Wednesday afternoon, January 29th, 2003...

Dear neighbor, where are you?...


Phnom Penh, Norodom Boulevard; a thick dark smoke rises in the sky in front of the newly built Thai Embassy. I tried to get closer to the scene, a crowd of hundreds of young people on motorcycles shouting anti-Thai slogans came so fast into my direction that I was caught into the crowded. 29th of January 2003, the day Cambodia was at the Brink of being at war with Thailand.

The “event” started with a Cambodian newspaper reporting a rumor about “morning star” (a Thai pop star) declaring that Angkor Vat should “be given back to Thailand...” She denied having said such a thing. But the rumor goes on... And it ended by violence that could have drawn the two countries to war.

left: the burning of Thai flag in front of the Thai embassy in Phnom Penh, January 2003.

May 2003, the Cambodia Daily prints a picture of the prime Minister of Cambodia and the prime minister of Thailand along with officials from both countries celebrating the “reconciliation” between the two countries. While looking at that picture and trying to recall the events I witnessed five months earlier, I can’t help myself thinking: Is this reconciliation?...


September 1989