



OUKOUBAH

Justice for the Cham Muslims under the Democratic Kampuchea Regime

Ysa Osman

OUKOUBAH – *Justice*

126. And if ye punish, let your
punishment

Be proportionate to the

Wrong that has been

Done to you:

But if ye show patience,

That is indeed the best (course)²¹⁶³

For those who are patient.

2163

In the context this passage refers to controversies and discussions, but the words are wide enough to cover all human struggles, disputes, and fights.

In strictest equity you are not entitled to give a worse blow than is given to you. Lest you should think that such patience only gives an advantage to the adversary, you are told that the contrary is the case, the advantage is with the patient, the self-possessed, those who do not lose their temper or forget their own principles of conduct.

THE HOLY QUR-ĀN
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មង្គ្រមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

Searching for the truth.

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Cover Photograph of Khalet Poukhary, age 9, Koh Phal village, Peus 1 subdistrict,
Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, by Youk Chhang

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*In Memory of the nearly two million Cambodians who suffered horribly
and died unjustly during the Democratic Kampuchea Regime.*

for my parents

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I wish to express my gratitude to all those generous benefactors who have supported me both materially and with ideas, who have raised my morale in so many ways, and who have provided invaluable information, giving me critical momentum to complete this paper. The United States Department of State, Bureau of Human Rights, Democracy and Labor (DRL) provided funds for research on the Cham Muslims under the Democratic Kampuchea (DK) regime of 1975-79. The Human Rights Projects Funds of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom provided funds for printing and publishing. The Royal Netherlands Government provided general support for this research. The Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) and the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes (TSL) provided many documents and photographs that served as an invaluable starting point for my research.

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My older brother Kaup Sleh and his wife Math Seiha were my guardians and played a large part in this study. They were the first to support my work as a researcher and constantly raised my spirits. They introduced me to a number of Cham Muslim leaders in Phnom Penh and other areas throughout the country. They were instrumental in helping me gain support from the many Cham who generously provided information for this paper. I am also grateful for the assistance of Uknha Sos Kamry (Kamaruddin bin Yusof), Chief of the Highest Council for Islamic Religious Affairs in Cambodia, who gave so much time in locating all the many sources in the Qur-ān concerning Islamic discipline, which clearly show how the deeds of the Khmer Rouge affected Islam and the traditions of Cham Muslims.

Invaluable assistance was also provided by His Excellency Math Ly, Representative of the Kampong Cham constituency and Supreme Personal Advisor to the King, His Excellency Zakariya Adam, Under Secretary of State of the Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs, His Excellency Senator Van Math, and the provincial and district *imam, bakem, toun, haji*, elders, and all brothers and sisters in the cities and rural areas. A large part of the text recorded here was taken from their recollections of the Democratic Kampuchea regime. Once again, I wish to express my gratitude to all those named above. I will continue to need you always, and can never be without you.

FOREWORD

It is easier to count the survivors in my family than the dozens of relatives, including my sister, nieces, nephew, aunt and uncle, who perished during the Democratic Kampuchea (DK) regime between 1975 and 1979. My family is no different from the Cham Muslim families Ysa Osman writes of in *Oukoubah*, the second volume in our Documentation Series. Like all of Cambodia's people, the Cham suffered under the brutalities of the DK regime. But each case is unique, as this book will demonstrate.

For over two decades now, Cham, Khmer, and other survivors have been seeking justice for the acts of the Khmer Rouge. They have signed petitions, built stupas and filled them with skulls, shared their stories with officials, and written down their own stories. While such actions have brought them some measure of relief from the trauma they experienced, our people have yet to achieve real justice. We have been patient for so long, and independent trials are the only way to further the process of healing and rebuilding Cambodia. Whatever justice comes out of the courts will not please everyone, but anything less than a legal accounting for the crimes of the DK regime will not do. In February 2002, the United Nations withdrew from talks with the Cambodian government over the establishment of a Khmer Rouge tribunal. The UN argued that the Cambodian government was unwilling to sign an agreement which would not safeguard the integrity of the trials and that the UN could not attach its name to trials over which it had only minimal control.

Cambodians are disappointed by both the UN and their government. They want criminal trials of Khmer Rouge leaders. The absence of justice for Khmer Rouge leaders haunts them and impedes the country's social and economic development. So the quest for justice continues and Cambodians, in overwhelming numbers, remain committed to moving it forward.

This second volume of the Documentation Series contributes to that quest. A Cambodian researcher, Ysa Osman, has documented the plight of the Cham people, an important minority group, which suffered enormous horror and grief during the reign of the DK regime. By documenting their experience, Ysa Osman makes an important contribution to uncovering the truth of what happened during what many Cambodians still call the "Pol Pot time." In doing so, he contributes to the growing body of research and documentation that makes an ever stronger and more compelling case to both the Cambodian government and the United Nations: cooperate to ensure that the Khmer Rouge leadership is brought to justice.

The survivors of the DK regime - the Cambodian people, including the Cham Muslims and other ethnic groups and religious minorities in Cambodia - have been waiting for too long. But they will continue their quest.

A NOTE ON THIS RESEARCH

Ysa Osman has written *Oukoubab* from his heart: he both lived through the Democratic Kampuchea regime, and has found common experiences with those he interviewed for this study. During his research, Osman learned that one of his subjects, Ismael Ahmad (who was arrested in early 1977 and held at S-21), was in fact his cousin. In addition, Osman's uncles were arrested in late 1975 and are believed to have disappeared in the Krauch Chhmar district security office. And perhaps most telling, Osman saw his brothers and sisters die young from a lack of food and medicine in Kratie province where his family had been evacuated.

The passion and pain that have informed Osman's writing could be dismissed as biased, but the reader will quickly see that *Oukoubab* is written from Osman's head as well. For example, historian Ben Kiernan calculates the 1975 Cham population based on a scientific survey conducted in 1936, while Osman has relied on Khmer Rouge telegrams and extensive anecdotal evidence in countering Kiernan's claim. While these figures may remain open to debate, there can be no doubt that Osman has carefully and thoroughly explored this question.

Moving beyond historian David Chandler's *Voices from S-21*, Osman has made the confessions collected from the notorious S-21 prison come alive. Forty-two Cham Muslim prisoners are known to have been held at S-21. Osman has profiled 13 of them because the biography sections of their confessions contain information on the victims' birthplaces, allowing him to locate relatives and unearth additional information on the prisoners as well as their alleged "prisoner networks." Osman brought a victim's confession along when interviewing the prisoner's family members, cross-checking the confession against the recollections of surviving relatives. He also uses many original Khmer Rouge documents as primary sources. His research and the vivid stories of the 13 Cham prisoners give readers an opportunity to decide for themselves if the Democratic Kampuchea regime singled out Cham Muslims for arrest and extermination based on race. A documentation series like this one can tell as much as available materials permit; perhaps only an independent Khmer Rouge tribunal will allow Cambodia to determine the complete truth. *Oukoubab* provides a source of evidence - on extra-judicial killing, summary execution, torture, child abuse, ethnic disaster, and bans on freedom of religion - for tribunal lawyers to examine.

Oukoubab is the second paper in our documentation series (the first paper is called *Victims and Perpetrators?*). The methodology we follow is explained on page 149. Briefly, we write from what materials tell us, rather than presume an answer and fit in selected information. We consult all available primary documents and secondary materials, as well as scholars. Osman and other researchers learn by doing and cross-train with local and international interns, volunteers and academic advisors. Current researchers train the next generation. In conducting interviews, a researcher avoids leading questions and is not allowed to reimburse those interviewed. A researcher chooses his or her own topic, cannot plagiarize, and follows a consistent

Documentation Center transliteration format. When I joined Osman for the first time, we interviewed the relatives of one of his study subjects, Saleh Yahya. During the interview I learned that they were my relatives and have since confirmed that Saleh Yahya was my uncle.

We would like to acknowledge the work of Wynne Cougill, who has edited this and several other Center papers. She loves and acknowledges the importance of our work, and provides us with encouragement. In return, we strive to be methodologically rigorous, while inevitably remaining emotional.

Through this series, Oukoubah has united the Osman family as well as mine, and I believe it is playing a broader cathartic role for much needed reconciliation, memory, and justice for all Cambodian people.

Sorya Sim

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INTRODUCTION

The 1975-1979 regime of Democratic Kampuchea (DK), led by Pol Pot and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, left more than one million Cambodians dead,¹ their bones scattered like those of animals. All of the more than 6,000,000 people who survived the regime² lived with constant horror and fear throughout those 3 years, 8 months, and 20 days. But the extent of suffering differed according to ethnicity and religious practice because the Democratic Kampuchea regime considered the cultural framework and religious customs practiced by Cambodians as “reactionary acts.”³

¹ The estimated number of deaths during the regime ranges from 1,000,000 to over 3,000,000:

Banister and Johnson report that 1,800,000 Cambodians lost their lives; their calculations take into account both births and immigration during 1975-1979. Banister, Judith and Paige Johnson, “After the Nightmare.” In *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge, the United Nations and the International Community*, Ben Kiernan, ed. New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1993, p. 90.

According to Chandler, “Conservative estimates of the number of men, women, and children who died between 1975 and 1979 as a result of DK policies run between 800,000 (1 in 10) and 1,000,000 (or 1 in 8) inhabitants of the country. These figures do not include those who died in combat with Vietnam.” Chandler, David P, *Brother Number One*, Colorado: Westview Press, 1992, p. 168.

The Government of the People’s Republic of Kampuchea set the number of people who died during the regime at 3,314,768, on the basis of 1,166,307 reports from 19 provinces and cities, and all offices and ministries around the party center. General Council of the Front for National Construction, Salvation, and Defense of the Kampuchean Motherland, *The Crimes of the Peking Hegemonists and Their Servants Pol Pot, Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan During 1975-1979*. Phnom Penh, 1983. This number was also used in Ney Pena, “The Collapse of the Pol Pot Genocidal Regime.” Phnom Penh: Pracheachun Newspaper, 1991, p. 138.

Between 1995 and 2001, the Mass Grave Research Team of the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) visited and documented 19,440 mass graves and over 1.2 million victims. Documentation Center of Cambodia, “Mapping the Killing Fields, 1975-1979” (a map), 2001. For a discussion of earlier findings, see Pheng Pong Rasy, “Map of Mass Graves, Prisons, and Memorials of the Khmer Rouge Genocidal Regime,” *Rasmei Kampuchea Daily*, July 29, 2001.

Craig Etcheson analyzed the number of dead by comparing figures from various sources, including those of the Research Commission on the Genocidal Pol Pot Regime, the Documentation Center of Cambodia Mass Grave Research Team, and historians Ben Kiernan, Marek Sliwinski, and Steve Heder. Etcheson wrote that, “not one million, not two million, but rather three million or more Cambodian people died during the Khmer Rouge regime.” Etcheson, Craig, “3.3 million dead and still counting.” *Phnom Penh Post*, Volume 9, Number 8, 14-27 April 2000.

² According to Kiernan, “The number of those living in January 1979 was calculated at 6 to 6.7 million.” Kiernan, Ben, *The Pol Pot Regime*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1996, p. 457.

³ Author’s interview with Math Ly, former member of the People’s Assembly of Democratic Kampuchea and former permanent member of the Khmer Rouge Tbaung Khmum District Committee, and today a Representative of Kampong Cham Constituency and Supreme Personal Advisor to the King, at his home in Phnom Penh, March 27, 2000. He stated: “on 20 May 1975 Pol Pot convened a conference in Phnom Penh to approve an eight-point plan. Those principles were: 1) Create cooperatives from low to high level. 2) Evacuate the people from the cities to the countryside and divide the people into three categories. 3) Stop use of money. 4) Close markets. 5) Eliminate religions, as they are all reactionary. 6) Eliminate schools. 7) Eliminate hospitals. 8) Sweep away internal enemies by the roots.” Also see Ney Pena, op. cit., p. 71, which refers to Ly.

Article 15, Section 20 of the Constitution of Democratic Kampuchea (which was approved on 14 December 1975) states “Every one of the people has the right to believe in faith or religion and has the right not to believe as well. Reactionary religions that damage Democratic Kampuchea and the Kampuchean People are absolutely forbidden.”

Among those who were killed disproportionately by the Khmer Rouge⁴ were the Cham ethnic group. It is estimated that prior to 1975, the Cham, who are Muslims, comprised 10% of Cambodia's population (roughly 700,000 of the country's 7,000,000 people). After the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime in 1979, only 200,000 ethnic Cham remained alive.⁵ Thus, of the nearly 2,000,000 dead, 400,000 to 500,000 were Cham. Their mortality rate was double to nearly triple that of the general Khmer population (57-71% vs. about 23%). Historian Ben Kiernan presents a very different estimate. He concludes that the Cham population fell from about 250,000 (perhaps more) to about 173,000; Kiernan added that by 1979 the "number would normally have reached at least 260,000."⁶

The research conducted for this paper concurs with Kiernan that the Cham

⁴ "Khmer Rouge" is a French word for *Khmer Krabam* or "Red Khmers," first used by Prince Norodom Sihanouk in the mid-1960s to refer to Khmer Communists and members of other Khmer left-wing organizations. The term is understood differently depending on the time period and historical view. The Documentation Center of Cambodia refers to the Khmer Rouge as those who worked to form and/or lead Democratic Kampuchea. For different views on the Khmer Rouge, see the DC-Cam publication *Searching for the truth*, Number 6, June 2000.

⁵ Author's interviews with:

Zakariya Adam, Under Secretary of State of the Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs, at his office, Phnom Penh, 12 October 1999. He claimed he had seen statistics on the Cham population in Cambodia compiled by Raja Thipadei Res Lah, the former Grand Mufti during the Sangkum Reastr Niyum and Khmer Republic eras. According to these statistics, the Cham population was 700,000. Zakariya further stated that after 1979 the population was 200,000.

Van Math, a senator, at his office in Phnom Penh, 6 April 2000. Math alleged that prior to 1975 he had heard an announcement by General Les Kosem (who had compiled statistics and conducted research on the Cham throughout the country) that the Cham population was 700,000. Math added that according to statistics compiled immediately after 1979, 200,000 Cham had survived the killings.

Math Ly, op. cit. His numbers were in accord with those provided by Zakariya Adam and Van Math, op. cit.

Uknha Sos Kamry (Kamaruddin bin Yusof), Chief of Highest Council for Islamic Religious Affairs (*Grand Mufti*) in Cambodia at Kilo 9, Chrang Chamres, Phnom Penh, 10 October 1999. Uknha Kamry stated "According to the memories of Cham elders, prior to 1975 there were 700,000 Cham and 220 Cham villages. Immediately after the Khmer Rouge era there were 300,000 Cham."

"As a result of strong persecution and massacres carried out by Democratic Kampuchea against the Cham, of 700,000 Cham (the figure from 1974) by 1979 after liberation there remained approximately 200,000 alive." Ney Pena, op. cit., p. 80.

Department of Minorities, Office of the National Council of the Front, "Statistics of the Cham Minorities," provided by Tres Sarom, Inspector, Inspection Department, Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs, 6 March 2002. This report states that the Cham numbered 138,607 in 1979 and 700,000 in 1974.

⁶ "In 1874 the French carried out the first census of their protectorate and counted 25,599 Chams, 3 percent of the Kampuchean population. In 1936, the Chams in Kampuchea were estimated to number 88,000, and by 1975 250,000." Kiernan, Ben, "Orphans of Genocide: The Cham Muslims of Kampuchea under Pol Pot." *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 20, Number 4, 1988, pp. 6, 30. Kiernan added the 88,000 to the population growth rate of 2.7 percent per year over the 1936-1975 period to obtain the 250,000 figure for 1975. The 2.7 percent growth rate was based on the works of J. Migozzi, *Cambodge: Faits et Problemmes de Population*. Paris: CNRS, 1973. Kiernan derived the population figure of 173,000 in 1979 starting with a population figure counted in 1982 by La Communaute Islamique au Kampuchea of 182,256 and subtracted from this an assumed population growth of 3 percent per annum, to arrive at a figure of 161,350. He then added the 11,700 people who fled abroad during this period (the latter figure was obtained from Po Dharma, *Introduction a la Connaissance de la Peninsule Indochinoise*, Paris: 1983).

population was nearly 200,000 in 1979, but differs on the number of Cham before 1975. A 1975 Khmer Rouge telegram states that the Cham population in the Eastern Zone was more than 100,000 after 50,000 members of that ethnic group had been evacuated to the Northern and Northwestern Zones.⁷ From this, one can infer that over 150,000 Cham were living in the eastern part of Kampong Cham province and parts of Kratie, Prey Veng and Svay Rieng provinces. Adding the Cham population in the other districts of Kampong Cham and other provinces and major cities⁸ to the figure of 150,000, the total Cham population of Cambodia rises well above the number calculated by Kiernan, to a figure approximating the statistics of other officials and researchers, as well as that recalled by almost all Cham: 700,000.⁹

To help implement their policies to “smash” the religion, customs, and traditions of the Cham ethnic minority, the Khmer Rouge arranged for a Cham of the lowest level in a village to become the leader. The Khmer Rouge’s goal was to have Cham kill Cham, Cham spy on Cham, and Cham report on fellow Cham, and to have the Cham erase their customs and traditions, shut the doors of the mosques, and forbid *sambahyang* (prayer), fasting, alms giving and various religious ceremonies. They forced the collection of the Qur-*ān* and *keitap* (a book teaching Islam and explaining the Qur-*ān*), the *sarong* and the *fez*, and the *makhna* (a long prayer garment for women). They also forced the consumption of pork, made females cut their hair short, and refused to allow the traditional covering of the head.¹⁰

Banister and Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 97, quote The Economist Intelligence Unit as stating: “In 1968 the estimate of ethnic minorities including the Cham Muslims, there were 150,000 Chams and 90,000 highland minority members from many groups.”

⁷ Telegram 15 of the Khmer Rouge, dated 30 November 1975, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number L01045. This telegram was written by Chhon and sent to Comrade Pol (Pol Pot), with copies to Brother Nuon (Nuon Chea), Brother Doeun, and Brother Yem.

⁸ Author’s interview with Uknha Sos Kamry, *op. cit.*, 18 February 2002. He stated that “Now, Chams live in 372 villages of 17 provinces and 4 cities (there are 20 provinces and 4 cities in Cambodia): 15 villages in Battambang, 7 villages in Banteay Meanchey, 37 villages in Kampot, 15 villages in Kandal, 14 villages in Kratie, 126 village in Kampong Cham, 47 villages in Kampong Chhnang, 1 village in Svay Rieng, 13 villages in Sihanoukville, 5 villages in Kampong Thom, 9 villages in Koh Kong, 3 villages in Mondul Kiri, 1 village in Kampong Speu, 1 village in Pailin, 16 villages in Phnom Penh, 4 villages in Prey Veng, 34 villages in Pursat, 3 villages in Rattanak Kiri, 10 villages in Siem Reap, 9 villages in Takeo, 2 villages in Kep. Prior to 1975 Cham lived in 242 villages of 18 provinces and cities.” (Excluded from the above provinces are: Mondul Kiri, Rattanak Kiri, and Kampong Speu.)

⁹ Figures for the Cham death toll were provided by Zakariya Adam, *op. cit.*, from the statistics of Raja Thipadei Res Lah. Van Math, *op. cit.*, once heard General Les Kosem, a researcher on the Cham, announce the Cham population figures for Cambodia prior to 1975. In addition, according to the majority of the leaders of Cham society, the Cham population prior to 1975 was approximately 700,000. Department of Minorities, Office of the National Council of the Front, “Statistics of the Cham Minorities,” *op. cit.* Math Ly’s (*op. cit.*) numbers were in accordance with those provided by Zakariya Adam and Van Math.

¹⁰ Author’s interviews with:

Ly Khadijah, age 75, a surviving villager of Chamkar Leu village, Tuol Snuol subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, at Prek Krauch village, Peus 2 subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, 11 March 2001.

While some Cham obeyed these policies, others resisted either simply for survival or to continue their religious practices. For example, Him Leh, the Khmer Rouge chief of Po Tonle village, urged the Cham people to flee and take refuge in Vietnam, until he was imprisoned for more than a year and his name was recorded on the S-21 list of traitorous networks for doing so. Math Ly, former member of People's Assembly of Democratic Kampuchea and a former permanent member of the KR Tbaung Khmum District Committee, fled to the forests when he could no longer tolerate seeing the Khmer Rouge persecute his people. Lep Vanmath and Soh Ponyamin, the Khmer Rouge youth leaders of Svay Khleang village, and Res Tort, the Khmer Rouge chief of Koh Phal village, led the people to rebel when upper-echelon Angkar ordered the closure of the mosques and arrested people in their villages.¹¹ The rebellion of Koh Phal and Svay Khleang villages in Krauch Chhmar district, where people rose up to preserve their Islamic and Cham identity, took place in late 1975 (a separate DC-Cam book on this topic is forthcoming).

To help stamp out Cham traditions, the Khmer Rouge absolutely forbade the use of Cham-style names and all Cham were made to use Khmer-style names. However, the Khmer Rouge did not have the capability to enforce this change fully. During the regime, when family members met privately, they still called one another by their birth names. It was more difficult to force small children to change their names than the adults, since they could not remember their new names.¹²

Math Dullah, age 53, at Cham Leu village, Prek Thmei subdistrict, Koh Thom district, Kandal province, 21 March 2000. Dullah stated that a Cham named Riev Soh worked on *Kanak Muksamba* (the Committee on Target Investigations) for the Khmer Rouge in Prek Thmei subdistrict, and that Soh carried out all KR commands to stop Islam in the villages and was involved in forcibly arresting Cham youth for the military.

Many Cham villagers in Kampong Cham, Kampot, Kampong Chhnang, Kratie, Kandal, Koh Kong, and Sihanoukville were interviewed for this study. They stated that in almost all Cham villages, the Khmer Rouge used a Cham who would take orders to lead the village or work at the subdistrict level.

¹¹ Author's interviews with:

Him Leh, age 56, a surviving villager from Pon Tonle village, at Cham Leu village, Prek Thmei subdistrict, Koh Thom district, Kandal province, 21 March 2000. Him Leh was named in Roun Math's confession, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D02674 (see p. 34).

Math Ly, op. cit.

Soh Ponyamin, age 43, at village 5 (former Svay Khhleang), Svay Khhleang subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, 25 January 2001.

Lep Vanmath, age 41, Deputy Chief of Staff, Special Military Zone, located at Banteay Slik Headquarters, Phnom Penh, 5 January 2001. Vanmath is a former Svay Khhleang villager.

Res Tort, age 60, former Khmer Rouge chief of Koh Phal village, at Koh Phal village, Peus 1 subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, 19 February 2000.

¹² Author's interviews with:

Haji Abutalep Aiyau, age 64, at Kbal Romeas village, Kbal Romeas subdistrict, Kampong Cham province, 1 April 2000.

They also prohibited the speaking of the Cham language, and to reinforce this policy killed the *bakem*, *toun* and village elders who spoke Cham. The Khmer Rouge were partially successful in this respect, because after 1979 no Cham youth knew how to speak the Cham language. Even today, the Cham people in Kampot province, Sihanoukville, Kampong Luong in the Ponhea Leu district of Kandal province, and Chrang Chamres village in Phnom Penh do not speak the Cham language.

Cham in all areas were also evacuated from their villages and split into small groups of four to five families. Some were sent to live in huts far from their villages, and some to live in villages with ethnic Khmer. Splitting up the Cham populace in this manner was done in accordance with Angkar's view of their "crimes." The groups called "first category enemies" were those who opposed Angkar. Those called "second category enemies" were the "supporters of rebel forces." Those considered "third category enemies" had low castes within their villages. In the Khmer Rouge structure, the "first and second category enemies" were more serious culprits than the "third category enemies." All three types of enemies were categorized as "new people."¹³ (Kiernan's table, "Approximate Death Tolls in Democratic Kampuchea, 1975-1979," does not include the number of Cham deaths in the "New People" category, which is contrary to the reports documented in this paper.¹⁴) The Cham were also evacuated and dispersed to prevent them from rebelling (two villages - Koh Phal and Svay Khleang - had risen up in opposition to Angkar in September and October 1975).¹⁵

Mussa Hausan, age 57, Abupakae Ismael, age 56, and El Tort, age 46, at Kampong Kandal village, Cheung Kriel subdistrict, Kampot district, Kampot province, 2 April 2000.

Yakaup Mussa, age 52, and Sae Oumaet, age 48, at Daun Taok village, Traey Koh subdistrict, Kampong Bay district, Kampot province, 3 April 2000.

Younus Yafaetr, age 47, Mah Yam, age 55, Tep Math, age 48, Lep Tort, age 52, and Sa Saleh, age 32, at Tuol Toteung 3 village, Sangkat Tuol Toteung, Khan Prey Nup, Sihanoukville, 10-11 April 2000.

Author's interviews with 45 Cham Muslims in Kampong Cham province. These sources made similar statements: that the KR did not allow them to speak their own language and prohibited the use of Cham names. Angkar provided them with new Khmer names.

"When asked if the Cham language had been forbidden by the DK authorities, 36 Cham Muslims answered yes (it had been forbidden). One answered no (it had not)." Kiernan, Ben, *The Pol Pot Regime*, op. cit., p. 461.

Becker quoted David Hawk as saying: "Cham [individuals] must change their names by taking new ones similar to Khmer names. The Cham mentality (Cham nationality, the Cham language, Cham custom, Cham habits, Cham religion) is abolished." Becker, Elizabeth, *When the War Was Over*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986, p. 261.

¹³ Author's interviews with 87 Cham Muslims in many villages in Kampong Cham, Kandal, Kampong Chhnang, Kampot, Kratie, Koh Kong, and Sihanoukville. Almost all had been evacuated from the villages where they were born, and were called "new people."

¹⁴ Kiernan, Ben, *The Pol Pot Regime*, op. cit., p. 458.

¹⁵ Author's interview with Tes El, Math El, and Res Tort, at Koh Phal village, Peus 2 subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, 19 February 2000.

Youk Chhang's interview with Sman Kaji, age 55, at Village 5 (Svay Khleang village), Svay Khleang subdistrict, Krauch

The Khmer Rouge did not aim to erase only Islam; they considered all religions to be reactionary.¹⁶ However, they did set as a main goal the implementation of measures to “sweep away” the ethnic Cham and Islam. This is illustrated by the case of Uknha Sos Kamry, who the Khmer Rouge made responsible for overseeing 400 children in Cheyyau subdistrict, Chamkar Leu district, Kampong Cham province, without realizing he was Cham. One day during 1977 he was called to a secret meeting in Bos Khnaor village in the same district. Forty trusted members of Angkar were present at the meeting, which was to discuss plans to smash the enemy. Kamry heard the meeting chairman say, “The enemies of Angkar come in many categories, but the biggest enemies are the Cham. The plan is to destroy them all before 1980.”¹⁷ Later Kamry read a book entitled *The Advanced Cooperative Plan*, which stated: “The targeted enemy are the Cham. They must all be destroyed before 1980.”¹⁸

As one example, in late 1978, the Khmer Rouge gathered all those accused of “crimes,” both Cham and Khmer, into a house in Trea village, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province. All the prisoners were asked one question: “Cham or Khmer?” Those answering Cham were sent to one side and the Khmer to the other. All of the Khmer prisoners were released. All but six of the approximately 100 Cham prisoners disappeared. The six - No Satah, Sleh Yan, Sleh Sarah, Mao Maisom, Tam Jouk, and Ahmad Sofiyah - survived because they lied and said they were Khmer.¹⁹

The number of Cham relocated to other areas during the Khmer Rouge regime indicates that Cham were killed in all localities throughout the country. The majority

Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, 13 November 1999.

¹⁶ Author’s interviews with:

Math Ly, op. cit. Ly recalled the eight-point plan of the Khmer Rouge.

Zakariya Adam, op. cit. He stated, “I assume the Khmer Rouge aimed to destroy all religion in the country, not just Islam, Buddhism, and Catholicism.”

The Constitution of Democratic Kampuchea, Article 15, Section 20.

¹⁷ Author’s interview with Uknha Sos Kamry, op. cit., 10 October 1999.

¹⁸ Sos Kamry read this book while he visited a Cheyyo subdistrict chief in Chamkar Leu district, Kampong Cham province. Author’s interview with Uknha Sos Kamry, op. cit., 10 October 1999.

¹⁹ Author’s interviews with:

No Satah, age 44, at Village 5 (Svay Khleang village), Svay Khleang subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, 5 December 2000.

Sleh Sarah, age 46, at Village 5 (Svay Khleang village), Svay Khleang subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, 15 December 2000.

Mao Maisom, age 44, at Khse Luos village, Trea subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, 6 February 2001.

Tam Jouk, age 43, at Khsach Praches Kandal village, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, 8 February

of Cham in Kampong Cham province were moved to malarial areas inside Kampong Cham and Kampong Thom provinces.²⁰ On 16-18 April 1975, a number of Cham and Khmer living near Phnom Penh were moved to Sa-ang and Muk Kampoul district of Kandal province; three or four months later, they were moved again to Preah Vihear and Battambang province.²¹ The majority of Cham in Prey Nup district of Kampot province (now Khan Prey Nup, Sihanoukville) were evacuated to Kampong Speu and Kampong Chhnang provinces.²² The majority of Cham around the Kampot provincial capital were sent to the Touk Meas and Chhouk districts of that province.²³ All provinces of Cambodia received at least some (and in some cases, many) Cham evacuees. The corpses of 400,000 to 500,000 Cham who died during the regime are scattered throughout the country, and everywhere there are mass graves with Cham remains included among the others. Of the 14,000 prisoners held in Phnom Penh's S-21,²⁴ 42 were Cham and 40 were Muslims from outside the country.²⁵

2001.

Ahmad Sofiyah, age 40, at Khsach Praches Kandal village, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, 25 January 2001.

²⁰ Youk Chhang's interview with Sman Kaji, op. cit.

Author's interviews with three elders of Koh Phal village: Tes El, Math El, and Res Tort, op. cit.

²¹ Author's interviews with:

Math Nauru, age 47, at his home No. 1AB, Street 428, Sangkat Boeng Trabek, Khan Chamkar Mon, Phnom Penh, 21 April 2000. Nauru was evacuated from Prek Pra, Phnom Penh, to Koh Thom and later to Preah Vihear province.

Ly Sman, age 65, at his home at Kilo 8, Chrang Chamres, Phnom Penh, 12 March 2000. Sman was evacuated from Chroy Changvar to Koh Thom and then to Preah Vihear province.

Math Dullah, op. cit., 21 March 2000. Dullah was a base person at Cham Leu and saw the second evacuation of the new people from Phnom Penh to Preah Vihear and Battambang province. At that time, the Cham in Prek Thmei subdistrict were beginning to be evacuated, but to nearby villages.

Author's interview with Haji Abutalep, age 57, Hakem of Kien Khleang village, Chroy Changvar, Phnom Penh, at Kien Khleang village, 3 December 1999. Abutalep was evacuated from Chroy Changvar to Prek Phdao in Rokar Kaong 1 subdistrict of Muk Kampoul and later to Battambang province.

The Fight to Liberate Phnom Penh, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D00710.

²² Author's interviews with Younus Yafaetr, Mah Yam, Tep Math, Lep Tort, and Sa Saleh, op. cit.

²³ Author's interviews with: Haji Abutalep Aiyap, op. cit., Mussa Hausan, Abupakae Ismael, and El Tort, op. cit., and Yakaup Mussa and Sae Oumaet, op. cit.

²⁴ Please see the appendix for details.

²⁵ Youk Chhang, "The Poisonous Hill that was Tuol Sleng," *Phnom Penh Post*, May 3-15, 1997. The prison execution logs, biographies, confessions, and other records indicate that there were at least 14,000 victims at S-21. "More than 14,000 men, women and children passed through the gates of S-21 before being executed by the Khmer Rouge, their bodies dumped at Choeng Ek on the outskirts of town."

Vann Nath, *A Cambodian Prison Portrait*. Bangkok: White Lotus, 1998, page 1. Nath was one of seven S-21 survivors who escaped in 1979.

Of the 42 Cham prisoners named in the table on the next page, this paper presents the cases of 13 for whom there is sufficient documentation for study and research. They are:

- ◆ seven Khmer Rouge soldiers (Him Man, Sa Math, Mae Math, Man Math, Roun Math, Sman Sleh, and Man Tech)
- ◆ two Lon Nol government officials (Chek Brahim and Haji Saleh Yahya)
- ◆ one student who had resided in Peking (Ismael Ahmad)
- ◆ one person who fled to the forests (Tep Yunus)
- ◆ one Khmer Rouge interrogation cadre from S-21 (Sim Mel)
- ◆ one fisherman (Samas Karim).

Each case is analyzed in terms of the reason for arrest, imprisonment, and execution by using confession documents discovered at the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes, which were verified using information supplied by family members and witnesses.

The stories of these 13 Cham S-21 prisoners may perhaps reflect the circumstances surrounding the deaths of other prisoners, as we discover the reasons for their arrests and transport to S-21 for execution. This is one step in the search for truth and justice to be presented to those who survived the KR regime and the families of the people killed at S-21 and other locations by the Khmer Rouge.