



# An Investigation of Western Influence in Visual Communications from Cambodian Non-Commercial Sources



Willem Paling  
Master of Design (Research)

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## Certificate of Authorship/Originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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## Abstract

This thesis is based on the analysis of 248 pieces of visual communications from Cambodian non-commercial sources along with interviews conducted with 10 non-commercial producers of visual communications in Cambodia.

Western influence was found to be widespread in numerous forms, ranging from such prosaic forms as their format and the technology used to produce them, to a tendency in some Christian material to depict the virtuous as European and the unvirtuous as more Asian.

At rural crossroads throughout Cambodia the corners present an array of billboards, with commercial billboards typically outnumbered by those from non-commercial sources such as NGOs and UN agencies. These bear messages such as the importance of vaccinations, the official voter registration procedure, the importance of registering the birth of children, advice on newly implemented laws, health advice and nutrition advice. Similar material exists in poster format in private homes, provincial hospitals, the houses of local leaders and other community spaces. Not publicly visible but existing in significant numbers are the books, leaflets, stickers, magazines and other forms of visual communications also produced by similar non-commercial organisations.

The prevalence of non-commercial organisations in Cambodia is such that the single biggest sector of the economy is the development sector. There are over 450 international and local non-government organisations, international organisations and donors operating in Cambodia. The majority of these organisations have some kind of western affiliation. This may be in the form of their funding sources, western staff, western religious affiliation or western educated Cambodian staff. Thus it can be expected that the presence of these western affiliations will be expressed to some degree in their visual communications.

It has been observed that economic development brings about somewhat predictable cultural changes. Khmer culture in particular is vulnerable as a result of the attempted abolition of religion and the closing of cultural institutions that was imposed by the

Democratic Kampuchea regime. While the effect that this material might have on the sustainability of Khmer culture cannot be gauged, an attempt has been made in this thesis to observe and identify the presence of these western influences in the context of cultural sustainability.



## Abbreviations

AIDS - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

AOG - Assemblies of God

AusAID - Australian Agency for International Development

BCC - Behaviour Change Communications

CCC - Cooperation Committee for Cambodia

CIC - Cambodian Information Center

CPP - Cambodian People's Party

CRDT - Cambodian Rural Development Team

DK - Democratic Kampuchea

E-E - Entertainment-Education

ESA - European Space Agency

FUNCINPEC - Front Uni National pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique, et Coopératif (National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia).

HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus

JICA - Japan International Cooperation Agency

KID - Khmer Institute for Democracy

MoEYS - Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Royal Government of Cambodia

MoH - Ministry of Health of the Royal Government of Cambodia

MVU - Maharishi Vedic University

NCHP - National Center for Health Promotion

NEC - National Election Committee

NGO - Non-Government Organisation

ORS - Oral Rehydration Salts

PSI - Population Services International

SIPAR - Soutien a l'Initiative Privee Pour l'Aide a la Reconstruction

SVA - Shanti Volunteer Association

TAP - (United Nations) Technical Assistance Program

TB - Tuberculosis

UNDP - United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund

UNTAC - United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia

USAID - United States Agency for International Development

UTS - University of Technology, Sydney

UXO - Unexploded Ordinance

WHO - World Health Organisation

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## Background

### Personal Motivation and Context

My motivation for this study comes from a personal interest in Cambodian development. During the period from 2002 to 2007 I spent a cumulative total of around 2 years working and living in Cambodia. Part of this time was spent working for the Australian Aid for Cambodia Fund, an Australian NGO that supports Maharishi Vedic University (MVU) in Kamchai Mear district, Prey Veng province. For the remainder of the time, I was resident in Phnom Penh conducting research for this thesis as well as undertaking various small projects with organisations such as the Buddhist Institute and the Cambodian Rural Development Team.

Before commencing this study, I found that the students at MVU held what I considered to be an inflated respect for western societies. Their dream for Cambodia, as I understood it, was for it to one day become a developed nation like Australia or the USA. I was confused by how highly these students and my Khmer colleagues valued owning a mobile phone, a car, a computer, and other modern items. I repeatedly saw friends and colleagues spend a month's wages on a mobile phone without hesitation. I personally received considerable respect; people who hardly knew me came to me for advice, because they valued my opinion as a foreigner. I could not understand this perceived awe of the west and all things modern.

As a visual communications designer, I wondered to what degree visual communications contributed to this awe, by intentionally, or unintentionally promoting western influences, particularly for NGOs, many of whom subscribe to a code of practice of which aims to "*respect the values, dignity, history, religion of the communities they serve*" (Cooperation Committee for Cambodia 2007b).

I have seen enough of Cambodia to witness first hand, young personal friends left fatherless by an inability to pay for proper medical treatment, losing their land in paying for the little medical help that they could afford. I have spent enough time in villages to know that village life is very difficult and that the abundance of smiles throughout rural Cambodia is not necessarily an accurate indication of the happiness of the proletariat.

This is worth mentioning because it is common for westerners, disgruntled with life in the west, to see the apparent happiness of Khmer people and wonder why anyone would seek to change their society.

During a six-week assignment in 2003, I was teaching Computing at the Kampong Cham branch campus of MVU, I used the Internet services of the Khmer Institute for Democracy's (KID) Community Information Centre (CIC). At the time, CIC was providing free Internet access, a small library, and classes focusing on democracy and human rights. At the time there were CICs in twenty-two provincial centres throughout Cambodia. I spent some time with the Kampong Cham branch manager, Mr Bun Rithy, as he taught me Khmer language and I helped with his English. As I spent more time at CIC and after speaking about the goals of CIC with Mr Bun Rithy, I formed the impression that this organisation exists primarily to serve US interests, and to promote views within Cambodian society that are in line with US policy. One of their current projects, the American Corner Program (Khmer Institute for Democracy 2003) involves setting up a library-like space, dedicated to information about the United States. Their primary source of funding is USAID via the Asian Foundation.

I became fascinated with the posters that they displayed in the building. Amongst other things, they dealt with drug abuse, weapons control, election issues and corruption all primarily through visual means. The bulk of non-commercial posters that I observed throughout Cambodia were composed of illustrations of Khmer people accompanied by a small amount of text. There were two things in particular that interested me. The first was the use of the visual message to communicate to the illiterate (approximately 30% of the population). The second was to do with the presence of western influences intentional and otherwise in these pieces of communications.

Given that westerners, or western organisations were involved at some level in the production of all these posters, I wondered about the degree to which western influences, present in visual campaigns such as these may have played some part in the development of the awe of the west that I perceived in many Cambodians. This masters research is being undertaken as an opportunity to explore, identify and clarify the ways in which western influence appears in non-commercial visual material.

I feel that it is worth noting, that as a westerner myself, I do not believe in the existence of universal values. I do not personally hold the conviction that those values identified as western in the literature review at Chapter 2, are universally appropriate for all nations in the world. Certainly, in Cambodia's brief period of stability following independence from France, Former Cambodian King, Norodom Sihanouk felt that the results of "Western-style democracy" were not sufficient to convince him that it ought to be *"introduced in Cambodia where there were no such traditions to support it"* (Sihanouk 1973, p. 46).

### **Cambodia's Recent History**

Although I have no strong political views, a study of Cambodia's recent history was useful background to gain an understanding of the context of my study. Whilst this thesis is not an analysis of political or historical contexts, the following outline is important in understanding the origin of the genre of non-commercial visual material analysed in this study.

Accounts of history in this period vary greatly and it is difficult to gain a non-partisan view. This is an account of my own understanding of this history, as it relates to this thesis. This understanding has been derived from reading books, newspapers and websites and from personal conversations with people who lived through these periods.

Cambodia's recent history has created the climate in which there is a significant amount of visual communications material being developed by internationally linked non-commercial organisations. The majority of these organisations were set up as part of the rebuilding process, after Cambodia suffered extensively during 25 years of war.

Since gaining independence from France in 1953, Cambodia enjoyed economic self-sufficiency and prosperity throughout the 1950s and early 1960s and significant infrastructure was put in place. The then Prince Norodom Sihanouk came under increasing pressure from the US to ease from his stance of neutrality with relation to the war in neighbouring Vietnam. Pressed by a journalist to choose between the "free world" or the "communist world", he stated: "I made my choice long ago. I choose Cambodia" (Khieu 2004). His neutrality earned him no favours from the US, and in

1970, a military coup installed General Lon Nol as president, whose government then received strong support from the US. Sihanouk fled, and formed a resistance movement, joining forces with the Communist Party of Kampuchea to form the National United Front of Kampuchea.

The National United Front of Kampuchea captured Phnom Penh in April 1975, and initially reinstated Prince Norodom Sihanouk as head of state. Control of power had been seized by Pol Pot, and he soon replaced King Sihanouk with President Khieu Samphan, but remained ultimately in control. Under Pol Pot's Maoist guidance, the state of Democratic Kampuchea (DK) was created. Urban areas were evacuated, and the people were forced into rural collectives. Estimates of the number of people who died from war, starvation or disease during the short-lived reign of Pol Pot's regime are in the range of one to two million.

A group of defectors from the regime regrouped in Vietnam, leading to the 1979 Vietnamese invasion, which resulted in the People's Republic of Kampuchea, based on a similar doctrine to Vietnam. Significant funding came from the Soviet Union. Pol Pot's forces withdrew to the west of the country and continued to mount low-level resistance attacks until 1998. The collapse of the Soviet Union, coupled with decreasing tensions between Sihanouk and Prime Minister Hun Sen, led to the 1991 Paris Peace Accords.

To sum up, in the last few decades, Cambodia has been emerging from a period of French colonialism, a brief occupation by the Japanese, a US bombing campaign associated with the war in Vietnam, the civil war that resulted in the reign of the Democratic Kampuchea regime and the Vietnamese invasion and that followed. The Vietnamese occupation was accompanied by ongoing civil war and 10 years of economic and political sanctions from the international community.

The fighting between the DK regime, royalist groups and the government, formally ended in 1991 when a truce was negotiated in Paris (the Paris Peace Accords). The United Nations Transitional Administration for Cambodia (UNTAC) was established, and it managed the country in the lead up to the 1993 national elections. The resulting constitution provides for a constitutional monarchy with a democratically elected senate and national assembly.

This turbulent period of history, culminating in the UN intervention and establishment of UNTAC, created the context for the rapid growth of Cambodia's development sector. In 2002, aid as a proportion of government revenue was the third highest of any country in the world (Hubbard). This growth of the development sector is what has brought about the rise of the types of visual material that are analysed in this study.

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

The writing that preceded this chapter gives some context to this thesis. This involved my own personal motivation and an account of my understanding of Cambodia's recent history in order to put into context some of the issues that are dealt with by the visual communications material analysed in this thesis.

This chapter, Chapter 1, presents my research questions, justification of research, a map of Cambodia and the definition of some key terms relevant to this thesis.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the existing literature relevant to this study. There is little that exists that is specifically relevant to this western influence in visual communications from Cambodian non-commercial sources, or even western influence in Cambodian non-commercial sources or visual communications in Cambodia. As a result, a broad range of literature is analysed. The literature analysed addresses visual communications in development, social marketing, Cambodian advocacy campaigns, the nature of western influence and some of the issues surrounding modern and traditional societies.

Chapter 3 provides the justification and description of the research design used in this study. A template analysis approach was chosen using two coding systems, one for visual material and one for interview data. This is followed by the development of the coding systems. The coding systems themselves are included in the appendix.

The following 2 chapters consist of the analysis of data collected in this study. This begins with visual material at Chapter 4 and the interview data at Chapter 5.

The findings of this thesis are presented in the conclusion at Chapter 6.

### Research Questions

#### Research Question 1:

What evidence of 'western influence' can be found in visual communications material produced by non-commercial organisations operating in Cambodia?

**Research Question 2:**

What factors contribute to the inclusion of western influence in visual communications from non-commercial organisations operating in Cambodia?

**Research Question 3:**

How are these western influences relevant in the Khmer context?

**Map of Cambodia**



*Figure 1: Map of Cambodia*

**Justification of Research**

The presence of non-commercial organisations in Cambodia is such that it is the single biggest sector of the Cambodian economy (Ghosh 2003). The Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (2007a) lists almost 900 agencies operating in the non-commercial



Cambodian development sector. These include over 450 international and local non-government organisations (NGOs), international organisations, and donors. The majority of these organisations have some degree of western affiliation. This may be in the form of western management or management advisors, western funding sources, western religious affiliation or western educated Cambodian staff. Thus it can be expected that the presence of these western affiliations will be expressed to some degree in the visual communications produced by these organisations.

Evidence of the presence of these agencies is visible throughout Cambodia. More significant crossroads, even in areas far from the cities, typically bear an array of billboards. The commercial billboards are significantly outnumbered by those produced by these agencies. These billboards present messages such as the importance of vaccinations, the official voter registration procedure, the importance of registering the birth of children, advice on newly implemented (or newly enforced) laws, health advice and nutrition advice. Similar pieces of visual communications in poster format exist in private homes, provincial hospitals, the houses of local leaders and in other community spaces.

The majority of these visual communications come from Cambodia's development sector; from NGOs, UN Agencies and other non-commercial organisations. It has been observed that *"economic development is associated with pervasive and to some extent predictable, cultural changes"* (Inglehart & Baker 2000). With development bringing about cultural change it follows that it must be affecting cultural sustainability. As a visual communications designer, I did not have the capacity to gauge the effect that this may be having on cultural sustainability, only to observe and identify the presence of these influences in the context of cultural sustainability.

Khmer culture is particularly vulnerable as a result of the attempted abolition of religion and the closing of cultural institutions that was imposed by the Democratic Kampuchea regime (Kiernan 2002). Cultural institutions such as the Buddhist Institute were not re-established until after the Vietnamese occupation (Buddhist Institute 2007).

In this light, it is important to be aware of the nature of visual communications material in Cambodia and any cultural implications that may be involved.

The following section outlines the terms of have used in this thesis with a brief description.

## **Explanation of terms**

### **Western influence**

In this thesis the term 'western influence' refers to anything that is drawn from the cultures of the west. The west being, the industrialised nations of Western Europe, North America and other former colonies of Western European nations which are now dominated by Europeans. These influences include, but are not limited to the classical legacy, Western (as opposed to Orthodox) Christianity, European languages, separation of spiritual and temporal authority, rule of law, social pluralism and civil society, representative bodies, individualism, the use of western aesthetics, languages, modes of communication and colour/symbol systems. Individualism has spawned a number of concepts which will be addressed specifically. These concepts include economic individualism and free market capitalism, the western notion of human rights, gender equality and the equality of all individuals. A more detailed exploration of these ideas will be found in the literature survey in chapter 2.

### **Visual communications**

For the purposes of this study, the term 'visual communications material' includes printed posters, billboards, leaflets, stickers, postcards, t-shirts, picture books and comics. These are the most common forms of visual communications produced or distributed by non-commercial organisations in Cambodia.

### **Non commercial sources**

'Non commercial sources' refers to any producer of visual communications whose stated motivation is not profit. In practice, this comprises primarily local and foreign government initiatives and NGOs.

The Cooperation Committee for Cambodia, the largest NGO group in Cambodia outlines in its *Code of Ethical Principles and Minimum Standards for NGOs in Cambodia* that:

*“NGOs will respect the values, dignity, history, religion of the communities they serve.”* (Cooperation Committee for Cambodia 2007b)

NGOs and other non-commercial sources were chosen because, generally speaking, they have a stated interest in the welfare of the Cambodian people and in Cambodian development. Their stated aims tend to indicate that they exist to serve the people rather than serving themselves.

The non commercial sources that produced the material analysed in this study include Christian organisations, development organisations, UN agencies and Cambodian government departments.

### **Democratic Kampuchea**

This is the name given to the state that is now known as Cambodia by the ruling Communist Party of Kampuchea in the period from 1975 to 1979. In this thesis, Democratic Kampuchea is used to refer to the government of that period. Westerners more commonly refer to this regime using the exonym *Khmer Rouge* (or ខ្មែរក្រហម *Khmer Krohom* in Khmer language). Cambodians most often refer to this period as the *Pol Pot Regime*.

### **Development**

Development is a heavily loaded word. When talking of development, countries are referred to in binaries; developed and undeveloped countries. The term development implies a movement towards a state that is similar to those countries which are referred to as developed.

The term came into common use as a result of the post World War II rhetoric of US President Harry Truman (Esteva 1992). Truman sought to end exploitative imperialism and to make the advances of the United States available for the good of the *underdeveloped* areas of the world.

In Cambodia it is simpler to define. Cambodian university graduates, when speaking English refer to three possible career directions; government, businesses and

organisations. “Businesses” are the private for-profit sector and “organisations” are synonymous with the development sector.

For the purpose of this thesis, I have taken the Cambodian understanding of the development sector as the definition of development in Cambodia. The broad term development refers to the actions of not-for-profit organisations in Cambodia that are not directly part of the government.

### **The NGO Sector**

Non-government organisations (NGOs) are a subset of the development sector. NGOs are recognised as such in Cambodia by means of being registered with the Ministry of Interior of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

### **Khmer**

Khmer refers to the dominant ethnic group in Cambodia and to their language. In Cambodia, Khmer and Cambodian are interchangeable terms. Cambodia is often referred to as ស្រុកខ្មែរ (srok Khmer), literally *the Khmer homeland*. The separation of nationality and ethnicity that we see in the west is much less present in Cambodia.

For the purpose of this thesis, Khmer is used in the western sense. It refers to people of Khmer ethnicity and to their language.

### **Cambodia**

For the purpose of this thesis Cambodia and Cambodian refer to the nation state of Cambodia. Its peoples are predominantly Khmer, but also includes other groups including but not limited to ethnic Vietnamese, hill tribe minorities such as the Pnong and Koi, ethnic Chinese and ethnic Chams.

Khmer people do not generally regard first generation immigrants as being Cambodian. As with Khmer ethnicity, the western concept of nationality does not apply. For a Khmer person, one must be culturally Khmer to be regarded as Cambodian.

### **Modernisation**

In this thesis, modernisation refers to the process of economic and industrial development and the cultural changes associated with this process. Inglehart describes modernisation as involving “*urbanization, industrialization, economic development, occupational specialization and the spread of mass literacy*” (Inglehart 1997, p. 69).

Inglehart’s analysis of cultural, economic and political change across 43 societies details the changes that tend to be involved in the process of economic and industrial development. While Inglehart does not assume that modernisation will lead to a uniform global culture, he asserts that there are specific political and cultural changes that are linked to modernisation. These changes are further discussed in the literature review at Chapter 2.

### **Traditional Society**

Traditional society refers to societies which have not modernised according to the definition above. As modern societies bear many similarities without being uniform, so too do traditional societies. The aspects that are common in traditional societies will be discussed further in the literature review at Chapter 2.

## Chapter 2 - Literature Review

After an extensive literature review, no research was found which specifically addresses the presence of western influence in visual communications from non-commercial sources operating in Cambodia. There are a number of studies that have referenced the social and cultural implications of visual communications in a development context, however, none relating specifically to Cambodia, and none relating specifically to western influence in visual communications from non-commercial sources.

The majority of literature written on visual communications in the development context is written from the perspective of a development practitioner trying to communicate a message as effectively as possible. While these studies touch on the cultural implications of what they are doing, they generally do so only when the understanding of cultural issues would contribute to more effective communication. Similarly, the literature that is written on advocacy campaigns (not specifically visual) in Cambodia is written with much more emphasis on effective advocacy than on cultural implications.

It must be stated at the outset that whilst my motivation for this thesis arises from a fond regard for Khmer culture and people, I am not trained in social studies or social history. However this literature review unavoidably explores concepts such as 'social marketing', cultural development, advocacy and the tension between modern and traditional societies.

### Visual Communications in Development

Visual communications are common in international development throughout the world. The most obvious reason for the use of pictures in such scenarios is the low literacy levels present in countries in which development organisations operate. Pictures have been more common than words and illustration more common than photography in communications relating to changing ideology and behaviour ever since the advent of these media. Communist Chinese propaganda campaigns used images to communicate to people who spoke many different dialects or were illiterate (Bradley 1995). Images can address issues that are too complicated, controversial or painful to be addressed verbally.

### **Cultural Considerations in Visual Communications for Development**

While pictures are more far-reaching than words, they are by no means universal. Bradley (ibid) explains that the apparent simplicity of pictures and diagrams often leads to the assumption of universality. This has the potential to include concepts and influences that the producer assumed to be universal.

Much of the material produced by NGOs can be described as *behaviour change communications* (BCC) or *social marketing*. Such communications have obvious cultural implications in that they are seeking to replace existing behaviour patterns with those that are promoted by the producer. Common examples of BCC include advocating condom use and other issues surrounding the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, breastfeeding, changes in diet or changes in behaviour that relate to newly implemented or newly enforced laws.

In extreme cases, such communications when viewed in the local context, have resulted in local outrage, even violence against members of the producing organisation (Rafi & Chowdhury 2000).

In the case of Cambodia, effort has been made to control the BCC materials that are being distributed in at least one sector. BCC material relating to health is, according to law, supposed to be approved by the National Centre for Health Promotion (NCHP) (Cambodian Ministry of Health 2007). In reality, very few organisations respect this policy, including organisations that fund the NCHP.

### **The Western Origin of Development**

From its conception, development has been the process of developed western nations providing assistance to undeveloped non-western nations. Shortly after the end of World War II, US President Harry Truman took office. In his inaugural speech, Truman introduced the Point IV Program. During this speech, it was declared that:

*“We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas”* (Truman quoted in Cowen & Shenton 1995, p. 7).



It was from this use of the word *underdeveloped* that the term development came into common use in a socio-economic context. This involved the dissemination of US systems to the rest of the world as part of its anti-communist strategy. This was soon followed by the United Nations Technical Assistance Programme (TAP), which was modelled on the Point IV Program. TAP later combined with another UN program to become the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

This is not to say that every non-commercial organisation operating in Cambodia is doing so as part of a US government strategy, but it is a sector which was born from US government strategy and its current forms and implementations may reflect that.

## **Social Marketing**

Social marketing is the promotion of ideas, products and practices intended to bring about social change (McKee 1993) rather than for commercial gain. This may involve tangible products such as contraceptives, practices such as participation in democracy, vaccination or registration of children and ideas such as family planning, human rights and democratic governance (ibid). Such marketing is present in the developed world in campaigns addressing issues such as the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, reduction of drug abuse, dealing with domestic violence and speeding. It is also present in the non-economised world, the types of non-commercial visual communications relevant to this study all being examples of social marketing.

In the case of a commercial marketing campaign, a 2-3% increase in market-share is regarded as a success. In the case of social marketing, success involves near universal social change. A 2-3% increase in vaccinations or birth registrations does not indicate that a social marketing campaign has been successful; in most cases such a change is insignificant (ibid).

Numerous books have been written on social marketing in a developed western context including Kotler (2002) and Andreasen (1995) however as these focus on issues and cases which exist in the developed world, they are of only partial relevance to Cambodia. McKee's (1993) account of social marketing in developing communities relates

predominantly to his own experience in Bangladesh. While this is not Cambodia, it is more relevant than accounts of social marketing related to the developed world.

McKee focuses on the practice of social marketing, the focus being on producing effective social marketing campaigns rather than being an analysis of existing social marketing campaigns. In doing so McKee reflects on the issues and challenges in social marketing such as ethical problems to do with manipulation, and the nature of participatory development practice with reference to communications.

### **Manipulation in Social Marketing in Developing Communities**

Broadly speaking, positioning a social product ought to involve far greater ethical consideration than positioning a commercial product. While it is acceptable to sell a product with reference to local beliefs which may not be consistent with western science, for an organisation having a focus on health, to do may be seen to be improper.

McKee references an example in Honduras, where diarrhoea is believed to be caused by a number of folk illnesses, that is, illnesses that are believed to exist by local people, but with no basis in western science. Diarrhoea causes dehydration, which can be treated with oral rehydration salts (ORS). Diarrhoea usually cures itself within a few days, but the problems associated with dehydration are far greater than the diarrhoea itself. If ORS was to be marketed in the most straight-forward manner possible, ORS would be presented as a simple sugar-salt solution which cures the dehydration associated with diarrhoea. However in the context of Honduras, such an approach would not be well received. In cases such as this, in order to be most effective, it may be beneficial to use an approach that may be considered to be misleading or manipulative.

McKee outlines a number of the arguments presented by social marketers against the assertion that social marketing is manipulative. These concepts are all very relevant in the context of non-commercial organisations in Cambodia.

McKee tells us that social marketers are of the opinion that they are providing information that fulfils the needs of their target audiences. Like their commercial counterparts, the marketing campaigns merely provide the audience with the

information necessary to make an informed choice. It is up to the people to decide for themselves whether they want to follow the message of the campaign.

The problem with this approach, particularly when the target audience is comprised of people with a low level of education, is that it cannot be assumed that people have enough information available and sufficient education to make an informed choice.

This is particularly significant in Cambodia where my personal experience of attitudes to learning mirrors the attitude attributed to Asian students in Australia by Ballard and Clanchy (1991). Ballard and Clanchy observed Asian students tend to regard knowledge as remembering something as opposed to having understood the concept and its context.

Another argument taken against the assertion that social marketing is manipulative relates to the level of research and understanding that goes into social marketing campaigns. Traditional public health campaigns assume that the service is universally desired, whereas the research processes that go into social marketing campaigns in developing communities take into account the solution that the target audience would actually prefer. It is claimed that the participatory process enables the solutions to be ultimately developed from within the community.

McKee identifies the problems with this approach. It is never the case that the marketing or what is being marketed is totally derived from the participatory process. Pre-existing concepts are modified and changed. In developing countries in particular, McKee observes that the field of consumer research is not well developed, and participatory techniques such as focus groups are often misused; *“Very often, in practice, one or two wrongly-constructed focus group discussions will be used to plan a whole campaign”* (McKee 1993, p. 149).

The problems involved in participatory processes are discussed in more detail below.

A very common argument in support of manipulative social marketing is that the end justifies the means. That saving lives, saving trees, promoting democracy or whatever the cause may be is more important than any other ethical considerations.

## Community Participation

The trend towards community participation in the development process began in the 1970s. While the production of visual material in Cambodia is not always a participatory process, the identification of what needs to be communicated generally is. For this reason, it is important to understand, on some level, the idea of community participation, so that the term *generated from the community* (used in the analysis of interviews at Chapter 5) can be put into context.

Proponents of participatory approaches to development claim that:

*“Participation is involvement by a local population and, at times, additional stakeholders in the creation, content and conduct of a program or policy designed to change their lives. Built on a belief that citizens can be trusted to shape their own future, participatory development uses local decision making and capacities to steer and define the nature of an intervention.”* (Jennings 2000)

Its critics argue that it's a meaningless piece of modern jargon which is used separate from any context and ideal for manipulative purposes (Rahnema 1993).

Taking a more balanced approach, McKee identifies some of the issues that arise in the participatory process. In theory, the positive elements of community participation are clear. It empowers the community to bring about change themselves, it helps people to understand the nature of their problems and how best to overcome them, it ensures that it is the people's needs that are addressed.

Without dismissing community participation, McKee identifies 10 caveats that relate to community participation.

*Participation can become ritualistic, only involving cursory consultation.*

*Participation often depends on one charismatic leader.*

*Participation may lead to the development of a participating elite.*

*Participation experiments are often not cost-effective or replicable.*

*Participatory programmes often do not take into account the opportunity cost of participants.*

*Participation can lead to coercion by neighbours.*

*Participation can involve manipulation of people by development workers towards the latter's own world views.*

*Participation may raise expectations which cannot be fulfilled.*

*Participation may lead to conflict and violence.*

*Participation may lead to a multitude of agendas and technologies which match neither national nor international development goals.*

(McKee 1993, p. 161)

While it is difficult to fault the desire to enable communities to shape their own development, the practical observations of McKee and others put such participation into a different context. The fact that a programme is the result of a participatory process does not necessarily mean that it is grounded in the views of villagers in affected communities.

## **Advocacy in Cambodia**

Advocacy is the act of arguing in favour of an idea. In the context of development, advocacy campaigns are generally aimed at influencing the actions of people in control of a situation. This may be government, public or private institutions, or the general population. Advocacy is expected to be non-deceptive, in good faith, honest and politically unbiased. This is what differentiates advocacy from propaganda.

Advocacy is a new and foreign concept in Cambodia. This is best demonstrated by the lack of a Khmer language word for advocacy. Mansfield (2002) explains that the commonly used term តំរូវមតិ (tasumateh) literally means to struggle for an idea. It is a term which is associated with groups who work against the Cambodian government and has many negative connotations. There are however, no alternative terms.

### **The Use of Visual Communications in Advocacy Campaigns**

When advocacy is referenced by Cambodian NGOs, it is usually done so in the context of lobbying government rather than changing the actions of laypeople. For this reason, Mansfield's (2002) report on advocacy in Cambodia does not address visual communications material that is aimed at Khmer laypeople. Visual communications is

used in advocacy aimed at government but other forms of communication are far more common.

In the case of advocacy that is aimed at the general population, visual communications play an important role. While broadcast media (particularly radio), is the most significant source of information as printed news media only reaches a small proportion of the population.

In 2003, literacy levels were measured at approximately 70% (World Bank 2004) meaning that a significant proportion of the population is capable of receiving only visual and aural messages. An average Cambodian household does not possess a television, newspapers do not reach much of the nation. 80% of the population lives in rural areas. Publicly visible billboards, posters and other printed items are a key means of mass communication. Outside marketplaces and at crossroads, it is common for large billboards to promote messages warning of HIV/AIDS, or promoting weapons amnesties.



*Image 1: A typical rural billboard.*

## Literature on Western Influence

Geographically speaking, the west refers to Western Europe. In terms of the civilisations that make up the world today, the west includes the settler countries of western European nations which are now dominated by Europeans. According to Huntington, this includes Western Europe and its settler countries, North America and arguably, Latin America (Huntington 1998, p. 46).

For the purpose of this thesis, western influence is that which has been drawn directly or indirectly from the culture of the West. In practice for example, this means that Japanese promotion of democracy and Korean run Catholic missions are still forms of western influence in spite of the non-western nature of their immediate sources.

In his paper *The West: Unique, Not Universal*, Huntington (1996) offers a summary of what makes the west western. For the purposes of this thesis, these are the core historical characteristics of western civilisation, from which western influence is derived. They consist of:

- The classical legacy  
The legacy of earlier civilisations, including Greek philosophy and rationalism, Roman law, Latin and Christianity
- Western Christianity  
Catholicism and later Protestantism, as distinct from orthodox Christianity.
- European languages
- Separation of spiritual and temporal authority (secularism)
- Rule of law
- Social pluralism and civil society
- Representative bodies  
Institutions representing the interests of a group of people.
- Individualism



## Critical literature on the Cambodian Development Sector

The Cooperation Committee for Cambodia divides its member organisations into the following sectors:

Areas of Focus of the Cambodian Development Sector
Agriculture/Animal Health
Art and Culture
Child Welfare/Rights
Community Development
Credit & Savings
Disability and Rehabilitation
Disaster Preparedness/Relief
Education/Training
Environment/Natural Resources
Gender/Women's Issues
Health/Nutrition
HIV/AIDS
Human Rights/Democracy
Land Mine/UXO Action/Awareness
Management/Organisational Development
Other
Support to Cambodian Organisations
Water and Sanitation

*Figure 2: Areas of Focus of the Cambodian Development Sector*

In his 1966 book, *Western Values in International Relations*, Martin Wight notes that “*freedom and self-fulfillment of the individual*” are the common values which are identified with the West, and so

*“The history of Western Civilization is thus seen as primarily the development and organization of liberty, especially in the form of the tradition of constitutional*

*government which descends from Aristotle through Aquinas to Locke and the founding Fathers of the United States.” (Wight 1966)*

This mirrors Huntington’s view that “*Again and again both Westerners and non-Westerners point to individualism as the central distinguishing mark of the West*” (1996, p. 34).

While a sector like Land Mine/UXO Action/Awareness is, at the surface level, relatively value free (in that it seeks to avoid death and injury, a practical goal in its own right), a number of other sectors are inherently value laden. In particular, *Human Rights/Democracy, Child Welfare/Rights* and *Gender/Women’s Issues* and those in the *Credit & Savings* (predominantly ‘microfinance’ (World Bank 2007)) sector are all extensions of the individualism described by Huntington.

This individualism expresses itself in the form of economic individualism that is commonly seen in the *Credit & Savings* sector and in the form of equal rights in the *Human Rights/Democracy, Child Welfare/Rights* and *Gender/Women Issues* sectors.

Economic individualism is synonymous with the western ideals of free market capitalism. *Credit & Savings* sector projects are typically microfinance institutions (World Bank 2007), offering loans based on western financing models. Microfinance aims to empower the targeted population, to enable the poor “*to build their own paths out of poverty*” (ibid).

### **Criticism of the Development Sector**

NGOs come under criticism for their lack of coordination. Each NGO is essentially a special interest group, and in achieving the goals associated with their particular focus, may overlook other factors. In 1999, it was estimated that only 20% of international NGOs operate an integrated program (Asian Development Bank 1999). That is, they target multiple sectors of society, and are aware that their interventions will have an effect on other sectors. Almost all NGOs appreciate the concept of integrated programming, however, in practice; the vast majority still operate independently. The high turnover of expatriate staff at NGOs is another area that has been identified as a weakness of NGOs. This detracts from the continuity of professional standards.

The presence of NGOs is not seen as positive by many of the foreigners who work in other sectors in Cambodia and by parts of the Khmer community. Indeed, the extravagant lifestyle of many expatriates working at NGOs in Cambodia bears stark contrast to the lifestyles of the Khmer people whom they are assisting. As Indian economics Professor, Jayati Ghosh (2003) put it:

*“The country is a haven for the international do-gooder. And the past decade and more of international manipulation and interference in Cambodia's polity and economy, while it may have contributed little to the living conditions of the average Cambodian, has enriched and even captivated the lives of the many expatriates who have flocked there over the years.”* (Ghosh 2003)

#### **Cambodia's Dependence on Aid**

Cambodia's rebuilding has been accompanied by a steady flow of foreign aid and widespread establishment of NGOs, which were previously few in number, concentrated around the refugee camps at the Thai border. This inflow continued until 1997, when aid was significantly reduced in response to civil disturbances. Since 1999, aid has again steadily increased, and today it makes up a significant part of Cambodia's national budget, and its economy (Ghosh 2003).

#### **The Dynamic Tension between Modern and Traditional Societies**

*The West: Unique, Not Universal* is a critique of modernisation theory and globalisation theory (which is referred to by Huntington as “*coca-colonization*”). Huntington's argument that modernised nations such as Singapore, Japan and South Korea are not culturally western, does not credit the desire to modernise as a universal value.

In Chapter 13 of his 1908 tract, *Hind Swaraj* (Indian Self Rule) Mohandas Gandhi denounced modernisation as inferior to traditional Indian civilisation.

*“It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that, if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibre.”* (Ghandi 1908 - republished 1998)

For Ghandi, modernisation was an undesired British (western) imposition, not a value free process initiated by the Indian people.

Inglehart (1997) analyses the findings of the 1990 World Values Survey which looked at cultural, economic and political change in 43 societies. Inglehart concluded that while modernisation will not lead to a uniform global culture, there are specific political and cultural changes that are linked to modernisation. There are certain values that are more likely to be found in modern societies, that is those which have undergone *“urbanization, industrialization, economic development, occupational specialization and the spread of mass literacy”* (Inglehart 1997, p. 69). Similarly, there are certain values which are more likely to be found in traditional societies that have not made these changes.

Inglehart looks at both modernisation and post-modernisation, I have focused on modernisation, as the process of modernisation has not occurred for the vast majority of the Cambodian population, thus post-modern values are uncommon.

While this thesis is not a review of modernisation theory or an attempt to link modernisation and westernisation, it is interesting to note that some of the changes that Inglehart refers to, correlate to some of the characteristics of western society that are listed by Huntington.

### **Secularisation and Bureaucratisation**

Inglehart tells us that in advanced industrial societies both in the West and in East Asia there has been a decline in traditional forms of religion. While the popularity of Islam has grown in wealthy Arab countries, the growth of their wealth has not come from the broad process of modernisation that is described above.

This decline in religion has been accompanied by an increase in the importance of state authority and scientific knowledge. This change corresponds to the separation of spiritual and temporal authority that is described by Huntington as one of the key characteristics of western civilisation.

Inglehart describes Bureaucratisation as *“the rise of ‘rational’ organisations, based on rules designed to move efficiently toward explicit goals, and with recruitment based on impersonal goal-oriented achievement standards.”* (1997, p. 73). This is associated with a shift away

from the family and the church (or its equivalent), these being the key institutions of traditional society. This move towards rational organisations can be related to a number of the characteristics described by Huntington; rule of law, representative bodies and individualism.

Given the lack of work that specifically addresses visual communications, this review of literature relevant to the nature of non-commercial agencies underpins the analysis of visual material in this thesis.

## Chapter 3 - Methodology and Research Design

This thesis is an investigation and analysis of existing visual communications material and of the attitudes and processes that are evident in its production by non-commercial organisations in Cambodia. It draws on the observations that I have made in my personal experience living amongst Khmer people and my professional experience working in the Cambodian development sector.

The material that makes up the data for this study comprises 248 pieces of visual communications material and 10 personal interviews with people who work in non-commercial organisations that produce visual communications. The visual material was collected during 5 residential visits to Cambodia between 2003 and 2007. The interviews were conducted in the latter part of 2006 and early 2007.

### Research Questions

The triggers for these questions came from my previous experience in Cambodia. I had difficulty understanding why the Khmer people that I associated with on a daily basis seemed (to me) to be in awe of the west and of all things modern. This was viewed in conjunction with my experiences with an NGO who had a clear, stated program to promote US interests.

As a visual communications designer, I was interested in the visual forms of these concepts, and this brought about the first research question:

#### Research Question 1:

What evidence of 'western influence' can be found in visual communications material produced by non-commercial organisations operating in Cambodia?

The logical extension of this first question was to seek to understand why these western influences were there:

#### Research Question 2:

What factors contribute to the inclusion of western influence in visual communications from non-commercial organisations operating in Cambodia?

The meaning of such influences in the context of local culture is always going to be an important consideration. In Cambodia however, it is particularly important. The Khmer Rouge consciously attempted to rid Cambodia of its culture and the subsequent communist Vietnamese occupation made no attempts to revive it. As a result, Khmer culture and traditions are particularly vulnerable to being lost. The final question goes some of the way to addressing this:

**Research Question 3:**

How are these western influences relevant in the Khmer context?

However, as a visual communications designer and not an anthropologist or sociologist I cannot fully address all cultural issues that arise in this study.

### **Justification of Research Methods**

The ideas behind the research questions addressed in this study were developed during numerous trips to Cambodia before this study was started. I had come into contact with many NGOs and other development organisations through my work at MVU. I had numerous close Khmer friends with whom I had spent significant amounts of time. This gave me some level of personal understanding of Khmer culture. A portion of the visual material analysed in this study was collected for personal interest during these trips. As a result of being directly involved in Cambodian life, I have taken a very personal non-detached approach to familiarising myself with the politics, spirituality, social and all other aspects of Cambodian society both in Phnom Penh and in the provinces. When I started this study, I was not in a position to make a detached observation of Khmer culture or of the development sector.

In conducting research for this study, I aimed to live as much as possible, with Khmers, in Cambodia, as part of the community that I was trying to understand. While this can only provide a limited perspective on Cambodian culture, politics and other aspects of Cambodian society, I feel that this is far more valuable than the limited perspective of a detached, uninvolved observer.

Due to the fact that visual material being analysed, comes from a wide range of sources, a sample of a complete body of work could not be obtained. Material was collected from a wide range of sources throughout Cambodia.

In conducting interviews, a relatively concise list of non-commercial organisations involved in the Cambodian development sector is available through the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia. Organisations were chosen randomly from this list and approached for interviews.

In arriving at the decision to use the 'template analysis' method (King 1998), various research methods were explored.

Consideration was given to both Action Research and to Participatory Development Communications (PDC). Both of these methods were appealing as they showed appreciation of a personal understanding of the situation at hand. Many research techniques require that the researcher be a detached observer of the subject. Both of these techniques involve intervention in a community or organisation. I was more concerned with the analysis of what can be found in existing material than in how organisations can change. For this reason I chose not to use either of these methods.

Grounded Theory was considered as this does not involve intervention but does involve a personal understanding of the subject at hand. Grounded Theory provides quite a flexible framework in which ideas are developed rather than tested during the course of the study. On the other hand, the processes described, especially by Strauss and Corbin (1997) are rigid processes which *must* be adhered to. In this case it is primarily visual and not verbal data that is being analysed and flexibility in method is necessary. As most methods are described with reference to verbal data, they would have to be adapted for use with visual data. Furthermore, as this is a masters thesis, Grounded Theory, being a technique for generating new theory, is unsuitable.

Looking for a structured approach that was not compromised by my personal involvement with Cambodia and its development sector, I considered Krippendorff's content analysis (2004). This seemed like a logical method to use as it is commonly used in propaganda analysis. The material that I am analysing shares many



characteristics with propaganda and might be labelled as such by its critics. In the case of the material that I was analysing, the content analysis involved the identification of pre-defined visual codes in each piece.

It became clear that I needed to redefine and restructure the coding system during analysis. Krippendorff's content analysis proved to be too rigid. It is commonly used in the analysis of large volumes of transcripts of propaganda. The use of computers to look for key phrases is common. In such instances, more thorough, qualitative analysis is impractical. The amount of data used in this study is small enough to be approached with a qualitative method of analysis. This need for a more flexible, qualitative system of coding phenomena brought me to King's (1998) template analysis, which is the basis of the method of analysis used in this study.

## **Data Collection**

Two types of data were obtained:

- Visual communications material produced by non-commercial organisations in Cambodia for which copies were obtained or photographed.
- Interviews of employees of non-commercial organisations in Cambodia.

The visual communications material has been used primarily to address the first research question. In this material the integration of western influence was explored, identified and analysed.

The interviews have been used to address the second and third questions, giving an understanding of the approaches and attitudes that exist with relation to the production of visual communications material in Cambodian non-commercial organisations.

With the help of analysis from Khmer people, the relevance of the identified forms of western influence is discussed with reference to both sets of data.

## **Source Organisations**

Any organisation operating in Cambodia that was a non-profit, non-commercial organisation was eligible for inclusion in this study either as a source of visual communications material or as an interview respondent.

The most concise list of organisations which are operating is maintained by the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC). This list is not exhaustive, but it is the most complete list available. Almost 900 agencies are listed by the CCC as organisations operating in the non-commercial Cambodian development sector. These include over 450 international and local non-government organisations, United Nations agencies, international organisations, and donors.

The membership requirements of CCC are as follows:

<b>CCC Membership Requirements</b>
Documented Status - as a non-profit, non-governmental organisation (only for Member status).
Objective - holding as primary objective development and humanitarian assistance, rather than promoting political or religious aims.
Office in Cambodia with the representative resident in Cambodia or an Accredited Office - applicants should have staff resident in Cambodia who are explicitly authorized to represent the Organisation, and who are able to participate in the activities of the CCC.
Program - applicants should be operating on-going programs in Cambodia, or supporting programs and/or NGOs/local initiatives in Cambodia, technically and/or financially, which have a primary objective to provide assistance beneficial to the Cambodian people in this country.

*Figure 3: CCC Membership Requirements.*

(Cooperation Committee for Cambodia 2007a)

The majority of organisations from which I obtained visual material can be found in the CCC listings. All of the organisations listed by CCC work in development or humanitarian assistance to some degree.

Some of the listed organisations that I interviewed did have Christian religious aims as their primary objective. However they had other development or humanitarian programs in addition to this. Some of the producers of visual communications material do not have other programs in addition to their proselytising, and do not meet the guidelines for CCC membership.

The Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (2007a) groups its member organisations into 18 sectors. These are listed in Chapter 2 (Figure 2: Areas of Focus of the Cambodian Development Sector) on page 17.

This list covers the activities of the majority of organisations relevant to this study. The only major area that is missing is the promotion of Christianity.

The CCC list and the membership requirements of CCC give a concise overview of the types of non-commercial organisations which are relevant to this study. For the purpose of conducting interviews, it provides a convenient list of a large proportion of the non-commercial organisations operating in Cambodia. It is slightly less relevant to the collection of visual material, however with the exception of organisations involved in the direct promotion of Christianity, its sector groupings and membership requirements accurately describe the sources of all visual communications material collected in this study.

### Collection and Collation of Visual Material

Material was obtained by the following methods:

<b>Methods used to obtain visual communications material</b>
Directly asking NGOs and other producers of visual communications.
Requesting copies of any material that had been taken off display by village leaders.
Photographing billboards and posters that were on public display.
Purchasing material produced by non-commercial organisations either from the organisation or from markets and shops in Phnom Penh.

*Figure 4: Methods used to obtain visual communications material.*

Around 300 pieces of material were collected or photographed. At the time that analysis was conducted, 248 pieces had been obtained. This includes posters, leaflets, picture books, flyers, t-shirts, magazines, activity books, stickers and school textbooks. Material was sourced in the municipalities of Pailin, Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville and in the provinces of Kratie, Prey Veng, Kampong Cham, Preah Vihear and Kompong Thom.

## Interviews

A list of 300 organisations currently operating in the non-commercial development sector in Cambodia was obtained from the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC). From this list 150 organisations were emailed at random and asked to participate in this research. There was the option to participate in a face-to-face interview or via an online survey.

As my spoken Khmer language is not strong enough to discuss the relatively complex issues involved in this study, interviews were conducted with assistance and interpretation from local researchers.

Where possible, Ham Samnom acted as an interpreter/translator. When Samnom was unavailable, fellow Buddhist Institute researchers Than Bunly and Chea Bunnary assisted.

The people interviewed were people who were involved to some degree in the production of visual communications material. They were rarely full time communications staff (visual or otherwise) and in most cases had other roles that were perceived to be more important.

The interview questions were initially set out as printed questionnaires in English and Khmer. A bilingual version was set up online, however due to a lack of consistent support for Khmer Unicode type, answers could only be provided in English.

A number of objective details were noted. These included the year in which the organisation was founded, the provinces in which the organisation operates, their primary objectives, the number of foreign staff, the number of Cambodian staff and the religious affiliation of the organisation if it existed. It was hoped that there would be a response to justify some basic comparisons being made between organisations based on these details.

These organisation details were followed by 10 open ended questions. These were primarily focused on finding out about the process through which visual communications were produced and any issues that may come up during the process.

## Template Analysis for this Study

Template analysis is one of many names given to the technique of using codes to identify and categorise the presence of themes in a body of data and to gauge the importance of these themes.

The method of template analysis used in this study is primarily based on the description given by King (1998) and the coding systems described by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Template analysis differs from Content Analysis in that it does not require a pre-existing set of codes, rather they are developed as the analysis proceeds. It is a qualitative method, revealing the themes that are present in the data rather than giving a set of numbers indicating the frequency with which certain codes appear. While pre-defined codes may exist, these codes exist in a flexible template and are modified to account for any issues that may arise during the process of analysis.

A typical template analysis may involve the creation of a provisional list of codes from which the researcher can begin analysis. Codes are typically arranged in a hierarchical structure with broader themes containing numerous more specific themes. As the analysis proceeds, new codes emerge and existing codes are revised and further developed until a satisfactory coding scheme has been developed and significant themes have emerged.

The results of the analysis are commonly presented in one of three ways:

- A set of individual case studies followed by a discussion of differences and similarities between cases.
- An account structured around the main themes identified, drawing illustrative examples from each transcript.
- A thematic presentation of the findings, using a different individual case study to illustrate each of the main themes.

(King 1998, p. 132)

The majority of literature written on template analysis and similar coding systems assumes the data to be comprised of large quantities of text. Data is typically marked up

with codes in the margins. The data for this study comprises a moderately sized set of visual data and a much smaller set of text. I have adapted the coding techniques described by Miles and Huberman (1994) and King (1998) for use in this analysis.

For the purpose of this thesis I developed two separate coding systems. One was applied to the visual material and the second was applied to the interview notes. The visual forms of these themes tended to be much more complex and diverse than those which were found in the interview data.

I have chosen the third method of presentation for results; *A thematic presentation of the findings, using a different individual case study to illustrate each of the main themes* (King 1998, p. 132). These are presented at Chapter 4.

### **Coding Procedure and System for Visual Material**

An initial template was developed with reference to an initial set of themes. These codes were quite broad and formed the basic structure of the second level coding template, in which more specific first level codes were contained.

A subset of the collected material was analysed using this initial template. Analysis was conducted with the help of a Khmer translator, Ham Samnom. Samnom was working at the time as a researcher at the Buddhist Institute in Phnom Penh and has extensive experience conducting research in Cambodia. Analysis relating to Khmer culture was conducted with her help.

During the initial analysis process new themes emerged and new information came to light regarding existing themes. As a result the template was modified with new codes being added to account for newly recognised themes and existing codes were redefined to take new knowledge into account.

This process was repeated until a satisfactory template emerged, at which stage analysis of all available material was conducted.

43 types of western influence were identified in 6 categories and each of these was marked as being either present or absent for all images.

All codes are non-scalar, only being marked present if they were found in a particular piece and left alone if they were not found.

The codes were grouped into the following categories and sub categories:

Category	Description & Subcategories
General Info	Practical details of the piece including, the producer, funding sources, whether the piece is Christian and its format.
Specifics	A number of specific recurring visual features that were counted in order to be discussed in depth.
Media	The physical format of the piece.
Culture	Aspects that are drawn from western culture: Attitude to sexual/romantic relationships  Elements that address issues to do with sex and romance in a manner that is more in line with the liberal attitude to sex and romance that has existed in the west since the sexual revolution.
Ideology	Aspects that are drawn from western ideology as addressed in the literature review at Chapter 2: Western science and technology  Modern Society  Gender  Definition of poverty  Democracy  Rule of law  Importance of formal, secular schooling  Transparency and accountability  Unionism and the right to protest  Equality

Language	The presence of western text and numbers in various forms: Use of English, French and other European languages in material aimed at Khmers
The Western hegemony	Specific aspects which could be interpreted as promoting a western dominance over Khmer culture.

*Figure 5: Table of categories and subcategories of codes used in the analysis of visual material.*

The form that was used for coding visual material has been included at appendix 1.

### **Coding Procedure and System for Interview Data**

A similar coding procedure was used for the interview data, the only differences being that Ham Samnom did not assist in the coding process. She was involved in the interview process and provided clarification on cultural issues at that point. All data was in English language and related to procedures within western-structured organisations.

### **Survey Design**

The survey was designed as a small number of demographic details and a short open set of questions. The survey was kept short in order to maximise response.

The survey was intended to answer the second and third research questions;

#### **Research Question 2:**

What factors contribute to the inclusion of western influence in visual communications from non-commercial organisations operating in Cambodia?

#### **Research Question 3:**

How are these western influences relevant in the Khmer context?

Questions were designed to uncover the process through which organisations produce visual communications and any issues relating to western influence that they may be aware of in this process. As much as possible, effort was made to avoid guiding the respondent in any way. This was done by using very open questions and only including



a small number of questions that directly refer to western influence, these were included amongst the later questions in the survey.

Khmer and English versions of the survey are included at appendix 3.

## Rationale for Interview Questions

1. **In what applications does your organisation use visual communications in Cambodia?**
  - To find out the physical formats of visual communications produced by the organisation and the context in which they are presented.
2. **In the past, has your organisation used visual communications for any other applications? Why does your organisation no longer use visual communications in these applications?**
  - To find out if at any time, the organisation has stopped using a particular form of visual communications due to the communications being poorly received as a result of western influence.
  - To bring out any examples of problematic western influence that may have occurred.
3. **Do you have a process for reviewing/assessing the effectiveness/success of your publications?**
  - To understand the level of importance that the organisation places on the results of their visual communications.
  - To understand whether an organisation is likely to find out, should western influence be seen as an issue by the viewers of their visual communications.
4. **Explain briefly, the process by which the visual communications material that your organisation develops goes into production?**
  - To understand the production process in the organisation.
  - To allow me to identify points at which western influence may be included. In the most obvious case, the involvement of foreigners at any stage may result in the inclusion of western influence.
5. **Has your organisation always used this process? If not, in what ways has the process changed, and for what reasons?**
  - To reveal any changes in the process which may have come as a result of western influence being included in visual communications.
6. **Has your organisation ever used any non-Khmer illustrators or any kind of images produced by non-Khmers in any of your material?**

- To determine whether drawings or photographs from foreign sources are included in visual communications produced by the organisation.

This question came up as a response to the misinterpretation of translated Christian material that I had become aware of before undertaking this research. Material was often translated from English, but still depicted characters in western settings and of western appearance. In some cases, material depicted characters that were of Chinese appearance. Original material, produced for Cambodia is less likely to include western influence.

**7. What do you think are the criteria for successful visual communications?**

- To give some idea of the priorities that the organisation has in approaching visual communications.

The consideration of cultural issues being amongst the criteria that an organisation places on its visual communications would indicate that there is effort being made to produce culturally relevant communications, effectively limiting western influence. This also gives an idea of the approach that the interviewee takes to visual communications work. A clear understanding of the criteria indicates a stronger understanding of visual communications in general.

**8. Has the presence of western influence in visual communications produced by your organisation ever been an issue? Please provide details.**

- To document any instances where the organisation has perceived western influence as an issue.

**9. What procedures do you use to ensure the sensitivity of your organisation's visual communications materials to local culture?**

- To understand whether the organisation actively attempts to produce material which is culturally sensitive.

**10. What do you consider the most important issues in the design and production of visual communications material?**

- To give a general overview of the organisation's approach in the production of visual communications material.

This question is likely to involve answers that were given in previous questions, but it

provides the opportunity for the interviewee to elaborate on anything that they feel is worth coming back to.

### **Involvement of the Buddhist Institute**

I specifically targeted the Buddhist Institute for assistance in this research as I was aware of the research work that they were conducting not only into Buddhism, but into all of Khmer culture.

The Buddhist Institute was established in 1921 and operated continuously until 1975 when it was closed by the regime of Pol Pot. It remained closed under the Vietnamese occupation and was reopened in 1992 under UNTAC. Today it states its ambition as being;

*“a key research centre of Khmer culture producing research to the highest international standards, through the education and training of young researchers, and the completion of projects with experts, both foreign and local”* (Buddhist Institute 2007)

In April 2006 I approached the secretary of state for the Cambodian Ministry of Cults and Religions, His Excellency Chhorn Iem. I had been introduced by a mutual friend and asked His Excellency to assist me in establishing a working relationship with the Buddhist Institute. I was introduced to Mr. Nguon Vanchanthi, who agreed to assist in my thesis by asking Ham Samnom, a researcher in the Mores and Customs Commission of the Buddhist Institute, to assist in my research.

Samnom assisted in analysis of visual communications material, obtaining interviews, and with general advice with relation to conducting research in Cambodia. When Samnom was unavailable at a time when an organisation had arranged to conduct an interview, fellow Buddhist Institute researchers Chea Bunnary and Ty Bunly assisted.

Samnom, Bunnary and Bunly were paid for their time. I have been assisting Mores and Customs Commission head, Sor Sokny as a volunteer on various Buddhist Institute projects in a reciprocal arrangement.

## **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations apply to the surveys that were conducted with employees of non-commercial organisations in Cambodia. Ethics approval was granted by UTS Human Research Ethics Committee (UTS HREC REF NO. 2006-179A).

### **Participant's Involvement**

Participants who chose to complete the survey online needed to spend approximately 30 minutes of their time to complete the survey.

Participants who partook in a face-to-face interview had to spend between 30 minutes and 1 hour. This was always done with the approval of the organisation that employed the participant and was done during normal working hours.

### **Risk/Harm**

There is a very low level of risk involved in this research. The only conceivable risk involves problems that may arise from a participant being critical of their own organisation or of a funding organisation. This is unlikely to occur as all data is de-identified and only accessible by myself, the primary researcher.

### **Consent**

For the online survey, consent was obtained by displaying an information letter (in both Khmer and English language). The respondent was required to click a button to indicate that they understood the contents of the letter and would like to continue to the survey.

For face-to-face interviews, consent was obtained by requiring the participant to sign a written consent form in either Khmer or English language.

### **Language and Cultural Considerations**

In most instances, as English is the working language of most NGOs in Cambodia, surveys could be conducted in English. It was often necessary however, to clarify terms in Khmer language and to refer to the translations of questions and prompts.

Respondents were chosen on account of the fact that they are working in the Cambodian development sector. These included foreigners as well as Cambodians of varying ethnicity.

Ham Samnom's contact details were provided should a respondent have any questions about the research that they did not feel comfortable speaking about either with a foreigner or in English language.

All questions were reviewed with Ham Samnom and discussed with other Khmer friends to make sure that there were no undesired cultural implications in any of the questions.

## Chapter 4 - Analysis of Visual Material

These results have been grouped into 4 sections:

- Panoptic forms of western influence.
- Posters and Billboards.
- Christian material.
- Picture books and magazines.

This coding template was printed onto single a double-sided piece of paper with checkboxes for each. Each piece of material was labelled with a number and a coding sheet was marked up to indicate the presence of each code.

From this data a number of significant phenomena were brought to light, forming the basis for further descriptive analysis. This takes the form of a thematic presentation with visual examples illustrating each of the main themes.

### Visual Elements, Features, and Themes

The codes that were developed in Chapter 3 were grouped into 6 categories:

Coding categories for visual elements, features and themes	
Specifics	Comprising a number of specific visual features that were counted.
Media	The physical format of the piece.
Ideology	Expressions of the western ideas identified in the literature review at Chapter 2.
Culture	Western cultural influence which is not ideological, predominantly involving visual features drawn from western popular culture.
Language	The use of European languages (generally English or French) in material aimed at Khmer people.
The Western Hegemony	Codes which could imply that Cambodia, its culture or its people are inferior to western people, nations or culture.

*Figure 6: Coding categories for visual elements, features and themes.*

The results of the analysis highlighted a number of more significant visual elements, features and themes. These themes may involve one or more of the codes used in

analysis and while they generally fit into one of the aforementioned categories, some themes span multiple categories.

## **Panoptic Forms of Western Influence**

A number of themes were consistently found in all formats of analysed material. These are mostly drawn from the coding system described at Chapter 3, but also include the history of this genre of material, an inherent theme that can be identified in the genre rather than any single piece.

These forms are discussed here in a general sense, and in more specific detail in the following sections relating to the groups of physical formats.

### **Format**

On a basic, practical level, western influence exists in the medium of visual communications produced by non-commercial sources in Cambodia. Communications material is reproduced using technology (i.e. the printing press) that was developed by westerners and in physical formats that are far more common in the developed west than in Cambodia.

### **History**

The forms of visual communications analysed in this study have been developed as a result of the influx of foreign (predominantly western) organisations that accompanied the growth of the development sector during and after the administration of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)<sup>1</sup>. Subsequently, non-commercial visual communications are a relatively new genre largely driven by western ideas and in applications that were mostly unknown to Cambodian illustrators prior to the UNTAC period.

### **Language**

The vast majority of the analysed material includes Roman script. In some cases, the message was presented in English and Khmer, but in the majority of cases, the Roman

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<sup>1</sup> Cambodia was under the control of UNTAC from February 1992 until September 1993.



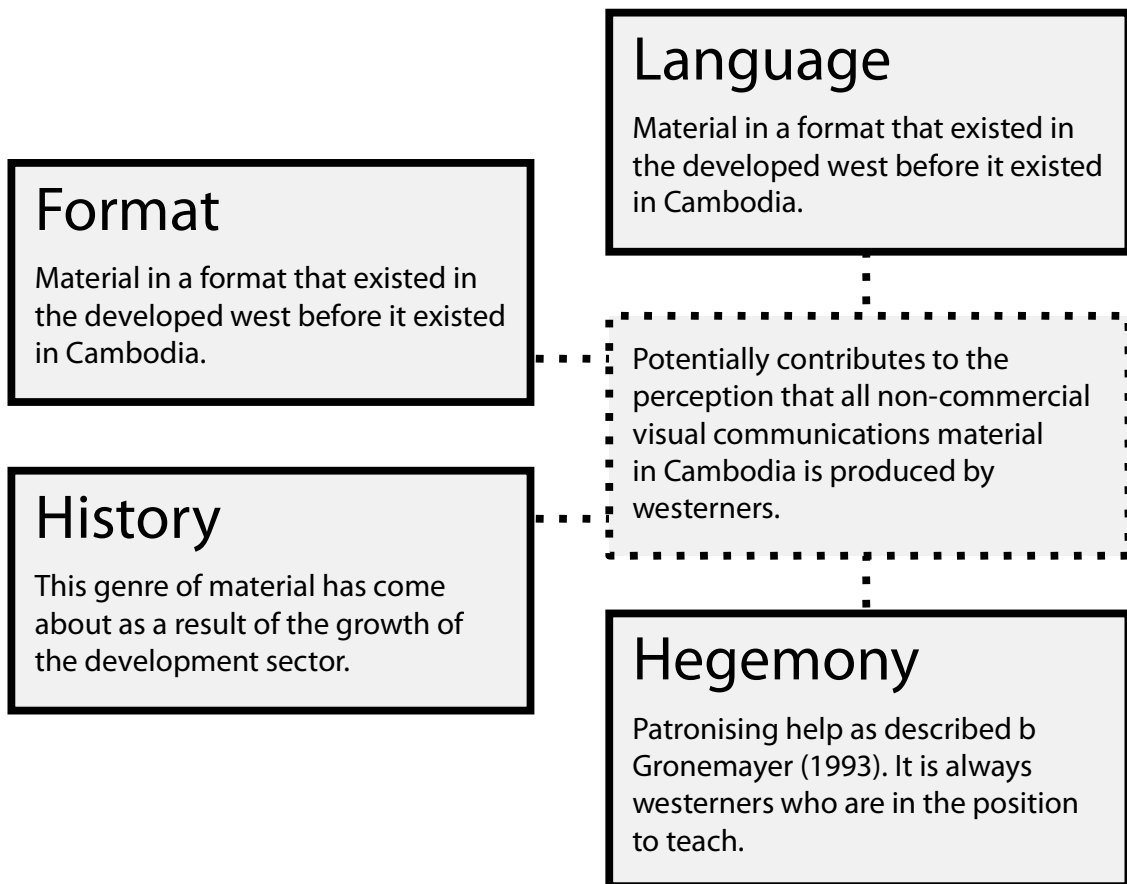
script was included in the form of organisation details, publication details, or as part of a logo. Throughout Cambodia, almost all non-commercial posters and billboards aiming to inform or teach Khmer people are identifiable, through the presence of Roman script, as having some kind of western affiliation.

### **Hegemony**

The historical context of this material and its use of western language may contribute to a perception that all non-commercial visual material is produced by westerners. This has the potential to reinforce the historical dominance of westerners over Khmers. In the case of all this material, when Khmers are in a position where they need to be helped, taught or informed, westerners (or at least western affiliated organisations) are in a position to do the teaching.

Gronemeyer (1993) asserts that this help puts shame on the receiver and that the problems associated with giving and receiving are present throughout the development sector worldwide. The perception exists that in Cambodia, the visual communications produced by the development sector have a tendency to inform poor people that they are doing something wrong and need to change the way in which they live their lives (Ham Samnom, personal communications, 8 September 2006).

Map of Panoptic Forms of Western Influence



*Figure 7: Map of panoptic forms of western influence.*

## Posters and Billboards

Apart from the panoptic forms of western influence that have already been addressed (Figure 7, p42), western influence was found in the posters and billboards that were analysed in the form of the following visual elements and themes:

- The depiction of an ideal array of professions to which young Khmer people should aspire.
- The depiction of modern industrialised society as an ideal.
- The public depiction of romance and implicit sex.
- The depiction of amputees in scenes unrelated to landmine issues.

These relate to a number of the codes described at Chapter 3.

The following map outlines the presence of these codes in each of these visual elements and themes. The titles in the map relate to the following codes:

- Panoptic forms  
As previously described (Figure 7, p42).
- Secular schooling  
Anything indicating the importance of formal (secular) schooling (meaning a lack of emphasis on a traditional education provided by the Buddhist pagoda).
- Denigration of tradition  
Depiction of traditional practices as undesirable.
- Equality  
Anything stressing the equality of rich and poor, old and young, male and female, able bodied and disabled (e.g. over-representation of hill tribes, token landmine victim).
- Sex/Romance  
Public display of affection.  
Public promotion of condoms for use with spouse and prostitutes.
- Gender  
That traditional gender roles should not exist.  
That rural women need a formal education as much as (or more so than) men.
- Economic definition of one's worth

That one's worth is defined in economic terms.

- Modern society

Implication that modern, western professions are superior to traditional occupations.

Depiction of modern society as a desirable side effect.

- Democracy

Any presence of democracy (e.g. the implication that democracy is an ideal that should be upheld and fought for).

Map of forms of western influence found in posters and billboards

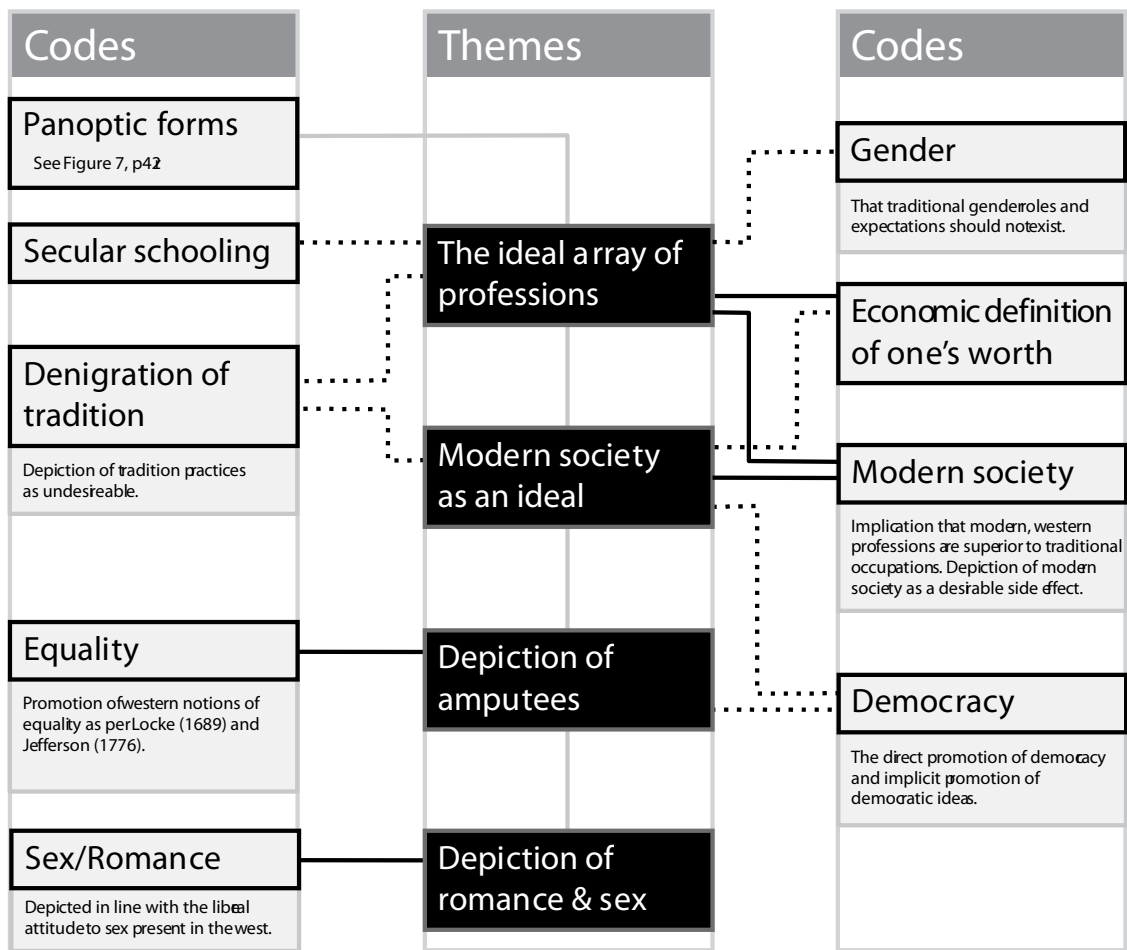


Figure 8: Map of forms of western influence found in posters and billboards illustrating the relationship between the themes discussed in this section and the codes used in the analysis of material.

### Frequency of forms of western influence found in posters and billboards

The following table documents the frequency of the codes relevant to the dominant themes found in posters and billboards. These figures occurred amongst a total of 81 posters and billboards that were analysed.

Code	Incidence
Anything indicating the importance of formal (secular) schooling (meaning a lack of emphasis on pagoda education).	10
Depiction of traditional practices as undesirable.	2
Anything stressing the equality of rich and poor, old and young, male and female, able bodied and disabled (e.g. over representation of hill tribes, token landmine victim).	21
Public display of affection.	12
Public promotion of condoms for use with spouse and prostitutes.	9
That traditional gender roles should not exist.	16
That rural women need a formal education as much as (or more so than) men.	2
That one's worth is defined in economic terms.	2
Implication that modern, western professions are superior to traditional occupations.	8
Depiction of modern society as a desirable side effect.	12
Any presence of democracy (e.g. the implication that democracy is an ideal that should be upheld and fought for).	5

*Figure 9: Table of the frequency of codes relevant to the dominant themes found in the analysis of posters and billboards.*

### The depiction of an ideal array of professions to which young Khmer people should aspire.

In one of the billboards and three of the posters which were analysed, a group of people of various professions are depicted. Looking at the professions which are included, these



*Image 2: Which way should we choose? - Japan International Cooperation Agency.*

These nine professionals are clearly depicted as role models, as a goal to which children should aspire. The path through school and university leading to a white collar profession, not a life of subsistence agriculture, or alternatively, as depicted, a life of drugs, destitution and crime. It is interesting to note that the negative examples exclusively depict men while the positive examples consist of a more balanced gender ratio.

The second example (Image 3) depicts five school children. Arising from each child, a thought bubble depicts the dream for that child's future, the profession to which that child aspires. A policeman, a teacher, a fighter pilot, a nurse and a businessman in suit and tie. This billboard is produced by the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Cambodian Government Ministry of Health. The text of the poster informs the viewer that contracting HIV can destroy your aspirations.



*Image 3: Aids can destroy your hopes and aspirations - United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS and the Ministry of Health of the Royal Government of Cambodia.*

The majority of these professions can only be entered into by following the formal, secular system of education, through primary and secondary school, into university. Cambodia's current education system continues to represent the western based education system inherited from its colonial rulers (Ayres 2000). In both of these images, the academics wear square mortarboard caps; caps drawn from the western academic tradition.

These are professions which are at home in the modern, centralised, western, market based economy that is emerging in Cambodia's capital Phnom Penh, and to a lesser extent in other more significant cities. These are not professions that one could expect to find in a traditional village based economy. In reality, proportionally very few Cambodians seek employment opportunities in the economised private sector and the civil service, which all of the professions here represent, as 80% live in rural areas (National Institute of Statistics 2004).

This is consistent with the mode of thinking that Santos (2004, p. 239) describes as “*a monoculture of criteria of capitalist productivity and efficiency*”. That is that progress through market forces (of a modern, western economy, the model that is present in the developed west) is regarded as superior to all non-capitalist economic activity.

Western influence primarily exists in this ‘ideal array of professions’ in the aforementioned themes of *secular schooling*, *economic definition of one's worth*, and *modern society*. The professions chosen, while they are all present in Cambodia, are those that fit with the western capitalist economic model and the western model of secular schooling. Non-capitalist alternatives in which the majority of young Cambodians are likely to participate are overlooked. The worthwhile paths in life are those that are deemed successful within a modern, western economy.

To a lesser extent, western influence can be found in the aforementioned themes of *gender* and *denigration of tradition*. Traditionally, Cambodian women do not undertake the same level of schooling as men. While the women are depicted in modern



occupations in lesser numbers than men, women are still encouraged to complete school and enter into these occupations rather than succumbing to the traditional expectations of Cambodian society.

### **The depiction of modern industrialised society as an ideal**

Modern industrialised society can be seen as a western phenomenon or it can be seen as a universal phenomenon. Ghandi (1908) argued that traditional Indian society was superior to modern western society. Ghandi saw modernisation as a British colonial influence. In contrast to Ghandi, Huntington (1998) argues that modern Asian nations such as Japan, South Korea and Singapore are not culturally western and does not link modernisation with westernisation. Inglehart and Baker (2000) take a more moderate view, observing that modernisation consistently brings a coherent shift away from traditional values towards a somewhat predictable set of modern values still shaped by traditional value systems. I have not attempted to resolve this issue, but will examine the depiction of modern society as a western influence on the basis that images of modern society are likely to be drawn from modern nations, the bulk of which are western nations.



*Image 4: We go to vote together on 27 July 2003 to strengthen democracy and the development of the country - National Election Committee.*

The depiction of modern industrialised society as an ideal or aspiration which may be reached by following the primary message of the poster or billboard exists to varying degrees in many of the pieces which were analysed. The ideal array of professions which has already been discussed is just one example of a modern image being used to appeal to the Khmer public. Other examples include modern buildings, machinery, dams, modes of transport, dress, hospitals and telecommunications equipment.

The first poster (Image 4), produced by the National Election Committee (NEC), features a woman in formal traditional dress placing her vote. The left side of the background of the poster depicts a rural scene; carts pulled by cows, elephants, a Wat (Buddhist temple) and many people lining up to the ballot box. On the right hand side of the poster, an industrialised scene is presented. Good quality paved roads, large trucks carrying shipping containers to the port, a large ship bearing the Cambodian flag, an aeroplane, traffic lights, a modern hospital, telecommunications equipment, and a few people. The text tells us that the upcoming vote (the 2003 national elections) is taking

place to strengthen the democracy and development of the nation and encourages people to take care of their identification cards.

The promotion of democracy itself is a western influence, however it is completely intentional and unremarkable coming from the NEC, which was set up to oversee the Cambodia's democratic elections.

Visually, the poster flows from the top left, towards the ballot box at the centre and then towards the modern scene on the right. From the traditions of Buddhism through democracy to a modern Cambodia. While the primary intention of the poster is to inform the public of the democratic process, the incentive to follow the message is through the depiction of a modern goal, not unlike western society.

The second example comes from the Working Group for Weapons Reduction (WGWR) in collaboration with the Interior Ministry of the Cambodian government and financed by Japanese Official Development Assistance.

The poster is made up of the vertically split image of a Khmer man, one side frowning, with a handgun in his belt, and a rifle held in the air. He bears a traditional talisman tattoo on his arm, wears patched clothes and he is unshaven and unkempt. Behind him, the background consists of one image showing him dead from a gunshot wound, with two people, presumably his family looking over him in despair. There is another background scene, which shows a man behind bars, his head resting on his hand, possibly contemplating and regretting the events which led to his imprisonment. On the other side, a tidily dressed and kempt man holds up a book. One of the background pictures shows a man teaching others that firearms are undesirable. The other background picture depicts a happy family with two children carrying school bags, standing in front of a dam, with a factory complex and a plane in the background. The text translates as *"Which way will you choose for a better future?"*



Image 5: Which way will you choose for a better future? - Working Group for Weapons Reduction.

The obvious intention is that the viewer will see the better future as that without weapons. Without weapons, there will be big factories, dams, planes and a small (in line with western ideals), well dressed family.

As the naming of this section suggests, the aforementioned *modern society* theme is the predominant form of western influence in these examples. In both instances, the desirable future is that which bears most resemblance to modern, western society.

In terms of secondary themes, it was observed in the first example that the *democracy* theme was present, through the direct promotion of participation in the democratic process. The visual flow of the first example, moving away from tradition, and the inclusion of the traditional talisman tattoo in the negative scenario of the second example could both be viewed as instances of the *denigration of tradition* theme.

### **HIV/AIDS campaigns and the public depiction of romance and implicit sex**

Of the twenty billboards photographed, six depict a young man and a young woman holding or otherwise associated with condoms. Even in this small sample, such a high prevalence is significant. Two of the posters depict similar scenes. In five of the billboards and one of the posters, the women have bare shoulders and/or bare knees, which in the Cambodian context is quite revealing. In one poster and two billboards the couple were seen to be married. In all the other pieces of visual communications, the couple were identified as being in a pre-marital sexual relationship. The women in three of these posters were identified as being sex workers. The other two women were identified as possibly being urban youths. However it was said that it was more likely that the women were sex workers.

Women engaging in premarital sex is something that is generally seen to bring considerable damage to a Khmer family's reputation (Tarr & Aggleton 1999). The majority of women depicted were identified as not being married to the man who they are depicted with. The presence of condoms in the image implies that these couples are engaging in sexual activity.

In contrast, paid premarital sex is normal for a large proportion of urban men and a smaller but significant proportion of rural men. The dominant approach to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Cambodia targets sex workers and their clients (ibid). This is the reason that so many of these posters depict couples who are seen to be involved in a commercial sexual relationship.

HIV/AIDS has only been a significant issue in Cambodia since the UNTAC period. Approaches to dealing with HIV/AIDS have only been necessary in Cambodia at a time when there has been a strong presence of foreign aid organisations. This has resulted in

a significant western involvement in the process. It can reasonably be said that men procuring the services of sex workers were not displayed on billboards before or during Cambodia's civil war. However as HIV was only discovered to be the cause of AIDS in 1984, there was no need to publicly address the issue before this time.

This example (Image 6), produced by the Ministry of Health and UNAIDS, depicts a young man looking at a young woman, who, by Cambodian standards, is exposing much of her body. The woman is holding a packet of the leading brand of condoms, *Number 1*. The text informs the viewer that in spite of the fact that this couple is beautiful, they still need to use condoms during sex in order to prevent HIV.



*Image 6: You are handsome and I am beautiful - United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS and the Ministry of Health of the Royal Government of Cambodia.*

UNESCO (2007) acknowledges that “*talking about sex is still taboo*” in Cambodia. Public displays of affection between married and unmarried couples are frowned upon.



In this example (as well as in other examples), the billboard very publicly displays a sexual relationship and discusses precautions one should take when engaging in sex. This is something that can be associated with the *sex/romance* theme in that it is in line with the more liberal attitude to sex that has been present in western societies to varying degrees since the sexual revolution. It clearly acknowledges, and arguably condones, pre-marital sexual relationships.

### **The depiction of amputees in scenes unrelated to landmine issues.**

Four posters depict figures who have had a leg amputated. In only one case is a prosthetic leg fitted. Proportionally, Cambodia has the highest number of amputees of any country in the world. This proportion is, however, much lower than the proportion of amputees represented in these posters. It is highly likely that these amputees have been deliberately included rather than simply being the depiction of a common scene.



*Image 7: Detail from four posters depicting amputees. Top left - Ministry of Education of the Royal Government of Cambodia. Bottom left and far right - National Election Committee. Middle - NGO Committee on Children's Rights in Cambodia.*

The manner in which the illustrators have chosen to depict these amputees is, in three out of four cases, the most visible manner possible, rather than the most realistic manner possible. In these instances, a single leg has been amputated above the knee.

The loss of an arm, a hand, or a foot, is much less visible, as is an amputated leg that has been replaced by a prosthesis.

Two of the posters relate to the fifth anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The other two posters relate to the 2003 national election. Both of these issues reflect the western notion of equality.

Democracy is an all-inclusive political system, where for the purposes of choosing a government, all people (of voting age) are equal and similar.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is described in both posters by its four key points:

*“The right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life”*  
(UNICEF 2007)

Again, having little to do with amputations from landmine incidents, these four points are put forth in the context of universal human rights, also related to the concept of equality.

This notion of equality has its roots in the political philosophy of John Locke (1689), who declared that all men are by nature, free, equal and independent. This is mirrored in the constitution of the United States of America:

*“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.”* (Jefferson 1776)

The fact that this kind of positive discrimination through over-representation of amputees exists indicates that the notion of equality that is valued in the west is seen to be lacking (consciously or otherwise) in Cambodia, that is, not a Cambodian value.

This equality, as the name suggests, relates directly to the *equality* theme. On a secondary level, the basis of the notion of equality and the subject of some of these particular posters relates to the *democracy* theme.



## Results of analysis

In the sample analysed in this study, the direct promotion of western influence was found to be widespread in the posters and billboards that were analysed. The nature of the visual elements and themes that were addressed, indicate that it is common for non-commercial organisations in Cambodia to include western influence in their visual communications. The approach taken in choosing what to depict and in what manner, is also often influenced by western attitudes and values. This has a definite potential to affect cultural sustainability in Cambodia.

Regarding the four recurring visual elements and themes discussed and illustrated in this section, it was found that:

- Professions that exist in a western capitalist market economy were heavily favoured in depicting the ideals and aspirations of young Khmers, while non-capitalist alternatives were overlooked.

The posters that included this visual feature were found to convey western influence primarily in the themes of *economic definition of one's worth* and *secular schooling*. To a lesser extent, the themes of *gender*, and *denigration of tradition* were present.

- Modern scenes, not dissimilar to western cities, were found to be depicted as the desirable result of the primary message of many pieces of visual communications (e.g. weapons reduction, democracy, education).

The posters that included this visual feature were found to convey western influence primarily in the theme of *modern society*. The secondary themes of *democracy*, *denigration of tradition*, and *economic definition of one's worth* were also identified.

- In visual communications relating to the prevention of HIV, there is a willingness to address sexual issues, which can be associated with the open attitude to sexual relationships that is found in the west. Little heed is paid to conservative Cambodian attitudes to sexual relations and the discussion of sex.

The posters that included this theme were found to convey western influence in the theme of *sex/romance*.

- Amputees (presumably landmine survivors) are often included in disproportionate numbers as an expression of the western notion of equality. These tend to be depicted in the most visible manner, without prosthetic limbs.

The posters that included this visual feature were found to convey western influence primarily in the theme of *equality*. To a lesser extent, the theme of *democracy* was present.

## Picture Books and Magazines

This section consists of the analysis and identification of the forms of western influence found in the 64 picture books, magazines and other multi-page illustrated materials that were analysed as part of this study.

Illustrated books and magazines are produced by non-commercial organisations in Cambodia in various formats. Most of the picture books and magazines that I collected can be classified as ‘entertainment-education’. That is, material which uses the popularity of entertainment to promote an educational message. A more detailed description of the ‘entertainment-education’ concept is provided later in this section.

Many of these pieces were bought from local markets at prices that appeared to be subsidised. Others were collected from NGOs and other organisations that use the material in their development programs. There are numerous picture books and magazines produced by Christian organisations that are covered in detail in the following section; Christian Material. This section deals exclusively with non-religious material.

The pieces analysed in this section are in a range of genres. There are Khmer language picture books; generally used in the promotion of literacy. In these cases, the story is generally an entertaining narrative rather than promoting a message relating to behavioural change. There are activity books produced for use in an educational setting; this may be general education in line with the Cambodian Ministry of Youth, Education and Sport curriculum or education that relates more specifically to the areas of focus of the Cambodian development sector, though there is significant overlap in the two areas. There are comic books; often directly addressing issues such as the prevention of HIV and TB. There are illustrated Khmer folk tales; produced as a means of preserving Cambodia’s oral history.

In analysing this material, similar forms of western influence that were found were categorised. In some cases these categories correspond to the physical format or genre of the piece. In other cases similar types of influence were found across different formats and genres.

Western influence in these pieces will be analysed in these four categories;

Category	Description
General forms of western influence.	Forms of western influence that are inherent in the published format of the material.
Illustrated Khmer folk tales.	Acknowledging and discussing the limited existence of western influence in these formats and identifying the few forms in which it does exist.
The presence of western development concepts.	The presence of western development ideology and concepts in these less direct forms of communication.
Recurring visual features and themes.	Imagery and other features that are drawn from the cultures of the west; western characters, western dress, western scenes and imagery and western games and puzzles.

*Figure 10: Categories of western influence used in the analysis of picture books and magazines.*

The following map outlines the presence of these codes in each of these visual elements and themes. The titles in the map relate to the following codes:

- Panoptic forms
  - As previously described (Figure 7, p42).
- Secular schooling
  - Anything indicating the importance of formal (secular) schooling (meaning a lack of emphasis on pagoda education).
- Choice of Khmer folk tales
  - Khmer folk tales that appear to have been chosen because their story relates to western development goals. These cannot be easily related to specific codes as they are Khmer stories. The topics chosen relate to the following broader headings that were included in the coding system:
    - Gender
    - Rule of law
- Modern Society

Implication that modern, western professions are superior to traditional occupations.

Depiction of modern society as a desirable side effect.

- Indirect inclusion of development issues

Using imagery relating to other goals of the development sector which do not appear to relate to the primary purpose of the piece of material.

The included issues relate to the following codes:

Anything indicating the importance of formal (secular) schooling (meaning a lack of emphasis on pagoda education).

Anything stressing the equality of rich and poor, old and young, male and female, able bodied and disabled.

Western approach to nutrition.

- Approach to HIV/AIDS issues

Using a western approach to dealing with HIV/AIDS. In doing so, the following codes were observed:

Public display of affection.

Public promotion of condoms for use with spouse and prostitutes.

- Sex/Romance

Sexual imagery depicted in line with the liberal attitude to sex present in the west.

Public display of affection.

Public promotion of condoms for use with spouse and prostitutes.

- Western characters

Western style illustration (e.g. cartoon characters).

- Western dress

Western dress.

- Western games and puzzles

Activities/Activity books.

- Western languages

Used to communicate to Khmers

Used to teach the language

Map of forms of western influence found in picture books and magazines

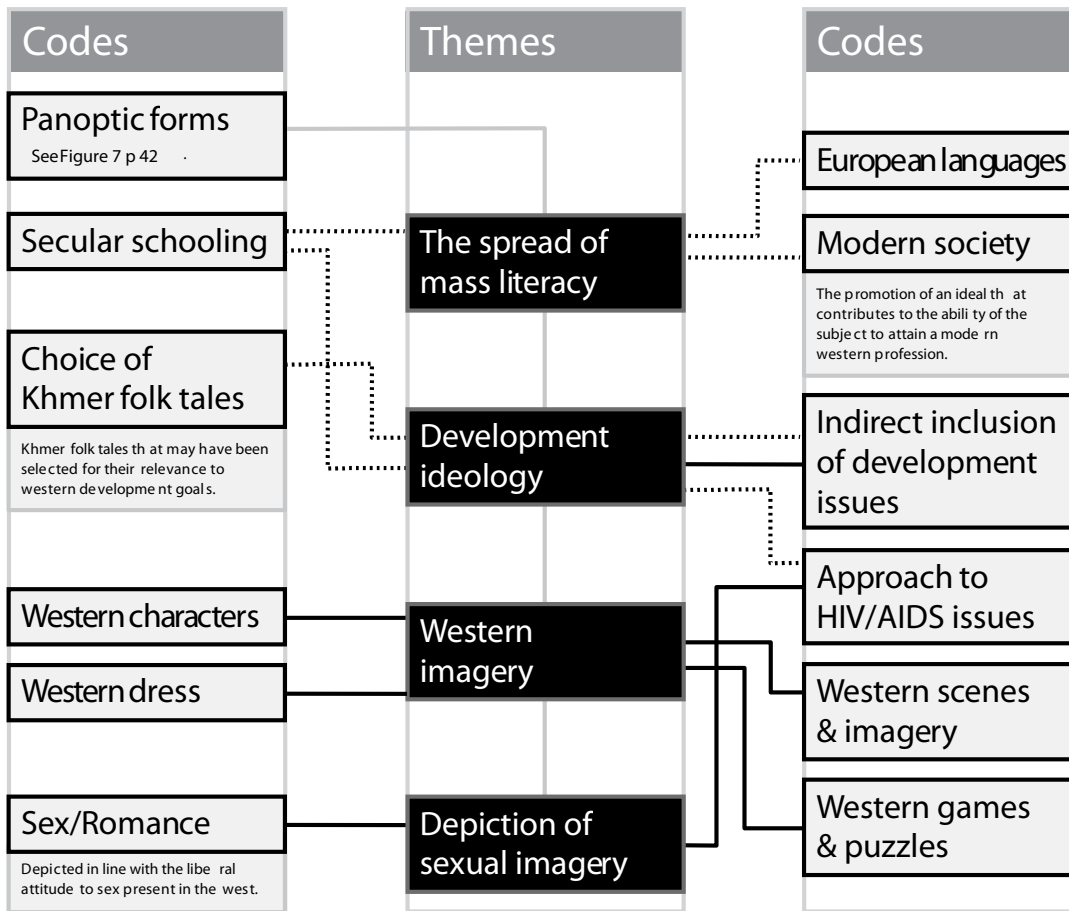


Figure 11: Map of forms of western influence found in picture books and magazines illustrating the relationship between the themes discussed in this section and the codes used in the analysis of material.

**Frequency of forms of western influence found in picture books and magazines**

The following table documents the frequency of the codes relevant to the dominant themes found in picture books and magazines. These figures occurred amongst a total of 64 posters and billboards that were analysed.

Code	Incidence
Anything indicating the importance of formal (secular) schooling (meaning a lack of emphasis on pagoda education).	3 (always implicit in mass literacy)
Implication that modern, western professions are superior to traditional occupations.	(always implicit in mass literacy)
Depiction of modern society as a desirable side effect.	5 (always implicit in mass literacy)
Anything stressing the equality of rich and poor, old and young, male and female, able bodied and disabled.	5
Western approach to nutrition.	5
Public display of affection.	6
Public promotion of condoms for use with spouse and prostitutes.	4
Western style illustration (e.g. cartoon characters).	13
Western dress.	13
Western languages: Used to communicate to Khmers	10

*Figure 12: Table of the frequency of codes relevant to the dominant themes found in the analysis of picture books and magazines.*

### **Entertainment-education**

In the context of this material, it is useful to understand the concept of entertainment-education. Entertainment-education (also known as enter-education or E-E) can be described as product placement for ideas. The general concept being that ideas that are casually introduced through entertainment are better received than messages that are communicated in a more direct manner. Material that exists solely for the purpose of promoting a message from a particular group may be seen as such by the viewer and ignored or alternatively overlooked in the vast array of other material of a similar nature.

The homepage of the Fourth International Entertainment Education Conference gives the following overview:

*“Entertainment-education (E-E) brings together the popularity of entertainment and the empowering potential of education through communication to achieve development and social progress. E-E communication strategies are rooted in oral traditions of ancient times and now extend to include a wide range of communication approaches including mass media technologies.” (2004)*

In the context of Cambodian development communications, it is necessary for pieces to stand out amongst the vast quantities of billboards, t-shirts, books, posters and other materials from NGOs and other non-commercial organisations. Entertainment-education aims to engage the audience firstly through entertainment, offering more than simply what the producer perceives to be good advice. In doing so, it is hoped that the message will be better received by a broader audience.

Entertainment-education may be ‘disengaged’, where the responsible group pointedly abstains from providing any link between themselves and the material at hand.

Disengaged enter-education is often seen as being ‘deceptive’. The audience, unaware of the source may receive the message on an emotional level rather than a rational level.

This is not the case for the vast majority of materials that were collected for this study. Only a small number of pieces of Christian material could be regarded as being disengaged. All of the picture books and magazines relevant to this section, and the majority of other entertainment-education pieces collected as part of this study are considered to be engaged. This means that the organisation that produces the material clearly and openly associates itself with the material.

### **Panoptic Forms of Western Influence**

As previously described (Figure 7, p42), western influence exists in the format of these pieces of visual communications material. Khmer stories were traditionally written on either ស្រូវស្លឹកវីតិ (palm leaves) or ក្រាំង (a traditional paper). They were not usually illustrated. Where illustrations did exist, they were produced using chalk and charcoal. The colour picture books, magazines and activity books are all in formats that existed in the west before they existed in Cambodia.



## Mass Literacy

As a western influence, the spread of mass literacy is more general, and as such, it has not been explicitly identified in the coding system, but rather discussed here in broader terms.

A large number of these picture books and magazines are primarily intended to promote literacy. Those that do not have the promotion of literacy as their primary goal are still, through their use of text, encouraging literacy. This corresponds directly to “*the spread of mass literacy*” described by Inglehart (1997, p. 69) as one of the key components of modern society. As mentioned in the literature review at Chapter 2, modernisation itself is not necessarily a western value. It is the case however, that mass literacy exists in the western nations that produce, distribute or fund these materials. Thus coming from western sources or western affiliated sources, it can be regarded as a western influence. The fact that its promotion is seen to be necessary suggests that it is seen to lacking in Cambodia, that is, not a traditional Cambodian value.

This can be linked to the codes that fall into the category of *modern society* as well as the code to do with the importance of formal (secular) schooling; *Anything indicating the importance of formal schooling*.

## Illustrated Traditional Khmer Stories

A large number of the picture books collected depict traditional stories, illustrated by Khmer illustrators. In these cases, western influence is quite limited. Traditionally, illustrations were produced using chalk and charcoal and stories were written on palm leaf manuscripts. The format of these books is a modern, western format with the logo and details of the organisation that produced them commonly printed in English. The western affiliation of these books is often evident through the previously addressed panoptic forms of western influence (Figure 7, p42).

Of particular note were the series by Shanti Volunteer Association (SVA) and the series by Domrei Saw (White Elephant). These books generally bear little notable western influence excepting the picture book format and a small amount of English language publication details. This may be partly due to the fact that SVA is an organisation

conceived and funded by Japanese Buddhist groups rather than western sources. The books by Domrei Saw contain no Roman text and always depict Khmer stories, the only notable exception being a single picture in one book that depicts the fly agaric mushroom, not found in Cambodia, but common in media aimed at western children. The same scene depicts squirrels and hedgehogs, again, common in western children's stories, but not found in Cambodia. Given the understanding of Khmer culture that is displayed in the rest of the pictures in this book, it would appear that it is a case of a Khmer illustrator being influenced by western children's illustrations rather than a western illustrator inadvertently illustrating a western scene.

While traditional stories are certainly Khmer and not western, the stories that are chosen and the aspects of the stories that are emphasised may reflect western development goals. Take the example of a series of four books that were produced by the Buddhist Institute as part of a project to record oral folk tales from the provinces. The translated titles printed on the covers of the four books are: *Trickster*, *Gender*, *Judgement* and *Environment and Customs*. *Gender* and *Environment and Customs* and to a lesser extent, *Judgement* use terms associated with the language of the Cambodian development sector. They correspond directly to the goals of many of the foreign organisations that fund the Cambodian development sector listed in the Methodology and Research Design at Chapter 3. The *Gender* book corresponds to *Gender / Women's Issues* and *Environment and Customs* corresponds in part to *Environment / Natural Resource* and also to *Art & Culture* (Cooperation Committee for Cambodia 2007a). Without delving too deeply into the written narrative, as this is a visual study, the identified examples can be linked to the codes of *Gender* and *Rule of Law*.

In a small number of cases, the Khmer text is accompanied by a foreign language translation. This was generally English. The use of European languages is an obvious western influence identified in the coding system under the category *Use of English, French and other European languages in material aimed at Khmers* with the specific codes *Used to communicate to Khmers*, and *Used to teach the language*. It is probably used to appeal to Khmer people who are trying to learn the English language.

These forms of western influence were generally more subtle than the forms found in the other types of picture books and magazines that were collected.

### **The Presence of Western Development Concepts**

A number of pieces use an illustrated narrative to promote ideas that are in line with the development ideas discussed in the literature review at chapter 2 and the methodology and research design at chapter 3.

While this is not remarkable in the posters and billboards discussed in the previous chapter, where the primary message is generally literal and obvious, it is interesting to see these ideas presented often as less direct, secondary messages in these narrative formats.

There are a number of ads in magazine format pieces that are similar in nature to the posters and billboards discussed in the previous section. These will not be discussed here in much detail as the forms in which western influence exists is very similar to that in the posters and billboards. In picture books, comics and activity books, the presence of development concepts often exists in a different format. It is often secondary to the nature of the piece as entertainment.

In a significant number of cases where western development concepts were present, narratives were used to present messages relating to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS and the surrounding issues. The following example is from a book produced by Room to Read entitled “You Are Not Alone”.



This story is not the most inspiring narrative, however it is more interesting to read and less confronting than a more direct piece that simply presents the facts. It is written in the third person, so that if the reader happens to be HIV positive, they are not being directly told that they will experience these problems, only presented with solutions should the problems arise. At the end of the book, more direct messages are presented.

Western influence exists in this example, in that the purpose of the storybook is to promote a western development agenda. It cannot be said that the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS is not a Khmer value, though as discussed in Chapter 5, HIV/AIDS has only been an issue in Cambodia since the UNTAC period. The approaches to dealing with HIV/AIDS have been developed with significant western involvement in the process. It is unlikely that traditional Khmer approaches to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS would be implemented by formal representative bodies like those described by Huntington (1996) as a key characteristic of western civilisation. In Cambodia this consists of bodies such as NGOs and government agencies.

Viewed in the context of other pieces by the same organisation (Room to Read), the direct focus of the narrative on HIV/AIDS issues is unique. Most Room to Read pieces are primarily entertainment pieces, with the only western development concept present being the passive promotion of literacy itself.

In other instances the development messages are less integrated. The narrative or entertainment aspects of the piece are largely separate. The following examples are from a colouring book produced by Save the Children Norway.



Image 9: Match the words to the pictures - Save the Children, Norway.



Image 10: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - Save the Children, Norway.

The majority of this piece is composed of relatively value free activities such as drawing fruit, the majority of fruit depicted is readily available in Cambodian markets.

The later pages indirectly touch on development issues such as health, education and landmine awareness. The depicted example (Image 9) simply asks the reader to match the words to the pictures. There is no major emphasis on each message, but they are all messages associated with the development sector; “don’t touch foreign objects” (meaning landmines and UXOs), “for good health” and “reading ability”. This is only seen on a relatively small number of pages in the publication. The link to codes is not strong, as these ideas are indirectly referenced, but these relate to *Anything indicating the importance of formal (secular) schooling (meaning a lack of emphasis on pagoda education)* and *Western approach to nutrition*.

The back cover (Image 10) depicts two Khmer children holding balloons that describe the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which, as discussed in Chapter 5, is associated with a western concept of equality with roots in the political philosophy of John Locke (1689) and directly relates to the code of *Anything stressing the equality of rich and poor, old and young, male and female, able bodied and disabled*.

As with the posters and billboards, the fact that western development agendas are present is not unexpected. The manner in which they are presented is not unintentional, nor is it presented under any false pretence. It is however, interesting to see these ideas presented in a less direct manner.

### **The Depiction of Sexual Imagery**

The depiction of sexual imagery exists in picture books, magazines and other multi-page illustrated formats that address the issues surrounding HIV/AIDS, human trafficking and sex work. The addressing of problems surrounding these issues is not a uniquely western value. While there are certainly large numbers of rural and urban Cambodians who are concerned about these problems, as previously mentioned, the manner in which they are dealt with, through the development concepts of representative bodies such as NGOs and government agencies may be regarded as a western influence. The imagery that is typically employed in dealing with these issues falls under the categories

identified in the *Sex/Romance* theme; *Public display of affection* and *Public promotion of condoms for use with family and prostitutes*.

Sexual issues are addressed in a different manner in the more private, passive formats such as books and magazines. In picture books and magazines there is a greater willingness to show more explicit images that may cause offence if used in the more visible public formats of posters and billboards. This more direct approach is particularly interesting given that these picture and activity books are often aimed at a younger audience.

Chan and Donovan (2005), in their analysis of graphic materials aimed at the prevention of HIV/AIDS note that forms of graphic design other than posters and brochures were more appropriate in dealing with HIV/AIDS issues for large rural populations. These formats are more appropriate because they are better understood and more discrete in dealing with this morally charged topic.

As discussed in the previous section; Posters and Billboards, for Khmer women, engaging in premarital sex is something that is generally seen to bring considerable damage to a Khmer family's reputation (Tarr, 1999). Cambodian society is, at least outwardly, very conservative with relation to sex. The 28-year-old woman who assisted me with my research was visibly uncomfortable looking at some of these images.

The depiction of sexual imagery was found in 6 pieces across the body of books and magazines collected. This is a small but significant portion of material. In most cases, it did not appear to be directly targeting sex workers and their clients, but rather a younger audience who are much less likely to be sexually active.





Image 11: Condom instructions - Population Services International.

Image 11 is from an advertisement for Number One Plus condoms. Number 1 is the dominant condom brand in Cambodia. They are produced by the USAID funded NGO Population Services International (PSI). PSI sell Number One condoms at heavily subsidised prices, a pack of four costs 100 riel, which is approximately 2.5 US cents. Number One Plus is a more expensive, premium brand produced by PSI. Its packaging is more attractive than the cheaper Number One brand. It is interesting to note that the branding for both of these products is predominantly in English, presumably in order to appeal to the Khmer preference, either real or perceived, for foreign products (locally produced beer is branded in a similar manner). This is another instance of the codes that come under the *European languages* theme.

The magazine that contains this advertisement is produced by the BBC World Service Trust. It is based on a *Taste of Life*, an enter-educational TV drama series addressing issues to do with HIV/AIDS . The main characters in the show are young adults in their early twenties.

This part of the advertisement, instructing the reader on how to put on a condom, is particularly graphic. The phallic object on which it is demonstrated is quite realistic as it is the colour of human skin, though interestingly, it is the skin colour of a westerner and the condom is applied by western hands (*Western characters*).

This magazine is quite widely and freely distributed, I obtained this copy from a promotion that was set up at Phnom Penh's biggest shopping centre. 66,000 copies of each edition of this magazine are distributed throughout Cambodia (BBC World

Service Trust 2005). While it is certainly less public than a poster or billboard, this wide distribution indicates that it is not a narrowly targeted piece that you might find at a sexual health clinic. It is still a relatively public piece of communications. In a similar manner to what was discussed in the previous chapter, the willingness to explicitly illustrate an issue like this can be associated with the more liberal attitude to sex that has been present in western societies to varying degrees since the sexual revolution, categorised in the codes that have been listed under the *Sex/romance* theme in this section.

In identifying this as a western influence, it is important to acknowledge that it is dealing with an issue that affects a large proportion of the Cambodian population. A strong case may be made for the adoption more liberal attitude to sex and sexual imagery, in line with that in the west, in order to most effectively address the AIDS epidemic in Cambodia. Even so, it is important to be aware of the possibility of cultural implications in producing this type of imagery.

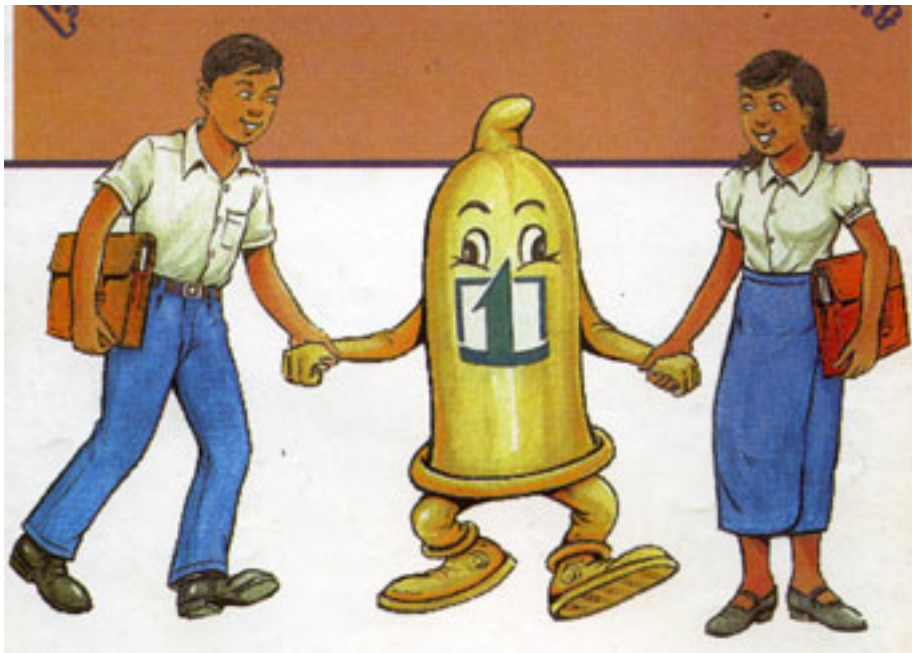


*Image 12: Front cover of a comic book dealing with human trafficking - Healthcare Center for Children.*

Image 12 is from the cover of a short comic book produced by the Healthcare Center for Children and funded by the Australian Embassy. It tells the story of a woman who leaves her village believing that she will be given a job in the city. She is sold into sexual slavery and eventually dies of AIDS. The message is not to do with prevention of HIV/AIDS so much as being a warning of the possibility of being sold into sexual slavery.

The bottom part of the image is a quite confronting depiction of a woman being sexually assaulted. Again, the willingness to display this image is more in line with the relatively liberal attitude to these issues that is present in the west.

As previously mentioned, it is important to acknowledge the necessity of addressing and preventing human trafficking, but also important to be aware of the possible cultural implications in doing so.



*Image 13: Condom advertisement in a children's activity book - Population Services International.*

Image 13 is another piece from PSI advertising Number One condoms on a less direct level. While the piece does not explicitly depict sex or sexual organs, it is a bizarre image of a sexual nature. It is essentially two school children holding hands with a giant phallus. In a piece such as this, which is clearly aimed at quite young children, it is much more difficult to argue its necessity.

This cannot be seen to be a direct western influence, as, I think it would be safe to say, this would not be well received by the parents of school aged children in most western countries. It is because of this, that this does not easily fit into the coding system used in this study. However it cannot be seen as a Khmer idea, the social marketing of condoms

being a relatively recent process in Cambodia that has been driven by predominantly western foreign aid as discussed in the previous chapter. It is a result of the approach to dealing with HIV/AIDS that has been developed by western and western affiliated organisations, thus it can be regarded as a western influence.

### **Recurring Visual Features and Themes**

A number of recurring visual elements and themes were identified in the collected works, primarily in those that were not traditional stories. As picture books and magazines are composed of multiple pages, each piece generally contains a wide range of related visual features and themes.

The four visual features and themes that are discussed are;

- Western Characters
- Western Scenes and Imagery
- Western Dress
- Western Games and Puzzles

#### **Western Characters**

Western characters and western influenced characters were identified in a range of forms throughout the body of collected work. 13 instances of western style characters were noted. These ranged from depictions of western children, to animals bearing western features, to characters illustrated in a style drawn from western popular culture. All of these examples fall directly into the code of Western style illustration (e.g. cartoon characters).



Image 14: Ocular health illustration - Save the Children, Norway.



Image 15: First aid illustration - Save the Children, Norway.

The two examples above are the simplest forms in which western characters and western influenced characters are presented. The first image (*Image 14*) is an illustration associated with an article about ocular health issues. It was found in issue 35 of Mom and Mab magazine, which is produced by Save the Children, Norway. The shade of brown of the iris is much lighter than the eyes of Khmer people. The skin is white and the shape of the eyes is consistent with western and not Khmer people. These eyes were identified as being បារាំង (barang) eyes.

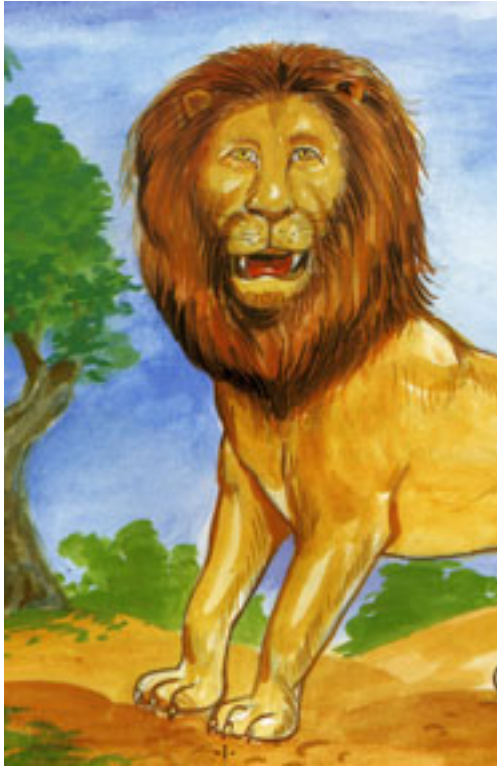
The second image (*Image 15*) is from issue 28 of the same magazine. This illustration accompanies a short article about first aid. The characters are clearly of western European appearance.

These images are likely to have been taken from existing publications rather than having been produced specifically for these Cambodian pieces. The depiction of foreigners in such situations is, in itself, relatively insignificant. The foreigners depicted are however, almost exclusively of western European appearance. When they are not, they are generally in groups of a racial composition commonly found in western countries.

It is likely that the images of foreigners generally depict westerners not out of any purposeful desire to depict westerners, but as a result of it being easier for the people who work in these organisations to source images and other content from their western counterparts (e.g. funding sources, international offices or other familiar sources). The only other group of non-western foreigners portrayed in significant number are the Japanese. This is generally seen in pieces produced by Japanese-funded, founded or operated organisations. This supports the assertion that these images are included because they come from sources familiar to the producers.

The inclusion of such characters is probably not a conscious attempt to establish or contribute to a western cultural hegemony. However it could be seen as doing so by reinforcing the idea that this material is coming from western sources and showing that westerners are in a position to help and teach Khmer people.





*Image 16: The Lion and the Cat - Shanti Volunteer Association*

The lion in *Image 16* is one of the main characters in a book titled “The Lion and cat” produced by Shanti Volunteer Association, an organisation founded and funded by Japanese Buddhist organisations. This lion was identified as having a បារាំង (barang) face. There is little in the imagery throughout the book that gives any clue as to the background of the illustrator. As a result, it is difficult to speculate on the reason that the lion is drawn with a face that is seen to be a western European face by Khmer people. While not much can be said about the nature of this piece of western influence, it is a peculiar and notable example of western influence.

Image 17 is taken from a small comic produced by Friends International/Mith Samlanh.

The illustrative style of this piece is unique amongst the body of material that was collected.





*Image 17: Brother Superman - Friends International/Mith Samlanh*

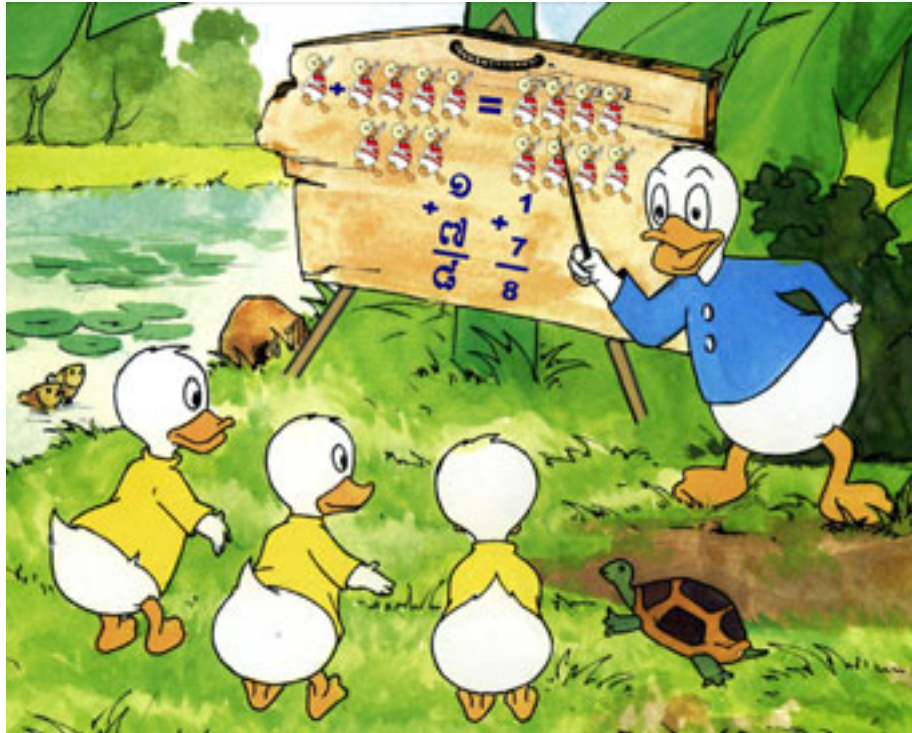
In the majority of pieces, illustrations are produced by hand and bear visible brush-strokes. Throughout this piece, lines are of a consistent width and colours are flat with distinct borders. It appears to have been produced by hand and subsequently traced and coloured using a vector graphics program. The highlights displayed in the example are consistent with those produced by digital image editing programs and would be difficult to produce by hand.

This relatively modern approach to image production suggests that the people involved in producing the image are likely to have had more exposure to modern western imagery than most Cambodian illustrators.

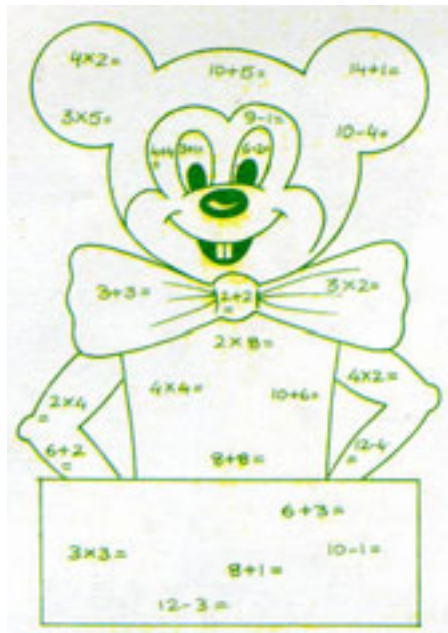
This character is referred to as ប្អូនអ៊ីរ៉ូម៉ែន, which can be literally translated as *brother superman*. He is depicted throughout the piece, teaching Khmer youths about the dangers of amphetamine use. The character's head-dress and the piece of cloth around the waist are drawn from Khmer culture. There is however, no basis for a lycra-clad superhero in the Khmer tradition. This is most likely drawn from the attire of western superheros who seem to have a penchant for lycra bodysuits. This is especially likely in

the context of such a modern approach to illustration and the naming of the character as a literal translation of Superman.

Still in the domain of western popular culture, one of the more curious examples of western influenced characters is found in a number of pieces that display characters clearly influenced by illustrations from the cartoons of the Walt Disney Company.



*Image 18: Disney style characters in We Learn to Add - Room to Read.*



*Image 19: Disney style character from Mom & Mab - Save the Children, Norway.*

These two examples are quite clearly drawn from the Disney characters Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse. In the context of the rest of the publication, neither of these images appear to have been drawn by western illustrators.

This Disney influence is slightly less bizarre when it is viewed alongside the many similar Disney-esque characters that are commonly seen in murals and advertising in regional centres through Cambodia, particularly on the walls of private schools.

This is not a new phenomenon in Cambodia, it is likely to have existed since the Sihanouk era and remained during the DK and Vietnamese periods in which Cambodia had little outside influence.

I spoke about these Disney characters with Bun Heang Ung (Pers. Comms. 2007), a Cambodian Australian who worked as an illustrator in Cambodia during the 70s and 80s. Bun was trained as an illustrator at the Royal University of Phnom Penh prior to the DK period. Bun suggested that these characters had come to Cambodia as a result of US cultural influence associated with the presence of US soldiers during the Vietnam War. Bun thought that as a result of a long period of little outside influence coupled

with a Khmer preference for copying existing material, there was a tendency to simply copy illustrations and styles, which is why we still have these characters in Cambodia today.

### Western Scenes and Imagery

9 of the 64 pieces displayed some sort of western imagery, being landscapes, buildings, flora and fauna, groups made up of a racial composition that is found in western countries or any other type of scenery. All of these instances fall into the code of *Western imagery* (e.g. *Landscapes, buildings, flora and fauna, racial composition of groups*).



*Image 20: Detail from Mom and Mab magazine - Save the Children, Norway.*

The issues of Mom and Mab magazine that were collected as part of this study routinely featured a translated western story illustrated with western imagery.

Image 20 is an example of the type of illustration that accompanies these translated stories. The children are all of racial backgrounds that are commonly found in western countries.





Image 21: Feature on the European Space Agency - SIPAR.

Image 21 comprises two images taken from an issue of SIPAR's ខ្ញុំ ថ្ងៃ ដឹង (that can be translated as *I want to know*). Viewed in isolation, it would appear that the magazine presents a western history. This particular issue focuses on space travel, with particular attention being given to the European Space Agency (ESA). The US and Soviet space programs are also mentioned, to a lesser extent.

This is a western influence, choosing to present an aspect of history that is dominated by western nations and western people. Viewed in the context of the 6 other SIPAR magazines that were collected for this study, this instance of western influence is balanced by the other five magazines; all present historical pieces with a focus on Asia. While it has been seen that it is common in other pieces for foreign cultural influence to be predominantly western, in the case of these SIPAR magazines, this western cultural influence is balanced by cultural influence from various accounts of historical events that took place throughout Asia.

### Western Dress

Western dress is the reality of present day Cambodia. Even rural villagers generally wear machine-sewn trousers and t-shirts. The one distinctly Khmer item of clothing that is worn on a daily basis is the krama; a piece of cloth that can be roughly equated to a sarong. More traditional Khmer clothes are still worn on visits to temples and other

formal occasions. The kinds of day-to-day traditional dress that are, or were unique to Cambodia are now associated with historically themed movies.

This is not to say that the clothes of a rural Cambodian would not look out of place in a modern western city. I have brought this up so as to preface the identification of western dress with an acknowledgement that it is in many instances, a representation of existing western influence in reality. It is not necessarily western influence belonging specifically and directly to the piece of visual communications, though there are also some instances of western dress featuring clothing items that are not common in Cambodia today. The code into which these instances of western influence fall is self-evident; *Western dress*.



*Image 22: Honest People - Save the Children, Norway.*

This example (Image 22) shows three people sitting in a hospital waiting room. The character dressed as a nurse is explaining to the two other characters that if they keep a certain young man (the patient) as their servant, that they will be sued. The woman responds by telling her to keep quiet.

The man on the left is wearing a suit, an unambiguous western influence. He is smoking a pipe, something I never saw in my two years of accumulated time in Cambodia. He is wearing glasses, only ever worn by comparatively modern Khmers. All these items, some of them not being entirely unheard of in Cambodia, are far more common in the developed west.



*Image 23: Drawing and Coloring Book - Snadai Khniom.*

Image 23 is taken from the cover of a colouring book produced by a French NGO, Snadai Khniom. It is simply a colouring book which does not attempt to communicate other social issues. It is clearly a Cambodian scene, the landscape in the background is similar to much of the countryside in the west of the country, and the prevalence of the rabbit character is in keeping with the prevalence of the rabbit character in Khmer folk tales and more recently in advertising and advocacy.

The most obvious piece of western influence is seen in the fact that the container holding the bear's crayons is decorated with Roman characters 'ABC'. The bear is

drawn in a manner that is consistent with the depiction of bears in western children's illustration. The overalls, long sleeved shirt, shoes and socks are not common in Cambodia, especially amongst the rural majority who cannot afford closed-in shoes. The bear character itself is probably drawn from depictions of bears in western children's illustrations.



*Image 24: Western dressed characters - Enfants & Développement.*

Image 24 is taken from the cover of a picture book produced by the French organisation Enfants & Développement. Apart from the pig character, who is wearing traditional Khmer pants, the other animals are wearing clothing that is much more common in the west than in Cambodia today.



The depiction of characters in western style clothing is common in picture books and magazines produced by non-commercial organisations in Cambodia. The clothing used is almost exclusively from the west, rarely from any other cultures.

### **Western Games and Puzzles**

In 13 of the 64 pieces that were analysed, western formats of activities were identified. These include such things as crosswords, dot-to-dots, colour-by-numbers, mazes, spot-the-difference and colouring in. These forms of activity are ideas that have come from the west, and as such, are a western influence.

### **Results of analysis**

The nature of western influence discussed in this chapter; that which was found in the picture books, magazines and other multi-page illustrated materials that were collected, is, for the most part, to do with the depiction of western objects and scenes coded as *Western imagery*, *Western style illustration* and *Western dress*. The presence of western ideology is not as common as it is in the posters and billboards analysed in the earlier in this chapter.

It was found that the western affiliation of the producers of these materials was evident in the majority of cases and that this may be interpreted as reinforcing a western cultural dominance. This affiliation was found to be almost universally evident through the presence of Roman script. In a few cases, books were produced in a bilingual format with European languages, predominantly English, fitting within the codes *Used to communicate to Khmers* and *Used to teach the language*.

The majority of these pieces were seen to have the promotion of literacy as a primary aim. This in itself was found to be a western influence, indirectly related to the codes; *Anything indicating the importance of formal schooling (meaning a lack of emphasis on a pagoda education)* and those which fall under the *modern society* category. In light of the western affiliations of the source organisations and the fact that the existence of this material shows that it is seen to be lacking in Cambodia suggesting that it is not a widespread Cambodian value.

While “*the spread of mass literacy*” (Inglehart 1997) is (not necessarily uniquely) a western value, in line with the other western concepts that were seen in the posters and billboards analysed in Chapter 5, it is addressed in a relatively indirect manner. The *entertainment-education* concept is applied, the books in themselves, being entertaining means that (at least in theory) they will be read and contribute to raising levels of literacy in Cambodia.

In a small number of cases, the entertainment-education concept was applied to development issues other than literacy, particularly the issues surrounding HIV/AIDS. Issues were identified in the coding categories of *Gender* and *Rule of law* as well as the more specific codes of *Anything indicating the importance of formal (secular) schooling*, *Western approach to nutrition* and *Attitude to sexual/romantic relationships*.

The depiction of sexual imagery was found to be addressed in a different manner to that analysed in the previous section; *Posters and Billboards*. The more private, passively received formats of books and magazines commonly depict more explicit images than the public formats of posters and billboards. The willingness to display such imagery is accordant with the more liberal attitude to sex and sexual imagery that we see in the west and contrasts with the dominant conservative attitude of Khmer people.

A relative lack of western influence was seen in all of the illustrated traditional Khmer folk tales. 22 of the 26 illustrated Khmer folk tales were not found to bear any western influence other than the picture book format and their publication details. A small number of these were deemed to have chosen traditional stories with subjects that correspond to some western development goals that fell under codes and categories mentioned above.

In terms of volume, the most significant types of western influence were found in the recurring visual features and themes drawn from the culture of the west. These were identified as;

- Western characters
- Western dress
- Western scenes and imagery

- Western games and puzzles

Western characters (coded as *Western style illustration*) were seen in the form of actual westerners or their body parts. These generally appeared to be included as a result of material sourced from the west rather than drawn specifically for Cambodia, from Cambodian sources. Less frequently, characters influenced by western popular culture were depicted. These included characters that appeared to be modelled on western superheros and Disney characters such as Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse.

Clothing (coded as *Western dress*) was generally found to be more representative of a general preference for modern, western dress in Cambodia today. In a minority of cases, western clothing and accessories were depicted that are very rare in Cambodia today.

The identified western scenes and imagery (coded as *Western imagery*) included western scenes such as groups of people composed of racial backgrounds commonly found in western countries. Educational pieces describing western aspects of history were also identified.

The western games and puzzles were western only in their format. Activities such as crosswords, dot-to-dots, colour-by-numbers, mazes, spot-the-difference and colouring in were included. All of these are activities that existed in the west before they existed in Cambodia.

Some degree of western influence was found in almost all picture books and magazines that were analysed as part of this study. The forms of influence found were, as mentioned, predominantly in the form of depictions of western objects and scenes and western communication formats.

## **Christian Material**

Christian material has been analysed separately because its aims are generally quite different to those of the mainstream development sector. In light of this, this section begins with an introduction to, and background of Christian organisations operating in Cambodia today.

### **Background of Christian organisations operating in Cambodia**

Today there are an estimated 100 Christian organisations or denominations operating in Cambodia (United States Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor 2005). Some of these organisations operate as part of the development sector, mixing a mainstream development agenda with Christian messages, whilst others operate independently, focusing only the message of the Bible.

In an effort to convey a relevant, effective message, many modern Christian organisations who operate in non-western cultures seek to bring western Christianity by adapting to the local culture rather than imposing an accompanying western culture (Angrosino 1994) and (McGregor 2001). In spite of the fact that religion and culture are undoubtedly linked, they are separate enough that it can be said that it is unlikely that any Christian organisation has the primary objective of bringing about a shift towards western culture. Certainly, as discussed by Angrosino (1994), a culturally relevant approach to Christianity (or to the communication of any message) is most effective.

This section; Christian Material, presents and discusses the results of the analysis of a range of visual communications material produced by Christian organisations in Cambodia. A large portion of this material is produced for children, this being due to a focus on visual, picture based material that is commonly used to communicate to children. This material was found to carry both religious and cultural messages.

86 pieces of printed visual communications material were analysed. These were produced by various Christian organisations in Cambodia. Formats included bible tracts, story books, illustrated bibles, educational activity books and small pamphlets.

The majority of these pieces are dominated by watercolour illustrations; these are accompanied by Khmer text supporting the image.

A large part of this was obtained from Family Book Store, a shop in Phnom Penh that sells a large range of Christian oriented material in both Khmer and English language. Most of these materials are sold at low prices in bulk and are intended for redistribution. A significant quantity was provided by Ken Huff, the director of the Cambodia Assemblies of God (AOG) church in Phnom Penh. AOG provided me with a range of material that they produce themselves as well as material that is produced by other organisations, and distributed by AOG.

Western influence was found to be present in a number of forms, the details of which will be discussed later in this section. As it is unremarkable to note that Christian material bears western Christian influence, Christian specific forms will not be addressed in detail.

Across the body of material that was collected, there appears to be a broad range of approaches. Some material is obviously produced in Cambodia specifically for Cambodia, displays knowledge of Khmer folk stories and depicts Khmer characters in Cambodian settings. Assemblies of God requires foreigners to spend their first 11 months in Cambodia learning to speak, read and write Khmer language, and the material that they have produced in recent years reflects this level of dedication to the understanding of Khmer culture (Huff 2005). At the other end of the scale, there is material which has been produced in the west, for the west, bearing the copyright of a western organisation, depicting western characters, objects and settings, appearing to have only had its text translated for the Khmer audience.

Only a subset of the typology for visual material described at Chapter 3 is of significant relevance in relation to this Christian material.

The types which are relevant to this material fall into three main groups.

- The depiction of Jesus, God, other divinities and other significant virtuous figures as European.

Limited for the purpose of this study to; God, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Adam

and Eve, Noah, Moses.

A figure was deemed to be of European appearance if it was identified by Khmer people as បារាំង (barang) . បារាំង literally means French, however it is commonly used to refer to white westerners. White Americans, white Canadians, white Australians, white Europeans and others of western European appearance are all commonly (though arguably incorrectly) referred to as បារាំង (barang).

- The depiction of the unrighteous as less western in appearance than other characters in the publication.  
This includes people such as those who have been damned to hell and those who oppose or otherwise do not follow the teachings of the Bible.
- Modern western cultural influence.  
Including the depiction of western activities (commonly childhood activities), depiction of characters in western dress and depiction of western imagery (e.g. landscapes, buildings, flora and fauna and the racial composition of groups being that of a western country).

There are other general forms in which western influence exists. These include the panoptic forms that have already been addressed (Figure 7, p42). These are relatively insignificant in Christian material, as the western association of the material is clearly evident from its western Christian content.

A more specific analysis was conducted that identified and specifically noted the perceived ethnicity for all instances in which Jesus, Adam and Eve, God and Angels are depicted.

As a foreigner, I could not identify whether figures are perceived by Khmer people to be of Khmer appearance, European appearance or of any other appearance. A similar difficulty exists in the labelling of objects, landscapes and other imagery. To counter this shortcoming, analysis was conducted with the help of Khmer people. The primary analysis was conducted with Ham Samnom, a researcher at the Mores and Customs

Commission of the Buddhist Institute in Phnom Penh. The secondary analysis was conducted with Touch Vann, who was at the time, a fourth year student at Maharishi Vedic University, Prey Veng, Cambodia.

The themes of western influence discussed in this section relate primary to three specific codes; *Depiction of white people from whom Khmers are to learn lessons*, • *Depiction of Jesus and other biblical figures as white (and as Khmer, Chinese etc)* and *Depiction of villains as being less western*. More general codes were also noted, similar to those that were found in the non-Christian picture books and magazines analysed in the previous section.

The following map outlines the presence of these codes in each of these visual elements and themes. The titles in the map relate to the following codes:

- Panoptic forms  
As previously described (Figure 7, p42).
- Western Christianity
- Virtuous characters as European  
Depiction of Jesus and other biblical figures as white (and as Khmer, Chinese etc).  
Depiction of white people from whom Khmers are to learn lessons.  
Implication that Khmers are ignorant and need to be taught by westerners.
- Unvirtuous characters as Asian  
Depiction of villains as being less western.  
Implication that Khmers are ignorant and need to be taught by westerners.
- Western cultural influence  
Public display of affection.  
Western style illustration (e.g. cartoon characters).  
Western dress.  
Activities/Activity books.

Map of forms of western influence found in Christian material

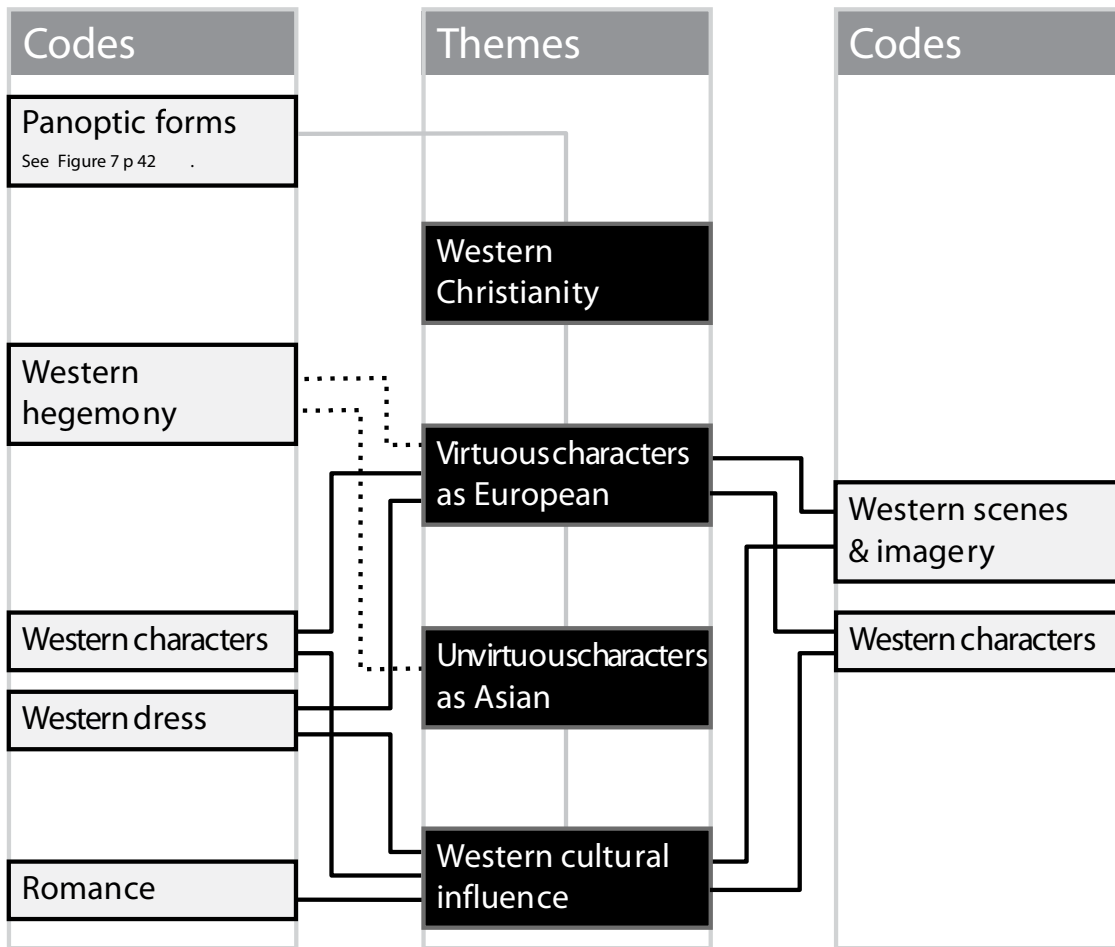


Figure 13: Map of forms of western influence found in Christian material illustrating the relationship between the themes discussed in this section and the codes used in the analysis of material.

#### Frequency of forms of western influence found in Christian material

The following tables documents the frequency of the codes and themes relevant to the dominant themes found in Christian material. These figures occurred amongst a total of 86 pieces of Christian material that were analysed.



#### Frequency of the depiction of Jesus and other biblical figures as white

Figure	Frequency	បារាំង (western)	Asian	Khmer	Other
Jesus	53	41	11	0	1
God	11	7	0	1	3
Angels	13	9	0	0	4
Adam and Eve	11	11	0	0	0

Figure 14: Table of the frequency of the depiction of Jesus and other biblical figures as white in Christian material.

#### Frequency of the other specific codes and themes

Code/theme	Frequency
Depiction of villains as being less western.	10
Depiction of white people from whom Khmers are to learn lessons.	59
Western cultural influence (including Western style illustration, Western dress, Western imagery, Western aesthetics).	39

Figure 15: Table of the frequency of codes relevant to the dominant themes found in the analysis of Christian material.

#### The depiction of Jesus, God, other divinities and other virtuous figures as European

Described in the map of forms of western influence for this chapter as *Virtuous characters as European*, are instances of the codes *Depiction of Jesus and other biblical figures as white* (and as *Khmer, Chinese etc*) and *Depiction of white people from whom Khmers are to learn lessons*.



*Image 25: The New Testament Picture Bible - The Bible Society in Cambodia*

In the early Christianity, there was significant reserve in the depiction of Jesus Christ. Christ was initially represented symbolically or ideographically. It was only during the late renaissance that Christ came to be represented in a realistic manner (Farrar 1895). This realistic depiction of Jesus, having originated in the western European renaissance, is of an ideal western European man developed to be most relevant to western Christians.

*“This is not a rough image of themselves people have been depicting. It’s an ideal image of themselves, painting Jesus as something they are aspiring to”* (Goodacre, M. quoted in Wilson 2004)

Using an image of Jesus which has been developed in terms of western aspirations is unlikely to contribute to effective communication and does contribute to western cultural influence. It is this image of Jesus that came to be the *colonial Christ* (Phan 1996) in its various forms:

*“Jesus as the white, male, all-powerful lord conquering souls and empires for God and implanting his own Church”* (Ibid)

Of course, in all likelihood, Jesus, being of Jewish heritage, was not of western European appearance, but of Semitic appearance.

While theological discourse exists concerning the ‘branding’ of Jesus for Asian missions, there is very little which deals specifically with the visual representation of Jesus (and of other divine and virtuous figures) in promoting Christianity to non-western cultures. This is not unexpected, as across all mass communications research, the field of visual communications has suffered relative neglect (Griffin 1992).

The depiction of these biblical characters has the potential to convey western influence. This sends the message that the characters from which Khmers should learn lessons, and the figures to which they should pray, are white Europeans. The depiction of both Adam and Eve and Noah as white Europeans suggests that Khmers, and all races have descended from white Europeans.

Of the 67 pieces which depicted the significant figures which were counted, 56 of these pieces depicted these figures as white Europeans.

In the 53 pieces which depicted Jesus, he is depicted as a white European 4 times, and of a non-Khmer Asian ethnicity 11 times (In one instance, he is depicted without any features from which ethnicity can be determined). These figures indicate that Jesus is depicted as non-European in approximately one fifth of all cases, however, it should be noted, that all 11 pieces which depict Jesus as non-European come from the same series of short books.



*Image 26: Heaven or Hell - Cambodian - Japan Bible Distribution League.*

God is depicted in 12 pieces. Of these, he was identified by Khmers as being បារាំង (barang) in 7 instances, as Khmer in instance, and is depicted without features from which ethnicity can be determined in 3 instances. The instance in which God is depicted as Khmer is slightly ambiguous, and will be discussed in the following section.

Angels appear in 5 pieces, of these, they were identified as បារាំង (barang) in 9 instances, as Khmer in one instance, without ethnically distinguishing features in 3 instances, and in one instance, an American produced piece depicted angels of various ethnicities, relating to the multi-racial composition of the US population.

Adam and Eve appear in 11 pieces, and were exclusively identified as បារាំង (barang).

These figures show that the in the overwhelming majority of cases, the virtuous Christian figures presented to Khmers in this body of material are perceived to be បារាំង (barang).

Other than the previously mentioned codes, this has the potential to contribute to the *Implication that Khmers are ignorant and need to be taught by westerners* that comes in the category of *The Western Hegemony*.

### **Depiction and perception of ethnicity**

In Christian material, the depiction of characters, identified by Khmers as បារាំង (barang), is particularly interesting. These instances are coded as *Western style illustration (e.g. cartoon characters)*, *Depiction of Jesus and other biblical figures as white (and as Khmer, Chinese etc)* and *Depiction of white people from whom Khmers are to learn lessons*.



*Image 27: Detail from True Love Can Overpower Your Fears - Assemblies of God, Cambodia*

There are a number of pieces in which I identified characters as being Khmer, of non-European descent, or of no distinguishable ethnicity, but it was found that the Khmer perception of that character was as បារាំង (barang).

Image 27: Detail from True Love Can Overpower Your Fears - Assemblies of God, Cambodia is an illustration in a 1994 workbook produced by Assemblies of God, Cambodia (AOG). Having grown up with western caricatures, I saw this figure as devoid of ethnicity. To the Khmer analyst however, the long nose immediately identifies this figure as បារាំង (barang). The illustrations in this piece are generally small icon-like images which appear to have come from a clip art gallery rather than having been produced specifically for the Cambodian audience.

Looking at an example (Image 28) from a more recent publication, also produced by AOG, the illustrator has rendered angels which were identified as being Khmer. In the context of the rest of the figures in this piece (primarily Khmer laypeople depicted in an illustrative style which is common in Cambodia), it is safe to assume that it is the intention of the artist to depict God as Khmer. To a foreigner, God appears to be Khmer, however to the Khmer viewer, it is slightly ambiguous. The main feature which brings about this ambiguity is his full face beard, a not unheard of, but certainly

uncommon feature for Khmer men and a common feature for western men. This Khmerised God appears to have been adapted from a western image of God and as a result, is less Khmer. This God is a Khmer rendering of the visual image of God that has been developed in response to western ideals and aspirations rather than a unique Khmer god entirely relevant to the ideals and aspirations of Khmer people.



*Image 28: Protecting people from HIV - Assemblies of God, Cambodia.*

The series of short picture books from which the following two images are taken is produced by the Bible Society in Cambodia. The publication details indicate that the illustrations are copyrighted by the Bible Society in Cambodia, suggesting that the publication was probably illustrated specifically for the Cambodian audience. The characters depicted throughout this series were not identified as បារាំង (barang), but could not be identified as Khmer. The Khmer analysts suggested that they might be Korean or Japanese. We can see in the first image (Image 29) that Jesus wears a smaller beard as is more commonly found amongst Khmer people and throughout Asia.



Image 29: *Jesus Grows Up - The Bible Society in Cambodia.*



Image 30: *Jesus Grows Up - The Bible Society in Cambodia.*

The second image (Image 30) depicts a teddy bear, children in western style clothes and a painting easel. This is clearly not a Cambodian scene. The familiarity with which this and other similar scenes in this series have been painted points towards the illustrator being more familiar with western imagery than with Cambodian imagery. This does not prove that the illustrator was a westerner, but it does strengthen the possibility. This being the case, it follows that this lack of familiarity with Cambodian imagery could be

the reason for the depiction of the people throughout this series of books in a manner which is perceived as being of a non-specific Asian race other than Khmer. Relevance may have been lost as a result of a foreign image of Khmer people applied to these characters and this foreign image being read in a different manner by Khmers.

These two attempts at rendering God, Jesus and other biblical figures indicate that there are Christian organisations in Cambodia sensitive to the concept of a localised visual Christianity. The frequency with which this has occurred shows that this idea is far from being universally accepted. In its current form, there is not yet a well developed, culturally Khmer Jesus. The depiction of the unvirtuous as less European

Referred to in the map as *Unvirtuous characters as Asian* the following are examples of the code *Depiction of villains as being less western*.

From Fu-Manchu and Ming the Merciless to Dr No, it is so often the 'other' that plays the part of the villain in western popular culture (Seshagiri 2006). Mirroring this trend in popular culture, the characters which are depicted in a negative light in the material analysed in this study, tend to be drawn as less western (and often more asian). While God, Jesus and the virtuous in general tend to be depicted according a classical western ideal, the misbelievers, the critics and the damned are not depicted according to a classical western ideal, they are the opposite of the classical western ideal, the 'other'.

Consider the following images, all from the same short bible tract (Image 31).

Throughout this piece, virtuous western men and woman are contrasted with unvirtuous non- western characters. These non-western characters were not identified as Khmer, however they were identified as not being បារាំង (barang). It is the non-western characters who illustrate sin and who are doomed to hell. While one of the unvirtuous characters does appear to be of western appearance, (the woman in the background of the bottom right frame) it is still the case that the scenes depicting the virtuous are exclusively white, whereas those scenes depicting the unvirtuous are dominated by non-western characters.





Image 31: The Apocalypse - Publisher not indicated.



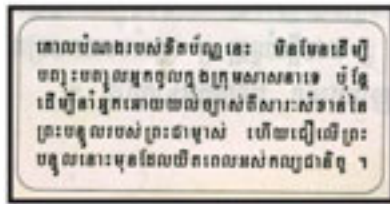
Image 32: God Forgives Your Sins - Cambodia-Japan Bible Distribution League.

Similarly, the second image (Image 32) juxtaposes virtuous westerners in Heaven with an unvirtuous man of dark complexion being thrown into the depths of hell.

Only 10 pieces (11.63%) depicted villains as less western and it is interesting to note that of those 10, 7 did not bear any information regarding the publisher. Only 11 of the 86 pieces analysed failed to indicate the publisher, and these account for 70% of the depictions of the unvirtuous as non-western. These pieces tend to tend to bear more sensationalist messages, frequently referencing the apocalypse, stressing that those who do not receive the message being conveyed will be subject to eternal suffering.

On the back page of these pieces, a message is often given such as the one pictured below (Image 33) which states:

*“This leaflet is not intended to convince people to join the Christian church. It is intended to enable you to understand and trust the word of God before entering eternal life”*



*Image 33: Disclaimer from a typical bible tract.*

The unwillingness to make public the details of the publisher and the pre-emptive defence that is pictured here suggests that the publisher is conscious of the fact that this material may cause offence. One would like to believe that the depiction of westerners as more virtuous than non-westerners is unintentional. These are however, such extreme cases that it is conceivable that such a rendering of Asian characters in a negative light and westerners in a positive light is intentional rather than simply being the result of an inherited prejudice from the depiction of villains in western narratives.



*Image 34: An Abridged Bible - The Bible Distribution League, Phnom Penh.*

In other instances, the negative portrayal of non-western characters is not as crude and could more easily be attributed to the fore mentioned inherited prejudice. The image above (Image 34) is from an illustrated bible produced by the Bible Distribution League, Phnom Penh. In the foreground of the image, a white Noah is spreading the message that he has received from God, only to be mocked by the figures in the background. These figures are not particularly dark, but they do all possess black hair, broader faces and broader noses than Noah. These figures were not identified as បារាំង (barang) by Khmer analysts.

While the message is not as confronting as in the previous two examples, it remains the case that the unvirtuous are never depicted as of ideal western appearance. In other places in the book, scenes depicting solely virtuous characters were identified as being composed entirely of បារាំង (barang) and scenes with both unvirtuous and virtuous characters being of mixed composition.

This avoids the interpretation that could be taken from the previous examples, that westerners are virtuous without exception, however it does imply that historically the

virtuous have been exclusively of western appearance. Those of darker complexion historically holding their place exclusively amongst the unvirtuous. As discussed with relation to *the depiction of Jesus, God, other divinities and other virtuous figures as European*, this has the potential to contribute to a western hegemony.

In particular, the instances where the unvirtuous are depicted as being of Asian appearance have the potential to damage Khmer people's confidence in their own culture. Khmer people tend to identify with other Asian cultures in particularly the Chinese and Thai which dominate the audiovisual entertainment industry.

### **Western cultural influence**

The influence of modern western society is limited by the fact that a significant proportion of Christian material depicts scenes from the Bible, with styles of dress and scenery reflecting the relevant time period. While it is easy to establish whether a human figure is perceived as Khmer or as foreign, it is not such a simple task to determine whether objects are Khmer. In terms of modern western cultural influence, foreign objects are only relevant in a modern context, which means that the majority of the material that I have analysed does not include depictions of modern western objects and landscapes which could impose western cultural influence.

In spite of the fact that so many pieces depict biblical scenes, 39 pieces (45.35%) display some form of modern western cultural influence.



*Image 35: Jesus' story of the kind enemy 'The Bible Society in Cambodia.*



The first example (Image 35) depicts three children in modern western dress (coded as *Western dress*), all wealthy enough to buy shoes and sit in chairs, playing traditional western musical instruments. Like many of these instances, this scene is something which Khmer people are not likely to understand or relate to more so than something which communicates a different, unintended message in the context of Cambodia.

Such examples are common and while comparatively tame these still contribute to a western cultural hegemony through associating western culture with a message which is promoted as virtuous in a manner that bears some relation to the code *Depiction of modern society as a desirable side effect*.

The depiction of relationships between male and female characters brings up some more significant instances of miscommunication (coded as *Public display of affection*).



*Image 36: Adam and Eve - Book of Hope International.*

The depiction of Adam and Eve (Image 36), both naked, close together, to the Khmer analyst, renders them as unchaste. We can be quite sure that this is not the intention of the illustrator to desensitise Khmer children to sexual relationships.



*Image 37: Young children walking arm in arm - Book of Hope International.*

The next example from the same piece (Image 37) illustrates a similar miscommunication. These two children walking arm in arm seem completely innocent to myself and to any western observer. To the Khmer, viewer they are involved in a romantic relationship, contrary to the traditional Khmer practice of arranged marriage. Whether the author supports a shift away from arranged marriages, it is unlikely that this was a conscious decision, rather an expression of western sensitivities (or the lack thereof) of friendship between young children.

The majority of modern western cultural influence exists in this form. Simply presenting modern western culture without explicitly promoting it. This is generally more likely to reduce the effectiveness of the communication more so than promoting a shift towards western culture.

### **Results of Analysis**

There exists a small range of Christian pieces which display strong understanding of Khmer culture, however, these are in the minority. The majority of the material analysed was found to include western influence above and beyond the inherent influence of western Christianity.

Influence was predominantly found in the presence of three specific codes:

- Depiction of Jesus and other biblical figures as white (and as Khmer, Chinese etc).
- Depiction of white people from whom Khmers are to learn lessons.
- Depiction of villains as being less western.

It came as a shock that, intentional or otherwise, in promoting Christianity, the majority of these organisations were putting forth the idea that the divine are white Europeans. A greater shock came when it came to light that in a significant minority of cases, the implication that the divine are made up of white Europeans is accompanied by an implication that the unvirtuous are made up of non-white, non-Europeans.

Less sensationally, western cultural influence was found relating to the codes *Public display of affection*, *Western style illustration (e.g. cartoon characters)*, and *Western dress, Activities/Activity books*.

Amongst the theme of western cultural influence, it was observed that there was an apparent difficulty for (presumably foreign) illustrators in depicting Khmer characters or characters devoid of ethnicity. Characters that were seen to be Khmer, Asian or without ethnicity to myself, were often seen as being westerners by Khmer people.

## Chapter 5 - Interview Analysis and Results

In reference to King (1998) a thematic presentation of the findings of the interview analysis is presented in this chapter. The themes and issues illustrated by the interviews came under 4 main categories. These are illustrated in the map below.

As the coding system used for interviews applies only to this one set of data, all the codes are relevant to this analysis. The categories in the map below correspond directly to the categories used in the coding system which is included at Appendix 2.

Map of themes and issues found in the analysis of interviews

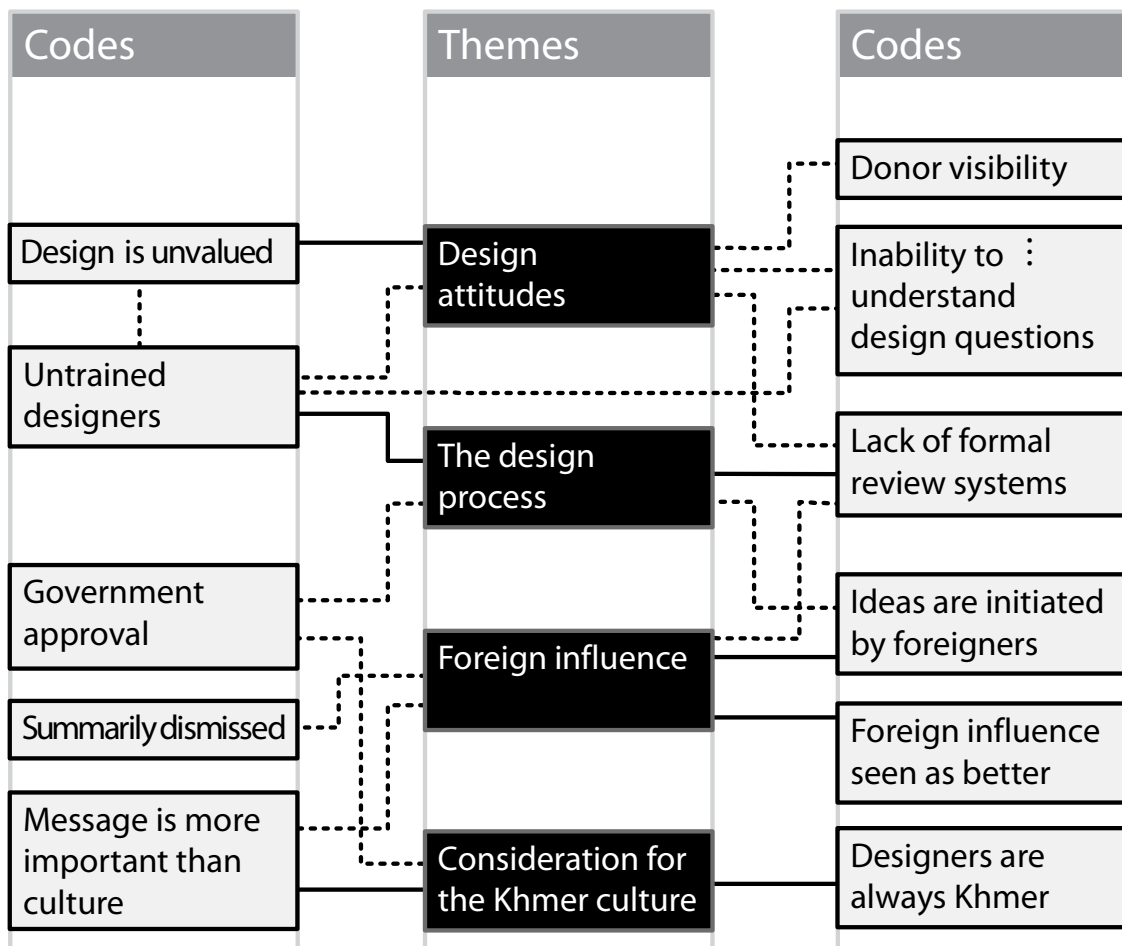


Figure 16: Map of themes and issues found in interviews, illustrating the relationship between the themes discussed in this section and the codes used in the analysis of interview data.



### Frequency of significant codes found during interview analysis

The following table documents the frequency of the codes relevant to the dominant themes discussed in this chapter. These figures occurred amongst a total of 10 interviews that were analysed.

The coding system does not relate directly to the survey questions, but rather, was drawn from the results of the interview process. Subsequently, the fact that a code is not found in an interview does not mean that it is not present in the organisation. Codes were identified as either having a positive indication of their presence in the interview, a negative indication or no indication.

Code	Positive indication	Negative indication
<b>The Organisation:</b>		
The organisation employs designers.	2	4
Designs are produced by an employee with a primary role other than communications, visual or otherwise.	4	-
The designer has received some formal training in design.	2	-
Design is outsourced to a local printing shop.	2	-
The respondent stated that others in the organisation do not respect or appreciate visual communications knowledge and skills.	2	-
Need is identified by the subject.	1	-
Through a participatory process.	1	-
Respondent mentioned that ideas were typically induced from the community rather than coming directly from the community.	1	-
Need is identified by upper management.	7	-
From existing external research	1	-
From the research and experience of the organisation.	1	-

Need is identified by non-senior staff.	1	-
Reviewed and approved by senior staff.	1	-
Need is identified by a partner organisation.	1	-
Systems of review: Formal system.	3	-
<b>Attitudes to Design:</b>		
The respondent had difficulty understanding questions relating to design.	2	-
The respondent explicitly stated that design is not important.	2	-
The respondent raised the issue of budget restrictions.	2	-
The respondent stated that donor visibility is an important factor.	2	-
<b>Foreign Influence:</b>		
Due to the practical benefit of foreign technical expertise.	1	-
Foreigners produce individual components of the design (e.g. illustrations, photographs).	2	-
The organisation uses translated foreign material.	2	-
The respondent gave a brief unconsidered dismissal of the idea that western influence may have been an issue in the organisation	2	-
The respondent noted that it was difficult to get Khmer staff to criticise work produced or presented by a foreigner	2	-
<b>Consideration for the Khmer Culture:</b>		
The respondent noted that cultural relevance is important in order to communicate most effectively to the subject.	1	-
The respondent stated that the message of their organisation is more important than the preservation of culture.	2	-

The respondent noted that the fact that their organisation's material is reviewed by the Cambodian government goes some of the way to ensuring that it is not offensive to Khmer culture.	4	-
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*Figure 17: Frequency of significant codes found during interview analysis.*

**Interview Process**

A list of 300 organisations operating in the non-commercial development sector in Cambodia was obtained from the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC). From this list 150 organisations were emailed at random and asked to participate in this research. There was the option to participate in a face-to-face interview or via an online survey. From this mail out, 4 positive responses were received; this consisted of 2 Internet and 2 face-to-face surveys. As my spoken Khmer language was not strong enough to discuss the relatively complex issues involved in this study, interviews were conducted with assistance and interpretation from local researchers. Where possible, interviews were conducted with Ham Samnom as an interpreter/translator. When Samnom was unavailable, fellow Buddhist Institute researchers Than Bunly and Chea Bunnary assisted.

It was recognised during the course of this study, that another approach was needed to gain responses to the survey. Ham Samnom had significant experience in conducting research with NGOs in Cambodia and suggested that the best approach was to turn up and knock on the doors of organisations. A randomly sorted version of the CCC list was used and around 60 organisations were approached, resulting in a further 8 interviews. The 2 Internet interviews were discarded as they are too small a sample to be relevant.

This sample accounts for only a small portion of the producers of non-commercial visual communications in Cambodia. All organisations had offices in Phnom Penh. The organisations that responded positively to requests for interviews tended to be smaller organisations. Larger organisations were more difficult to approach, and requests for information, taken by a receptionist, rarely resulted in an interview. I had no responses from any of the Christian organisations that produced widely distributed evangelical material such as that analysed in the section on Christian material in Chapter 4.

In view of the sample size, this analysis predominantly descriptive rather than statistical. The codes that came up frequently have been addressed in depth, but notable codes that came up infrequently are also discussed.

Due to the difficulties in gaining interviews, it was not possible to redesign the survey in response to earlier responses. For this reason, the questions reflect the types of responses that were expected and not necessarily the most valuable responses gained from the interviews.

I had originally planned for the respondents to write down their own answers to questions with assistance and clarification from myself and an interpreter. I immediately found that this was too difficult as the concepts were difficult for most of the respondents to grasp. Instead I asked questions and the interpreter and myself took notes of the responses that were given.

### Physical Formats

The organisations that were interviewed produced material in a wide range of formats. The following table shows the frequency with which each format was mentioned.

Format	Incidence
Posters	8
Books	6
Leaflets	5
Stickers	4
T-Shirts	3
TV Shows	2
Diaries	1
Newspaper Advertisements	1
Magazines	1
School Curriculum	1
Billboards	1
Calendars	1
Large Format Banners	1
Video	1

*Figure 18: Physical formats mentioned by interview respondents.*

Posters were by far the most popular format, followed by books, leaflets, stickers, t-shirts and television. An array of other formats were mentioned only once.

The formats mentioned by these organisations correspond only in part to the formats of visual communications material that were collected as part of this study. The large numbers of billboards that were photographed is not reflected, nor is the number of magazines. For both of these formats, this incongruity is probably the result of a combination of these particular formats being readily available, and the organisations that produce these formats being larger organisations who were less likely to respond to the request for an interview. Billboards are, of course, very visible and able to be photographed, magazines are easily accessed as they can be bought from local markets. Some of the other formats such as calendars, leaflets, stickers and posters were collected, but not in significant numbers.

## **Applications**

By far the most common application of the collected visual material is the education of the general public. This was reflected in the interview responses, with 5 of the 10 organisations mentioning that their material is intended for public education. This is particularly significant as this was not asked as a direct question, but was generally mentioned in response to a broader question regarding the formats and applications in which the organisation uses visual material.

The organisations that were interviewed also produced visual communications for attracting funds from donors (2), advocacy aimed at the government (2) and simply to provide a free t-shirt to the patients of a health NGO.

It was mentioned on three occasions that visual material was particularly useful in communicating to groups who may have a low level of literacy. One respondent mentioned that in doing so, it was important to ensure that in catering to those with low levels of literacy, it was not shown that the respondents were unable to read or write, in order to avoid the loss of face.

## Attitudes to Design

The most significant themes and issues that were found in relation to attitudes to design are listed below with the corresponding codes.

Theme	Corresponding Codes
Design is under-valued and/or under-appreciated.	<p>The respondent explicitly stated that design is not important.</p> <p>The respondent stated that others in the organisation do not respect or appreciate visual communications knowledge and skills.</p> <p>The respondent raised the issue of budget restrictions.</p>
Some respondents were unable to understand the concepts involved in some design questions.	The respondent had difficulty understanding questions relating to design.
Designers are typically untrained, and often have a primary role in an area such as administration.	<p>Designs are produced by an employee with a primary role other than communications, visual or otherwise.</p> <p>Design is outsourced to a local printing shop.</p> <p>The designer has some formal training in design.</p>
Donor visibility is a high priority	The respondent stated that donor visibility is an important factor.

*Figure 19: Significant themes found in relation to attitudes to design expressed in interviews with organisations.*

A lack of understanding and appreciation of design was evident in most responses. This was confirmed by the respondents who did have a formal design or communications education, who claimed that design and communications in general was under-appreciated throughout the development sector in Cambodia.

This lack of understanding mirrors the description of advocacy in the Cambodian development sector as being characterised by “*limited or nascent experience*” (Mansfield & MacLeod 2002, p. 3).

Many of the respondents had difficulty understanding issues relating to design. The later questions in particular, often took quite a while to explain in both Khmer and English. In some cases, the respondent was unable to grasp the concepts surrounding these questions. These were:

- 7) What do you think are the criteria for successful visual communications?
- 8) Has the presence of western influence in visual communications produced by your organisation ever been an issue? Please provide details.
- 9) What procedures do you use to ensure the sensitivity of your organisation’s visual communications materials to local culture?
- 10) What do you consider the most important issues in the design and production of visual communications material?

The interpreters felt that this inability to grasp these concepts was not a language issue, but a result of a lack of knowledge in relation to design and communications and in some cases, a low level of general education. Having limited experience in producing visual communications could contribute to miscommunication and possibly the inclusion of western influence.

Only two of the organisations interviewed mentioned that they have staff employed who had some level of formal training in design. Four organisations explicitly mentioned that they do not employ designers. In five cases, graphic design was done by a staff member who had a primary role within the organisation other than design.

The lack of trained designers is a manifestation of a general lack of trained designers throughout Cambodia. One respondent was surprised to learn that I had studied a bachelor’s degree solely dedicated to the design of visual communications, as there are no universities in Cambodia that offer design courses. The use of software (particularly Adobe Photoshop) used in the design and production of visual communications is

generally taught in a technical manner within degrees such as IT or marketing. Students are taught how to use the application in a practical manner as opposed to being taught how to communicate visually.

One of the two respondents who had received formal training in visual communications spoke of a general lack of respect for communications education and knowledge across the development sector. The respondent mentioned that the production process was plagued by low budgets and unrealistic time allowances. Staff from other departments in the organisation tended to disregard the opinion of the respondent and other people trained in communications.

On a two occasions, it was mentioned that it was a priority in production of visual communications, to ensure the visibility of donor logos. These logos generally contain or are accompanied by Roman text, associating the material with western sources. This focus on donor visibility could be indicative of a desire to retain and/or secure funds, potentially compromising the effectiveness of the communications.

## The Design Process

The most significant themes and issues that were found in relation to attitudes to design are listed below with the corresponding codes.

Theme	Corresponding Codes
Untrained designers	Designs are produced by an employee with a primary role other than communications, visual or otherwise. Design is outsourced to a local printing shop.



Lack of formal review systems	<p>Formal system.</p> <p>Involves user testing.</p> <p>Involves review and redesign in response to user testing.</p> <p>Formal process exists but the respondent stated that it was rarely followed.</p> <p>Informal process - observation and feedback.</p> <p>Considers review to be prohibitively expensive.</p>
Government approval	Government approval.
Ideas are initiated by foreigners	<p>Need is identified by the subject.</p> <p>Through a participatory process.</p> <p>Respondent mentioned that ideas were typically induced by staff rather than coming directly from the community.</p> <p>Need is identified by upper management.</p> <p>Need is identified by non-senior staff.</p> <p>Reviewed and approved by senior staff.</p> <p>Need is identified by a partner organisation.</p>

*Figure 20: Significant themes found in relation to the design process, expressed in interviews with organisations.*

In the majority of cases (6) the need for a piece of visual communications was said to be identified by upper management. Upper management are more likely to be westerners, other foreigners or Khmers with a western education, increasing the potential for inclusion of western influence. In only one instance was it mentioned that the need for visual communications came as the result of a participatory process, meaning that the subject of the communications had identified the need themselves. Even in this isolated case, it was mentioned that ideas were generally induced from the community following prompts and suggestions from the staff of the organisation rather than coming directly from the community.

Once the need for a piece of visual communications has been identified, the design was usually produced in-house, though it was sometimes produced at a local printing shop. Only one organisation mentioned that they had outsourced design to a communications agency. The majority of other organisations used existing staff who generally work in administrative or other non-design roles to produce their visual communications material.

Nine out of the ten organisations surveyed mentioned that they used informal observation and feedback as a system of review. Only three organisations mentioned that they had a formal internal review system, with one of those stating that it was rarely adhered to. Of those three organisations, two used a cyclical process that involves user testing and re-design.

Four organisations mentioned that their designs were often subject to the review and approval of Cambodian government ministries, even to the point of having to conform to government layout guidelines. The two ministries mentioned were the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and the Ministry of Health (MoH). One organisation listed government approval as one of their two most important considerations in the design and production process.

## Foreign Influence

The potential for foreign influence to come into the design process was identified in the following issues, themes and codes:

Theme	Corresponding Codes
Ideas are initiated by foreigners	<p>Due to the practical benefit of foreign technical expertise.</p> <p>As the instigators, providing the idea to Khmer staff who go on to produce it.</p> <p>Foreigners produce the design.</p> <p>Foreigners produce individual components of the design.</p> <p>The organisation uses translated foreign material.</p> <p>The respondent noted that it was difficult to get Khmer staff to criticise work produced or presented by a foreigner.</p>
Foreign influence is seen as better	Due to the practical benefit of foreign technical expertise.
(Foreign influence being an issue in the past was) summarily dismissed	The respondent gave a brief unconsidered dismissal of the idea that western influence may have been an issue in the organisation.

*Figure 21: Significant themes found in relation to foreign influence expressed in interviews with organisations.*

Across all responses, foreign influence was not considered to be a major issue in the production of visual communications. This can be seen in the fact that seven of the ten organisations interviewed gave a short unconsidered response to question 8:

8) Has the presence of western influence in visual communications produced by your organisation ever been an issue? Please provide details.

This was generally 'No' without any elaboration. The fact that it is not seen to be an issue could be interpreted as being a result of an absence of western influence in the visual communications that is produced. Having identified various forms of western influence in the visual communications analysed in chapters 5, 6 and 7, I feel that this is not the case. It is more likely that in most instances this is a result of a combination of a limited understanding of visual communications resulting in a reduced openness to alternative interpretations, and/or a lack of awareness of what constitutes western influence and what effect it might have on the subject.

In one instance, the respondent stated that western influence may be expressly included because it was seen as being 'better' by Khmer people. This includes both the Khmers producing the material and those who ultimately view it. This is in line with the practice of Cambodian-made products being branded in English, such as the Number One condoms discussed in Chapter 4 - Analysis of Visual Material and all Cambodian beer. I am not aware of any Cambodian beer that is branded in Khmer language.

In most cases, all imagery and layout was done by Khmer people. In two cases, translated foreign material was used, one of these being a translated brochure that had been produced for a sister organisation in Lao and the other being the occasional use of translated Japanese stories. In one case, existing foreign-produced illustrations and photographs were sourced, generally from the internet, and in another, foreign photographers were occasionally used. As we have seen in the analysis of imagery in previous chapters, foreign produced imagery is not a particularly common source of western influence.

It was often mentioned (4 times) that the fact that material is produced by foreigners meant that western influence was not an issue.

The involvement of foreigners in the production of material was generally at conceptual level. Upper management (more likely to be foreigners or western-educated Khmers) identified the need for visual communications in 6 of the 10 organisations, and then non-senior staff (more likely to be Khmer) produced the material. In only one instance was it explicitly mentioned that the upper management who initiate the production of visual material were westerners. However given that upper management are most

commonly westerners or western-educated Khmers, it is possible that this is a significant source of western influence in the production process.

### Consideration of the Khmer Culture

In relation to consideration of the Khmer culture, three themes were found to be relevant, these are listed here with their associated codes:

Theme	Corresponding Codes
Message is more important than culture.	The respondent stated that the message of their organisation is more important than the preservation of culture.
Designers are always Khmer.	The respondent did not consider western influence to be an issue simply because all material is produced by Khmer people or by groups dominated by Khmer people.  The respondent noted that cultural relevance is important in order to communicate most effectively to the subject.
Government approval.	The respondent noted that the fact that their organisation's material is reviewed by the Cambodian government goes some of the way to ensuring that it is not offensive to Khmer culture.

*Figure 22: Significant themes found in relation to consideration of the Khmer culture, expressed in interviews with organisations.*

It was often mentioned that western influence was not an issue as a result of the production of visual material being carried out by Khmer people. Implicitly, Khmer cultural relevance is thought to be achieved by the same means.

While only one respondent mentioned that cultural relevance was important in order to communicate most effectively, there were numerous other statements referring to “*something the villagers can understand*”. Some degree of cultural relevance is necessary in order to communicate the desired message.

A number of respondents referred to the fact that their material is reviewed by the Cambodian government as being an indication that it was not offensive to Khmer culture.

The most interesting responses in relation to Khmer culture were the two respondents who explicitly stated that their message was more important than the preservation of Khmer culture. The issues that these organisations were dealing with were human trafficking, rape and HIV/AIDS. In these cases, as mentioned in Chapter 6, it is important to recognise that these are serious issues in Cambodia and it may well be the case that approaches to dealing with these problems that were entirely sensitive were sought, but not found.

## **Results of Analysis**

The data that was obtained from these surveys has given insight into the nature of western influence in visual communications from Cambodian non-commercial sources in a way that was not expected when designing the survey. The survey questions were designed with the expectation that the designers working at these organisations would be familiar with the issues at hand and be able to answer the questions with ease. The most significant finding of these interviews was that this was not the case. Some of the respondents were unable to understand some of the later questions in the survey even after a lengthy explanation in both Khmer and English language. The visual communications education and experience of the people who are producing non-commercial visual communications in Cambodia is, in most cases, quite limited.

It was found that even in organisations that did employ designers, visual communications was not a highly valued or respected skill. Most of the people producing visual communications do not have the production of visual communications as their primary role within their organisation. Very few had any formal training in design or communications. One respondent explicitly stated that the design of visual communications material is not important and that a single piece can be used for a long time without review. The fact that no university in Cambodia has a visual

communications or graphic design degree may be part of the reason that such an attitude is seen prevalent in the Cambodian development sector.

Formal review systems for visual communications material were found to be uncommon. One of the few organisations that did have a formal review system mentioned that it was rarely adhered to. One organisation did use a cyclical process in the design of their visual communications, testing the material on the subject and redesigning it in response to their feedback. For the most part, review consisted of informal observation and feedback.

Limited education and experience in visual communications does not itself amount to western influence. It does however, make it more likely that unintended messages would be communicated and that less consideration would be given to the effects of communications other than the result of the primary message.

The design process itself was found to generally be initiated by upper management, who are more likely to be westerners or to have a western education, meaning that it is possible that the initial ideas could contain western influence. Designs were found to have been produced almost exclusively by Khmer people. It was rare that imagery was produced by foreigners or obtained from foreign sources. Many organisations saw this as the only safeguard necessary in ensuring the cultural relevance of their designs. Other organisations saw the government approval process that their material had to go through as being an indication that their visual communications material is sensitive and relevant to Khmer culture.

Most organisations gave a short, unconsidered response when asked whether western influence had ever been an issue in their organisation. This is more likely to be due to a limited understanding of visual communications and a lack of awareness of what constitutes western influence than being a reflection of the general lack of western influence in material produced by these organisations.

In some organisations it was seen that the message they were promoting was more important than the adherence to Khmer cultural sensitivities. These were organisations that deal with serious issues in a culturally charged sexual context such as HIV/AIDS,

rape and human trafficking. While there may be a strong argument for putting cultural sensitivity aside in dealing with these issues, it is important that cultural considerations be acknowledged.



## Chapter 6 - Conclusion

This thesis sought to address three questions that were triggered by my personal experiences in Cambodia during a number of visits during the period from 2002 - 2005.

### **Research Question 1:**

What evidence of 'western influence' can be found in visual communications material produced by non-commercial organisations operating in Cambodia?

### **Research Question 2:**

What factors contribute to the inclusion of western influence in visual communications from non-commercial organisations operating in Cambodia?

### **Research Question 3:**

How are these western influences relevant in the Khmer context?

These questions came from my perception that Khmer people were enamoured by all things western. As a visual communications designer, the way in which I've addressed these questions in this thesis has been predominantly through the analysis of collected visual material and interview texts.

In this conclusion chapter I have made some general comments followed by more detailed conclusions for each research question, ending with possible areas for future study arising from this masters thesis.

In the vast array of visual communications that is produced by non-commercial organisations in Cambodia, western influence has been found to be widespread. The material that was found to contain the least western influence was Khmer folk tales. However these generally used Roman text in the publication details, promoted a western value in the spread of mass literacy and sometimes gave preference to Khmer stories that are relevant to western development ideas.

Western influence was evident in a number of subtle aspects. For example, the use of western paper sizes and layout formats together with the inclusion of Roman type in almost all material studied. The more disturbing examples in some Christian materials

depicted western characters as virtuous and characters of a more Asian appearance as unvirtuous or detrimental. For the most part, however, the influence was either the overt promotion of western capitalist ideology or embedded in imagery taken from or influenced by western illustrations.

A wide range of factors contribute to the inclusion of western influence. Development itself is a western concept, the terms 'development' and 'under-development' came into common use in the context of a US project which was initiated as a means of disseminating US systems to the rest of the world as part of its anti-communist strategy. As discussed in the literature review at Chapter 2, the concepts that are common in the development sector reflect its western origins and the dominance of western organisations in the development sector. Similarly, many of the ideas that are intentionally promoted in the material analysed in this study have their roots in western thought. Limited experience and education on the part of the Khmer people involved in the production of visual communications was identified as another potential means by which western influence is included. This factor would account for unintended western influence and make it less likely that alternative interpretations and unintended communications would be considered.

There are subtle western influences included in depictions of western scenes, western people and western dress. The children's books studied, show many examples of this, also using illustrations that appeared to have been sourced from the west. Sometimes these were purpose-drawn illustrations from Khmer artists, who appeared to be using western illustrations as a reference point.

It was noted in Chapter 4 with reference to billboards and posters that the perception exists in Cambodia that visual communications from NGOs target poor people with the message that they are doing something wrong and need to change the way in which they live their lives. In the literature review at Chapter 2, it was acknowledged that social marketing, such as the material that is produced by many non-commercial organisations in Cambodia, generally targets people with a low level of education.

## Research Question 1:

### What evidence of ‘western influence’ can be found in visual communications material produced by non-commercial organisations operating in Cambodia?

Western influence was found on some level in almost all pieces that were collected for this study. Across the range of material analysed, western influence was found primarily in the following forms:

Primary forms of western influence across all visual material
Formats, logos and publication details
Western ideology
Western sourced or influenced imagery

*Figure 23: Primary forms of western influence across all visual material.*

#### Formats, logos and publication details

The physical format of the material; primarily posters, billboards, magazines, leaflets, books and stickers, is not a traditional Cambodian format. Traditionally, documents were produced on either ស្រូវស្លឹកវិចិត្រ (palm leaves) or ក្រាមីង (a traditional paper). It is reproduced using printing technology that was initially developed in the west.

The increase in the prevalence of these formats is associated with the growth of the development sector that came about during and after the UNTAC administration.

They exist in a genre that was initiated by western organisations and, in my experience; they are generally viewed as coming from a western source by Khmer people.

#### Western ideology

In the literature review at Chapter 2 parallels were drawn between the stated goals of the development sector and the key characteristics of western civilisation. Ideas such as democracy are obviously a western influence, along with less obvious influences such as the promotion of mass literacy, which was addressed in Chapter 4.

It is interesting to note that even in the material that was seen to be relatively free of western influence; illustrated Khmer folk tales, there was an occasional tendency to

choose stories that were relevant to western development concepts with titles such as *Gender, Judgement* and *Environment and Customs*.

The posters and billboards displayed a stronger tendency to directly promote western ideas whereas the picture books and magazines generally did so in a less direct manner. Christian material was generally promoting western Christianity, but other than that obvious western influence, it included western influences in a similar manner to the picture books and magazines in addition to other aspects already discussed.

In the Christian material, Christianity as a western influence was not discussed extensively, as it is to be expected that western Christian organisations will promote western Christianity. Similarly, materially that directly promoted western ideas which are openly promoted such as democracy and rule of law was not given an in-depth analysis when referring to that material.

The posters and billboards were analysed through a number of recurring visual elements and themes through which western influence is included. These were:

<b>Primary themes and visual elements found in posters and billboards</b>
The depiction of an ideal array of professions to which young Khmer people should aspire.
The depiction of modern industrialised society as an ideal.
The public depiction of romance and implicit sex.
The depiction of amputees in scenes unrelated to landmine issues.

*Figure 24: Primary themes and visual elements found in posters and billboards.*

An ideal array of professions was depicted in 4 pieces from a total of 81. This form involved the depiction of a group of people to which Khmer people should aspire, typically comprised of professions such as police, military, medical, academic, business professional, construction, legal, and architectural that fit within the western capitalist economic model and the western model of secular schooling.

The depiction of modern society as an ideal is not as clear a western influence as the ideal array of professions. As discussed in Chapter 4 and in the literature review at Chapter 2, modern society is not necessarily a western influence. It was regarded as such

by Ghandi (1908), dismissed by Huntington (1998) and observed by Inglehart and Baker (2000) to consistently bring a coherent shift away from traditional values towards a somewhat predictable set of modern values. It was included as a western influence on the basis that images of modern society are likely to be drawn from existing modern societies, the bulk of which exist in the west.

The examples analysed both depicted two alternative scenes on either side of the image. One poster (Image 4) depicted a group of people in a traditional rural setting lining up towards a central ballot box. Leading away from the ballot box was a paved road that led into modern, industrialised scene. The intention of the poster is to promote participation in the democratic process; however the incentive is the promise of a modern, western society, not unlike western society. The western influence may be used as a means of appealing to Khmer people who aspire to a modern, western society.

The public depiction of romance and implicit sex was found in all three categories of material that were analysed. It was particularly evident in the picture books and magazines, as comic books, picture books can provide a more light-hearted approach to dealing with the severity of HIV/AIDS (Chan & Donovan 2005). Cambodia, is (at least outwardly) a sexually conservative society. Women engaging in premarital sex is something that is generally seen to bring considerable damage to a Khmer family's reputation (Tarr & Aggleton 1999). In the posters and billboards, the majority of women depicted in association with condoms were seen to be unmarried and probably sex workers.

It was noted that in dealing with such serious issues as HIV/AIDS and human trafficking, a strong case may be made for the adaption of more liberal attitude to sex and sexual imagery, in line with that in the west. However it is important to be aware of the cultural implications in doing so.

In Christian material, the inclusion of what was seen to be couples involved in romantic relationships was less intentional. In one instance (Image 37), a naked (but not exposed) Adam and Eve were depicted. To the Khmer viewer, they were deemed to be unchaste. It was seen to be unlikely that this was an effort by the producer to desensitise Khmer children (at whom this material is aimed), to sexual relationships. It was seen to be more

likely that its presence is a result of using an western-sourced image that communicates an unintended message to Khmer viewers.

The depiction of sexual issues in picture books and magazines was in some cases more graphic, and in others, bizarre. These more private, personal mediums are a more discrete means of dealing with this morally charged topic. In one case (Image 13) a personified condom is depicted holding hands with school aged children. A boy and a girl, in school uniform, walking along with a cheery-eyed giant phallus. School aged children are unlikely to be sexually active, thus they are not in a position where condom use will help them immediately. In this light, it was seen to be much more difficult to argue this form inclusion of sexual imagery as a necessity. It could not be seen as a direct western influence, as it was deemed as unlikely that it would be well received by parents of school aged children in western countries. It was deemed to be an indirect western influence, the social marketing of condoms being something that has been developed by the western dominated development sector since HIV became an issue in Cambodia following the UNTAC administration.

One of the more (Image 11) explicit images relating to condom use is present in a magazine based on *Taste of Life*, a TV drama produced by the BBC World Service Trust. This magazine, its parent TV show and many of the other picture books and magazines analysed in this study are considered to be entertainment-education. That is, material that introduces ideas casually through entertainment rather than directly and openly promoting a message. This form of communication is sometimes regarded as deceptive, the message being communicated without acknowledgement of its source, on an emotional level rather than a rational level. This was not the case for the majority of material that was analysed in this study with the exception of a small quantity of Christian material. In most instances, the education component was promotion of literacy, which was identified as a western influence in Chapter 4.

#### **Western sourced or influenced imagery**

The majority of material used original illustrations and photographs produced by Khmer people. In some Christian material and some of the picture books and magazines, imagery that appeared to have been produced in the west by western people

was used. In a number of other cases, original material that appeared to have been produced by Khmer illustrators included features that appeared to be influenced by western illustration and culture.

Western imagery was found in the picture books in the form of a number of recurring visual elements and themes:

<b>Recurring visual elements and themes in picture books</b>
Western Characters
Western Scenes and Imagery
Western Dress
Western Games and Puzzles

*Figure 25: Recurring visual elements and themes in picture books.*

Western characters were included in 13 of the 64 picture books that were analysed. In many cases this was included in the form of characters that are plainly identifiable as being of European descent (identified by Khmer people as បារាំង (barang). In one case (Image 27) a silhouette was easily identified by Khmer people as បារាំង (barang) on account of its long nose. The same figure was seen to be devoid of ethnicity by westerners.

It was more interesting to note the western influenced characters such as a lion that was identified as បារាំង (barang) and the lycra-clad character; បងវីរៈបរិស័, who is drawn in a style consistent with western superheroes. In two instances, Disney characters were depicted, in each case, relatively isolated, amongst other non-Disney characters throughout the piece. It was suggested by Bun Heang Ung, a Cambodian Australian who worked as an illustrator in Cambodia during the 70s, that these characters had become common in Cambodia as a result of US cultural influence associated with the presence of US soldiers during the Vietnam War. A removed western influence that is not associated with the increased presence of the development sector following UNTAC.

Dress in present day Cambodia is generally machine-sewn trousers and t-shirts. Most of the western dress depicted could be seen in Cambodia. In many cases, like the Disney characters, it is not a direct western influence, but rather an expression of an earlier western influence. In some instances, western clothing was seen that I have never seen in Cambodia, but have seen in western countries.

Western scenes and imagery, seen in 9 of the picture books and magazines that were analysed, was found in the form of landscapes, buildings, flora and fauna and groups made up of a racial composition common in western countries. In one of the analysed instances (Image 20) this was in the form of an illustration associated with a western story that had been translated into Khmer. Another instance (Image 21) was found in an education piece that gave an account of the history of space travel, with particular emphasis on the European Space Agency. This is not necessarily a version of history that displays a western bias, but it is an aspect of history that is dominated by western nations and western people.

#### **Western influence in Christian material**

There are a number of forms of western influence that were identified in Christian material in Chapter 4 that do not easily fit into the form groupings that are relevant to the non-religious material.

It was found that at least one Christian organisation requires that their foreign employees spend a significant amount of time learning to speak, read and write Khmer language before they undertake any significant work (Huff 2005). The material produced by a few Christian organisations reflects this level of dedication to the understanding of Khmer culture. Other Christian organisations produce or distribute material at the other end of the scale, with blatant ignorance of and what could be perceived as disrespect for Khmer culture.



Western influence in Christian material was analysed in terms of three main forms:

<b>Main forms of western influence found in Christian material</b>
The depiction of Jesus, God, other divinities and other significant virtuous figures as European.
The depiction of the unrighteous as less western in appearance than other characters in the publication.
Modern western cultural influence.

*Figure 26: Main forms of western influence found in Christian material.*

Modern western cultural influence has already been addressed in this conclusion, and its form in Christian material is not incredibly different from that of the non-religious material.

#### **The depiction of Jesus, God, other divinities and other significant virtuous figures as European**

The commonly used image of Jesus is a relatively recent construction and does not represent his Semitic race. It was in the late renaissance that Christ came to be represented in a realistic manner (Farrar 1895) rather than being represented symbolically or ideographically. Borne of the western European renaissance, Christ came to be represented as an ideal western European man (Wilson 2004). This western image of Jesus has been referred to as the “*colonial Christ*” (Phan 1996).

This has the potential to convey western influence by sending the message that the characters from which Khmers should learn lessons and to whom they should pray, are white Europeans. In the case of Adam and Eve, it is suggested that all people on earth, including the Khmers, have descended from white Europeans.

In 56 of the 67 instances where significant figures (God, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Adam and Eve, Noah and Moses) were depicted, they were identified by Khmer people as being ប្រាណីដ (barang). There were a number of instances where God and Jesus were depicted as Khmer. In one instance (Image 28) God is depicted in a manner that appears to be based on the common western depiction of God, and as a result, his

ethnicity is slightly ambiguous to Khmer people. Jesus is depicted as Khmer in 11 instances, however, these were all from the same series. The Khmer Jesus is also ambiguous, it was suggested that he was possibly Korean or Japanese. It was found that the illustrator of these pieces was quite familiar with western imagery. It is likely that this is an instance of a westerner drawing Khmer people from a foreign perspective.

### **The depiction of the unrighteous as less western in appearance than other characters in the publication**

In more extreme examples, it was seen that the unrighteous, the characters who illustrate sin and who are doomed to hell, are illustrated as less European and generally more Asian in appearance. Where God, Jesus and the virtuous in general are depicted as the quintessential European, those who are unvirtuous, are depicted as the opposite, the 'other'. This is in line with a tendency in western popular culture for villains (e.g. Ming the Merciless, Dr No) to be played by the 'other' (Seshagiri 2006).

It is worth noting that the 10 pieces that depicted the unrighteous as less European accounted for 7 of 11 pieces that did not bear any publication details. The messages in these pieces tend to be more sensational, frequently depicting the apocalypse in an effort to assert that those who do not receive the message will be subject to eternal suffering.

### **Research Question 2:**

### **What factors contribute to the inclusion of western influence in visual communications from non-commercial organisations operating in Cambodia?**

It was seen that western influence may have been included due to any of these factors:

<b>Factors contributing to the inclusion of western influence</b>
The intentional promotion of western ideas
The limited visual communications education and experience present in Cambodian non-commercial organisations
Western sourced or influenced imagery

*Figure 27: Factors contributing to the inclusion of western influence.*

### **The intentional promotion of western ideas**

As discussed in the literature review at Chapter 2, development has its roots in the west. It was initiated as a means of disseminating US systems to the rest of the world and continues to be dominated by western countries. It was seen that the goals of the development sector have many parallels to the key characteristics of western society.

This factor results in the direct promotion of western ideas such as democracy, rule of law, secularism and a number of other characteristics of western society that were identified in Chapter 2. As previously mentioned, the fact that these organisations are directly promoting these ideas is unremarkable, just as it is unremarkable to note that Christian organisations promote western Christianity. For this reason, direct intentional promotion of western ideas has not been extensively discussed.

### **The limited visual communications education and experience present in Cambodian non-commercial organisation**

One of the most significant findings of the surveys that were conducted was that the people producing visual communications material in many organisations, had little education or experience in visual communications. Some respondents were unable to understand some of the later questions relating to design even after a lengthy explanation in Khmer language.

Few of the organisations that were interviewed employed designers, visual communications material was generally produced by a staff member who had another primary role within the organisation. One of the few respondents who did have some education in communications (albeit predominantly non-visual) referred to a general lack of respect for visual communications and the associated skills across the development sector. This is probably linked to the fact that there are no degrees in visual communications or graphic design offered in Cambodia.

While this is not a western influence in itself, it increases the possibility that alternative and secondary interpretations of visual communications material would be considered. In the development sector, where many western ideas are present, this is likely to be a source of unintended western influence.

### Western sourced or influenced imagery

Only a few organisations mentioned that they used foreign illustrators or photographers, or that they sourced imagery produced by foreigners. The frequency of what appeared to be foreign-produced material that was identified in the collected material confirmed was similar.

This is a small, but not insignificant source of foreign influence. Its previous discussion as a form of western influence covers the issue in more depth.

### Research Question 3:

#### How are these western influences relevant in the Khmer context?

As discussed in the literature review at Chapter 2, social marketing communicates to people who are less educated and therefore less capable of making an informed choice. In Cambodia, this is generally the uneducated rural poor. This and many of the other issues that are not relevant to the west but are relevant in the Khmer context, are not necessarily Khmer specific, and may apply to numerous countries that are not developed. The following points outline the main three issues that are relevant in the Khmer context:

Issues relevant in the Khmer context
In light of the Cambodian approach to learning, educational material is less likely to be questioned
Western products or ideas may be seen as being better
There is a general feeling that non-commercial posters and billboards tend to tell poor people that they are doing something wrong

*Figure 28: Issues relevant in the Khmer context.*

#### **In light of the Cambodian approach to learning, educational material is less likely to be questioned**

It was noted that the approach to learning that I experienced working at a university in Cambodia was consistent with the approach to learning attributed to Asian students by Ballard and Clanchy (1991), that is, with a preference for rote learning. In this light, the messages put forth in the material produced by non-commercial organisations in

Cambodia is less likely to be questioned, this, coupled with low levels of education, makes it unlikely that people will be in a position to make an informed choice about the ideas that are being promoted.

#### **Western products or ideas may be seen as being better**

It was noted by one survey respondent that Khmers may see western influence as being better. This assertion is backed up by the observation that was made about the branding of condoms and beer in Chapter 4; a preference, either real or perceived, for western products. Western influence may be included in order to appeal to this Khmer desire.

#### **There is a perception that non-commercial posters and billboards tend to tell poor people that they are doing something wrong**

It was noted in Chapter 4, that the perception exists amongst at least some Khmer people that non-commercial posters and billboards tend to tell poor people that they are doing something wrong. This is consistent with the idea that the help provided by aid organisations puts shame on the receiver (Gronemayer 1993). The rural Khmer people that I have come into contact with generally regard all non-commercial visual material as having come from western sources. As a result, it may be the case that posters and billboards are seen as representing westerners telling poor Khmer people that they are doing something wrong and need to change the way in which they live their lives.

#### **Area for further research arising from this study**

There are a number of areas uncovered in the course of this Masters research that I would like to investigate further. It is my intention to do so in further studies. The following are ideas that I feel would be valuable in furthering the findings presented in this thesis:

- Conduct a more thorough investigation of visual communications in a single organisation or a small number of organisation through case studies and/or action research.

Looking at material from a broad range of sources avoids the bias that one might develop in looking at a single organisation in depth. It is

however, limited in that it gives only a small insight into the products and processes of any given organisation. It would be valuable to conduct a more thorough investigation of a single organisation, or a small number of organisations either through conducting case studies, or by involving oneself in the organisation by means of action research.

- Conduct an in-depth survey of the material for a particular issue or event, e.g. the 2008 national election.

Just as the range of organisations covered was broad, the issues covered were similarly broad. It would be interesting to conduct a thorough investigation into western influence in material that addresses a specific issue. A good opportunity for doing so exists in analysing the material surrounding the 2008 national elections.

- Conduct a survey attempting to gauge the perception that Khmer people have of this material and the effect that it may have had on their own world view.

Insight into the processes and content of this material allows us only to speculate on the effect that this might have on an individual, or on the Khmer public. Further study could be conducted into the perceptions of Khmer people in terms of cultural relevance and in terms of the effect that being surrounded by such material may have had on their own world view.

- Conduct an investigation aimed at determining the historical development of the illustrative style that is used in much of this material.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, there are elements in this material that appear to have been introduced in the Sihanouk era, following independence from France (1954) and before the civil war (1970). The illustrative style is akin to that of a 1950s western commercial artist. Bun Heang Ung, who was trained as an illustrator in Phnom Penh in the late 60s suggested that this style came as a result of French influence and remained during the period in which Cambodia was at war and had little outside influence.

It would be interesting to speak to Khmer people (in Cambodia, Australia, France and the US) who worked as illustrators in the 50s and 60s as well as current illustrators in order to determine how this style came about. This could be taken further in analysing the style as a style itself rather than in terms of western influence.

- Conduct an investigation into western influences that existed before UNTAC. Development organisations were only present in small numbers prior to the UNTAC period. Little outside influence existed during the Democratic Kampuchea regime and the Vietnamese occupation, thus this would largely be concerned with the French colonial period and the Sihanouk era, during which Cambodia was independent, but still had strong ties with France.

It would be useful to better understand which aspects of western influence present in the material produced have existed in Cambodia for an extended period of time, and which are more recent introductions associated with the influx of development organisations.

- Investigate the approaches to the Khmerisation of the image of Jesus (visual and otherwise) by Christian organisations operating in Cambodia. This expands on the research into Christian material, by removing the limitation imposed by restricting investigation to the visual.

## Appendix 1 - Coding System for Visual Material

General Info:

Seq: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary producer(s):

Christian

Affiliates:

Format:

---

Specifics:

The token landmine survivor

Depiction of Jesus and other biblical figures as white (and as Khmer, Chinese etc)

Figure:

Ethnicity:

Depiction of white people from whom Khmers are to learn lessons

Depiction of villains as being less western

---

Media:

Picture book

Activities/Activity books

Colouring book

Illustrated texts

---

Culture:

Contains a translated western story

Generic material which has been produced in the west and had its text translated



Western style illustration (eg. cartoon characters)

Western activities (notably childhood activities)

Western dress

Attitude to sexual/romantic relationships:

Public display of affection

Public promotion of condoms for use with family and prostitutes

Public discussion of drug use

Western imagery (eg. Landscapes, buildings, flora & fauna, racial composition of groups.)

Western aesthetics

Western signs and symbols                      Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Ideology:

Western science and technology:

Approach to nutrition

Obsession with hygiene

Western approach to medicine

Modern society:

Implication that modern, western professions are superior to traditional occupations

Depiction of the modern society as a desirable side effect

Depiction of traditional practices as undesirable

### Gender:

- That traditional gender roles should not exist
- That rural women need a formal education as much as (or more so than) men
- Depiction of traditional practices as undesirable

### Definition of Poverty:

- That one's worth is defined in economic terms

### Democracy:

- Any presence of democracy  
eg. The implication that democracy is an ideal which should be upheld and fought for.

### Rule of law:

- Any presence of rule of law  
eg. That Cambodians should have faith in Cambodia's western judicial system.  
That Cambodians should expect Police to be of assistance if they are the victim of a crime.

### Importance of formal (secular) schooling:

- Anything indicating the importance of formal schooling  
(meaning a lack of emphasis on a pagoda education)

### Transparency and accountability:

- Anything indicating the importance transparency and accountability  
(Eg. Birth registration, id cards, depiction of accountable, modern Khmers as role models.)

### Unionism/the right to protest:

- Anything encouraging unionism/right to protest  
(Eg. That the Police and Military, who are working for somebody that people will generally protesting against, should support and assist people in conducting a smooth protest.)

### Equality:

- Anything stressing the equality of rich and poor, old and young, male and female, able bodied and disabled  
(Eg. Over representation of hill tribes, token landmine victim.)

## Language:

Use of English, French and other European languages in material aimed at Khmers.:

- Used to communicate to Khmers
  - Used to teach the language
  - Roman script used to sign an artists name
  - English acronyms
  - English used in logos
  - Use of hindu Arabic numerals
- 

## The Western Hegemony:

- Implication that Khmers are ignorant and need to be taught by westerners
- Implication that a lack of material wealth means that Khmers are poor and helpless

## Appendix 2 - Coding System for Interviews

---

### Physical Formats:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflets       | <input type="checkbox"/> Posters           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stickers       | <input type="checkbox"/> Banners           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> T-Shirts       | <input type="checkbox"/> Books             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calendars      | <input type="checkbox"/> TV Shows          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Video          | <input type="checkbox"/> Billboards        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Reports | <input type="checkbox"/> School Curriculum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magazines      |  |
- 

### Purpose of Visual Communications:

- Communicating to groups who may have low levels of literacy
    - Without showing them up as illiterate
  - Attracting funding from donors
  - Educating the public on a particular issue
  - Lobbying government (advocacy)
  - To provide free t-shirts to patients
- 

### The Organisation:

Design staff:

- The organisation employs designers
- Designs are produced by an employee with a primary role other than communications, visual or otherwise

- The designer has received some formal training in design
- Design is outsourced to a local printing shop
- The respondent stated that others in the organisation do not respect or appreciate visual communications knowledge and skills

Identification of the need for a piece of visual communications:

- Need is identified by the subject
  - Through a participatory process
    - Respondent mentioned that ideas were typically induced by staff rather than coming directly from the community
  - Need is identified by the subject
- Need is identified by upper management
  - From existing external research
  - From the research and experience of the organisation
- Need is identified by non-senior staff
  - Reviewed and approved by senior staff
- Need is identified by a partner organisation

Systems of review:

- Government approval
- Formal system
  - Involves user testing
  - Involves review and redesign in response to user testing
  - Formal process exists but the respondent stated that it was rarely followed

- Informal process - observation and feedback
  - Considers review to be prohibitively expensive
- 

### Attitude to and Understand of Design:

- The respondent had difficulty understanding questions relating to design
  - Considers the text more important than the visual
  - Values a clear, simple design
  - The respondent explicitly stated that design is not important
  - The respondent raised the issue of budget restrictions
  - The respondent stated that donor visibility is an important factor
  - The organisation produces different designs for communicating the same idea to different groups of people
  - The respondent stated that they value an aesthetically attractive design
  - The respondent noted that audience understanding was more important than a design that appealed to the designer
- 

### Foreign Influence:

#### Foreign Involvement in the Production Process:

- Due to the practical benefit of foreign technical expertise
- As the instigators, providing the idea to Khmer staff who go on to produce it
- Foreigners produce the design

- Foreigners produce individual components of the design  
(eg. illustrations, photographs)
  - Produced for the purpose
  - Existing material is sourced
- Due to Khmer commercial alternatives being too expensive  
(eg. involving pop stars)

- The organisation uses translated foreign material
- The respondent gave a brief unconsidered dismissal of the idea that western influence may have been an issue in the organisation
- The respondent noted that it was difficult to get Khmer staff to criticise work produced or presented by a foreigner

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### Consideration of Khmer Culture:

- The respondent noted that cultural relevance is important in order to communicate most effectively to the subject
- The respondent stated that the message of their organisation is more important than the preservation of culture

Note the specific issue: .....

- The respondent did not consider western influence to be an issue simply because all material is produced by Khmer people or by groups dominated by Khmer people
- The respondent considered Khmer cultural issues to be relatively unimportant when targeting the comparatively modern population of Phnom Penh
- The respondent noted that the fact that their organisation's material is reviewed by the Cambodian government goes some of the way to ensuring that it is not offensive to Khmer culture

**Appendix 3 - Questionnaires**

**Khmer Language Questionnaire**

**ព័ត៌មានស្តីអំពីអង្គការ**

ឈ្មោះអង្គការ:

សញ្ជាតិអង្គការ:

ប្រភពមូលនិធិមកពីប្រទេស:

ឆ្នាំដែលនាបង្កើតអង្គការ:

ខេត្តដែលធ្វើប្រតិបត្តិការណ៍:

គោលដៅចម្បង

ចំនួនបុគ្គលិកបរទេស

ចំនួនបុគ្គលិកខ្មែរ

ចំនួនបុគ្គលិកបរទេសធ្វើការរយៈពេលវែងមាន

ចំនួនបុគ្គលិកបរទេសអាចនិយាយភាសាខ្មែរស្អាតមាន

១-តើមានប្រភេទអ្វីខ្លះដែលអង្គការរបស់អ្នកធ្វើ

ក្នុងចក្ខុវិស័យនៃភាពទំនាក់ទំនងដោយសំភារៈពីបណ្តាលប្រភពមិនមែនជាការធ្វើ

ពាណិជ្ជកម្មនៅកម្ពុជា?

បង្ហាញការរៀបចំការអប់រំផ្តល់វិជ្ជាជីវៈឱ្យមាន( ) បញ្ហាផ្សេងៗស្មើ

ដំបូងជាពាណិជ្ជកម្មផ្សេងៗស្របច្បាប់,ស៊ីវិល,រថបញ្ជូនសំបុត្រ,អាវយឺត,សៀវភៅផ្តល់

,សៀវភៅរៀងនិទានខ្លី



២-តើពីពេលកន្លងមកអង្គការរបស់យើង(នា)ធ្វើភាពទំនាក់ទំនងដោយសំភារៈ  
ពីបណ្តាលប្រភពមិនមែនជាការធ្វើពាណិជ្ជកម្ម  
ផ្តល់ទៀតប ទេ?តើហេតុអ្វី)នាជាអង្គការរបស់អ្នកមិនធ្វើក្នុងចក្ខុវិស័យ  
នៃភាពទំនាក់ទំនងដោយសំភារៈមកដល់សព្វថ្ងៃនេះ?

បង្ហាញឱ្យទាហរណ៍ដូចជាការផលិតប្រភេទជាក្តួលក្តួលនៃសំភារៈសំរាប់ការអប់រំ  
ដែលមិន)នាជោគជ័យ  
ផលិតនៅការជួយទំនាក់ទំនងសំរាប់គំរោងជាក្តួលក្តួលដែលបច្ចុប្បន្ននេះ)នាបញ្ចប់រួច  
រាល់ហើយ

៣-ចូរបង្ហាញដោយសង្ខេបអំពីដំណើរការ សំភារៈសំរាប់ការទំនាក់ទំនងដែលអង្គ  
ការរបស់អ្នក)នាអភិវឌ្ឍន៍ទៅក្នុងផលិតកម្ម

បង្ហាញតើអ្នកណាជាអ្នកសំរេចចិត្តថាមតិការបែបណា  
ដែលនឹងត្រូវជាក្តួលបញ្ចូល?តើអ្នកណាជាអ្នក  
ផលិតប្តូររូបភាព?តើអ្នកណាជាអ្នកផលិតផែនទៅ?អ្នកណាជាអ្នក(កេ)ញ្ចុះ?

៤-តើអង្គការរបស់យើង(នា)ប្រើដំណើរការបែបនេះ ទេ?ប្រសិនមិន  
តើដំណើរការបែបណាដែលអង្គការរបស់អ្នកផ្លាស់ប្តូរនិងសំរាប់ហេតុផលអ្វី?  
បង្ហាញឱ្យទាហរណ៍ប្តូរទៅប្រើជាអត្ថប្រយោជន៍

៥-តើអង្គការរបស់យើង(នា)ប្រើ  
ភាសាខ្មែរដែរ ទេ?ប ក៏ប្រភេទណាផ្តល់ទៀតនៃលក្ខណ៍ផលិតដោយមិនប្រើ  
ភាសាខ្មែរនៅក្នុងប្រភេទណាមួយនៃផលិតផលរបស់អ្នក?



## English Language Questionnaire

Organisation Details:

Year in which Organisation started operating in Cambodia:

Operating Provinces:

Primary Objectives:

Number of foreign staff:

Number of Khmer staff:

Number of long term foreign staff (over 2 years):

Religious affiliation of the organisation (if any):

1. In what applications does your organisation use visual communications in Cambodia?

Prompts: Any educational settings, advocacy, e.g. printed posters, billboards, leaflets, stickers, postcards, t-shirts, books and comics.

2. In the past, has your organisation used visual communications for any other applications? Why does your organisation no longer use visual communications in these applications?

Prompts: e.g. Producing a particular type of educational material which was unsuccessful (why did you consider the application unsuccessful), producing visual communications for a specific project which has now finished.

3. Do you have a process for reviewing/assessing the effectiveness/success of your publications?

4. Explain briefly, the process by which the visual communications material that your organisation develops goes into production?

Prompts: Who decides what the content of the item will be? Who produces the imagery? Who does the layout? Who prints it? Who identifies the need for visual material.

5. Has your organisation always used this process? If not, in what ways has the process changed, and for what reasons?

Prompts: E.g. Changed to using Khmer illustrators.

6. Has your organisation used non-Khmer illustrators or any kind of images produced by non-Khmers in any of your material?

What proportion of material is translated? What proportion is original?

7. What do you think are the criteria for successful visual communications?

8. Has the presence of western influence in visual communications produced by your organisation ever been an issue? Please provide details.

Prompts: E.g. Pictures not being understood by Khmers. Western references, images or ideas being inadvertently introduced into communications material.

9. What procedures do you use to ensure the sensitivity of your organisation's visual communications materials to local culture?

10. What do you consider the most important issues in the design and production of visual communications material?

## Appendix 4 - List of Analysed Material

#	Format	Source(s)	Religion
1	Book	Assemblies of God, Cambodia	Christian
2	Book	Generation Ministries	Christian
3	Picture Book	Cambodian Christian Media Center	Christian
4	Picture Book	Cambodian Christian Media Center	Christian
5	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
6	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
7	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
8	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
9	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
10	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
11	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
12	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
13	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
14	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
15	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
16	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
17	Picture Book	Canadian Bible Society	Christian
18	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
19	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
20	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
21	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
22	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
23	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian

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<b>#</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Religion</b>
24	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
25	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
26	Comic Book	David C. Cook Publishing Co. Ltd	Christian
27	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
28	Book	Bible Distribution League	Christian
29	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
30	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
31	Large leaflet	Bible Distribution League	Christian
32	Picture Book	Unknown	Christian
33	Picture Book	Assemblies of God, Cambodia	Christian
34	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
35	Tract	Unknown	Christian
36	Comic Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
37	Tract	Unknown	Christian
38	Leaflet	Cambodia Campus Crusade for Christ	Christian
39	Tract	Unknown	Christian
40	Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
41	Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
42	Tract	Unknown	Christian
43	Picture Book	Standard Publishing Co.	Christian
44	Picture Book	Unknown	Christian
45	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
46	Book	CAMA Services Inc.	Christian
47	Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian

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<b>#</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Religion</b>
48	Picture Book	Assemblies of God, Cambodia	Christian
49	Tract	Unknown	Christian
50	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
51	Leaflet	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
52	Book	Assemblies of God, Cambodia	Christian
53	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
54	Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
55	Book	Resurrection, France	Christian
56	Picture Book	Assemblies of God, Cambodia	Christian
57	Picture Book	Assemblies of God, Cambodia	Christian
58	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
59	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
60	Tract	Unknown	Christian
61	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
62	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
63	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
64	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
65	Picture Book	Unknown	Christian
66	Tract	Unknown	Christian
67	Picture Book	Canadian Bible Society	Christian
68	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
69	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
70	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
71	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian

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<b>#</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Religion</b>
72	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
73	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
74	Picture Book	Canadian Bible Society	Christian
75	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
76	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
77	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
78	Picture Book	Unknown	Christian
79	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
80	Picture Book	Bible Distribution League	Christian
81	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
82	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
83	Picture Book	The Bible Society in Cambodia	Christian
84	Picture Book	www.hopenet.net	Christian
85	Poster	Unknown	Christian
86	Picture Book	Unknown	Christian
87	Picture Book	Paragraph/MoEYS	None
88	Picture Book	Snadai Khniom	None
89	Picture Book	Paragraph	None
90	Picture Book	Paragraph/MoEYS	None
91	Picture Book	Room to Read	None
92	Picture Book	Unknown Japanese Source	None
93	Picture Book	Not Indicated	None
94	Picture Book	Paragraph	None
95	Picture Book	Unknown Japanese Source	None

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<b>#</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Religion</b>
96	Picture Book	Room to Read	None
97	Picture Book	Unknown Japanese Source	None
98	Picture Book	Unknown Japanese Source	None
99	Magazine	SIPAR	None
100	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
101	Picture Book	White Elephant	None
102	Picture Book	JSRC Library Section	None
103	Picture Book	White Elephant	None
104	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
105	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
106	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
107	Picture Book	Room to Read	None
108	Picture Book	Room to Read	None
109	Picture Book	Room to Read	None
110	Picture Book	Room to Read	None
111	Picture Book	Room to Read	None
112	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
113	Magazine	SIPAR	None
114	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
115	Picture Book	White Elephant	None
116	Picture Book	White Elephant	None
117	Picture Book	PASEC/MoEYS	None
118	Picture Book	MoEYS	None
119	Picture Book	PASEC/MoEYS	None

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<b>#</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Religion</b>
120	Picture Book	Room to Read	None
121	Magazine	SIPAR	None
122	Book	Reyum	None
123	Picture Book	Reyum	None
124	Magazine	Save the Children (Norway)	None
125	Picture Book	Room to Read	None
127	Picture Book	Room to Read	None
128	Magazine	Roots (with UNICEF/SIDA)	None
129	Magazine	Ambassade de France du Cambodge	None
130	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
131	Magazine	Save the Children (Norway)	None
132	Picture Book	Unknown Japanese Source	None
134	Magazine	Save the Children (Norway)	None
135	Picture Book	White Elephant	None
136	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
137	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
138	Magazine	Save the Children (Norway)	None
139	Magazine	Save the Children (Norway)	None
140	Magazine	Save the Children (Norway)	None
141	Picture Book	White Elephant	None
142	Brochure	MoH	None
143	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
144	Illustrated Text	Sovanna Phoum	None
145	Magazine	UNESCO (with UNFPA, WHO, UNAIDS, World AIDS Foundation)	None

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<b>#</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Religion</b>
146	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
147	Picture Book	Shanti Volunteer Association	None
148	Activity Book	Snadai Khniom	None
149	Brochure	RHAC	None
150	Brochure	RHAC	None
151	Brochure	RHAC	None
152	Brochure	RHAC	None
153	Brochure	RHAC	None
154	Comic Book	HCC	None
155	Magazine	SIPAR	None
156	Brochure	RHAC	None
157	Magazine	SIPAR	None
158	Magazine	SIPAR	None
159	Magazine	SIPAR	None
160	Brochure	RHAC	None
161	Brochure	RHAC	None
162	Brochure	RHAC	None
163	Brochure	RHAC	None
164	Brochure	RHAC	None
165	Brochure	RHAC	None
166	Brochure	RHAC	None
167	Poster	NEC	None
168	Poster	MoEYS	None
169	Poster	WGWR	None

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<b>#</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Religion</b>
170	Poster	Save the Children (UK)	None
171	Poster	Disability Action Council	None
172	Poster	CIC	None
173	Poster	WGWR	None
174	Poster	MoEYS	None
175	Poster	USAID/CLEC/COMFREL/NICFEC	None
176	Poster	NEC	None
177	Poster	NGO Committee on CRC	None
178	Poster	MoH	None
179	Poster	RHAC	None
179	Poster	CMAC	None
180	Poster	RHAC	None
181	Poster	UNHR	None
182	Poster	MoH/NCHP	None
183	Poster	PSI/MoH	None
184	Poster	COMFREL	None
185	Poster	RHAC	None
186	Poster	MoH/NCHP	None
188	Poster	Save the Children (UK)/UNFPA	None
189	Poster	Cambodia Trust	None
190	Poster	MoH/NCHP	None
191	Poster	Cambodia Trust	None
192	Poster	UNICEF	None
193	Poster	ADHOC	None

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<b>#</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Religion</b>
194	Calendar	Unknown	None
195	Poster	Santi Sena	None
196	Poster	Friends International	None
197	Poster	CMAC	None
198	Poster	Santi Sena	None
199	Poster	COMFREL	None
200	Poster	Helen Keller	None
201	Poster	UNICEF	None
202	Poster	RHAC	None
203	Poster	CMAC	None
204	Poster	MoEYS	None
205	Poster	Friends International	None
206	Poster	MoH/NCHP	None
207	Poster	MoH/NCHP	None
208	Poster	UNESCO	None
209	Poster	JICA	None
210	Poster	GADC	None
211	Poster	EU	None
212	Poster	Friends International	None
213	Poster	UNHR	None
214	Poster	RHAC	None
215	Poster	ADRA	None
216	Poster	Care (with MoH, EU)	None
217	Poster	GADC	None

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<b>#</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Religion</b>
218	Billboard	MoH/UNAIDS	None
219	Billboard	ADHOC	None
220	Billboard	MoH/UNAIDS	None
221	Billboard	MoH/UNAIDS	None
222	Billboard	UNFPA	None
223	Billboard	UNICEF	None
224	Billboard	DFID	None
225	Billboard	SEILA	None
226	Billboard	MoH/UNICEF	None
227	Billboard	MoH/WHO/UNICEF	None
228	Billboard	MoH	None
229	Billboard	UNFPA	None
230	Billboard	UNICEF	None
231	Billboard	Unknown - too decayed	None
232	Billboard	MoH/Plan	None
233	Billboard	DFID	None
234	Billboard	OxFam	None
235	Billboard	Handicap/AusAID	None
236	Billboard	Red Cross	None
237	Calendar	UNICEF/USAID	None
238	Poster	GADC	None
239	Sticker	MoH (with UN/AusAID)	None
240	Poster	MoH/AusAUD/UN	None
241	Poster	MoH/AusAUD/UN	None

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<b>#</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Religion</b>
242	Poster	MoP/MoEYS/UNDP	None
243	Poster	MoWA/Christian Aid/EED/OxFam	None
244	Poster	Helen Keller	None
245	Billboard	MoH/UN	None
246	Billboard	Helen Keller	None
247	Poster	Helen Keller	None
248	Brochure	RHAC	None

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