

# មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

## The Khmer Rouge, Then and Now: A Photographic History

March 28th, 2006

Exhibition in Dana Lobby March 28 -April 30.

The extremist Communist Party of Kampuchea (popularly known as the Khmer Rouge) ruled Cambodia from April 17, 1975 until January 7, 1979 under the leadership of Pol Pot and the Party's central and standing committees. In less than four years an estimated two million Cambodians died from untreated disease, starvation, forced hard labor, or execution. The deaths of a quarter of the country's population make this genocide the largest in history, in percentage terms.

The 1970s' photographs displayed here were drawn from the archives of the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam), a non-government independent research organization that holds the world's largest repository of primary documents on the Khmer Rouge. They depict 12 young men and women between the ages of 14 and 29 who joined the Khmer Rouge revolution. Most were "combatants" or personnel of the infamous central-level S-21 prison. Of the estimated 14,000 people held there, only about 12 survived.

The photographs taken of Khmer Rouge cadres during Democratic Kampuchea were often taken to accompany a "biography" that cadres wrote at least once. They noted such information as a cadre's age, home village, family members, social status, and reasons for joining the revolution. Using information from the biographies, DC-Cam staff searched out the 12 former cadres in this exhibit, photographed them, and interviewed them on their lives during the regime and their views on trying Khmer Rouge leaders.

This exhibition was prepared by members of the Honors College Senior Seminar on Transitional Justice under the guidance of Professor Alex Hinton. Rutgers-Newark houses a complete set of DC-Cam's archival and other materials. The archives include invaluable Khmer Rouge documents, microfilms, films, maps, posters, photographs and publications by or on the Khmer Rouge.

It is our hope that the insights gained from Cambodia's experience can be applied to other genocides around the world. As Professor Alex Hinton says, "No outsider can fully understand what it means to live through genocide, but that does not mean you cannot understand the causes. It's important for us to do so. Learning about genocide also teaches us cautionary lessons about our own lives and the world around us."

This exhibit was made possible through the generous support of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, the John Cotton Dana Library, the Rutgers-Newark Alumni Association, and the Rutgers Foundation. For information on the Cambodian genocide, please call DC-Cam's Public Information Room on the Rutgers-Newark campus at 973-353-5222.

Documentation Center of Cambodia

Searching for the Truth

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