The course of economic change in twentieth century Cambodia was marked by a series of deliberate “conscious human efforts” that were typically extreme and ideologically driven. While colonisation, protracted war and violent revolution are commonly blamed for Cambodia's failure to modernise its economy in the twentieth century, Margaret Slocomb's *An Economic History of Cambodia in the Twentieth Century* questions whether these circumstances changed the underlying structures and relations of production. She also asks whether economic factors in some way instigated war and revolution. In exploring these issues, the book tracks the erratic path taken by Cambodia’s political elite and earlier colonial rulers to develop a national economy. The book closes around 2005, by which time Cambodia had been re-integrated into both the regional and the global economy as a fully-fledged member of the World Trade Organization.

To document Cambodia's path towards a modern economy, the author draws on resources from the State Archives of Cambodia not previously referenced in scholarly texts. The book provides information that is academically important but is also relevant to investors, aid workers and development specialists seeking to understand the shift from a traditional to a modern market economy.

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