



Soul Survivors - Stories of Women and Children in Cambodia

Bhavia C. Wagner

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Soul Survivors gives voice to women and children in Cambodia who survived the genocide (1975 - 1979), when nearly two million people died from execution, starvation, or disease. Through their detailed personal stories, fourteen people reveal the brutality of Pol Pot's regime, how they managed to survive, and what it took to rebuild their lives afterward.

Although the survivors lives are fraught with suffering and times of despair, there is an under current of hope, courage, and resilience that comforts and inspires. Their stories are a testimony to the strength and goodness of the human spirit.

Twelve of the fourteen survivors who tell their stories in *Soul Survivors* stayed in Cambodia after the genocide and worked against the odds to bring their family fragments back together and reclaim their culture. The fascinating details about life and traditions in Cambodia are revealed through their tales as the survivors come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including a medical doctor, classical dancer, landmine survivor, Buddhist nun, Muslim fisherwoman, Christian farmer, orphan, high school teacher, prostitute, silk weaver, social worker, and women's leader.

Two survivors came to the United States of America as orphans, graduated from college, and returned to Cambodia as young adults to help rebuild their country. Sixty-four captivating photographs draw the reader into contemporary Cambodia to witness the survivors' courageous work to recover from three decades of war, genocide and poverty. *Soul Survivors* creates a comprehensive picture of Cambodia yesterday and today.

In addition to the survivors stories, there are chapters on how the Khmer Rouge came to power, the role of the US, the landmine situation, the Buddhist peace movement, and how to help people in Cambodia. It includes a chronology of Cambodian history, a map of Cambodia, and an index.

This second edition of *Soul Survivors* was published as Cambodia's genocide trial began in 2008. The perpetrators, top leaders of the Khmer Rouge regime, are being held accountable for mass murder and crimes against humanity 30 years after the tragedy.

This new edition is updated and contains recent historical events and an epilog telling what happened to the survivors since the first edition was published in 2002. It also includes information about the two charitable humanitarian organizations (friendshipwithcambodia.org and artinabox.org) the author and photographer were inspired to create to help the poor in Cambodia.

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