Chapter One
Fire in the House

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Introduction

Home SOS casts a vital spotlight on the domestic sphere as a critical, yet overlooked, vantage point for understanding the trajectory of Cambodia, a Southeast Asian nation known for its encounters with genocide (Hinton 2005; Kiernan 2002), reconciliation and peacebuilding (Ciorciari and Heindel 2014; Gidley 2019; Hughes and Elander 2017; Öjendal and Ou 2013, 2015; Peou 2007, 2018; Richmond and Franks 2007), post-conflict transition (Öjendal and Lilja 2009; Peou 2000), and economic transformation (Hughes and Un 2011; Hughes 2003; Springer 2010, 2015). During Pol Pot's genocidal reign (1975–1979), the home was rendered 'ground zero' in efforts to break apart families, intimacies and other relations of the former society. As a lifeworld 'constituted by relatively stable associations, relatively known and shared histories' (Bhabha 1994, p. 42), it had to be destroyed. Cambodia needed to be 'killed', to cease to exist both literally and symbolically, for the radical communist revolution to be built (Tyner 2008, p. 119).

After decades of upheaval and displacement, Cambodia moved through a so-called 'triple transition' (Peou 2001, p. xx): from armed conflict to peace, from political authoritarianism to liberal democracy, and from a socialist economic system to a market-driven capitalist one. The accelerated neoliberal path that the country has taken, and its unravelling experimentation with democracy, has had a profound influence on domestic life. In this political

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economy context, at a time of formal peace, *Home SOS* contends that home is, once again, a spatial epicentre of intimate violences, thought to have been consigned to its genocidal past. It is not only that wounds remain in dysfunctional marriages and traumas carried through time, but rather, with its formal end, Cambodia opened up to the world, and new wounds have reconfigured and compounded the old.

The dual focus of *Home SOS* on domestic violence and forced eviction shows that the home is not a 'pre-political' or 'unexceptional' space (Enloe 2011, p. 447) separate from these political changes. Its internal intimacies and external-facing dynamics have the capacity to temper, retell, and rework the grand narratives of change that have so dominated writing on Cambodia. As a pivotal space of bio-necropolitical world (un)making, the home demands greater scrutiny. It is where the production and destruction of life is perhaps most regularly and intensely expressed, yet it is systematically overlooked in theoretical writing in geography and related disciplines.

The starting point of the book then is the 'extra-domestic' home, in and through which, multiple forms of violence flow and coalesce. This 'extra-domestic' reading derives 'precisely from the fact that it [the home] had always in one way or another been open; constructed out of movement, communication, social relations which always stretched beyond it' (Massey 1994, p. 171). The home is host to violences that are played out through the microdramas of daily life, but also through public political worlds that influence, and are influenced by, the domestic (Blunt and Dowling 2006; Brickell 2012a, 2012b; Nowicki 2018). Tracing these violences through the realm of the extra-domestic problematises the narrowness of 'crisis-affected' and 'crisis-prone' descriptors limited to countries and regions experiencing war, conflict, and natural disasters. The intimate wars of domestic violence and forced eviction render the home a crisis-affected and crisis-prone space, both inside and outside, of these formal hostilities and calamities. *Home SOS* thus works to reaffirm and reprioritise the home as a political entity that is foundational to the concerns of human geography.

More specifically, the book contributes to geographical scholarship on intimate geographies of violence and crisis that have not commanded as much attention as high-profile public ones. The concern of *Home SOS* is not simply the enactment of domestic violence and forced eviction but how they are experienced and contested. While neither domestic violence nor forced eviction are formal emergencies, the title of the book deploys the SOS distress signal. This internationally known code has been used by forced eviction women activists in Cambodia as a political statement of emergency to oppose their dispossession (Figure 1.1). Their public SOS calls reassert the importance of imbuing everyday structural violences with a sense of scholarly and political urgency that is so often lost, given the seeming intransigence of routine violences (Philo 2017; Scheper-Hughes 1996).

Figure 1.1 SOS sign in Boeung Kak Lake, Phnom Penh, 2011. Source: © Ben Woods. Reproduced with permission.

Charting the journey of Cambodia's first-ever domestic violence law (DV law), alongside women's housing activism against forced eviction, I examine how each usher women's bodily presences from the home into the wider world to make life more liveable. They are, on the face of it at least, refusals for the injustices they embody to be known only in the private realm. As I go on to demonstrate, however, the political economy of Cambodia has conspired to stymy, and in some cases quash, the transformative potential that each might hold.

Based on over 300 interviews, conducted over the past 16 years, the research presented in *Home SOS* pivots around experiences of intimate violence and the work of survival as told through the gendered stories of 'ever-married' Cambodian women.[1] It incorporates continuums and rearticulations of violence from the Khmer Rouge period and includes discussion of episodic shocks and endemic precarities played out in the lifeworlds of participants in the four decades since. In what follows, I explore the ways in which home and intimate life are sustained, contested, and disrupted through marital relationships 'in crisis' and which are lived out, and shaped through, this history and newer manifestations of crisis taking place.[2] The book therefore aims to document, make visible, and interpret women's experiences of violence and survival in, and through, the home as an irreplaceable centre of significance in still challenging times. Looking to the home as the spatial epicentre of married life, the book contributes to the now growing

body of research in geography on family and intimate relations (see Tarrant and Hall 2019 for a recent review). While noting that home and family are not necessarily coterminous, and intimate relations are not only marital but take a variety of forms, I take the marital home as my central referent point. A little over a decade ago, the family was considered an absent presence in the discipline (Valentine 2008), and marriage as the 'commonest form of social cooperation' had been neglected in the social sciences on the grounds of its ubiquity, taken for granted, and more-than-individual character (Harker 2012; Jackson 2012). By showing how marriage is a foremost social relationship through which domestic violence and forced eviction are articulated, *Home SOS* further questions the validity of these grounds for dismissal.

In Cambodia 'family is at the core of society' and is traditionally headed by a man who is invested with meeting its economic and social needs, and women its housekeeping and child rearing responsibilities (Ministry of Womens' Affairs (MOWA) 2015, p. 23). It is normatively accepted that Cambodian wives must provide 'shade' including 'shelter, safety and prosperity' for their children (Kent 2011a, p. 197–198) and are responsible for the management of conflict in family life. Women in Cambodia have primary duty for the social reproduction of their households and, in turn, they gain important public value through domesticity. Nineteenth century normative Cambodian poems such as the *Chbab Srei* (Rules for Women) refer derogatorily to women who walk too loudly in the house as to make it tremble, and should a woman act too forcefully, neglect her household responsibilities, or not fulfil the entirety of her husband's demands, then blame can be assigned to her for the breakdown of their marriage. Divorced women are typically regarded as socially incomplete in Cambodian society (Ovesen, Trankell, and Öjendal 1996) and a Khmer proverb reminds daughters that, 'you should be married before you are called an old maid' (cited in Heuveline and Poch 2006, p. 102). Women's homes and bodies therefore risk being considered as lacking when marriages fail. To avoid this, women in Cambodia are invested with the demands of ensuring the harmony, intimacy, and warmth of their marriages and wider family in the home. Domestic violence and forced eviction not only challenge women's capacity to fulfil these expectations, but they also threaten the material and symbolic foundations of everyday life from which life is grown and sustained. Both domestic violence and forced eviction have, therefore, a disproportionate impact upon women given the intensities of homemaking in comparison to men.

The twin focus of *Home SOS* on domestic violence and forced eviction arises, in part too, from their status as human rights abuses, which witness the 'mutual absorption of violence and the ordinary' (Das 2007, p. 7). The home is, perhaps, the most ordinary of spaces on which geographers train their research and analysis. An intimacy sustaining vision of the 'ordinary' home, however, is complicated by domestic violence and forced eviction. which both disrupt the safety, stability, and comfort that the space should normatively afford. As Lauren Berlant (1998, p. 281) argues,

> intimacy … involves an aspiration for a narrative about something shared, a story about both oneself and others that will turn out in a particular way. Usually, this story is set within zones of familiarity and comfort: friendship, the couple, and the family form, animated by expressive and emancipating kinds of love … This view of 'a life' that unfolds intact within the intimate sphere represses, of course, another fact about it: the unavoidable troubles, the distractions and disruptions that make things turn out in unpredicted scenarios.

Berlant's conception of intimacy brings to the fore the 'unpredicted scenarios', which are perceptible and woven into the ordinary. Under this guise, the 'ordinary' cannot be equated with the benign and harmless (Mayblin, Wake, and Kazemi 2019); its study requires that scholars go beyond and interrogate the taken-for-granted. The potential for such discordance, ambiguity, and negativity in experiences of ordinary life has been a motivating focus in the critical geographies of the home sub-field, which emerged in the mid-2000s (Blunt and Varley 2004; Blunt and Dowling 2006). As Jeanne Moore (2000, p. 213) argued, there was a 'need to focus on the ways in which home disappoints, aggravates, neglects, confines and contradicts as much as it inspires and comforts'. Decades on, there is room to think more about how to theorise the home as a space that absorbs as well as repels 'trouble'. The fact that in the family geographies sub-field 'everyday processes of family conflict, trouble and disruption' currently only 'occupy a marginal space in the geographic literature' (Tarrant and Hall 2019, p. 4) lends further weight to this task.

In *Home SOS*, I take the 'crisis ordinary' (Berlant 2011) as the lead conceptual frame through which I deepen theoretical engagements on intimate geographies of violence in these sub-fields, and geography more broadly. Domestic violence and forced eviction, I contend, are both instantiations of the crisis ordinary, 'when the ordinary becomes a landfill for overwhelming and impending crises of life-building and expectation whose sheer volume so threatens what it has meant to 'have a life' that adjustment seems like an accomplishment' (Berlant 2011, p. 3). *Home SOS* explores this social theory through a grounded, embodied, and long-running account of crisis ordinaries that are unfolding in Cambodia and that allow elite men, in particular, to maintain the balance of power at the expense of women and their homes.

The book that follows is an ambitious, expressly experimental one, which rather being a single-issue monograph is dedicated to the integrated study of domestic violence and forced eviction. Domestic violence and forced eviction are typically understood as discrete and unconnected violences, the former usually discussed as a type of interpersonal violence and the latter as a 'violence of property' (Springer 2013a, p. 608). However, a core argument made in the book is that the intimate injustices and precarious journeys that domestic violence and forced eviction embody are also intimately linked and, in some instances, simultaneously faced in women's lives. I read and weave these interconnections through hybrid yet complementary theoretical engagements with the crisis ordinary and

survival-work, bio-necropolitics and precarity, intimate war and slow violence, law and lawfare, and rights to dwell (see Chapter 2). Drawing on literatures from development studies, women's studies, anthropology, politics, and international relations (IR), and spanning development, legal, political, and social geography, I provide, ultimately, an original book-length study that combines domestic violence and forced eviction to offer relational insights between these violences.

In this introductory chapter I set up some of the major and interconnected arguments that the book takes forward: first, that domestic life is lived and manifest in and through crisis ordinaries; second, that domestic violence and forced eviction necessitate what I call 'survival-work'; and, third, that they are both forms of gender-based violence. I then turn to the research trajectories that led to the convergence of the domestic violence and forced eviction research and material. I also include reflection on key overarching methodological approaches taken and how these are reflected in the content and ethos of *Home SOS*. Finally, I move on to the structure of the book and summarise its findings.

Crisis Ordinaries of Domestic Violence and Forced Eviction

If Berlant's work on the crisis ordinary reminds scholars 'to make sense of the ways in which subjects find themselves habituating, situating, desiring, or feeling in the world, day to day, often amid conditions of cruelty' (Cram 2014, p. 374), then *Home SOS* shows how systemic crises are entrenched in the home and speak to broader patterns of violences as part and parcel of the vernacular landscape of Cambodia. Both domestic violence and forced eviction can be considered as spatial exclusions or 'expulsions' (Sassen 2014) from home and living space as part of a wider diagnosis of unstable and disconcerting times. Yet they are forms of ongoing loss that a language of expulsion risks eliding. Taken together, domestic violence and forced eviction work to underscore the significance of 'less sensational, yet nevertheless devastating' dislocations from home (Vaz-Jones 2018, p. 711). They are singular yet inter-linked forms of crisis ordinariness rooted in metaphorical and/or physical displacement. Above all, however, they are lived experiences, which the book prioritises. Just as domestic violence can lead to forced eviction from home, empirical data in the book attests to the emergent links that can be drawn between forced eviction, domestic violence, and marital breakdown. In order to start building a holistic understanding of intimate violences encountered by women in contemporary Cambodian society, the equivalences and morphisms that exist between domestic violence and forced eviction are explored in the pages that follow.

Doing so aims to counteract how 'there are many forms of precarity and disorder not captured under the designation of "crisis" that do not command the same critical attention' as high profile disasters (Ahmann 2018, p. 147). In this regard, the book thus builds from recently published work in two areas. The first

relates to crisis geographies that are multi-scalar and embedded in political economy dynamics (such as austerity), but are experienced intensely at the personal scale and articulated through everyday fragilities of family life (Hall 2019). In *Home SOS*, for example, I show how marriage is an intimate yet precarious union that is influenced by wider political structures and processes, including Cambodia's recent history of humanitarian crisis at the hands of the Khmer Rouge. A second area that *Home SOS* builds from is the vital importance of 'non-eventful geographies' of violence and everyday life – violences that are too often left out of social science work on suffering and dying (Wilkinson and Ortega-Alcázar 2019). Such 'quasi-events', Elizabeth Povinelli (2011, p. 13) argues, 'never quite achieve the status of having occurred or taken place'. My ambition, then, is to reposition domestic violence and forced eviction as events, rather than quasi-events, that happen, and are happening, in the extra-domestic realm.

Domestic life for many women in Cambodia, I show, is saturated with crises, which are viewed in ordinary and anticipatory terms. The Cambodian Buddhist expression 'fire in the house' embodies the idea, for example, that in order to maintain a harmonious household, women are responsible for suppressing three fires of potential conflict within the home – parents, husbands, and 'others' (Derks 2008). Often uttered in relation to domestic violence, the Khmer proverb 'Plates in a Basket will Rattle' speaks to the saturation and management of conflict (fire) in everyday life that is normal rather than diversionary. Crisis in this guise can be approached as a 'prosaic', 'the routinization of a register of improvisations lived as such by people and, in this sense, belonging at most to the domain of the obvious or self-evident, and at least to the banal or that which no longer evokes surprise' (Mbembé and Roitman 1995, p. 326). The first-ever survey of domestic violence in Cambodia opens with a vignette that evokes this further: 'if people live in the same house there will inevitably be some collisions. It's normal … it can't be helped. But, from time to time, plates break. So do women' (Zimmerman 1995, np). Through the life stories of female respondents, *Home SOS* focuses on these collisions and, in some tragic cases, their fatalities; my argument is that women's homes and bodies are being broken, time and again, in the making of Cambodia today.

The joint study of domestic violence and forced eviction reveals how this pernicious breaking exceeds baseline expectations of domestic conflict. Not only this, but the home is a dynamic space of potentiality (Povinelli 2011) in which women are innovating under these debilitating circumstances in different ways. Some women I spent time with continued to manage the flames, others felt compelled to ignite them in the public sphere to try and extinguish their threat, whilst others exited marriage to escape the heat altogether. In the ordinary, then, it is possible to read the eventful, the memorable, and also the episodic, 'occasions that make experiences while not changing much of anything' (Berlant 2007, p. 760). As Susan Fraiman (2017, p. 123) writes in relation to the reproduction of the ordinary, it is women who 'generally get the brunt' of this work. Women's firefighting takes many forms in contemporary Cambodia and the book ignites

discussion of domestic violence and forced eviction as fires with multiple and politically imbued sources, responses, and outcomes.

Home SOS goes on to show, for instance, how the mundanity of the crisis ordinary continues as marginalisation and containment of these supposed 'non-events' to the home by a government unwilling to tolerate its spilling out into public and the concomitant political questions and challenges to its power that this may bring. Government attempts to keep disruption to the established order at a minimum enables the continued production of death, social or actual, through de facto gerrymandering whereby political advantage is achieved by manipulating and regulating the boundaries of home and the 'fire' within. Women have the right to dwell free from violence, but in their everyday lives, and in their pursuit of this goal, are subject to a bio-necropolitical brutality that the book brings into view through its joint focus on domestic violence and forced eviction.

The Survival-Work of Domestic Violence and Forced Eviction

To examine women's injuries, but also the survival practices, that are performed in the domestic domain, I synergistically place domestic violence and forced eviction within an expansive conceptualisation of work that exposes capitalist patriarchy as the requirement that women perform survival-work across private and public realms (Dalla Costa 1972; Mies 1982). The centrality of social reproduction to accounts of violence and dispossession thus take on critical importance (Fernandez 2018). As Maria Mies (2014, p. 2) elaborates in relation to the accumulation of wealth, productive capital, and control by men:

> Today, it is more than evident that the accumulation process itself destroys the core of the human essence everywhere, because it is based on the destruction of women's autarky over their lives and bodies.

As feminist writing has long set out, women's labour in the home is not a separate social sphere located outside of economic relations but is integral to it. Despite this, 'housework is not counted as work, and is still not considered by many as "real work"' (Federici 2012, p. 127). My reference to survival *work* therefore tries not to lose sight of the range of labour that women undertake in the extra-domestic home, but which remains largely invisible in writings on political and economic change in Cambodia. The home is a discursive construct and product of ongoing and demanding labour that is intimately connected, rather than sealed off, from political meaning and impact. Just as Sylvia Chant (2007) identifies a 'feminisation of responsibility and obligation' taking hold in the Global South as rising numbers of poor women of all ages are working outside the home and are continuing to perform the bulk of unpaid reproductive tasks, *Home SOS* adds the precarities of domestic violence and forced eviction to this

growing suite of duties. As such, it directly responds to Berlant's (2007, p. 757) incitement that 'we need better ways to talk about activity oriented toward the reproduction of ordinary life: the burdens of compelled will that exhaust people taken up by managing contemporary labor and household pressures'.

Evidence from around the world demonstrates that it is women who, with deepening inequalities, are shouldering the burden of adjustment as 'shock absorbers' and carers for households on the edge of survival (Brickell and Chant 2010; Cappellini, Marilli, and Parsons 2014; Elson 2002; Gill and Orgad 2018; McDowell 2016; Sou and Webber 2019). Given the corporeal and material hardships of domestic violence and forced eviction, as well as the dramatically limited and high-stake choices that they both entail, the significance of emotional (Hochschild 1983) as well as physical labour cannot be discounted. Focusing on daily spaces and routine situations reveals how 'precarity is embedded in the mundane tasks of the domestic, and as a result, unevenly impacts women whose traditional roles as mothers and caretakers mean that they are often at the fore of place-making practices and responsibilities' (Muñoz 2018, p. 411). Both domestic violence and forced eviction are traumatic ruptures in time and space of domestic and social reproduction in all their dimensions. This includes the symbolic dimensions of identity and representation (Meertens and Segura-Escobar 1996) that Cambodian women are typically responsible for in their familial lives.

If patriarchy is to be understood as men's violent appropriation of women's labour as a dominant force of production (Federici 2014, p. x), then the survival-work that women perform is being co-opted as a means to uphold the viability of the Cambodian state. This is because 'the reproduction of human beings is the foundation of every economic and political system' and 'the immense amount of paid and unpaid domestic work done by women in the home is what keeps the world moving' (Federici 2012, p. 2). In other words, the Cambodian government's accumulation model is being strengthened not only through the waged labour of women in the garment factories sustaining its economic growth but also the unwaged labour that women are undertaking in the home. Both are 'productive' for the reproduction of 'big men' and the modern Cambodian state; predicated on the control of women's homes and bodies that they desire to have firm and lasting dominance over. The home and women's labour in it, are cornerstones upon which capital accumulation is forged. Cindi Katz (2001, p. 709) writes that, as a result, it is important to critically study 'the material social practices through which people reproduce themselves on a daily and generational basis and through which the social relations and material bases of capitalism are renewed' (see also Federici 2018a). The survival-work entailed in living with, or on, from domestic violence and forced eviction pushes the importance, therefore, of 'broadening the concept of labor to more fully articulate the dialectics of production and reproduction' (Tyner 2019, p. 1307; see also Rioux 2015).

With these points in mind, a mainstay argument pursued in *Home SOS* is that women are not only disproportionally impacted upon by domestic violence and

forced eviction as events and processes in themselves but that they are also tasked with the adjustive work of homemaking and the management of everyday precarity stemming from this. The expectation of, and necessity for, women's survival-work in the crisis ordinary is highly problematic and the home is a key setting where this can be identified and studied. Homemaking is a cultural process and since a 'culture only exists as a sum total of its iterations' (Macgregor Wise 2000, p. 310), this 'pragmatic (life-making)' and 'accretive (life-building)' work becomes endangered and more arduous when the conditions for predictability are undermined (Berlant 2007, p. 757). My reference to survival is therefore a 'back to basics' move (Heynen 2006, p. 920), which recognises the centrality of home to survival and the labours that go into the meeting of basic material need, familiarity, and comfort. 'Practices of survivability', Loretta Lees, Annunziata, and Rivas-Alonso (2018, p. 349) write, include 'all of the different practices people employ to stay put' and that counteract 'blanket statements of neoliberal hegemony'.

The survival-work that women do to 'stay put' is underpinned by the home being both 'a nodal point of concrete social relations' and 'a conceptual or discursive space of identification' (Rapport and Dawson 1998, p. 17). The home as a physical and ideological entity reflects the significance of place in 'dis*place*ment' (Davidson 2009, p. 226, emphasis in original). As I conjectured earlier, domestic violence and forced eviction are attempted deprivations of home, its material infrastructure, and/or sense of belonging. Domestic violence is one of the most overlooked forms of displacement as women are often forced to leave their homes suddenly, without their possessions, to an unknown and unfamiliar place (Warrington 2001; Graham and Brickell 2019). In the United Kingdom, for example, tens of thousands of forced migrations occur each year as a result of domestic violence yet it is a country designated as having no internally displaced persons (Bowstead 2015, 2017). Such mobilities 'could certainly be understood *as* emergency' given that they 'demand highly intensive forms of movement that radically transform one's life chances and quality of life' (Adey 2016, p. 32). Women experience 'a process of spatial churn' as they undertake individual, isolated journeys, and move multiple times before they are able to find a settled home (Bowstead 2015, p. 317). For women who cannot leave meanwhile, they may feel 'homeless at home' (Wardhaugh 1999), living in, and managing, a violent environment through daily and multiple forms of survival-work. The ideological scripting of home as intimate and safe can also lead to women tolerating violence so as not to signal a deep failure or collapse of home (Price 2002). The book shows that in Cambodia, this ideological scripting is strongly focused on women's familial responsibilities and has a similar influence. Part of what makes the violence so untenable and cruel is the survival-work required to keep up this pretence.

The threat of forced eviction can also lead to the chipping away of home, materially and metaphorically, and the eventual displacement and dislocation of families ejected from their homes leads to their 're-settlement'/homelessness. Much like the 'spatial churn' that domestic violence survivors can face, forced eviction

also produces a harmful turbulence that women must typically counteract through their emotional and physical labours. Survival-work inside, and outside of, the home is therefore an important, yet still neglected, part of labour and economic geography that warrants scholarly development (Strauss 2018).

The Gender-Based Violences of Domestic Violence and Forced Eviction

While domestic violence and forced eviction are significant issues for women in their own right, *Home SOS* contends that, taken together, they most clearly and definitively demonstrate the gendered contingency of existence in contemporary Cambodia. Situating the book as a feminist geography intervention with broader (inter)disciplinary significance, I venture that both are acts of gender-based violence. Gender-based violence is defined as 'violence which is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately' (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1992, np). This includes acts that inflict physical, mental, or sexual harm or suffering, the threat of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty (CEDAW 1992).

Domestic violence is a well-known form of gender-based violence that encompasses violence against women by an intimate partner and/or other family members, wherever this takes place, and in whatever form, be this physical, sexual, psychological, or economic. Adult women account for the vast majority of domestic violence victims globally. The insidious nature of domestic violence in Cambodia was first highlighted by inaugural research conducted in the mid-1990s by the Project Against Domestic Violence with 1374 women (Nelson and Zimmerman 1996). The study found that 16% of women surveyed reported physical abuse by their spouses and 8% acquired injuries mostly to the head. More recently, a nationally representative Partners for Prevention (P4P) (2013) study showed that one in four women (25.3%) in Cambodia had experienced in their lifetime at least one act of physical or sexual violence, or both, perpetrated by an intimate partner. Figures published in the country's *National Survey on Women's Health and Life Experiences* (MOWA 2015) report too that approximately one in five women (between 15 and 64 years old) who had ever been in a relationship had experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner at least once in their lifetime. Further to this, three out of four women who had experienced physical and/or sexual violence had encountered severe acts of violence that were likely to cause injury. These include being hit with a fist or something that could hurt; dragged, kicked, or beaten up; threatened or hurt by a gun, knife, or other weapon. The survey also found that women are much more likely to experience frequent acts of violence rather than one-off incidents. Domestic violence occurrence is not an isolated event, but is a pattern of violative behaviour that women encounter. This includes emotional abuse, with almost one in three (32%) of 'ever-partnered' women aged 15–64 in Cambodia reporting controlling behaviour and/or the threat of harm (MOWA 2015).

In contrast to domestic violence, it is unusual that forced eviction is explicitly framed as gender-based violence. Forced eviction is viewed as a widespread and systematic human rights violation in Cambodia but is rarely discussed as gender-based violence. Cambodia is infamous for the scale and brutality of forced evictions occurring in, and beyond, Phnom Penh under the auspices of development. According to WITNESS (2017), at least 30 000 residents of the capital city, Phnom Penh, have been forcibly evicted, and approximately 150 000 Cambodians throughout the country are at risk of forced eviction. Underscoring the magnitude of the issue, between January 2000 and March 2014, the human rights LICADHO (2014a) documented more than 500 000 Cambodians affected by state-involved land conflicts in investigations covering roughly half the country.

Kaori Izumi's (2007, p. 12) writing on Southern and East Africa was, until recently, rare in its direct contention that forced eviction 'represents a form of gender-based violence in itself, as well as often being accompanied by other acts of extreme violence against women, including physical abuse, harassment, and intimidation, in violation of women's human rights'. A United Nations (2014a, p. 16) fact sheet on forced eviction now acknowledges that, 'women often tend to be disproportionately affected and bear the brunt of abuse during forced evictions'. Furthermore, it affirms that forced eviction commonly entails 'direct and indirect violence against women before, during and after the event'.[3] Forced eviction hurts in multiple senses, but is particularly traumatic for women given its targeting of the domestic sphere. As Yorm Bopha, an interviewee activist evocatively told me,

> My message is that home is life for women. Even the bird needs a nest. Even corpses need a cemetery. The most important place is home. If we do not have a home, how can we bring up our children?

The point that Yorm Bopha is making is that every woman needs somewhere either to nurture new life or rest their deceased bodies. Forced eviction, however, is a form of gender-based violence that reduces and unravels women's capacity to fulfil social reproductive roles that many women value. Although scholastic work collectively evidences the gendered dimensions of displacement (see Brickell and Speer 2020 for a review), *Home SOS* strengthens the case for viewing forced eviction more specifically, and emphatically, as a form of gender-based violence like domestic violence. The book reveals women's feminised responsibility to deal with the far-reaching and adverse consequences of forced eviction, from possible destruction of the family home, splintering of familial and/or community ties, the loss of livelihood, and access to essential facilities and services. These carry with them significant physical and mental burdens. As UN-HABITAT (2011a, pp. 3–4) notes and *Home SOS* demonstrates, 'the prospect of being forcibly evicted can be so terrifying that it is not uncommon for people to risk their lives in an attempt to resist or, even more extreme, to take their own lives when it becomes apparent that the eviction cannot be prevented'.

On these grounds, it is largely women who have been at the forefront of contestations over displacement globally (Casolo and Doshi 2013) and this resistance is part of the survival-work that women are undertaking. While displacement challenges the displaced 'to take their proper place [of non-being] instead of taking place' (Butler and Athanasiou 2013, p. 20), 'emplacement' (Roy 2017) as a tactic is one way that women contest the removal of their homes. The book shows, however, how these emplacement efforts are mired in gender-based violence, including state-sponsored violence against women, domestic violence, and women's incarceration as part-and-parcel of their fight for home. Direct and indirect violences are therefore inflicted physically and mentally upon women disproportionately, and this includes other deprivations of liberty that fit the definitional contours of gender-based violence. That forced eviction has been excluded from the gender-based violence radar is highly political and likely to be because it raises the spectre of complicit governments and a development model driven by capitalist dynamics and state accumulation tied to the seizing of homes at any human cost.

Indeed, seminal feminist scholarship conjectures that an indelible link exists between 'the global extension of capitalist relations and the escalation of violence against women, as the punishment against their resistance to the appropriation of their bodies and labour' (Federici 2014, p. xi). Prompted by Silvia Federici's work, Sutapa Chattopadhyay (2018, p. 1296) asks, 'how can women's vulnerability to gender-based violence be explained through numerous co-constitutive forms of violence and inequalities that shape the bodies of the marginalized?' *Home SOS* places the experiences of domestic violence and forced eviction centrefold in order to examine women's injuries, but also their survival practices, in defence of home. It therefore works to connect rather than isolate different forms of gender-based violence in its co-constitutive analysis of violences and inequalities shaping women's lives.

Converging Research Trajectories

Home SOS brings together original data from four studies I have undertaken. Over the 15-year collection period, my work has shifted from the broad-based focus of my doctorate (Brickell 2007) on household gender relations and marriage to a more concentrated engagement on domestic violence and forced eviction issues. This work began in Siem Reap Province and has since extended to Pursat Province and Phnom Penh, the country's capital.

The fieldwork for my PhD (2004–2005) was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and was undertaken in the urban centre of tourist-oriented Siem Reap (Slorkram commune), home to the global heritage and tourist site of Angkor. Here female participants worked in low-paying service sector positions or were engaged in the home-based selling of soup and refreshments. The other fieldsite was located in its rural vicinity where rice farming still predominated (Krobei Riel commune) and where women were mainly subsistence

farmers and weavers.[4] The research was based on 100 oral histories and 40 semi-structured interviews. The sample of interviewees was based on an equal proportion of men and women of differing ages living in the two communes. Participants were sought through visits on different days and times to randomly selected individual households in the two communes. Unlike the semi-structured interviews, the oral histories were completed in two sessions (lasting between two to four hours each) and were used to understand transitions over the life course given the shifting expectations, responsibilities, and attitudes tied to the roles of men and women in and outside the household. These were ordinarily carried out in participants' homes out of the sun and, given their length, women sometimes undertook piecework or housework. A profile was also used to gather background socioeconomic information about respondents and their respective households. In total, during my doctoral research, I interviewed 19 women in Slorkram and 5 women in Krobei Riel who had directly experienced marital breakdown, the majority of whom had encountered domestic violence in their spousal relationship(s). This included Orm, whose life story had a profound influence on the development of my research trajectory and this book.

My first encounter with Orm came across the metallic countertop of her sugar cane juice stall positioned outside her house in Slorkram Commune, Siem Reap (Figure 1.2). She had lived there with her two young daughters for

Figure 1.2 Orm's sugar cane juice stall outside her home, Siem Reap, 2004. Photo: Katherine Brickell.

4 years. Sipping the sweet liquid she had just squeezed through her press, we went on to spend several hours together talking. The joyous shrieks of the boys jumping in the river behind us felt in stark relief to the sombre tone of her voice as it began to crack in this initial interview. Surrounded by photographs of her standing alone, Orm quickly started telling me about the social discrimination she encountered as a divorcee, and the extreme depression that resulted. This extended to anxiety-induced weight loss and the attritional wearing down of her body in response.[5] Her mood was bleak and her failed marriages inflected with sadness and worry that had become an affective presence in her life.

Orm's interview revealed the reluctance to talk publicly about her circumstances on the basis of perceived guilt, which upholds the idea that women should not take fire outside the house, but let it smoulder inside. Crises should, by this prevailing logic, be contained as internal domestic affairs and not leaked into the public sphere. What was also telling for me in Orm's interview was how the failings of her intimate relationships and her insecure tenure status residing on the riverbank without legal title (Figure 1.3) compounded her overarching sense of precarity and outsider status. Much like the language used to describe the history

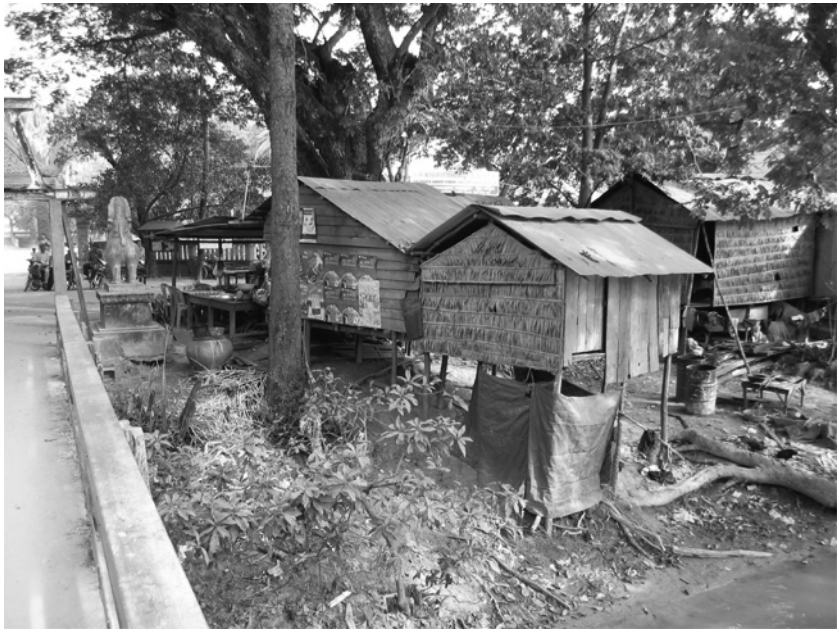

Figure 1.3 Exterior of Orm's home, Siem Reap, 2004. Photo: Katherine Brickell.

and circumstances of her intimate relationships, she explained that she had no choice but to 'bear living here'. Orm was deeply unhappy because she did not know if and when the land would be confiscated and frequently noted her constant fear of her eviction 'being soon'. Earning only 40 US dollars per month and living alone without a partner, she noted that there was little way of turning her life chances around. This slow and anticipatory emergency was never far from her mind. Crisis had an omni-presence in her life history that she keenly detected.

Orm's interview impressed upon me the toll that the responsibility of managing the crisis ordinary people can have, and how this weight is linked memories and experiences of the past. When fantasies of 'the good life' become untenable (Berlant 2011), as they had for Orm, a sense of crisis can pervade to such an extent that life feels hopeless. Orm describes that she 'can only hold the pain in my chest' and feels that 'trouble' was 'accumulating continuously' in her life. This inability to move forward positively in life, the sheer relentlessness of issues amassing, and the quotidian internalisation of this harm, is etched into the crisis ordinary. To escape it, suicide is one route Orm contemplated. The only thing deterring her suicide was concern for her children's well-being. Orm had lost both her parents when she was a child during the Khmer Rouge regime and after being forcibly displaced to Battambang Province lived with her grandmother before she was also killed. Moved regularly across the country, Orm variously laboured on rice fields, broke up termite mounds, and built irrigation channels, all under the regime's orders. She did not wish her daughters to be orphaned as she had. In her first marriage, she explained that her husband's parents did not accept her because she was an orphan. Often, she said, looking down, 'they didn't allow me to sleep inside with my husband, closing the door on me' and forcing her to sleep outside. Orm's desire for home and acceptance had once again been stymied.

For Orm, the ensuing crisis was not only an event but felt like 'an enduring condition of life' (Roitman 2013, p. 2) that she could not escape however hard she tried. This is in large part because of the normative ideals and constraints to which she felt held as a Cambodian woman who should be happily married and living in a stable conjugal home. In Cambodia these seemed available only to certain populations she was stigmatised by, and excluded from, on moral and financial grounds. That crisis 'entails reference to a norm' (Roitman 2013, p. 4) was especially pertinent to Orm's gendered story of the crisis ordinary.

My doctoral research provided the basis for a project four years later on marital dissolution, an issue of intimate significance to Orm and several other women I had met during my PhD research. Supported by a Royal Geographical Society small grant, I returned to the rural Krobei Riel commune in 2011. There I carried out a total of 22 in-depth interviews with ever-abandoned, separated, or divorced women.[6] During the month-long research, all women from the commune who were identified by village-level leaders as falling into the aforementioned categories were interviewed through this targeted sample approach. Working across this range of statuses was important in a country where marriage and its end can

take multiple forms. The 2005 Cambodian Demographic Health Survey (National Institute of Public Health et al. 2006, p. 266) suggests that only one-third of ever-married women (652) canvased (2162) had signed a contract in front of commune authorities.[7] Research by Robin Biddulph (2011) on what are termed 'de facto marriages' suggests that whilst couples apply for permission from the commune and follow formal public announcement guidelines, they do not complete the registration process at the commune to gain marriage certification. Whilst not legally verifiable, these marriages are based on community recognition and also on family books compiled and issued by local authorities. As Mehrvar, Kim Sore, and Sambath (2008, pp. 14–15) have stated in their work on land rights in Cambodia, 'Most women interviewed did not understand the difference between divorce in a legally registered marriage and an agreement between parties to dissolve traditional marriage (separation).' Consequently, despite a decision from the court being required for a 'formal divorce' in cases of legally registered marriages, they found official court decisions for divorce to be extremely rare.

Given this complex legal picture of marital dissolution, a profile form was again used to collect data on marital status, age, household structure pre- and post-breakdown(s) (including intermediary arrangements), and engagement in paid work (again with notes to any changes). The women ranged in age between 24 and 48 years old. Whilst the project predominantly focused on Krobei Riel, I also spent time attempting (largely in vain) to relocate the 19 women who had experienced marital breakdown identified in my doctoral research in the Slorkram commune. I did, however, manage to successfully recontact and re-interview Orm with the help of a photograph I had kept from seven years prior.

Orm had moved further down river to allow for what she was briefed as bridge widening works. Despite Orm's tumultuous relationship history, out of stigma and shame, mixed with a desire for emotional and financial support, Orm had also recently remarried. Yet this change in her marital status had not removed the need for survival-work to support her family and she again felt 'as usual' depended *upon* rather than being depended *for*. Describing being 'looked down' upon and 'scorned', her decision to remarry was in part influenced by her 'out of place' status. Orm's reluctant choices emerged from her attempts to conform to acceptable Khmer womanhood. In this sense, symbolic dimensions of marital dissolution – in which discrimination plays a part – are shown to directly shape decision-making processes. The 'choice' to remarry becomes a tool to regain status, acceptance, and self-confidence at the same time as familial stability and happiness.[8] Prevailing gender norms are important factors to understanding the 'home unmaking' (Baxter and Brickell 2014) and remaking practices of Cambodian women who have experienced marital breakdown (Brickell 2011). They are in one sense contradictory, limiting the agency of women, to challenge the spectre of violence they encounter in cases of domestic violence and forced eviction. Yet, as Orm's marital manoeuvres testify, they can provide a form of moral legitimacy and protection that women mobilise in situations of discrimination.

A year later after I conducted this research, and having re-met Orm, I began leading a study (2012–2015) joint funded by the ESRC and Department for International Development (DFID) entitled 'Lay and Institutional Knowledges of Domestic Violence Law: Towards Active Citizenship in Rural and Urban Cambodia'. It explored the (in)efficacies of the country's first ever DV law, 'The Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protection of Victims' (Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) 2005) (see Figure 1.4). Each research element was conducted

Figure 1.4 Domestic violence law poster in Pursat Province, 2013. Photo: Katherine Brickell.[9]

in eight communes divided equally between urban and rural environs of two provinces – Pursat and Siem Reap (including Slorkram commune in which I had undertaken my prior research). In early 2013, the qualitative research was conducted that forms the backbone of the domestic violence (DV) data I engage with in the book. It included 40 interviews with female DV victims (identified by NGOs and community authorities), 40 with an equal proportion of male and female householders (approached randomly), and a final 40 with a range of different stakeholders who had an occupational investment in DV reduction. This latter sample included legal professionals, NGO workers, police officers, and other authority and religious leaders. The viewpoints of such stakeholders are a distinctive and necessary feature of the empirical chapters that follow. They help 'to reveal specific features of contentious politics in the terrain of law, since as an "institutional environment" law

makes mediators and translators crucial to the activation of a politics of rights' (Woodman 2011, p. 190). Their professional behaviour and conduct also sends out powerful wider messages to victims, offenders, and the wider society about the prospects of women gaining justice (Briones-Vozmodiano et al 2014; Lila, Gracia, and Gracia 2013). In January 2019 I undertook follow-up meetings with key stakeholder organisations in Phnom Penh.

These three projects featured in *Home SOS* are joined by a fourth, on forced eviction. The need for this research became more pressing over time as I undertook the other studies. Forced eviction was a human rights violation, which was becoming ever more present across Cambodia. It was also something that Orm spoke to me about previously in the 2011 study on marital dissolution in Siem Reap. In 2013, I returned to Siem Reap to re-connect with Orm once again. I could not find her, however, and her riverside home had disappeared. The year prior, nearly 400 families had been evicted from their homes in the Slorkram commune of the city. Authorities had justified the evictions to develop, further widen the river, and make new communal gardens (Transterra Media 2012). Despite being told that they had until 1 April 2012 to move, on 27 March a large police force arrived in the early morning and demanded families and businesses leave immediately (Figure 1.5).

Figure 1.5 Slorkram river community before (26 March) and after (27 March) the eviction, Siem Reap, 2012. Source: Courtesy of Philippe Ceulen.

Orm's home had been displaced several times; its fixity to the river bank had gradually been unstitched until it was gone. The fire that tore through it was deliberately ignited to remove every trace of familial life once lived on Siem Reap's river banks. It was the end point of an attritional war waged by provincial authorities to make room for more 'profitable' uses. Described as a 'sore sight for tourist eyes', the river 'clean up' (Sokha 2006) was justified to help beautify the city, the economy of which is driven by international tourists visiting the archaeological ruins of Angkor close by.

The spectre of forced eviction and the eradicative violence that accompanied it, also revealed fault lines that were hard to ignore and compelled the twin study of domestic violence and forced eviction. Their juxtaposition was something I kept on returning to in my thinking. While the passing of DV law suggested a political willingness, of sorts, to tackle this type of violence against women through 'rule of law', the Cambodian government were concurrently using 'rule by law' against women contesting forced eviction on the streets of the country's capital (see Chapter 6 for a discussion of these distinctions). 2011 saw the escalation of violences in, and politically motivated charges against, the Boeung Kak Lake (BKL) community of Phnom Penh and women in particular. Law and violence had an intimate relationship in Cambodia and was one I felt needed exploring. Over the years, spending more time in Phnom Penh for the DV law study interviewing NGOs and policymakers, I took the opportunity to visit BKL in 2012 and then to start new work there. This fieldwork was carried out in 2013 and 2014.

Garnering both national and international attention, BKL is perhaps the most widely known case of forced eviction, and collective resistance to it, in Cambodia. The controversial project involved the eviction of families living around the lake over many years in central Phnom Penh (see Chapter 4 for more information; Nam 2011 on its history and Kent 2016 on recent events there). As the United Nations General Assembly (2012, p. 8) note, 'The case is emblematic of the desperation that communities throughout Cambodia feel in resolving their land disputes, and the ensuing civil unrest.'To understand forced eviction as an embodied, located, and grounded phenomenon, in-depth interviews were conducted with 15 women from BKL who had either been forcibly evicted and/or who had become active participants in protest in 2013. In addition to these interviews, material was gained via audio-recorded tours (Figure 1.6) with some of the women as well as more informal 'hanging out' at the women's advocacy centre. All the women chose to be identified using their real names: Kong Chantha, Bo Chhorvy, Phan Chhunreth, Nget Khun, Ngoun Kimlang, Soy Kolap, Srei Leap, Heng Mom, Van My, Sear Naret, Srei Pov, Soung Samai, Phorn Sophea, Srey Touch, and Tep Vanny. Given the government's intensified clamping down on freedom of speech and willingness to incarcerate BKL women in recent years since, I have not used their specific names where I refer to any direct criticism of government party members.

Figure 1.6 Audio-taped tour of Boeung Kak by residents, 2013. Photo: Katherine Brickell.

A further five interviews in 2013 were conducted with women living in Trapaing Anhchanh, a resettlement community made up of evicted residents from the 'Cambodia Railway Rehabilitation Project'.[10] These are featured in Chapter 4 using pseudonyms. In 2014 I returned to interview three BKL women, Tep Vanny and Srei Leap, who I had met previously, and Yorm Bopha, who was in prison during an earlier research trip (see Chapter 6 for more information on incarceration). I also extended my sample to include six husbands of BKL activists and other menfolk to understand their experiences (I again adopt pseudonyms in the empirical chapters). Across both years of research, I undertook six further interviews with NGOs involved in land rights issues. In 2017 and into 2018 I also met several Cambodian political figures and journalists who were in London and who offered their views on the BKL situation.

Overarching Methodological Approaches

Taken together, the four projects I have outlined are marked by a series of overarching methodological approaches. First, the material presented in the book brings together and scans across a 15-year horizon that is complementary to feminist geography research and emphasises the benefits of sustained engagement, of long-term relationships, and commitments to particular groups of people or issues (McDowell 2001; Valentine 2005). It is not only that my arguments are based on a larger volume of interviews than individual studies might yield (over 300 in total) but that their undertaking over more than a decade gives rise to

insights that go beyond snapshots of time. As Clare Madge et al. (1997, p. 96) note, longitudinal studies are valuable 'because the research is not fixed in time but reflects the dynamism of people's experiences, so enabling temporal differences' to be comprehended (see also Sou and Webber 2019). The influence of Orm's life story, followed from 2004 until 2013 inspired, for example, the shape of my research in the years that followed in this book. Learning from her twin experiences of marital breakdown and forced eviction, cemented my thinking that rather than discuss domestic violence and forced eviction in isolation from each other, it was important to trace and understand their connective tissue. Being attentive to individual as well as collective trajectories in a country in flux offers the ability to explore how women's lives and those of their families are swept up with Cambodia's transition – 'to tell a story capable of engaging and countering the violence of abstraction' (Hartman cited in Saunders 2008, p. 7). Inspired by Orm, the book is therefore less reactive to, and more reflective on, the (un)eventful and women's survival-work on a daily and long-term basis. The book's ability to capture the slow violences, less perceptible traces, and repeated articulations of injustice in Cambodian society are heightened through this approach. They provide a fuller and more cumulative story about the violences encountered in domestic life than might otherwise have been possible. Furthermore, given that violence is 'a processual and unfolding moment, rather than an "act" or "outcome"' (Springer and Le Billon 2016, p. 2), the longitudinal allows the book to transcend the singular event and moment to demonstrate the processing and unfolding nature of violence.

Second, the book draws out the experiences of ever-married Khmer women from the wider data set of participants possible from the four studies.[11] Albeit selective, this approach aims to ensure that histories of women in Cambodia are told not only through the more formal realms of female politicians (Lilja 2008) or Buddhist nuns (Kent 2011a, 2011b) but also through more informal spheres of political power tied to the marital realm. The book's focus on the Cambodian housewife as domestic violence survivor and grassroots activist contributes to work on the history of women and power in the country (Jacobsen 2008). It works to ensure that as domestic figures they are not written out of history either as unexceptional or rebel figures who are trivialised and/or derided in the popular or scholarly imagination. My pivot around marriage and its breakdown also arises from what is described as 'the near universality of marriage in Cambodian society' (National Institute of Statistics (NIS) et al. 2014, p. 98). Reflecting the wider centrality of marriage in Asia (Piper and Lee 2016), figures record that the proportion of women in Cambodia who have never married decreases with age to a low of only 4% among those aged 45–49 (NIS et al. 2014, p. 98). While this ubiquity does not mean that I exclude other perspectives and voices from the data in the book, it does mean that *Home SOS* foregrounds the violences visited upon, and told through, the narratives of middle-aged women who have been, at one point, in a spousal relationship.

Third, each of the projects outlined has been driven by a commitment to in-depth qualitative research, namely interviews, to better understand 'geographies that wound' (Philo 2005) both in terms of their affliction and treatment. In the face of what Russell Hitchings (2012) has identified in human geography as a growing hesitance about interviews to research everyday life, I reaffirm the vital and enduring role of 'talk' for learning about domestic life and its ruptures. This falls in line with feminist geographical research which has a long history of engagement with interviews (Longhurst 2016). Given potential suppression and eradication of victims' capacity for speech within and beyond the Cambodian family, interviews encourage the narration of stories to communicate their experiences. These recorded Khmer language interviews were transcribed and then translated verbatim into English by research assistants I worked closely with in each project. In my doctoral research, I had a basic command of Khmer, and worked with two male interpreters who were students at the time, and who supported my broad-brush explorations of household life. Female research assistants undertook the marriage dissolution and forced eviction research with me. Meanwhile, following World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines on the ethical conduct of research on domestic violence, the interview team in the larger DV law study included one male and one female research assistant who carried out the research with male and female respondents (respectively) after a period of training, piloting, and initial in-the-field supervision. At the start of each interview informed-consent was recorded on the digital voice recorder, and with my more sensitive postdoctoral research, it was explained to respondents that if at any point they felt distressed and wanted to change the subject (or stop the interview), then this was acceptable. Information on NGO assistance was additionally given to two participants who requested help in the DV law study.

Structure of the Book

In the next chapter I continue to set up the conceptual parameters through which the interconnected fires of domestic violence and forced eviction can be best understood. Chapter 2 brings into dialogue scholarship on the crisis ordinary with bio-necropolitics and precarity, intimate war and slow violence, law and lawfare, and rights to dwell. It therefore harnesses and aims to advance a diverse yet synergistic set of theories from geography and cognate disciplines to impress the political significance of threatened homes, women's survival-work, and the paramountcy of gender-based violence.

Chapter 3 provides information on Cambodia's turbulent history and some of the key social-spatial continuities and junctures of change being witnessed in the country today. The chapter thereby grounds the book in the political economy of Cambodia. As feminist scholars argue, political economy matters; it 'highlights the patterns of material power and relationships that profoundly affect both the

prevalence of violence and insecurity and the efforts to eliminate them' (True 2012, p. 7; Elias and Roberts 2018). Just as violence within the family 'is a multifaceted phenomenon grounded in the interplay among personal, situational, and social cultural factors' (Heise 1998, p. 262), so too are the paths of domestic violence and forced eviction interventions embedded in, and mediated by, an environment of interconnected factors (Adelman 2004; Brickell 2015; Fulu and Miedema 2015; Sjoberg 2015; True 2012). As I advance through the book, domestic violence and forced eviction are present and felt in the home precisely because of their rooting in other sites and scales of power (Pain and Staeheli 2014). Detailing some of the 'political and institutional context in which the *production* of precarity occurs' (Waite 2009, p. 421, emphasis in original) is therefore core to the aims of Chapter 3.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 present the empirical material collected. In each I draw out commonalities and differences between the rights violations of domestic violence and forced eviction. My aim is to provide the reader with an ongoing and at times heightened sense of tension, dissonance, irony, and anger as the two unfold against each other in respect to their SOS calls (Chapter 4), responses (Chapter 5), and outcomes (Chapter 6). These are long and at times overwhelming chapters, which are shaped by the gravity of the subject matter and the weight of empirical material from both domestic violence and forced eviction victims on their experiences.

More specifically, Chapter 4 pursues a bio-necropolitical reading of contemporary Cambodia to explore women's narratives of domestic violence and forced eviction. Their narratives attest to truncated homes and lives subject to political abjection. I explore how these domestic crises are intimate wars that Cambodian women traverse through diverse encounters with death: from suicidal contemplation and suicide; avoiding and/or dwelling in social death; feeling like the living dead; to enduring feticide (the destruction of a foetus). The chapter is attentive to the resilience shown by women (and a number of featured men) in situations of domestic violence and forced eviction and how this survival-work is formative of the crisis ordinary.

Chapter 5 critically examines the actors and mechanisms through which the violences detailed in Chapter 4 have been responded to. While in the case of domestic violence I centre on the official state-sanctioned recourse to new legislation, my attention to forced eviction pivots on unsanctioned and creative routes to official redress via women's grassroots activism. I explore both these refusals for 'fire' to be contained to the home and study the extra-domestic spaces of parliament, the courts, and the street to pursue this. I thereby focus on the (un)invited and (un)eventful spaces of resistance of citizenship that have emerged from the home as an expansive and multi-dimensional space of political and legal significance. The chapter's focus on the different meanings given, commitments made, and actions taken to address domestic violence and forced eviction forms the groundwork for Chapter 6, which analyses their outcomes for women's lives.

Chapter 6 shows how women's experiences of violence can galvanise resistance but that this can also heighten their exposure to further violence and jeopardise their survival. Here I demonstrate the significance of law and lawfare for understanding the consequences of the survival-work explored in the two chapters preceding it.

Chapter 7 provides the conclusion to the book and summates how the home and the women they notionally shelter are imbued with variable levels and logics of disposability and grieveability by the Cambodian government and society in general. The myriad violences that women are encountering, I conclude, are not accidental to the governance of contemporary Cambodia but are central to its functioning. Domestic violence and forced eviction are, therefore, not unrelated typologies of gender-based violence. They are interrelated oppressions and brutalisations of domestic life that gravitate and retrain multiple subfields of geography on to the home sphere as a public–private hybrid worthy of energised study.

Endnotes

1 Ever-married refers to persons who have been married at least once in their lives although their current marital status may not be married.
2 Linguistically, at least in Khmer, there is no word for home. While *phteah* literally means house, the Khmer word *Kruosar* is equivalent to family.
3 These high-level observations relate to broader academic ones that the effects of displacement are not gender neutral, impacting men and women differently. This has been evidenced in relation to: conflict (Brun, 2000; Ensor 2017; Majidi and Hennion 2014; Manchanda 2004; Meertens and Segura-Escobar 1996; Suerbaum 2018); development (Brickell 2014a; Fernández Arrigoitia 2017; Mehta, 2009; Muñoz 2017, Perry 2013); gentrification (Lyons et al 2017; Mirabal 2009; Maharawal and McElroy, 2018; Sakizhoglu 2018; Watt 2018; Wright 2013); the extractive industries (Ahmad and Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt 2006); and/or natural disasters (de Mel 2017; Gorman-Murray, McKinnon, and Dominey-Howes 2014; Juran 2012; Tanyag 2018).
4 More detailed information on each vicinity can be found in my PhD thesis (Brickell 2007).
5 At this point in time, Orm had one prior formal divorce and two subsequent failed non-marital relationships.
6 The original research design had intended to include an equal proportion of men in the sample. However, no village leaders were able (or perhaps willing) to identify men who had experienced marital breakdown. National level statistics available at the time corroborated this situation with more women officially 'divorced' than men in both the 2008 General Population Census (0.8% males/3.1% females) (National Institute of Statistics 2009) and the 2005 Cambodian Demography Health Survey (CDHS) (1.8% males/4.2% females) (National Institute of Public Health et al. 2006). More recently, the National Institute of Statistics et al. (2014) record that, on average, across the 15–49 age cohort, only 1.4% of men are divorced in comparison to 3.4% of women.
7 This information is not available in newer versions of the CDHS.

8 See, however, the study by Sothy Eng, Szmodis, and Grace (2017) on the prevalence of domestic violence among remarried women in Cambodia.

9 The translation of this poster, is as follows. (Left): The abilities and duties of the authorities: (in the case of) the use of violence against wives or family members, the closest authorities have a duty to intervene immediately in cases where violence against the family takes place. (Right): Duties of the authorities when intervening in family violence: the authorities must identify a clear reason for the occurrence and then report it urgently to the prosecuting authorities (the court).

10 The Asian Development Bank and AusAid have attracted criticism for inadequate safeguarding against breaches of human rights as part of their funding of the 'Cambodia Railway Rehabilitation Project'. The range of options and full entitlements under the resettlement plan were not made available to project-affected households (Inclusive Development International 2012). The project was launched in 2006 to restore the country's dysfunctional railway infrastructure as part of the ADB's Greater Mekong Sub-Region Programme. See http://www.babcambodia.org/railways for a video on the harm experienced.

11 I refer to 'Khmer' women specifically as I did not conduct research within any ethnic minority communities who represent less than 5% of the population.