

# THE CHAM PRISONERS IN THE KHMER ROUGE'S SECRET PRISON

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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,<sup>1</sup> their bones scattered like those of animals. All of the more than 6,000,000 people who survived the regime<sup>2</sup> lived in 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 DK regime considered the cultural framework and religious customs practiced by Cambodians as “reactionary acts.”<sup>3</sup>

Among those who were killed disproportionately by the Khmer Rouge<sup>4</sup> were the Chams. It is estimated that prior to 1975, the Chams, who were 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 survived<sup>5</sup>. Thus, of the nearly 2,000,000 dead, 400,000 to 500,000 were Chams. Their mortality rate was double to nearly triple that of the general Khmer population (57-71% against 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.”<sup>6</sup>

The research conducted for this paper concurs with Kiernan that the Cham population was nearly 200,000 in 1979, but differs on the number of Chams 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.<sup>7</sup> From this, one can infer that over 150,000 Chams were living in the eastern part of Kompong Cham province and parts of Kratie, Prey Veng and Svay Rieng provinces. Adding the Cham population in the other districts of Kompong Cham and other provinces and major cities<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

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* (prayers), fasting, alms giving and various religious ceremonies. They forced the collection of the Kuran and *kitab* (a book teaching Islam and explaining the Kuran), 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.<sup>10</sup>

While some Chams 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 Thbaung 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.<sup>11</sup> 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.

To help stamp out Cham traditions, the Khmer Rouge absolutely forbade the use of Cham-style names and all Chams 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.<sup>12</sup>

They also prohibited the speaking of the Cham language, and to reinforce this policy killed the *hakem*, *Tuan* 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, Kompong Luong in the Ponhea Leu district of Kandal province, and Chrang Chamres village in Phnom Penh do not speak Cham.

Chams 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."<sup>13</sup> (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.<sup>14</sup>) The Chams 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).<sup>15</sup>

The Khmer Rouge did not aim to erase only Islam; they considered all religions reactionary.<sup>16</sup> 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 Cheyyo subdistrict, Chamkar Leu district, Kompong 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."<sup>17</sup> 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."<sup>18</sup>

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, Kompong 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.<sup>19</sup>



The number of Chams relocated to other areas during the Khmer Rouge regime indicates that Chams were killed in all localities throughout the country. The majority of Cham in Kompong Cham province were moved to malarial areas inside Kompong Cham and Kompong Thom provinces.<sup>20</sup> On 16-18 April 1975, a number of Chams and Khmers 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.<sup>21</sup> The majority of Cham in Prey Nup district of Kampot province (now Khan Prey Nup, Sihanoukville) were evacuated to Kompong Speu and Kompong Chhnang provinces.<sup>22</sup> The majority of Cham around the Kampot provincial capital were sent to the Touk Meas and Chhouk districts of that province.<sup>23</sup> All provinces of Cambodia received at least some (and in some cases, many) Cham evacuees. The corpses of 400,000 to 500,000 Chams 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, 42 were Cham.<sup>24</sup>

Of the 42 Cham prisoners named in the table below, this paper presents 3 cases of them. They comprised of a student who had resided in Peking (Ismael Ahmad), a Lon Nol government officials (Haji Saleh Yahya), and a Khmer Rouge interrogation cadre from S-21 (Sim Mel).

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.

These stories 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.

#### Cham Muslims Imprisoned at S-21, 1975-1979

<b>Name</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>Entry Dates</b>	<b>Execution Dates</b>	<b>Source of Info.</b>
Chek Brahim	Koh Thom Kandal	24-1-76	26-5-76	D21897
El Man	Division 310	7-12-77	9-12-77	D21898
El Man	301st Battalion	30-4-77	8-7-77	D21898
Him Man	Sa-ang, Kandal	22-7-75		D02673

Him Put	S-21 Kho	27-3-77	13-4-77	D21898
Ismael Ahmad	Stung Trang Kompong Cham	2-1-77		I08450
Kaup Him	Region 505	27-12-78	31-12-78	D21899
Keo Ibrahim	Kompong Cham			K05839
Kufi	Battambang			K06975
Lep Math	Kompong Cham	12-2-77		I09797
Ly Leh	Division 290	8-8-77	15-10-77	D21898
Mae Math	Factory K1	4-1-77	18-10-77	D21898
Man Math	State Commerce	?-10-75		I09069
Man Sim	Division 310	4-12-76	17-3-77	D21898
Man Tech	S-21Kho	17-6-78		K02614
Man Ya	Kompong Cham	?-7-76		I09371
Math El	Battambang	13-2-76	10-6-76	I09197
Math Leh	Kompong Cham	27-1-78		D02661
Math Loh	Kompong Cham	13-2-76		K05804
Math Loh	Kompong Cham	10-2-76		I09197
Math Man	Northeastern Zone	25-10-77	4-11-77	D21898
Math Sah	Pochentong	27-3-76	27-5-76	D2189
Math Tam	S-21	27-8-77		D21898
Maut Hiet	Battambang	19-6-78		K04373
Mohammad	Kandal	5-1-76		K06688
Roun Math	Koh Thom, Kandal	?-9-75		D02674
Sa Loh	Hospital P260		3-8-77	D21898
Sa Math	Eastern Zone	28-8-78	2-9-78	D21899
Sa Math	Koh Thom, Kandal	?-11-75		D02676
Saleh Hiet	Battambang	18-6-78		D02681
Saleh Yahya	Muk Kampoul		2-5-76	D21897
Samas Karim	Prek Phneou	8-1-76	27-5-76	D21897
Sim Mel	S-21 Kho		30-4-78	D21899
Sman Ny	S-21	28-6-77	29-6-77	D21898
Sman Sleh	Koh Thom, Kandal	?-11-75		D02676
Sman Sok	Office V 66	5-6-77	3-7-77	D21898
Soh	Kandal			K05756
Soh Math	Water Truck	15-6-77	3-7-77	D21898
Soh Tort	Kompong Cham	12-1-77		I08540
Tep Yunus	Kompong Som	20-5-76	10-6-76	D21897
Ya Man	S-21Kho		27-8-77	D21898



Yeu Math            S-21  
**S-21 Prisoner Cases**

22-2-77

12-5-77

D21898

### **Ismael Ahmad**

Ismael Ahmad was born in Thmei village, Popel subdistrict, Ponhea Krek (formerly Thbaung Khmum) district, Kompong Cham province. His father was Ly Ismael and his mother Sarifah. Ahmad began religious studies in 1953, and on 20 August 1967, passed his examinations to study Islam in Egypt, where he stayed for six years. In 1970 Ahmad changed his field of study from religion to mechanics. In April 1973 he arrived in Peking, but nothing is known of what he did there. On 27 October 1975, Ahmad and ten other students were called back to Phnom Penh by the Khmer Rouge Front Organization in Peking, after which he returned to Cambodia. Then Angkar sent Ahmad to Preah Andaung village in Region 42.<sup>25</sup>

On 22 December 1976, Ahmad and 25 other Cambodians who had studied or worked in Peking were rounded up and transported from the base areas to Region 42 of the Central Zone; from there, they were to be sent to Phnom Penh. The designated gathering place was Akmok village (also known as Speu village) in Cheyyo subdistrict, Chamkar Leu district, Kompong Cham province. On 23 December 1976 they traveled to Phnom Penh, where they were sent to live at the Khmer-Soviet Technical School. On 2 January 1977, Ahmad was arrested and sent to S-21.<sup>26</sup>

After his arrival at S-21, Ahmad was interrogated by Soeun from 31 January through 16 February 1977.<sup>27</sup> During those 17 days, Ahmad provided 88 pages of testimony, 68 of which were dated and signed "Ismael Ahmad."<sup>28</sup>

According to the List of Prisoners Categorized as Students and Officials from Overseas, prepared by former S-21 prisoner Ung Pech, 184 students and officials from 22 countries were detained at S-21 Prison.<sup>29</sup> Ismael Ahmad was number 92 on the list dated 2 January 1977, where he was described as a "student from Peking."<sup>30</sup>

None of the witnesses interviewed for this study knew why Ahmad and the other students were sent from Peking to Cambodia.<sup>31</sup> Ahmad's confessions stated that many students in Peking who lived under the control of the Front Organization conspired secretly to create treasonous connections through Sith, the leader of the Front's student group, and Chem Snguon, who worked in the embassy in Tanzania in 1973, where he led "traitorous forces."<sup>32</sup> According the

Ahmad's confession, the students were sent back to Cambodia to meet Hou Youn, the CIA chief in Cambodia.<sup>33</sup> But in fact, Hou Youn was a member of Parliament for the Kompong Cham in 1958 and in 1972 was the Minister of Interior for the Reform of Base Areas and Cooperatives of Sihanouk's government in exile, and a member of the Politburo of the Kampuchean National Unification Front.<sup>34</sup> According to Math Ly, a former permanent member of the Khmer Rouge National Assembly and permanent member of the Khmer Rouge Tbaung Khmum District Committee, the Khmer Rouge killed Hou Youn because he opposed Pol Pot's creation of cooperatives and the evacuation of the populace.<sup>35</sup>

In his confession, Ahmad related what happened to him when he first returned to Cambodia: "On 27 October 1975 the Front Organization permitted our return to the country. On that same day we all reached Phnom Penh. After arrival in Phnom Penh, Angkar had us stay at the General Staff for three days. Later Angkar took us to a place near the Independence Monument. After we had been in Phnom Penh half a month, Angkar sent us to the countryside. We all first went to Region 42, and then split up among the various districts."<sup>36</sup>

Ahmad's confession stated: "Angkar had me go to live in Stung Trang district, Preah Anduang subdistrict, Preah Andaung village" in Kompong Cham province. However, eight people who lived in Preah Andaung village during the Pol Pot era were interviewed for this study, and none of them knew of a man named Ahmad.<sup>37</sup> They stated that two students from overseas were sent to live in their village, and two others were sent to the nearby villages of Khpop Ta Nguon and Tuol Rokar.

Chhin Phen lived in a house with two of the students in Preah Andaung village. She stated that "Sometime during late 1975 four (students) named Sok, Run and two others, Hak at Khpop Ta Nguon and Vuth at Tuol Rokar ... Sok and Run, when they first came, came to live at my house."<sup>38</sup>

However, a Cham named El Lei had been evacuated to Preah Andaung village and knew Ahmad from birth. He recalled that the Khmer Rouge changed Ahmad's ethnic Cham name to the Khmer-style name of Sok.<sup>39</sup> Apparently, Ahmad had tried to hide his ethnicity to prevent suspicion among the villagers that he was anything other than ethnic Khmer.<sup>40</sup> But after being interrogated multiple times at S-21, Ahmad confessed his true identity.<sup>41</sup> (Ahmad's siblings and other family members who still reside in Thmei village were interviewed for this study, but said that they did not know a "Sok" at all.<sup>42</sup>)



Ahmad lived in Preah Andaung village from November 1975 until July 1976, when Angkar required him to move to Peam village in the same district, where he stayed until December 1976.<sup>43</sup> Chheng Trim, who lived with and was close to Ahmad in Preah Andaung village, stated that, "He [Sok] left here for Peam. Before he left he said he would not forget me, and he would send me letters." I haven't seen him at all since he left ... he has never returned. When he met them [people from Preah Andaung village] he sent word through them that he did not dare come to visit. He was afraid of them [the Khmer Rouge]. He dared not travel."<sup>44</sup>

Sorn Keo, who lived in Prek Sdei village, Preah Andaung subdistrict, Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province during the Pol Pot era, met and knew Ahmad as "Sok." He stated "Sometime in late 1976 ... until the appointed time Angkar gathered up the students and took them to upper echelon to carry out duties for Angkar in Phnom Penh ... He [Ahmad] came to say farewell to me and told me that Angkar was taking him back to Phnom Penh."<sup>45</sup>

Ahmad described his departure with the other students for Phnom Penh as if he knew nothing at all of the reasons for his removal. "On the 21 December 1976, Elder Brother But [the chief of Preah Andaung subdistrict] told me that Angkar had called me back to Phnom Penh." Ahmad continued: "On 21 December 1976, I departed Peam village, Sangkat Preah Andaung [Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province] toward Speu [Cheyyau subdistrict, Chamkar Leu district, Kompong Cham province]. Upon reaching Speu I met one after another with other students from Peking like myself and with persons who had worked in the Front in Peking. On the morning of 22 December 1976 everyone from all the base areas met together. On the afternoon of 22 December we all departed Speu for Kompong Cham. On the morning of 23 December we left Kompong Cham for Phnom Penh. Upon arrival in Phnom Penh Angkar had us stay in Soviet instructor housing at the Khmer-Soviet Technical School." Finally in his confession, Ahmad stated: "On the 2 January 1977 Angkar arrested me."<sup>46</sup> It is interesting to note that Ahmad understood the Khmer Rouge deceit: he was initially told that he was being "called back" to Phnom Penh, but bluntly stated in his confession that "Angkar arrested me."

Ahmad's "Rebel Forces and Rebel Connections" chart, which is found in his confessions, contains the names of 56 persons who he said were his co-conspirators. The names appear in two categories: 24 were people Ahmad claimed to have recruited when he lived in Peam village and Preah Andaung village. The other 32 were rebel connections in Peking. According to this chart, 26 of the 32 people had returned to Cambodia after 1975, 7 of the 26 had been arrested and



19 were still residing at the Khmer-Soviet Technical School. Six other Cambodians were still living in Peking (there is no information available on whether or not they returned to Cambodia during 1975-79).<sup>47</sup>

According to Ung Pech's List of Prisoners Categorized as Students and Officials from Overseas, only six students and officials from Peking were arrested, taken to S-21, and killed. Among those six were Ahmad and two others shown on Ahmad's list as "already arrested." However, two others on Pech's list "are residing at the Khmer-Soviet Technical School in Phnom Penh." Thus, it appears that the 19 students at the Technical School were later arrested and taken to S-21 as well. The final name on Ung Pech's list was a student from Peking, but this name did not appear in Ahmad's confession.<sup>48</sup>

According to an interview with Chhin Phen, there were three students aside from Sok (Ahmad): Run at Preah Anduang village, Hak at Khpop Ta Nguon village, and Vuth at Khpop Rokar village in Stung Trang district. These three names appear on Ahmad's "Rebel Forces and Connections" list, showing that "Hak was arrested and Run and Vuth were at the Khmer-Soviet Technical School."<sup>49</sup> According to the author's research, all of Ahmad's rebel connections had lived overseas, including those who had returned to Cambodia and those who had not, and only 2 of the 32 escaped the DK regime: Chem Snguon and Kae Sreng.<sup>50</sup>

Interviews with villagers in Preah Anduang and Peam revealed that 14 of the 24 people in Ahmad's "domestic network" escaped being killed by the Khmer Rouge. Of the five "network" members interviewed for this study, only one claimed to have known Ahmad (Sok). The four others said they never knew "Sok" at all. When asked if they had ever carried out rebel activity or if they were ever induced by anyone to do so during the Pol Pot era, none could think of any mistakes he had committed against Angkar or any so-called treason. Uy Meng stated, "I never did such a thing at all, never wanted to run off to join any party ... I never knew Sok. If I had known him I would tell you." As for Lay Kuy, "I never knew Sok, didn't know him, can't even recall him... I never had any intention to run off anywhere, or had any network...I never even complained about Angkar, did not dare criticize." Lach and Yan also denied any rebel connection, asking what could they say when they did not even know who Sok was. Only Sorn Keo knew Sok. He stated that they had only ordinary exchanges, such as complaining of being tired and rundown, or that the duties assigned by Angkar were too heavy. But Sorn Keo answered the same as the others, "I never rebelled or made those mistakes."<sup>51</sup>

According to Ahmad's confession: "I knew and understood their hearts for a time. I carried out the directions of the CIA outside after I returned to the country. I incited the people." Given this admission and the totally contradictory statements of witnesses concerning their "rebel activities," Chheng Trim was asked whether Ahmad committed rebellion. She stated, "When it was time to go to work, Sok went with me. They always called Sok and me mother and child. I saw that he did not eat pork, that he was Cham." (Sok never told Chheng Trim that he was Cham.) Trim continued, "He seemed never to do anything wrong, he was gentle and well-informed, he was good and knew what was what... I believe that he would not dare [rebel]."<sup>52</sup>

The statements of Chheng Trim and those who Ahmad claimed were "network" members imply that Ahmad had not actually carried out any rebel acts against Angkar.

One may thus deduce that the section of Ahmad's confession, "Rebel Activities and Forces," was not stated truthfully.

### **Haji Saleh Yahya**

"I f uncle [I am] is to die now, keep struggling, nephew. Ask them to [let you] do the *somyang mayit* [funeral prayers] over my corpse."<sup>53</sup> So Saleh Yahya whispered to his nephew after being beaten and interrogated while imprisoned at the Khmer Rouge Muk Kampoul district security site, the Damrei Sar Pagoda Prison.<sup>54</sup>

Saleh Yahya was born in Chroy Changvar, Phnom Penh in 1922. His father Saleh and his mother Khadijah were well schooled in Islam.<sup>55</sup> His younger brother Math Saleh Slaiman was Second Mufti during the Sangkum Reastr Niyum era.<sup>56</sup> His wife Aminah and their seven children<sup>57</sup> were killed during the Khmer Rouge regime.

As Yahya grew up, he studied Islam and general knowledge in Chroy Changvar, where he lived until the evacuation of 17 April 1975. An accomplished man, he was one of 40 senators chaired by So Kham Khoy in the Khmer Republic of Marshal Lon Nol. In 1965 he participated in the Islamic African-Asian Conference in Indonesia,<sup>58</sup> and in 1966 went on a pilgrimage to Mecca. In the Sangkum Reastr Niyum era, Yahya was Chief of the Personnel and Accounting Office and Under Secretary of State of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In 1967 he ran for election for the Sangkum Reastr Niyum Party in the Krek constituency of Kompong Cham province.



At 10:00 pm on 6 December 1975, Yahya was arrested at his home in Kohe village, Rokar Kaong 1 subdistrict, Muk Kampoul district, Kandal province, and placed in the Damrei Sar Prison in Rokar Kaong 1 subdistrict.<sup>59</sup> The Khmer Rouge used this pagoda and the nearby Serimongkol Junior High School as their security office.<sup>60</sup>

During the Khmer Rouge era, Damrei Sar pagoda was known as the Muk Kampoul district security office. After 1979 Damrei Sar was almost totally unrecognizable as a pagoda: there were no Buddha images, monks, nuns or novices there. On the pile of bricks the villagers saw chains, shackles and human feces, and the surrounding temple walls were stained red with the not-yet faded blood of victims. The people cleaned up the blood and feces, made repairs and carved the words “Serimongkol pagoda” in the entranceway, which remain there today. The majority of the people now refer to the temple as “Damrei Sar pagoda.”<sup>61</sup>

Almost all the prisoners sent to Damrei Sar in early 1976 were connected with the rebellion of 22 November 1975 (see below). The prisoners were tortured, forced to confess to rebel activities,<sup>62</sup> and then killed. A number of important prisoners were sent from Damrei Sar to S-21, where their final confessions were taken.<sup>63</sup>

After Yahya was transferred to S-21, he was interrogated<sup>64</sup> by comrade Leng of the “Elder Brother Mon Tauch” team at S-21.<sup>65</sup> His undated 54-page confession includes: a personal history, history of duties, treasonous activities, and treasonous networks. As for treasonous activities, Yahya wrote that he “incited Islamic siblings in Kohe village. As a result, we Islamic brothers demonstrated on 22 November 1975 at Kohe village along with our local Khmer brothers.” Yahya also described various unusual events that he faced, such as his departure from home on 17 April 1975 with 13 members of his family. They traveled along Highway 5 with the hordes of people leaving Phnom Penh, crossing the Tonle Sap River at Prek Kdam, and arrived at Kohe village on 28 April 1975. (Not one of the Cham people evacuated along with Yahya survived the Khmer Rouge regime. Many died at Phum Kohe and Pursat.) Yahya documented the time and place of his arrest, “on the evening of 6 December 1975 Angkar arrested me at home in Kohe village and placed me in Damrei Sar temple in Rokar Kaong.”<sup>66</sup>

Yahya divided his rebel network and contacts into three categories: upper-level connections (six people who trained him to conduct rebel activities),<sup>67</sup> connections in his same echelon (eleven people trained by the same ringleaders who trained Yahya in rebel activities),<sup>68</sup> and subordinate connections (six people Yahya said he organized to carry out rebel activities).<sup>69</sup> Of these 21 connections,



10 were Cham.<sup>70</sup> The author's research found that only one of those ten Cham, Les Kosem, fled Cambodia in time to escape death.

There are no sources that describe the reason for Yahya's arrest. His confession, however, contains the statement that "The Cham people's movement rebelled on 22 November 1975 in Rokar Kaong subdistrict."<sup>71</sup>

Tit Tum remembered the cause of this large anti-Khmer Rouge rebellion: "the base people and new people that were Chinese and Cham had the idea that they weren't being given enough to eat and could not travel, so they created the Khmer Sa [White Khmer] to rise up and rebel." Haji Abutalep also claimed that the people created a resistance organization called the "Khmer Sa." Hundreds of Khmer, Cham, and Chinese joined this movement. Initially the rebel forces captured five or six Khmer Rouge cadre and seized a weapons warehouse. Firefights broke out for a day between the resistance movement and Khmer Rouge soldiers sent in from Muk Kampoul district and Phnom Penh.<sup>72</sup>

Haji Abutalep personally saw these events. He recalled that the rebellion materialized first at Prek Phdao village (where he was living) and Kohe village (the location of a Khmer Rouge weapons warehouse that the rebels captured). Abutalep said "There was shooting, the people were carrying weapons and ammunition, and young people who had been Lon Nol soldiers were doing the firing." At the same time in neighboring Prek Koy subdistrict of Kang Meas district, Kompong Cham province, a related people's rebellion was planned. Tum stated that the people did not intend to do this only in Rokar Kaong subdistrict; people in the Eastern Zone and Kang Meas district also planned to rise up on 24 November 1975 (their leaders had infiltrated the Khmer Rouge). But because of confused information exchanges, the infiltrators in Rokar Kaong began before the others.<sup>73</sup>

There were two survivors of the hundreds held in the Damrei Sar prison. The first was Tit Tum, who was arrested and sent to Damrei Sar on charges of rebellion when he lived in Prek Phdao village, Rokar Kaong 1 subdistrict. After a one-year detention there, he was released. He described himself as just skin and bones, his entire body covered with rashes. Tum stated, "I saw some people so hungry they caught grasshoppers and lizards to eat and they were beaten and kicked [by guards] for that." Tum also recalled that immediately after the 22 November uprising, all 18 classrooms in the Serimongkul junior high school were packed with 80 prisoners per cell and monk's dwelling. "Many prisoners were called from their cells by Angkar and told to plant rice, but not one of them ever returned," said Tum.<sup>74</sup>



The second was Abdul Majet, who was held in a cell for 20 days at the Serimongkul junior high school because he had signed up to join a cooperative when he was evacuated from Chroy Changvar to Chroy Metrei village, Russei Chroy subdistrict, Muk Kampoul district, Kandal province. Majet revealed that he was a nephew of Yahya. He met and spoke with his uncle after Yahya's first interrogation session (Yahya was sent by his interrogator to the same cell in which Majet was held). Majet saw his uncle in great pain, "At about 5:00 pm he entered the cell. He saw me and collapsed and crawled over to me. There were about 30 of us in there. He kept moving a little at a time until he reached me, and he rested his head on my thighs. He held my hands to his head." Majet continued, "I touched his head and saw that it had become soft. I asked him what they had hit him with, and he answered that they had used a pistol." Majet recalled his uncle's last words for him to do a funeral prayer.<sup>75</sup>

Yahya's whispered words were not yet finished when there was a shout from the door, "Do you see, yet, Saleh Yahya, [we've] looked for you for a long time. Now come outside and we will get to know one another." Then Majet looked outside and saw a soldier suddenly move toward him and drag Yahya outside the cell. "This time I only heard the sound of him screaming 'ee!, ee!, ee!' outside. A prisoner near the wall peeked out, seeing what I don't know, then suddenly collapsed in fright and fell back." From that time on Majet was separated from his uncle, and only after 1979 did he hear villagers say that they had seen Yahya's photograph at Tuol Sleng Museum.<sup>76</sup>

Yahya died at S-21 on 2 May 1976, after 4 months and 26 days of imprisonment. His cause of death was recorded as being "numb and worn-out."<sup>77</sup>

### **Sim Mel aka Man**

Sim Mel aka Man was born in 1955 in Baren village, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Sa-ang district, Kandal province. His father was Sah Kae and his mother Keas; he was the eldest of eight siblings.<sup>78</sup>

In childhood Man studied Islam in his home village and with famous *Tuan* (teachers of Islam) in Chroy Changvar (Phnom Penh), Chumnik village, Trea village (Krauch Chhmar district) and Rokar Popram village (Thbaung Khmum district) in Kompong Cham province. He returned home after the demonstrations to overthrow Sihanouk in 1970, before completing his studies. Many witnesses claim that Man knew Islam very deeply. A fellow student named El Him is today a *Tuan* and religious leader in Cham Kraom village.<sup>79</sup>



Man became a Khmer Rouge soldier in 1971 in Sa-ang district<sup>80</sup> because he was angry at Lon Nol soldiers who had bombed his village, killing many villagers and burning down many houses. In particular, his grandmother was killed by an artillery round fired by Lon Nol soldiers.<sup>81</sup> Prior to 1975, Man was a messenger for Ta Nat, the commander of Division 12 (later called the Division 703), based at Damrei Slap village, Sa-ang Phnom subdistrict.<sup>82</sup> Him Huy got to know Man in 1974 when the latter worked with Ta Nat.<sup>83</sup>

Man worked as an interrogator inside S-21 from July 1976 until the Party relieved him of his duties in March 1977.<sup>84</sup> After Man had worked at S-21, he was sent by the Party to farm at Prey Sa (Office 24 or S-21 Kho), another branch of S-21, until he was arrested and taken back to S-21 on 28 October 1977. There, he was questioned from 3 November 1977 to 13 January 1978 by interrogators Chhin and Vun. Man's confessions contain 22 interrogation dates, indicating that he was interrogated 22 times.<sup>85</sup> Subsequently, the Khmer Rouge kept him imprisoned until 30 April 1978, when a list from Angkar ordered Man to be taken and "smashed."<sup>86</sup>

"When I was torturing, I just thought of hitting them, not of following up questioning but on whatever I could do to torture the prisoner and cause him to be unable to function. My own group beat four prisoners to death."<sup>87</sup> This one sentence of Man's 97 pages of confessions is evidence of the savageness and cruelty of S-21 interrogators toward innocent prisoners. But Man, just like the other interrogators, saw these as normal occurrences.<sup>88</sup>

During the eight months<sup>89</sup> that Man was an interrogator at S-21, he mistreated and beat to death many innocent people: "I beat Mam Keng aka Sak, until he could no longer be worked on. Questioned Ke Meas, a palace official who was stubborn and would not speak; I was too lazy to interrogate him together with Horng, and beat him until he could not be worked with further and died in the prison. I acted together with Horng during the questioning of Kit Soem aka Nin. Myself, Leng and Thong beat Chhocun, a battalion commander in Division 920, and Chhorn, a commander of group 310, because they would not talk, beat and tortured them until they couldn't be worked with further. I beat to death Phen from Hospital P98. Leng and I beat a major from the Geographic Ministry without getting testimony until he died in the prison. I questioned Tea Meng Tek from Malaysia. I questioned Nin, chief of the medical group at P98."<sup>90</sup>

In March 1977 the Party sent Man to the Prey Sar Reeducation Office and gave him the duty of being a member of Company 13 in Office 24 or S-21D. In August 1977, the Party reassigned him to be a member of the agricultural



committee in the same office. In August, office chief Huy (Huy Sre)<sup>91</sup> planned to arrest Man because he didn't pump water in time for those planting rice. But Man learned of this in advance from friends and fled to Region (Dambon) 25. On 24 October 1977 Man fled on a bicycle along route 38 with the intention of meeting Chea, the Secretary of Region 25, in order to hide himself in that area. Friends of Man had written a letter introducing Man to Chea, which Man was carrying with him. The letter stated "Propose the Brother Chea, Secretary of Region 25, receive this [comrade] Man and conceal him because here at the Prey Sar Reeducation Office the Party is planning to arrest the comrade who is carrying this letter."<sup>92</sup>

When Man reached a point west of the Sa-ang district Office, the militia blocked his journey. His confession states, "I saw that the situation wasn't good before the militia came to inspect me. I tore up the letter and threw it away in the grass. When the militia inspected me, I had no travel permit, so they arrested me." Man was taken to be imprisoned at Koh Kor in that district for four days. Later he was sent to S-21.<sup>93</sup>

Chim Aminah, who personally witnessed the arrest of Man, made a different claim than the one in the confession. She stated that, "Man reached my house in the dark, about 4:00 am. Then my house was at Veal village, also known as Damrei Slap village. He was alone. He had a bicycle, a hammock, and a pair of shoes. I asked Man how he had gotten there. He replied, "Auntie don't talk. I fled here because they are going to take me to be killed ... they kill according to [one's] leaders, and I was with Brother Nat [a commander of Division 703], and now Brother Nat and Brother Pin have already been killed. That's why I'm here." "Aminah continued, "Khmer Rouge had announced that if any soldiers or relatives arrived from somewhere else, to inform them. Man coming like that, if I had informed them, they would have killed him. So I hid him in a trench for two days and concealed rice which I took to him to eat ... When they saw the bicycle, they were suspicious, so they came and found him [Man] ... They suspected him and so they grabbed him. He fled. They chased him out of eyesight. I don't know if they caught him or not. I did not dare stand and watch." Later all of Aminah's family were accused of concealing the enemy and were imprisoned at Koh Khsach Tonlea until 1979.<sup>94</sup> According to Aminah, two people arrested Man; both still are alive today.<sup>95</sup>

Although what Man wrote in his confession was different from what eyewitnesses reported, there is evidence to show that Man was actually arrested at Damrei Slap village. After his arrest Man was sent to small cell 11 in large room 5 at S-21. There, two or three of his old friends provided him with information



on a route of travel and a military uniform as a disguise, and opened the outer wall lock so he could flee. With this help, Man had much hope of escaping the prison. There was only one small obstacle that he had to overcome by himself since no one dared help: He would have to break his own shackle lock.<sup>96</sup>

One evening a friend gave a signal that the situation outside was good. Man tried to break his shackles. After being hit again and again, the shackles finally opened from around his ankles. "When I had broken the lock, I got out of the small cell, and helped one other nearby break his as well. I went to look for Brother Vang [Man knew Vang before being imprisoned] in his small room. But I didn't see him. Then a guard came walking up from the south. I fought [fought back] with the guard. Soon the situation got out of hand. A medic grabbed me and held me," wrote Man in his confession.<sup>97</sup>

Man was imprisoned and tortured again in S-21, but this time with no means of freeing himself. Under constant torture, he faced what he himself had committed against so many prisoners previously. Man's death, on 30 April 1978, shows perfect justice, according to Islam.

### **Analysis of Prisoner Cases**

Documentary sources note that Duch<sup>98</sup> was the chief of S-21. He was personally responsible for receiving orders from the upper echelon to track down and arrest people. His deputies, such as Hor, Chan, Pon, Tuy, Peng, and Huy, personally carried out the tortures and executions.

On many S-21 confession documents, document examiners wrote notes next to the names of those listed as rebel contacts. The names were then entered into lists and sent to various bases or units so that individuals could be tracked down and arrested. To document the receipt of the lists and the arrests and dispatch of prisoners to S-21, commanders sent letters to Duch mentioning the handover of prisoners. For example, after Son Sen had examined the confession of Doeun (aka Dim),<sup>99</sup> the deputy commander of Division 164 made a notation to Duch dated 31 July 1977: "This document is secret because it involves the Eastern Zone. It must not be sent to the bases, even in excerpts [excerpts of the rebel contacts' names]." A letter written to Duch on 5 August 1977 by the unnamed commander of a mining unit noted the arrest of a laborer named Ry: "We request to submit the so-called 'Ry' to Security, as he has clear political problems ... so we ask that Brother accept him." On the same day Duch made a note on this letter and sent it to Chan: "To Brother Chan: Give him to the interrogators." Duch added "Interrogate immediately, follow-up in detail, pressure him in detail.



Seek out all his remaining contacts.”<sup>100</sup> An undated letter from the commander of Battalion 414 to Duch stated: “To beloved Comrade Duch: Request to hand over to you 17 persons. Please receive them. They were arrested as the interrogation reports of Meun Khan aka Roeun, they are CIA. Transported on 26-4-77 [with a list of names numbered 1 through 17].”<sup>101</sup>

On many documents, Duch left notes ordering interrogators to torture prisoners more severely so they would confess to their rebel activities and contacts. On the confession of Mut Heng,<sup>102</sup> Duch wrote a note for the interrogators on 21 June 1978, “Grab him and beat and interrogate him again.” A letter from Duch to comrade Pon dated 1 October 1976 reads: “With this brother Ya (A Labang Ya), comrade can use hot methods of long duration. Even if a slip is made and he dies, you will not be held in violation of unit regulations.”<sup>103</sup>

Son Ty was arrested on 10 December 1978.<sup>104</sup> On the final page of his confession, Ty wrote a note to Pol Pot through Duch dated 15 December 1978. It reads, “Respects to the Party, more beloved than life. I did not betray the party. At first when I did not answer and then came the big stick. I fabricated the answers. I offer my life to the Party. Please don’t arrest those whose names I have incorrectly reported. Our friends are good people. I am not CIA or Khmer Serei [a group formed in opposition to the Khmer Rouge]. My final decision at this time of death is to ask the Party to spare my life.”

In a “lifestyle meeting” at S-21 held during February 1976, Duch stated to all present that: “This is our class stance. We must beat [prisoners] for class, national, and international reasons. Get rid of the view that beating the enemy is cruel. This is the wrong view.”<sup>105</sup>

The “Santebal Rules” were written on a blackboard in an S-21 cell for the prisoners to follow:

1. Answer what is asked, don’t evade my questions.
2. Absolutely do not try using this or that pretext with the idea of concealing, arguing or lying.
3. Do not play stupid and pretend you don’t understand orders, because you dared to oppose the revolution.
4. Answer questions immediately. Don’t delay even for a minute.



5. Deficiencies, small mistakes, immorality, this or that bad characteristic, don't speak of those things. Don't speak about the essence of the revolution.
6. When beaten or given electric shocks, absolutely do not scream.
7. Do nothing at all. Sit quietly and await your orders. If it is not ordered, do not do it. When ordered to do something, immediately do just that. Do not hesitate.
8. Do not ever use the Kampuchea Krom pretext to mask your counter-revolutionary face.
9. For every order disobeyed each day you will receive lashes and electric shocks. Oppose a single rule and you will get ten lashes of the whip or five electric shocks.<sup>106</sup>

Execution lists with the names of thousands of prisoners bear the signatures of Hor, the deputy chief of S-21, and Huy Sre, the chief of S-21D at Prey Sar. These lists are dated from 3 March 1976 to 31 December 1978. The total number of prisoners executed varied from day to day. In early 1976 the list contained the names of 20-30 persons to be killed each day. The totals increased with time, and by late 1978 there were 100-250 executions per day.<sup>107</sup>

Chapter 6, Article 10 of the Constitution of Democratic Kampuchea states, "As for chains of activities of opposition and destruction which damage the people's state, the highest punishment must be demanded." Chapter 7, Article 9, states: "The court is the people's court, the people's representative for justice, and defends the rights and freedoms of the people and will punish all activities opposing the people's state or violating the laws of the people's state."<sup>108</sup>

But in arresting and punishing people, the Khmer Rouge did not go through the process of obtaining a court decision, and thereby violated their own constitution. Rather than going through the court system, low-level unit or base chiefs made arrests, while prison chiefs and their direct subordinates made all decisions on the torture, interrogation and killing of prisoners. All policies on the chain of command in such matters came from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea.



## END NOTES

<sup>1</sup> 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, 1993, "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, 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., 1992, *Brother Number One*, Colorado: Westview Press, 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, 1983, *The Crimes of the Peking Hegemonists and Their Servants Pol Pot, Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan During 1975-1979*, Phnom Penh. This number was also used in Ney Pena, 1991 "The Collapse of the Pol Pot Genocidal Regime." Phnom Penh: Pracheachun Newspaper, 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, (a map), 2001 "Mapping the Killing Fields, 1975-1979". 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.

<sup>2</sup> According to Kiernan, 1996, "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, p. 457.

<sup>3</sup> Author's interview with Math Ly, former member of the People's Assembly of Democratic Kampuchea and former permanent member of the Khmer Rouge Thbaung Khmum District Committee, and today a Representative of Kompong 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.”

<sup>4</sup>“Khmer Rouge” is a French word for *Khmer Kraham* 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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 Chams 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 Km 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 Chams 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 Chams (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 Chams numbered 138,607 in 1979 and 700,000 in 1974.

<sup>6</sup>“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, 1988 “Orphans of Genocide: The Cham Muslims of Kampuchea under Pol Pot.” *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 20, Number 4, p. 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, 1983, *Introduction a la Connaissance de la Peninsule Indochinoise*, Paris.).

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.”



<sup>7</sup>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.

<sup>8</sup>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 Kompong Cham, 47 villages in Kompong Chhnang, 1 village in Svay Rieng, 13 villages in Sihanoukville, 5 villages in Kompong Thom, 9 villages in Koh Kong, 3 villages in Mondul Kiri, 1 village in Kompong 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 the Chams lived in 242 villages of 18 provinces and cities." (Excluded from the above provinces are: Mondul Kiri, Rattanak Kiri, and Kompong Speu.)

<sup>9</sup>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.

<sup>10</sup> Author's interviews with:

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

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 Muksanha* (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 Kompong Cham, Kampot, Kompong 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.

<sup>11</sup> 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.

Math Ly, op. cit.

Soh Ponyamin, age 43, at village 5 (former Svay Khhleang), Svay Khhleang subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, Kompong 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, Kompong Cham province, 19 February 2000.

<sup>12</sup> Author's interviews with:

Haji Abutalep Aiyau, age 64, at Kbal Romeas village, Kbal Romeas subdistrict, Kampot district and province, 1 April 2000.

Mussa Hausan, age 57, Abupakae Ismael, age 56, and El Tort, age 46, at Kompong 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, Kompong 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 Kompong 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, 1986, *When the War Was Over*, New York: Simon & Schuster, p. 261.

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

<sup>14</sup> Kiernan, Ben, *The Pol Pot Regime*, op. cit., p. 458.

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

Youk Chhang's interview with Sman Kaji, age 55, at Village 5 (Svay Khleang village), Svay Khleang subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, Kompong Cham province, 13 November 1999.

<sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> Author's interview with Uknha Sos Kamry, op. cit., 10 October 1999.

<sup>18</sup> Sos Kamry read this book while he visited a Cheyyo subdistrict chief in Chamkar Leu district, Kompong Cham province. Author's interview with Uknha Sos Kamry, op. cit., 10 October 1999.

<sup>19</sup> Author's interviews with:

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

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

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

Tam Jouk, age 43, at Khsach Praches Kandal village, Krauch Chhmar district, Kompong Cham province, 8 February 2001.

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

<sup>20</sup> 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.

<sup>21</sup> Author's interviews with:

Math Naury, age 47, at his home No. 1AB, Street 428, Sangkat Boeng Trabek, Khan Chamkar Mon, Phnom Penh, 21 April 2000. Naury 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.

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

<sup>23</sup> Author's interviews with: Haji Abutalep Aiyaup, op. cit., Mussa Hausan, Abupakae Ismael, and El Tort, op. cit., and Yakaup Mussa and Sae Oumaet, op. cit.

<sup>24</sup> Youk Chhang, May 3-15, 1997, *The Poisonous Hill that was Tuol Sleng*, Phnom Penh Post. 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, 1998, *A Cambodian Prison Portrait*. Bangkok: White Lotus, page 1. Nath was one of seven S-21 survivors who escaped in 1979.

Chandler analyzed the number of prisoners at S-21 using many sources including Vann Nath, op. cit.; his interview with surviving prisoner Tin Chan; Ung Pech; Lionel Vairon's interview with Thach Chan, a typist at S-21; Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D00017; and an interview with Ruy Nea Kung, a surviving prisoner. Chandler stated that "Between April 1975 and the first week of January 1979, at least 14,000 men, women and children were held at S-21." Chandler, David. P., 1999, *Voices from S-21*. Berkley: University of California Press, p.6.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

The 1977 S-21 Prisoner Execution List, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D21898.

<sup>27</sup> Soeun interrogated 20 prisoners at S-21. Lach Vorleak Kalyan, October 1999, S-21 Interrogators: 1975-1979, Documentation Center of Cambodia, Unpublished Report, p. 75-76.

<sup>28</sup> *The Confession of Ismael Ahmad*, op. cit.

<sup>29</sup> The 22 countries and 184 persons are broken down as follows: France, 97; USA, 26; Russia, 23; Peking, 6; Germany, 4; Canada, 1; Algeria, 2; Australia, 1; Switzerland, 1; Japan, 1; Malaysia, 1; Vietnam, 2; Yugoslavia, 2; Czechoslovakia, 2; Laos, 2; Albania, 1; Romania, 1; Egypt, 1; Saudi Arabia, 2; Tanzania, 2; Korea, 2; and 4 from unidentified countries. Ung Pech, List of Prisoners Categorized as Students and Officials from Overseas, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D00149.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Author's interviews with ten people. Four were relatives of Ahmad at Thmei village. Six others lived with Ahmad during the Khmer Rouge era at Peam village, Peam Koh Sna subdistrict (former Preah Anduang subdistrict) and at Preah Andaung village, Preah Andaung subdistrict, Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province.

<sup>32</sup> *The Confession of Youk Chantha, First Secretary of Chem Snguon at the Kampuchean Embassy in Tanzania*, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D13833. Chem



Snguon was Minister of Justice of the Kingdom of Cambodia from 1993-1998 and Second Deputy Chairman, Kingdom of Cambodia, in 1998. He died of natural causes in 1999.

<sup>33</sup> *The Confession of Ismael Ahmad*, op. cit. See the section entitled "Ahmad's Activities Overseas."

<sup>34</sup> Summers, Laura, 1 July 1972, *Indochina Chronicle* (a publication of the Indochina Resource Center), Issue 17.

<sup>35</sup> Author's interview with Math Ly, op. cit.

<sup>36</sup> *The Confession of Ismael Ahmad*, op. cit. See the section entitled "Ahmad Returns to Cambodia."

<sup>37</sup> Author's interviews with:

Sorn Keo, age 56, at Prek Sdei village, Preah Andaung subdistrict, Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province, 15 December 1999.

Chheng Trim, age 69, at Prek Sdei village, Preah Andaung subdistrict, Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province, 16 December 1999.

Chhin Phen, age 59, at Prek Sdei village, Preah Andaung subdistrict, Preah Andaung district, Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province, 16 December 1999.

Um Rin, age 66, at Prek Sdei village, Preah Andaung subdistrict, Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province, 17 December 1999.

Lay Kuy, age 61, at Peam village, Peam Koh Sna subdistrict, Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province, 17 December 1999.

Lach, age 64, at Prek Sdei village, Preah Andaung subdistrict, Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province, 15 December 1999.

Uy Meng, age 67, at Peam village, Preah Andaung subdistrict, Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province, 17 December 1999.

El Lei, age 48, at Sangkum Thmei village, Sralop subdistrict, Tbaung Khmum district, Kompong Cham province, 13 December 1999.

<sup>38</sup> Author's interview with Chhin Phen, op. cit.

<sup>39</sup> Author's interview with El Lei, op. cit.

<sup>40</sup> Ahmad did not tell villagers or friends that he was Cham, but told them that he was born in Phnom Penh. They all knew him as "Sok." Author's interviews with Chhin Phen, Sorn Keo, and Chheng Trim, op. cit.

<sup>41</sup> *The Confession of Ismael Ahmad*, op. cit.

<sup>42</sup> Author's interviews with:

El Kho, Rasinah, Maisom, and Salimah, the younger sisters of Ahmad, at Thmei village, Popel subdistrict, Ponhea Krek district, Kompong Cham province, 12 December 1999.

It Tam, age 61, the Tuan at Thmei village, Popel subdistrict, Ponhea Krek district, Kompong Cham province, 12 December 1999.

<sup>43</sup> *The Confession of Ismael Ahmad*, op. cit. See the section entitled "Ahmad Comes Back to Live in Cambodia."

<sup>44</sup> Author's interview with Chheng Trim, op. cit.

<sup>45</sup> Author's interview with Sorn Keo, op. cit.

<sup>46</sup> *The Confession of Ismael Ahmad*, op. cit. See the section entitled "Ahmad Returns to Live in Cambodia."

<sup>47</sup> *The Confession of Ismael Ahmad*, op. cit. See the section entitled "Forces and Traitor Connections."

<sup>48</sup> Ung Pech, *Prisoners Categorized as Students and Officials from Overseas*, op. cit.

<sup>49</sup> *The Confession of Ismael Ahmad*, op. cit. See the section entitled "Forces and Traitor Connections."

<sup>50</sup> Author's interview with Sat Sen, age 61, at Thmei village, Popel subdistrict, Ponhea Krek (formerly Tbaung Khmum) district, Kompong Cham province, 12 December 1999. He stated the Kae Sreng today lives in France. Sat Sen was also a *Tuan*.



Chem Snguon was Minister of Justice of the Kingdom of Cambodia from 1993-1998 and Second Deputy Chairman of the National Assembly, Kingdom of Cambodia, in 1998. He died of natural causes in 1999.

<sup>51</sup> Author's interviews with:

Uy Meng, op. cit. Lay Kuy, op. cit. Lach, op. cit. Sorn Keo, op. cit. Yan, at Peam village, Peam Koh Sna subdistrict, Stung Trang district, Kompong Cham province, 17 December 1999.

<sup>52</sup> Author's interview with Chheng Trim, op. cit.

<sup>53</sup> According to Islam, proper ceremonies must be performed prior to burial to ask Allah that the deceased be blessed.

"When the Khmer Rouge rose to power, one religious custom forbidden was the wake and funeral ... That they [the families] could not mourn the loss of their loved ones and conduct important sacred rituals has left them with open wounds on their hearts." Mam Kalyanee, 1998, *Family Life Under the Democratic Kampuchea regime*, Unpublished Manuscript, Documentation Center of Cambodia, p 36.

The Kuran states that the corpse itself has no purpose, but must be buried according to the proper procedures and prayers (*Sampayang Mayit*). When one had taken his last breath, the soul does not die, but awaits the judgment of Allah on the day the world ends. When Judgment Day comes, no plant or animal may live on the earth; each will return to what it was prior to creation. Then all souls will gather for judgment according to the merit each has created when alive on earth. The good will go to heaven, the bad to hell. From then on nothing will change, but will remain as it is forever.

According to the *Virak Sangkahak* (a Buddhist text describing aid), the soul of one about to die cannot begin a new incarnation if the soul's owner has not drawn his or her final breath. The *Visothimeak* section of the *Vinay Beidak* (a Buddhist text describing discipline) states that the corpse is to be taken to a place call *Pachha* (crematorium) to be eaten by animals in order to transmute from human to animal. The *Preah Boromakru* (Buddha) states that only the Enlightened one was to be cremated so that the remains could be distributed among the faithful. See Chhang Song, "Two Miraculous Things," *Searching for the truth*, Number 6-7, June-July 2000, Documentation Center of Cambodia.

<sup>54</sup> Author's interview with Haji Abdul Majet bin Abdullah, Hakem at Kaulalaom Mosque, Chroy Changvar, Phnom Penh, 2 December 1999.

<sup>55</sup> Author's interview with Tauny Sauny at Village 3 (Chroy Changva Khong), Sangkat Chroy Changvar, Khan Russei Keo, Phnom Penh, 2 December 1999.

<sup>56</sup> Author's interview with Sulaiman Hafisoh, age 46, at Chroy Changvar, Phnom Penh, 13 October 1999.

<sup>57</sup> *The Confession of Haji Saleh Yahya*, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D02662, states that Yahya and his wife had 7 children. But Tauny Sauny stated: "Yahya had more than ten children. But four surviving children (before the Pol Pot era) and another adopted child makes five. They were named Sainop, Saly, Suftaet, Maiya and the adopted Hakim." Author's interview with Tauny Sauny, op. cit.

<sup>58</sup> *The Confession of Haji Saleh Yahya*, op. cit.

<sup>59</sup> Yahya wrote: "On the evening of 6 December 1975 at 10:00 pm Angkar arrested me at home at Kohe village and took me to Damrei Sar pagoda at Rokar Kaong." Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Author's interview with Haji Abdul Majet bin Abdullah, op. cit.

*The Confession of Haji Saleh Yahya*, op. cit.

See *the Report of Research on the Mass Graves of Muk Kampoul District*, 15 June 1998, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number 080703.

<sup>61</sup> Author's interview with Chuong Chim, age 60, at La Et village, Prek Dambang subdistrict, Muk Kampoul district, Kandal province, 12 January 2000.



<sup>62</sup> On September 25, 1976, Comrade Pon, chief of S-21 interrogators, reported on his activities to Duch, saying "On September 25, we received orders from Angkar to torture. In the morning, we started to torture about 20 lashes in the morning with small rattan. In the afternoon the torture was 20-30 lashes of a whip of three strands of electric wires." Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D07331. On 1 October 1976 Duch answered in a note to Pon: "With this Ya, you may use hot methods strongly and at length, and even if you slip-up and he dies, you will not be held in violation of Angkar's discipline ... If he continues to hide his traitorous connections and activities, Angkar has decided that he be killed." Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D07321.

<sup>63</sup> Author's interview with Tit Tum, age 47, at Prek Phdao village, Rokar Kaong 1 subdistrict, Muk Kampoul district, Kandal province, 4 December 1999.

<sup>64</sup> "The purpose of torture is to get their responses, not for entertainment. So, make them hurt so they will answer quickly. Be rough to frighten them, to break them, that is beat them but absolutely not to kill them. When torturing (you) must consider their health. Inspect the whip. Don't rush and cause them to die without getting a confession." "Methods of Interrogation." in *Statistics of Santebal S-21, Politics, Attitude, Organization*, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D06936.

"Prisoners at S-21 lacked hygiene so there was contagious disease transmission. When the weather was very hot, sweat mixed with the blood of the wounds of torture, and insect bites covered their bodies, causing skin disease and a smell worse than that of animals. Already ill, they became more so, and prisoners often died in the prison." Ung Pech's Report, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D0018. Ung Pech was an S-21 prisoner who survived his incarceration.

<sup>65</sup> Mit Leng interrogated 33 prisoners at S-21. Lach Vorleak Kalyan, op. cit., p. 98-99.

<sup>66</sup> *The Confession of Haji Saleh Yahya*, op. cit.

<sup>67</sup> Sau Kham Khauy, former chairman of the senate; Leh Kosem, former brigadier general at the Ministry of Defense; El Brahim, former commander of the Royal Military Police; Chek Brahim, former colonel; Math Slaiman, former colonel; and Hem Charoeun, former deputy chairman of the Senate. Khauy and Kosem fled the country before 17 April 1975. Chek Brahim was arrested and sent to S-21. Slaiman and El Brahim were among those who died during the Democratic Kampuchea regime.

<sup>68</sup> All eleven were members of the Lon Nol Senate: Ing Hoeung, Ngao Suy, Kim San, Ros Saret, Chheang, Sok Sa-aun, Nong Chhum, Lim Sie, Sam Sokhom, Tep Hun, and Ngaot Hien.

<sup>69</sup> Abdul Hausang, former captain in Infantry Division 5; Lep Loh, former first lieutenant in Infantry Division 5; Norng Aung Math, formerly assigned to the Ministry of Customs and Excise Taxes; Him Man aka Haji Sulaiman, former Deputy Command Officer in the 5th Brigade; Math Sulaiman aka Haji Sulaiman Shukry, first deputy to Muflin; and Ly Mohammad, former Phnom Penh policeman. All six died during the Democratic Kampuchea regime.

<sup>70</sup> Les Kosem, El Prahim, Chek Brahim, Math Slaiman, Abdul Hausang, Lep Loh, Norng Aungmat, Sulaiman Shukry, Him Man, and Ly Mohammad.

<sup>71</sup> *The Confession of Haji Saleh Yahya*, op. cit.

<sup>72</sup> Author's interviews with Tit Tum and Haji Abutalep, op. cit.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Author's interview with Tit Tum, op. cit.

<sup>75</sup> Author's interview with Abdul Majet bin Abdullah, op. cit.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> See the 1976 S-21 Prisoner Execution List, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D21897, which shows that from 1 through 15 May 1976, 52 people died of disease at S-21. Yahya was number ten on the list. "10) Yi Saleh Yahya, from Region 22, worked at the Ministry of Religion, died 2-5-76, numb and worn-out."



<sup>78</sup> *The Confession of Sim Mel aka Man*, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D02678.

<sup>79</sup> Author's interviews with:

Kae Math Zen, age 42, younger brother of Man, at Baren Kraom village, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Sa-ang district, Kandal province, 6 November 1999.

Haji Ahmad, age 55, who knew Man from birth, at Baren Kraom village, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Sa-ang district, Kandal province, 6 November 1999.

El Dullah, age 60, who knew Man from birth, at Baren Kraom village, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Sa-ang district, Kandal province, 6 November 1999.

El Him, *op. cit.*

*The Confession of Sim Mel aka Man. op. cit.*

<sup>80</sup> Man joined the KR army in April 1971 through Yum and Lim, and was stationed at the Prek Chi battlefield for three months. Later he studied military techniques at Koh Thom district. While studying, Man met Tem and Song Ly. They used Man as their messenger in Company 175. In 1972 he went to stay with Lorn [Lorn's position unknown]. In 1973 he was chief of Office 267, responsible for rounding up battlefield deserters. He returned to Lorn at the Tonle Bassak battlefield in 1974. In the same year, Man studied "investigations" for five months at the military school. Later he was an investigator in Battalion 143. In 1975 Man was in the investigation unit of Division 12 and was sent by the party to Ta Khmau [unknown unit] west of the Kandal provincial headquarters. Later Man was chosen by the party to work for Santebal at Ta Khmau. There Man guarded prisoners. In May 1976 Man left Ta Khmau for the messenger unit at Prey Sar, and later was sent to Boeng Tumpun. In July of that same year, the party sent Man to the interrogation unit at S-21. *The Confession of Sim Mel aka Man. op. cit.*

Author's interview with Kae Math Sen, *op. cit.* "Man was a KR soldier since 1970, operating from the Sa-ang district headquarters to Koh Thom, since between Sa-ang headquarters and Phnom Penh was all the Lon Nol forces. In 1973 Man visited home once. He was wearing a pistol, and had a folding-stock AK rifle and a radio transceiver. In 1975 he came back, but not to the house, only to the Au Pang ferry crossing on the other side of the river. His parents and siblings knew that Man was the messenger of Ta Nath, commander of Division 12 [later the 703rd]."

<sup>81</sup> Author's interview with Kae Math Sen, *op. cit.*

<sup>82</sup> Author's interviews with:

Kae Math Zen, *op. cit.*

Chim Aminah, age 59, who knew Sim Mel (Man) before 1975, at Baren Kraom village, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Sa-ang district, Kandal province, 21 March 2000.

El Man, age 52, who knew Sim Mel (Man) before 1975, at Baren Kraom village, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Sa-ang district, Kandal province, 21 March 1999.

Mao Nil, age 47, a KR soldier together with Man, at Village 8, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Sa-ang district, Kandal province, 13 March 1999.

Muy Tech Leng, *op. cit.*

<sup>83</sup> Author's interview with Him Huy, at Anlong San village, Prek Sdei subdistrict, Koh Thom district, Kandal province, 21 December 2001.

<sup>84</sup> *The Confession of Sim Mel aka Man. op. cit.* Man did not explain why the party removed him from his duties at S-21.

*The Confessions of Former S-21 Interrogators Neou Kantha and Sok Ra. relate to the treason of Man and confirm that Man was an interrogator at S-21. Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Numbers D00153 and D00160.*



Youk Chhang's interview with Him Huy, former S-21 guard, at Documentation Center of Cambodia, 28 May 2000. Him Huy stated, "Man was an interrogator at S-21. Everyone in the office knew Man was a Cham, and later he was arrested."

Author's interview with Prak Khan, former S-21 interrogator, op. cit. Khan stated that "One ethnic minority member was an interrogator at S-21, named Man. Man beat prisoners to death during interrogations at S-21."

<sup>85</sup> *The Confession of Sim Mel aka Man*, op. cit. Man was interrogated between 3 November 1977 and 13 January 1978.

<sup>86</sup> See 1978 S-21 Prisoner Execution List, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D21899. "Sim Mel aka Man, from S-21 Kho (Prey Sar), interrogation team chief, smashed 30-4-1978 (no date of entry)."

<sup>87</sup> *The Confession of Sim Mel aka Man*, op. cit.

Author's interview with Prak Khan, op. cit.

<sup>88</sup> "The problem of torture, torture is used to get their answers, not for entertainment. So make them hurt so they will answer quickly." *Statistics of Santebal S-21, Politics, Attitude, Organization*, op. cit, the section on "Attitudes toward interrogation."

<sup>89</sup> *The Confession of Sim Mel aka Man*, op. cit. "In July 1976 I [Man] worked at S-21 as an interrogator ... in March 1977 the party sent me to the Prey Sar Reeducation Office to be a member of Company 13 at Office 24."

<sup>90</sup> *The Confession of Sim Mel aka Man*, op. cit.

<sup>91</sup> Huy (or Huy Sre) was chief of S-21 Kho or Office 24. Originally named Nun Huy, he was born in March 1951 at Tonle Bati village, Bati district, Takeo province. Huy joined the revolution on 7 April 1970. In the Sangkukreasniyum era Huy was a farmer. His wife Prok Samuth (aka Prok Khoeun) was born in 1953 at Rumchek village, Thnaot subdistrict, Bati district, Takeo province. She joined the revolution in March 1972. In 1977 the Party removed Prok Khoeun from the military staff hospital to S-21. Huy's father was Nun Ros and his mother El Nan; they lived at Tonle Bati. *Personal History of Prok Khoeun*, 1977, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number K08273.

Many prisoner execution lists at the Documentation Center of Cambodia were signed by Huy Sre. For example, on 10 May 1977, he ordered the killing of 21 prisoners. On 7 April 1977, Huy signed two prisoner execution lists. The first list contains the names of 18 prisoners and an annotation that, "request only 4 prisoners to be interrogated and the rest must be smashed." The second list contains the names of 11 pregnant female prisoners and a number of unnamed children.

Another KR cadre at S-21 was also named Huy (formerly named You Huy, now Him Huy). He was born in 1954 at Kbal Chroy village, Pothi Ban subdistrict, Koh Thom district, Kandal province. He joined the revolution on 7 October 1972 and had been a soldier, section leader, deputy squad leader, squad leader, and company commander, and was later made responsible for the defense unit at S-21. Huy's father was You Him and his mother Seam Cheu. He had eight siblings. *Personal History of You Huy*, 10 November 1977, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D00016. Today, Huy lives in Anlong San village, Prek Sdei subdistrict, Koh Thom district, Kandal province.

<sup>92</sup> *The Confession of Sim Mel aka Man*, op. cit., "The Matter of Fleeing the First Time."

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> For more information on Koh Tonlea, see Mam Kalyanee, op. cit.

<sup>95</sup> Author's interview with Chim Aminah, op. cit.

<sup>96</sup> *The Confession of Sim Mel aka Man*, op. cit., the section on "The second escape, in prison."

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.



<sup>98</sup>Duch, aka Kaing Guek Iev, or Kiev was born in 1942, although his ID card claims he was born in 1943. His father was Vietnamese and his mother of Chinese extraction. They lived in Stong district, Kompong Thom province. Duch was always at the top of his class in mathematics and ranked first in the national mathematics examination. In 1961, he studied for baccalaureate I. During 1964-1965, he taught physics, chemistry, mathematics, and Khmer literature at a school in Skun district, Kompong Cham province.

In 1966, Duch was arrested and imprisoned until 1970, when Lon Nol came to power and released all prisoners in the country. Duch then moved to Unnalaom pagoda where he taught again. During this period, he was known as a Khmer Rouge leader. He was close to Sok Thuok, aka Vorn Vet, and Khieu Samphan. His Unnalaom teacher, who was close to Samdech Preah Sanga Raja Chuon Nate, told Duch, "Don't enter politics." Duch answered, "Lok ta, do politics to liberate people, to help people." In 1973, he left to go into hiding in the forest, bringing with him many young people from Unnalaom. (Phat Kosal and Vanthan Peou Dara's interviews with Kim Sour, former student of Duch and Leam Sarun, former close friend of Duch, 7 July 1999.)

Duch was known as a talkative person who made jokes, and not as a cruel man. He did not like to argue, and if anyone insulted him, he did not respond. If someone were to physically assault him, he would console his adversary. And the angrier he became, the more he smiled. He was close to his students, who loved him, and did not gamble, womanize, or drink (but he did chain smoke).

In 1971, Duch became chief of Office 13 in Tumneap village, Amleang subdistrict, Thpong district, Kompong Speu province, which was then in a liberated zone. Report 65/75, Issue 18 of the *Khmer Republic*, dated 22 January 1975 (Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number L00562), talks about "Amleang detention office," with Duch as its chief and Chan as its deputy chief: "both were brutal." A former prisoner at Office 13, for example, testified that a prisoner named Son was burned with a torch there, and then had rubber dripped all over his body. Vanthan Peou Dara's interview with Ham Im, at Sdok Saat village, Meanchey subdistrict, Udong district, Kompong Speu province, 13 July 2001, in *Searching for the truth*, Number 22, October 2001, p. 21-24.

Office 13 was disbanded after April 17, 1975, and Duch and his deputy, together with other cadres, were sent to work at the newly established detention office in Phenom Penh. Ibid. Duch was made chief of this office, which was called S-21. While there, he read and/or signed thousands of confessions and gave orders for follow-up and interrogation. The earliest note believed to have been written by Duch was the 28 July 1975 confession of Ke Chhang, where Duch wrote: "Take political measures and always be guarded, do not let [him] die, torture in a way that won't leave a scar." Two days later, Duch wrote, "take heavy torture measures because it is decided 100% that he has a rank between first lieutenant and captain; he is a long-time spy." The Confession of Ke Chheang, Car and Train Mechanic, Arrested 28 April 1975, TSL K-125. Ke Chheang was killed on 16 September 1975. The 30 August 1975 confession of Nhep Dim aka Ong Chhorn, age 53, also bears handwriting that is exactly like that of Duch: "This contemptible person is so stubborn; beat him until he is unconscious." Documents related to Duch, TSL Catalogue Number N-212.

Duch was also involved in torture. A note believed to be written by him appears on the confession of a woman named Prum Sam Nieng: "This contemptible person spoke out too little! No need to summarize! I did not explain anything. I beat her with 30 lashes of a whip and pushed her to write again. This afternoon, if I am not satisfied, I will assign a person to torture again and write again. This person is not doing well at this moment." TSL Catalogue Number P-153.

There are many letters from units handing over prisoners to Duch. For example, a letter from Battalion 414 states: "To Dear Comrade Duch: Request to hand over 17 persons to you, so



kindly take them, they all joined the CIA according to the confession of Meun Khan sent 26-4-77." Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D01078.

The last known note written and signed by Duch is dated 23 December 1978. It appears on the confession of a prisoner named Kim Sok: "Respectful Brother, this issue of hiding the Vietnamese happened in Region 25 and relates to the father of Eang (Huy's father). The important person left is this Tring. Follow up on his activities. I request that I won't keep this person long. Once I can learn about his activities and contacts, I request that I will take [kill] him." The Confession of Kim Sok, Chief of Unit 11, Office 24, TSL Catalogue Number K-346. On 7 January 1979, Duch escaped from Phnom Penh. He was arrested on 10 May 1999 and today is in a military court prison pending a hearing.

<sup>99</sup>*Confession of Doeun aka Dim*, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number 0549 BBKKh.

<sup>100</sup>Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D01282.

<sup>101</sup>Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D01078.

<sup>102</sup>*The Confession of Mut Heng*, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D07304.

<sup>103</sup>Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D07321.

<sup>104</sup>Son Ty was nicknamed Teanh. Before 1975 he was with Comrades Nat and Pin in Division 703 (formerly Division 12). After 1975, Ty was assigned to Nat and Pin on the military staff. Ty was responsible for logistics. Nat was responsible for liaison. Son Ty was executed on 31 December 1978. *The Confession of Son Ty*; Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D07377.

<sup>105</sup>Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D0048, p. 11.

<sup>106</sup>"Santebal Discipline," Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number D21919. Today, it remains written on a blackboard at Tuol Sleng Museum.

<sup>107</sup>See 1976, 1977, and 1978 S-21 prisoner execution lists, Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Numbers D21897, D21898, D21899. Some lists are undated. Entries in the lists contain a sequence number, prisoner name, from (unit), duty, date of entry (into S-21), and date of "smashing" (execution). The lists included those who died of disease before they could be executed.

<sup>108</sup>Constitution of Democratic Kampuchea, op. cit.

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- Chheng Trim, age 69, at Prek Sdei village, Preah Andaung subdistrict, Sting Trang district, Kampong Cham province, 16 December 1999.
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- Chim Aminah, age 59, who knew Sim Mel (Man) before 1975, at Baren Kraom village, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Sa-ang district, Kandal province, 21 March 2000.
- Chuong Chim, age 60, at Lo Et village, Prek Dambang subdistrict, Muk Kampoul district, Kandal province, 12 January 2000.
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- El Kho, Rasinah, Maisom, and Salimah, the younger sisters of Ismael Ahmad, at Thmei village, Popel subdistrict, Ponhea Krek district, Kampong Cham province, 12 December 1999.
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- Haji Ahmad, age 55, who knew Man from birth, at Baren Kraom village, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Saang district, Kandal province, 6 November 1999.
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- It Tam, age 61, toun of Ismael Ahmad at Thmei village, Popel subdistrict, Ponhea Krek district, Kampong Cham province, 12 December 1999.
- Kae Math Zen, age 42, younger brother of Man, at Baren Kraom village, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Sa-ang district, Kandal province, 6 November 1999.
- Lach, age 64, at Prek Sdei village, Preah Andaung subdistrict, Sting Trang district, Kampong Cham province, 15 December 1999.



- Lay Kuy, age 61, at Peam village, Peam Koh Sna subdistrict, Sting Trang district, Kampong Cham province, 17 December 1999.
- 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.
- 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.
- Ly Sman, age 65, at his home at Kilo 8, Chrang Chamres, Phnom Penh, 12 March 2000.
- Mao Maisom, age 44, at Khse Luos village, Trea subdistrict, Krauch Chhmar district, Kampong Cham province, 6 February 2001.
- Mao Nil, age 47, a KR soldier together with Man, at Village 8, Svay Prateal subdistrict, Sa-ang district, Kandal province, 13 March 1999.
- Math Dullah, age 53, at Cham Leu village, Prek Thmei subdistrict, Koh Thom district, Kandal province, 7 November 1999, 21 March 2000.
- 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 member of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Representative of the Kampong Cham Constituency, and Supreme Personal Advisor to the King, at his home in Chamkar Mon, Phnom Penh, March 27, 2000.
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