher levels of social collectivization. As argued in earlier chapters, those areas that had high economic incentives or internal security risks were more likely to face social collectivization. This suggests, broadly, that the Northwest Zone and the areas surrounding urban centers (especially the areas surrounding Phnom Penh) would have the harshest conditions. In the high production areas in the Northwest Zone, the need for labor could serve as a restraint on the use of direct violence, but the working conditions were still a frequent cause of death (from either starvation or exhaustion). In both sets of comparisons, economic collectivization is an important component of the mortality outcomes, but it is a prior that sets the stage for famine. Through this chapter, I demonstrate how state control over the production and consumption of all goods set the stage for an economic disaster, but the added policies of forced marriages and family separation worsened the effects of economic disaster and made famine inescapable.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The research presented here started out with a simple question: why was the Khmer Rouge period so lethal? Within that broad question, I ask more specifically why the KR regime killed so many people that it set out to govern. In answering these questions, I focused on collective agriculture – the cornerstone of the KR’s vision for a new society and the central policy of their new state. I set out to understand the scope of violence and the lived experience of collectivization under a brutally repressive and violent regime. In doing so, I found wide variation in the ways that collectivization was implemented and carried out, which had different effects on the survival strategies with which people could engage. The central party made choices about the kinds of practices put in place within the suite of policies that makes up collective agriculture. The types of policies put in place was shaped by the regime’s interests in a particular community: either its economic value or its strategic importance. Both of these dimensions are shaped by the Khmer Rouge ideology, which determined the population groups that would be internally threatening and defined the state’s economic interests. As a result of those policy choices, some communities faced higher rates of indirect deaths. I find that economic elements made famine possible, but it was the social components that made deaths from starvation or exhaustion more likely. In this final chapter, I review the argument and central findings of this research, discuss the comparative context to demonstrate why these conclusions matter beyond the Cambodian case, and expand on the broader implications of this project.

Summary of findings

In this project, I find there was wide variation in the policies and practices put in place as collective agriculture, and within those differences, the social components of cooperative policies shaped the survival strategies available for the population. These findings present three central contributions. First, I present a new conceptualization of collective agriculture that breaks down the component policies and includes not only economic, but also social dimensions. Second, I demonstrate that there was an underlying logic to the ways that repression or openness varied across the country, and that variation is based in the regime's strategic interests. Lastly, I argue that the social components of collectivization served to undermine family and community ties, and in doing so, eroded the traditional buffers against famine, making it more likely that people would die from indirect means.

A first component of this project is to systematically explain this variation as a more holistic measure of collectivization. In the descriptions of everyday life in the cooperatives that I heard in interviews, I found wide variation in what the cooperatives were like on the ground. Prior to conducting fieldwork, I had read accounts that spelled out where there was better or worse treatment and greater experiences of violence, but I didn't know how that variation could translate into daily life. The variation in practices and strictness was not something I was expecting when I went into the field; however, it is this variation that I spend the first half of this dissertation categorizing and explaining. I measured the level of collectivization by the types of policies - social and economic - and the level to which they were implemented. In doing so, I broke down the component parts of the suite of policies that contributed to the establishment of collective agriculture: the economic dimensions that expropriated private property and established communal ownership over all goods produced or consumed, and the social

dimensions that broke down communities into groups of men, women, and children and established the state as the new head of the family. Each of these dimensions were on a spectrum. In a given community some, all, or none of those practices could be enacted.

The policies that were implemented reflect the ways that authority was decentralized in the communes. As I find in chapters 3 and 4, the central party exerted greater control over those areas that had high strategic values, which made it more likely that both social and economic practices would be established. In communities that faced security risks from external actors, I find that economic collectivization was more often used to establish control. In contrast, in areas with internal security risks, either from ethnic minorities or political enemies, local leaders faced a choice to use social collectivization to reform undesirable groups or execute those populations. I find that the choice to use social controls was more often made in places where the undesirable groups were necessary laborers. Additionally, in communities where there was a history of high rice production, they were more likely to receive additional waves of urban evacuees, and both preferred status groups and undesirable groups faced high levels of social collectivization. This was based on the need to produce as much rice as possible, which was labor intensive. In areas without strategic value, local leaders had greater autonomy to govern as they saw fit; however, this usually led to a more open and less collectivized environment.

The concept of social collectivization and its associated effects are, what I believe, to be the core contribution of this research. I put forward a novel concept of social collectivization as a way to capture the policies that made family life cooperative. While these components have been discussed elsewhere, this is, to my knowledge, the first approach that systematically incorporates them into a broader discussion of collectivization. In doing so, I presented a new way to explain

the high rates of indirect deaths in Cambodia. I have argued that the fractured social ties - the result of social policies - made people more likely to die as a result of indirect means.

The social ties that helped insulate people from the worst effects of an economic crisis or periods of violence were family ties and community networks. Intuitively, family ties are the stronger of the two and the more central. In a context of violence and upheaval, people were more likely to help those with whom they have strong preexisting ties. However, community ties played a significant role as well. In those communities where leaders were local, they were more likely to moderate repression and violence against the population. In part, this was driven by a desire to stay in their communities, but it was also due to greater local knowledge and an interest in protecting their own families, friends, and acquaintances. More specifically in a Cambodian context, it was likely driven by pre-conflict patronage politics as well: Cambodian politics has long been dominated by patronage politics and the KR period was no exception. Ironically, the expectations of future patronage politics led to a moderating effect. Non-local leaders however, were less likely to have ties to the community, and fewer expectations to stay in the areas where they were sent. Instead, non-local leaders were likely to be more loyal to the regime that trained and sent them. The context of violence and repression also made new strong ties unlikely. There were constant threats of spies or denunciation at the worksites and at home, therefore people were less likely to trust or rely on work group or living group members. Instead, this led to atomization within the communes. Therefore, I argue that the inclusion of social collectivization and its uses can explain the lethality of the Khmer Rouge collectivization project.

Moving beyond Cambodia

In the introductory chapter, I put the famine mortalities from the Cambodian case in the context of Soviet Collectivization and China's Great Leap Forward to demonstrate that the death rates in Cambodia were nearly double. In each of these cases, private ownership was abolished and land was held in common by the state. Agricultural production was put into the hands of large cooperatives, crops expropriated by the state, and consumption controlled through communal dining halls. And yet, the rates of starvation deaths were much higher in Cambodia. This difference, I argue, can be attributed in part to the extreme social dimensions of the policies the KR sought to implement. Other communist cases had elements of social collectivization - communal daycare and greater pushes for state education, communal eldercare, even pieces of pro-natalist and at times anti-natalist policies; however, they did not approach the level to which the KR's version explicitly sought to dismantle the family.

Pro-natalist or other family policies are not new to communist or totalitarian regimes: they were a persistent feature in Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, Romania under Ceausescu, North Korea, among others. While China's best-known family policy - the one child policy - is meant to restrict births, it still is a state attempt to manipulate the family. However, these policies almost across the board were used to reinforce the centrality of the family: producing children was critical, but it was in the context of the 'ideal' picture of the family. While totalitarian, and not communist, pro-natalist policies made to shape the "proper" families are perhaps clearest in the Nazi case where birth control and abortions were outlawed for most German women alongside the promotion of state incentive programs for having children, while those considered unfit faced forced sterilization (Koonz 1986, p. 7). While the state was making decisions about

who could or could not have children and incentivizing the right kind of people to have more children, it was not coercing couples together or forcing them to have children.

The evolution of Soviet family policies suggests the discontinuity in communist approaches to women and the family. Soviet family policies initially saw the institution of the family as withering away with time (Goldman 1993), this was seen as a critical step toward liberating women from the demands of the household and family life. However, they retreated from this view in the 1930s with a new law bolstering the role of the family. Ironically, the period of time at the height of Stalin's purges also saw a retrenchment of the role of the family (Kaminsky 2011). The 1936 decree almost completely reversed the picture of the 'family withering away' from the original 1918 law. By this time, abortion was banned, state support to mothers with large families increased, the state expanded healthcare and childcare into rural areas, and the state expanded what it considered to be a marriage (ibid). The shift after 1936 was what Goldman describes as a "repressive strengthening of the family unit" (1993, p. 337). Therefore, the family was maintained as a critical part of the Soviet agenda – disbanding families, particularly after 1936, would contradict the ideal that the regime put forward.

Like their predecessors in the Soviet Union, Chinese communists relied on women joining the workforce in order to meet new cooperative production goals. In doing so, it required that the state organize childcare, education, and eldercare facilities so that women would be able to participate fully in the labor market. In 1950 the Chinese Communist Party put forward a new marriage law, which allowed choice in marriages and outlawed arranged marriages, concubinage, and bigamy (Johnson 1985). The state stopped trying to implement this law after 1953, but some of its legacies have continued (Diamant 2009). While other communist states pushed a pronatalist agenda alongside the pro-family line, Kimberly Ens Manning notes that this

was more ambiguous in China, and during the Great Leap, women's organizations advocated for family planning (2011).

In addition to family policies, China also had practices surrounding communal living. Wang Yanni's account of communization gives clear insights into this phenomenon, pointing to the destruction of individual homes and shift to communal houses in Macheng County during the Great Leap Forward.¹ She argues that the destruction of homes was meant "to facilitate the collection of fertilizer, to facilitate communal living, and to improve production efficiency" (2011, p.151). The collection of fertilizer led to the destruction of many homes, which were made out of mud and other materials that could be used. However, in the drive to increase efficiency there were also cases of family separation in the creation of 'production armies'. As Wang describes, these production armies were labor forces that were separated into men, women, and children, sent as additional labor to support major infrastructure programs (2011, p. 162). However, as Ens Manning notes (2011, same volume), women with children were tasked to stay in the community, with their children, and tend to the crops. While these production armies are not explicitly analyzed here, she contends that both types of communal living – either combined families in one home or separated families in separate homes – were intended to militarize the countryside. Ultimately however, she finds the push for production armies undermined the industrialization drive and was ended after 1959.

In a comparative context, this appears to be a similar practice to the mobile units that were established in Cambodia nearly two decades later. However, the framing of the two practices suggests the differences in their use. The production armies in the GLF, at least from

¹ Her account is one of the only ones that I have seen that explicitly discusses communal living and the separation of families in China. Comparisons between Chinese and Cambodian style communal living could be a fruitful direction for future work on comparative communism.

Wang's account, were described and established to maximize production and efficiency. The separation of families in the KR case is framed in terms of the role the regime played in the state: if they were the rightful parent of the nation, then other family units were not a useful construct. Children were taught the *Angkar* was responsible for them, not that they were separated from their parents in order to produce more efficiently. Further, the reorganization of family life to reflect the regime's priorities is a different set of practices altogether. Forced marriages and the creation of new family units were intended to be permanent – the production armies were short lived, while the children of forced marriages remain the children of forced marriages.

Direct and indirect strategies of violence

The emphasis throughout this project on the indirect strategies of violence has implicitly drawn a comparison to the ways that direct violence was used. Through the logic of governing, I contend that the KR regime used policy tools as a strategy of indirect violence alongside the tools of direct exterminatory violence. Both components were part of their drive to achieve their vision for a pure Khmer state and both strategies were fundamental to the mass killings that took place. The exterminatory violence that took place – through executions, forced migration, and in the prisons – was intended to purge the state of its enemies and undesirable foreign influences. The indirect violence that occurred, as I have argued, targeted undesirable populations, but also led to deaths of those from preferred status groups. Indirect deaths were most likely in those areas that were high rice production zones: the expropriation expectations were higher, which dramatically limited the food supply and the demands for labor lead to very strict social control.

Throughout this discussion, I have skirted around the question of intent and whether the policies of collectivization were designed to kill. I have avoided answering this directly partly

due to limited information on the intent of the regime's leaders, but also because my aim in this research is to focus at the local level. However, in establishing a strategic logic, I assume that the central party's intentions were to deliberately create a policy designed to maximize production and respond to perceive risks. The risks they responded to were undesirable populations and the threat of invasion, not the deaths of nearly one million of their own people from starvation.

While I cannot determine if they knew the specific ways that their policies led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, they intentionally established the policies and practices that led to famine, exhaustion, and epidemics, as well as widespread practices of sexual violence through forced marriages. I do not have reason to believe that they set out to create conditions of famine; however, they did not change the direction of these policies, even in light of information that people were dying in large numbers. In her writing and in her testimony at the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, Elizabeth Becker reported discussions with Ieng Thirith, the Minister of Social Affairs as well as Pol Pot's sister-in-law, where Thirith said she was distraught about the poor conditions in the countryside and that she reported them to Pol Pot to ensure the conditions improved (Cambodia Tribunal Monitor 2/9/15). Becker also reported that Pol Pot confirmed such a discussion and knowledge of the conditions in the countryside (ibid). If members of the central committee were aware of conditions of starvation or disease, they would have been the ones able to make changes to improve the overall conditions; however, these improvements did not happen. Additionally, official rhetoric reminded people that it was better to accidentally kill an innocent person than to let a potential risk survive (Locard 2004, p. 209-210). This suggests at least an indifference to the destruction that these policies caused if not a deliberate intent to cause harm.

More recently, the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia found the two remaining senior leaders of the KR guilty of genocide (in a limited manner) and crimes against humanity in November 2018 (ECCC 2018a).² While I am not trying to assess legal guilt or intent throughout this research, the court's findings are important. In finding them both guilty, the tribunal demonstrated that the senior leadership had sufficient knowledge and control over the state to have intentionally killed and created inhumane conditions (ECCC 2018b). In particular, they found that the practices of forced marriage were significant and widespread as part of the KR's agenda (ECCC 2018d). This finding reinforces the view that the KR were capable of establishing national policies and implementing them, even without explicitly written directives. Further, there was debate over including this issue as it did not have a clear precedence or classification as a crime under international law (de Langis and Studzinsky 2012). In finding forced marriage constituted a crime against humanity, not culture, it reinforces how deeply consequential the attempt to transform social structure was. More broadly, my argument about indirect violence in the establishment of collective agriculture has important implications for the ways that we understand communist mass violence elsewhere. While the KR leaders are the first communist regime to be found guilty of genocide – this applies only to the treatment of the Cham and ethnic Vietnamese, not to the Khmer Buddhists who were killed. This decision can

² This decision was based on two years of testimony in Case 002/02. Case 002/02 focuses explicitly on the question of genocide against the Cham, a Muslim minority group, and the ethnic Vietnamese, as well as crimes against humanity (in particular for the practices of forced marriage, forced labor, and the treatment of political groups in model districts). This comes after the earlier Case 002/01 found the same leaders guilty of crimes against humanity primarily for forced migration of about 30% of the population in 1975, for which they are currently serving their first life sentences. The first case, 001, sentenced Kaing Guek Eav (comrade Duch) to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity for which he was responsible in his capacity as the head of S-21, the highest-level prison in the Khmer Rouge prison system.

renew discussions of the kinds of acts considered under international law. The crimes that the leaders were found guilty of were not only mass killing or torture, but also forced labor, forced migration, and forced marriages. The court's finds that "crimes against humanity were committed in relation to the establishment and operation of cooperatives and worksites" (ECCC 2018a, p.10). Their findings focus on forced labor at specific worksites, however they include the cooperatives at Tram Kok district, which was a model district intended as a paragon of Khmer Rouge ideals. This demonstrates that there is sufficient evidence to determine that the regime's leadership was responsible for the practices and the extent of forced labor in the cooperatives (ECCC 2018c). If, as I've argued, there is a specific logic driving the practices of collectivization across the country, then this suggests that the central party had significant responsibility, and can be held accountable, for the ways that cooperative agriculture took place across the country and those who died as a result.

Implications

The central findings about the role of family and community life, as well as the use of indirect measures as a strategy of violence, have broader implications for the ways that people experience periods of intense conflict or repression. The first pertains to the use of indirect strategies of violence: in the most disruptive conflicts taking place today, the risks to civilians come not only from direct violence, but also displacement, famine, or drought. While drought or famine are sometimes unavoidable, they can also be a strategy of harming civilians. This research sheds light on the ways that states can target populations with these kinds of indirect means as well as the ways that people mitigate their effects. More broadly, the findings in this research have implications for restoring and rebuilding communities in the aftermath of conflict

or crisis. If the family and community ties serve to insulate people from the effects of crisis or violence, then it suggests that restoring and building those ties following a crisis is critical to mediating the post-conflict period.

Moving beyond the period of conflict or crisis, the destruction of social ties can have longer-term implications for the populations' attitudes toward the state and interpersonal relationships. The broken ties between families and communities were not automatically restored once the period of violence ended, but rather families remained fractured and missing during the post-conflict period. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s people sought out their missing relatives and tried to reunite with family and friends. Beyond the immediate effects of families that were physically broken up, the constant fear of spies or denunciations during the KR period led to greater distrust and suspicions among the population. The effects of that fear and distrust would not go away simply because the regime lost power, but rather have had lasting effects on society. The effects of fractured and weak ties within the community, beyond making starvation or indirect deaths more likely, continue to shape the ways that people interact with their families, neighbors, and the state long after the risks of direct or indirect violence are over.

In carrying out this research, each interview began with the question of "how did your life change under the Khmer Rouge?"³ This has, in part, driven the whole project - I sought to understand the ways that the regime fundamentally changed daily life during the DK period and for generations to come. The interviews often closed with a question intended to ask when the violence ended - asking "when did your life come back to normal?" Some of my informants

³ There was an introduction of the research, IRB consent process, and then some biographical questions first, but this was the first directed question.

talked about the end of the KR period, talking about when the cooperatives broke apart or when they were reunited with families, others responded that the civil war continued into the 1990s, but most added that things never really went back to normal. The effects of the KR period fundamentally changed the lives of those who lived through it and continues to shape the generations that have come after them.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Breakout of Social Measures

Table 1: Family level factors

<i>Commune</i>	<i>Forced marriage</i>	<i>Family status</i>	<i>Visitation</i>	<i>Family Aggregate</i>
Veal	Yes	Separate	No	Highest
Pneoe	Mixed	Mixed	No	Medium
Kanteur Piir	No	Intact	N/A	Low
Snao	Yes	Separate	No	Highest

Table 2: Communal level factors

<i>Commune</i>	<i>New People</i>	<i>Non-local officials</i>	<i>Communal Aggregate</i>
Veal	Separate	Yes	Mid
Pneoe	Separate	No	Low
Kanteur Piir	No	No	Low
Snao	Separate	Yes	Mid

Appendix 2:

Timeline of key events:

November 9, 1953: Cambodia becomes independent, King Sihanouk leads the new Kingdom of Cambodia

1955: Sihanouk abdicates the throne in favor of his father, instead founds the Sangkum, a “Buddhist Socialist” party which won overwhelming in the 1955 elections. Beginning of the Sangkum period.

March 18, 1970: general Lon Nol (backed by the US) stages a coup, overthrows the Sihanouk and Sangkum government

Late March 1970: North Vietnamese troops arrive in Cambodia to support the fight against Lon Nol government, at the request of Nuon Chea (soon to be Cambodian Communist’s number 2).

April - June 1970: Communist forces within Cambodia expand, Royalist movement in support of Sihanouk’s return forms. Both groups ally against Lon Nol. Despite alliance, anti-Vietnamese riots and violence occurs more

March 1972: Lon Nol halts a vote in the Constituent Assembly on a new constitution

June 1972: Lon Nol becomes the president of the newly created Khmer Republic (the beginning of the Republican period)

January 1973: Paris Peace Accords signed, signaling an end to war in Vietnam. Lon Nol calls for a ceasefire, Cambodian Communists (Khmer Rouge) continue fighting

March - August 1973: Civil war widens; US Air Force continues to bomb Cambodia’s countryside closer in to Phnom Penh to support Lon Nol government against communist Khmer Rouge. Approximately 500,000 tons of bombs were dropped before April 1975.

April 1975: Khmer Rouge forces move closer to Phnom Penh, much of the countryside has been evacuated due to years of bombing and civil war (several million people moved from countryside to Phnom Penh between 1970 - 1975).

April 17, 1975: Khmer Rouge take Phnom Penh and declare victory, ending the civil war. April 17 - 20, 1975: All urban populations evacuated from cities and provincial towns across Cambodia. People are moved to the countryside under the guise of a threatened bombing raid

April 30, 1975: Fall of Saigon. US leaves Vietnam.

July 1976: Consolidation of Khmer Rouge leadership in Democratic Kampuchea, Establishment of Kampuchean People’s Representative Assembly. First 4-year plan announced.

February 1977: Rebellion against Khmer Rouge cadres takes place in Chi Kraeng, Siem Reap.

March - April 1977 (approx): Purges begin across the North and Northwest zone

June 1977: Hun Sen, among other Eastern Zone commanders, defect to Vietnam

Late 1977: On-going border skirmishes with Vietnam escalate

May 1978: Anti-Vietnamese violence in the Eastern zone (near VN border) increases

December 1978: Vietnamese military enters Cambodia and begins to push back Khmer Rouge

January 7, 1979: Vietnamese take Phnom Penh, declare the end of Democratic Kampuchea.

January 1979: People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) established.

April 1989: PRK dissolved and renamed State of Cambodia

October 23, 1991: Paris Peace Accords signed, signaling the end of civil war in Cambodia within 2 years.

1993: Restoration of Kingdom of Cambodia, dissolution of State of Cambodia/PRK

May 1993: First election since Sangkum era held under UN authority

September 1996: Royal Government of Cambodia declares amnesty for Khmer Rouge soldiers

April 15, 1998: Pol Pot dies

December 25, 1998: Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan defect to the government, effective end of the Khmer Rouge and coalition resistance. Civil war ends.

Appendix 3

Local governance terms and titles:

Krom (ក្រុម): work groups, usually 10 - 12 people and the smallest level of organization in collectives.

Kong (កង): company, there were both small and big kongs that were made up of 3 to 10 kroms.

Phum (ភូមិ): village, often made up of several big kong. In some cases, a big kong is the same as the village

Sahakaw (សហករណ៍): cooperative, usually made up of several villages or big kongs. In some cases at the same level as the village

Khum (ឃុំ): commune, typically made up of 3 - 10 villages or cooperatives

Srok (ស្រុក): district, typically made up of 5 - 10 communes

Damban (តំបន់): region, made up of several districts and controlled as much as entire provinces.

Pumipeak (ភូមិភាគ): Zone, made up of several regions

Above the Damban were the zones and the national government; however, as I am focused on the local level, the terms above are the primary ones used.

The bolded terms are used in describing local government today, with the village being the lowest level. In the present day, 'regions' have been returned to the original province (kiet) divisions.

Positions and officials

Me (ម៉េ) or **brotean** (ប្រធាន) both of which refer to the chief or boss of an organization.

Mien tourniati (មិនត្រូវទី) literally, to have responsibilities. This is used to designate anyone with an official position

Chhlop (ឈ្លប) spies or local militia members (usually refers to young boy

Appendix 4

Commune Coding:

Each of the communes included in this research have been coded for the type and level of collectivization faced. This was based on a more holistic narrative drawn from the content of interviews, taken together, as well as the practices of collectivization that were put in place, how they were practiced, and how they changed over time (guided by the template below).

Commune:						Date:
	<i>Pre-1975</i>	<i>1975</i>	<i>1976</i>	<i>1977</i>	<i>1978</i>	<i>1979+</i>
Group work						
days off/breaks						
Group meals						
take home						
keep utensils						
keep garden						
keep animals/ catch fish						
other						
Group living						
days off/breaks						
family visits						
Quotas/						
Individual goals						
Sanctions:						
Quotas met						
Uniforms						
all black						
given out						
Meetings?						
All or leaders?						
Content:						
Weddings						
groups						
right of refusal						
post-observation						

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Author Fieldnotes:

February 12, 2016, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

February 19, 2016, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

February 28, 2016, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

March 10, 2016, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

April 26, 2016, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Interview Index

All interviews have been kept anonymous to protect informants. The code or naming convention for the interviews follows a pattern of province abbreviation, district (number, based on the order of when I went), commune (number, based on the order of when I went), and then the number of which interview it is in a specific commune. The pilot interviews are simply coded by A to designate that it is a pilot and then an interview number.

For example: SR113 would be the third interview conducted in Kdei Run commune (1st commune visited in the district), in Puok district (1st district visited in the province), in Siem Reap province.

Pilot Interviews:	Commune	Province	Date	Subject	Position?
A1	Damnak Chang'aeur	Kep	3/13/16	2 men, 70s	no
A2	Damnak Chang'aeur	Kep	3/13/16	Man and Woman, 60s	no
A3	Damnak Chang'aeur	Kep	3/13/16	Man and Woman, 60s	no

Interview	Commune	Province	Date	Subject	Position?
B111	Praek Khbob	Battambang	7/11/16	Man, 60s	no
B112	Praek Khbob	Battambang	7/11/16	Woman, 60s	group leader
B113	Praek Khbob	Battambang	7/11/16	Woman, 80s	no
B114	Praek Khbob	Battambang	7/11/16	Man, 80s	no
B211a	Ta Pun	Battambang	7/11/16	Man, 70s	no
B211b	Ta Pun	Battambang	7/11/16	Woman, 60s	no
B212	Ta Pun	Battambang	7/11/16	Man, 80s	no
B221	Reang Kesei	Battambang	7/19/16	Man, 70s	no
B222	Reang Kesei	Battambang	7/19/16	Man, 70s	no
B223	Reang Kesei	Battambang	7/19/16	Man, 80s	kong leader
B311	Kanteur Piir	Battambang	7/12/16	Man, 60s	no
B312	Kanteur Piir	Battambang	7/12/16	Man, 70s	village chief
B321	Sneoung	Battambang	7/12/16	Man, 70s	supervised children's group
B322	Sneoung	Battambang	7/12/16	Woman, 70s	cook
KL111	Koh Anlong Chen	Kandal	10/18/16	Man, 60s	no
KL112	Koh Anlong Chen	Kandal	10/18/16	Woman, 50s	no
KL113	Koh Anlong Chen	Kandal	10/18/16	Woman, 60s	no

KL121	Krang Yov	Kandal	11/3/16	Woman, 70s	no
KL122	Krang Yov	Kandal	11/3/16	Woman, 70s	no
KL123	Krang Yov	Kandal	11/3/16	Woman, 60s	no
KL131	Svay Proteal	Kandal	11/11/16	Woman, 50s	no
KL132	Svay Proteal	Kandal	11/11/16	Man, 50s	no
KL211	Prek Thmei	Kandal	11/8/16	Woman, 70s	no
KL212	Prek Thmei	Kandal	11/8/16	Woman, 70s	no
KL213	Prek Thmei	Kandal	11/8/16	Man, 50s	damban official
KL221	Pouthiban	Kandal	11/7/16	Woman, 60s	no
KM111	Trapeang Bei	Kampot	10/11/16	Woman, 70s	no
KM112	Trapeang Bei	Kampot	10/11/16	Man, 70s	no
KM113	Trapeang Bei	Kampot	10/11/16	Man and Woman, 70s	no
KM121	Lbaeuk	Kampot	10/11/16	Man, 50s	no
KM122	Lbaeuk	Kampot	10/11/16	Man and Woman, 70s	no
KM123	Lbaeuk	Kampot	10/11/16	Man, 70s	no
KM131	Mean Chey	Kampot	10/12/16	Man and Woman, 70s	no
KT111	Mean Chey	Kampong Thom	8/15/16	Man, 70s	no
KT112	Mean Chey	Kampong Thom	8/15/16	Man, 60s	no
KT121	Chheu Teal	Kampong Thom	8/15/16	Group interview (3 men, 4 women, all between 60s and 70s)	
KT211	Pneoe	Kampong Thom	8/16/16	Man, 50s	no
KT212	Pneoe	Kampong Thom	8/16/16	Woman, 70s	no
KT212b	Pneoe	Kampong Thom	8/16/16	Woman, 60s	no
KT213	Pneoe	Kampong Thom	8/16/16	Man, 80s	no
KT221	Kroya	Kampong Thom	8/16/16	Man, 60s	village chief
KT222	Kroya	Kampong Thom	8/16/16	Woman, 50s	no

P111	Kanchor	Pursat	7/18/16	Man, 60s	cook
P112	Kanchor	Pursat	7/18/16	Man, 60s	no
P113	Kanchor	Pursat	7/18/16	Man, 70s	no
P114a	Kanchor	Pursat	7/18/16	Man 70s	no
P114b	Kanchor	Pursat	7/18/16	Woman, 70s	cook
P121a	Veal	Pursat	7/18/16	Woman, 70s	no
P121b	Veal	Pursat	7/18/16	Man, 70s	no
P122	Veal	Pursat	7/18/16	Woman, 80s	no
P123	Veal	Pursat	7/18/16	Man, 70s	no
SR111	Kdei Run	Siem Reap	6/7/16	Woman, 80s	no
SR112	Kdei Run	Siem Reap	6/7/16	Man, 50s	no
SR113	Kdei Run	Siem Reap	6/7/16	Woman, 60s	teacher
SR121	Trey Nhoar	Siem Reap	6/7/16	Man, 50s	soldier
SR122	Trey Nhoar	Siem Reap	6/7/16	Woman, 60s	no
SR123	Trey Nhoar	Siem Reap	6/7/16	Man, 70s	village chief
SR211	Kampong Kdei	Siem Reap	6/13/16	Man, late 50s	no
SR212	Kampong Kdei	Siem Reap	6/13/16	Man, 70s	village chief
SR213	Kampong Kdei	Siem Reap	6/13/16	Woman, 50s	no
SR214	Kampong Kdei	Siem Reap	6/13/16	Woman, 50s	medic
SR221	Pongro Kraom	Siem Reap	7/6/16	Man, 60s	commune chief
SR222	Pongro Kraom	Siem Reap	7/6/16	Man, 60s	no
SR223	Pongro Kraom	Siem Reap	7/6/16	Woman, 60s	commune official
SR224	Pongro Kraom	Siem Reap	7/8/16	Man, 70s	no
SR225	Pongro Kraom	Siem Reap	7/8/16	Man, 70s	no
SR226	Pongro Kraom	Siem Reap	7/8/16	Woman, 70s	party member
SR311	Varin	Siem Reap	6/20/16	Man, 60s	village chief
SR312	Varin	Siem Reap	6/20/16	Woman, 60s	cook
SR313	Varin	Siem Reap	6/20/16	Man, 60s	soldier
SR314	Varin	Siem Reap	6/20/16	Woman, 50s	no
TK111	Snao	Takeo	11/10/16	Man, 70s	no
TK112	Snao	Takeo	11/10/16	Woman, 70s	no
TK113	Snao	Takeo	11/10/16	Woman, 60s	no
TK121	Kampeang	Takeo	11/29/16	Man, 80s	no
TK122	Kampeang	Takeo	11/29/16	Woman, 70s	no
TK123	Kampeang	Takeo	11/29/16	Woman, 60s	no

TK211	Thnaot	Takeo	11/28/16	Woman, 50s	no
TK212	Thnaot	Takeo	11/28/16	Man, 60s	soldier
TK213	Thnaot	Takeo	11/29/16	Man, 70s	no
TK214	Thnaot	Takeo	11/28/16	Man, 60s	village chief
TK215	Thnaot	Takeo	11/28/16	Woman, 60s	no
TK221	Krang Thnong	Takeo	11/29/16	Woman, 50s	no
TK222	Krang Thnong	Takeo	11/29/16	Man, 70s	no
TK231	Lumpung	Takeo	12/1/16	Woman, 70s	no