Archiving the Unspeakable:

Silence and Voice in Khmer Rouge Mug Shots

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

(Library and Information Studies)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN MADISON

2012

Date of final oral examination: 3/20/12

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ABSTRACT:

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Using theoretical frameworks from archival studies, anthropology, and cultural studies, this dissertation traces the social life of a collection of mug shots taken at the notorious Tuol Sleng Prison in Cambodia and their role in the production of history about the Khmer Rouge regime. It focuses on three key moments in the social life of the mug shots: the moment of their creation; their inclusion in archives; and their use by survivors and victims' family members in establishing narratives about the Khmer Rouge. The dissertation explores the ways in which silences were encoded in each of these moments, how the meaning of these records changes depending on their context, and how their reuse creates an infinite layering of the archive. The first chapter outlines the key theoretical and methodological frameworks employed, namely Trouillot's conception of silences and the production of history, the records continuum model, and the social life of objects approach. The second chapter details the French colonial roots of the mug shot as a photographic genre in Cambodia, places the creation of the Tuol Sleng mug shots within the Khmer Rouge bureaucracy, and describes the discursive social function the records played in transforming suspects into enemies of the state. The third chapter outlines the confluence of political and economic forces that shaped the mug shots into museum displays, archival collections, and digital databases. The fourth chapter addresses both how the mug shots

are being used by Cambodians to spark narratives about the past through legal testimony, documentary films, newsletter articles, and how the circulation of photographs of people looking at the mug shots transforms viewers into witnesses and performs human rights in the present. Finally, this dissertation argues that through these many reuses of the mug shots, archival institutions such as the Documentation Center of Cambodia are ensuring that some of the silences embedded in the records at their creation are not perpetuated in the making of archives and narratives about the past. From their original function as bureaucratic records, to their subsequent acquisition into archives, digitization, and publication, and their current reuses as legal and historical evidence, Khmer Rouge mug shots play an active role in an ongoing drama of suffering, memory, and accountability in Cambodia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"Every blade of grass has its angel that bends over it and whispers, 'Grow, grow.'"

- The Talmud

I have been blessed with the whispers of countless angels encouraging me to grow over the course of writing this dissertation. My dissertation committee—Christine Pawley, Kristin Eschenfelder, Alan Rubel, Michele Hilmes, and Anne Gilliland—have helped me beyond measure with their thoughtful questions, gentle prodding, and sustained encouragement. I have been very fortunate to have their support over the past few years and know that they will continue to serve as role models in my future.

Youk Chhang and the staff and volunteers of the Documentation Center of Cambodia have graciously answered my questions, read drafts of my work, sent copies of publications to the UW-Madison Libraries, and assisted me in conducting research. Their hard work and unrelenting dedication honor the memory of the victims of the Khmer Rouge. I have also received enormous help from archivists at the National Archives of Cambodia and the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center. These Cambodian archivists who work professionally in difficult political and financial climates with little material reward are a true inspiration to memory workers everywhere.

I would not have embarked on this project without the generous support of a Building the Future of Archival Education Doctoral Fellowship from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Much gratitude is due to Anne Gilliland and Elizabeth Yakel for conceiving of this important program that has sustained me intellectually, financially, and socially during my doctoral work and will continue to sustain me for years to come. I was also lucky enough to

receive travel grants to conduct research and attend conferences from the Holtz Center for Science and Technology Studies, the Vilas Travel Fellowship, and the Linda B. Richardson Fund for Student Travel at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

I am grateful to my interview subjects for generously sharing their time and experiences with me: David Chandler, John Ciorciari, Paul Conway, Craig Etcheson, Helen Jarvis, Judy Ledgerwood, Ben Kiernan, and David Walls, as well as several who asked to remain anonymous. Without them, this dissertation could not have been written.

It is not easy to maintain high spirits while researching such a grave topic. I am indebted to the music of James Brown, for helping to maintain an upbeat mood in countless dance breaks throughout this three-year process, and Jay-Z, for giving me confidence before every conference presentation and job talk.

For my colleagues and friends at the Archives Education and Research Institute, it has been a pleasure learning from and with you over the past three years. Thanks to: Lorrie Dong, Joanna Steele, Joel Blanco Rivera, Amelia Abreau, David Kim, Allison Krebs, Morgan Daniels, Dharma Akmon, Amber Cushing, Joanne Mihelcic, Leisa Gibbons, Amelia Acker, Dalena Hunter, Michael Wartenbe, Brian Cumer, Kim Anderson, and Shannon Faulkhead. Together, AERI crowd, we are changing the field. Professors Sue McKemmish, Wendy Duff, and Verne Harris, also lent their support in crucial stages of my doctoral education. Thanks are also due to my archivist friends Jesse Johnston, T-Kay Sangawand, and Mario H. Ramirez, who each helped make conferences important sites of intellectual growth and social exchange. Above all, this dissertation could not have been written without the wisdom, encouragement, and unbridled enthusiasm of my partners in archival crime: Ricardo Punzalan, who always knows which book

to recommend at just the right time, and Andrew J Lau, who patiently walked me through the continuum model as my head spun. Their imprint is all over this dissertation.

My lifelong friends have listened patiently as I complained about not knowing my life's calling, and then, I once I found it, have maintained their patience as I complained about how much work it would take to achieve it. Carlyn Kolker, Emily Drabinski, Cassie Adcock, Samip Mallick, Ann Putnam, Heather McClean, Sumayya Ahmed, Berta Bustamante, Bridgette Farrer: You are forever members of my committee. My sister Cherie Caswell Dost and my brother-in-law Hagen Dost have always encouraged me to pursue my dreams with love, interest, and their unparalleled sense of humor.

Last but not least, I am eternally thankful to Tomer Begaz, the biggest angel of them all, who tried really hard (usually successfully) not to interrupt me while I was writing, and correctly assured me that nobody gets sick in Cambodia on his watch. His effortless brilliance, natural curiosity, and unwavering commitment sustain me. He will always be the sun and moon and stars in my book.

CONTENTS

Chapter One: Silence, Agency, and the Social Life of Archival Photographs

> "Let us stop thinking of photographs as nouns, and start treating them as verbs, transitive verbs. They *do* things. We need to ask not only what they are *of*, and what they are *about*, but also what they were created to *do*. And when they are preserved or digitized, published, or in other ways repurposed and recirculated, we must ask how their material nature has been altered, and in the process, how the relationships embedded in them have changed, why, and to what end. Archival lessons from these alternative narratives teach that we must… expand the range of questions we ask, so that we may better understand and account for the movement of photographs and changes in their meaning across temporal and spatial, discursive and institutional boundaries…."[1]
>
> –Joan M. Schwartz

> "Some information about the past can be provided only by visual images."[2]
>
> --Hayden White

On October 12, 1976, a young Cambodian woman, Hout Bophana, was arrested by the Khmer Rouge secret police and sent to Tuol Sleng prison (also known as S-21), the regime's central torture facility in the evacuated city of Phnom Penh.[3] Before the Cambodian civil war, Bophana was an educated, French-speaking middle class teenager, the daughter of a teacher living in a prosperous town in the country's northwest. Once the civil war began, Bophana, like many of her neighbors, moved from the country to the capitol city of Phnom Penh to escape U.S. air raids. There, she was gang raped by soldiers from the U.S.-backed Lon Nol regime and became pregnant. When the Khmer Rouge invaded Phnom Penh on April 17, 1975, Bophana was evacuated and placed on a communal farm, where she was forced into heavy labor. Her fiancé joined the Khmer Rouge, and they secretly communicated through letters that were

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[1] Joan M. Schwartz, "The Archival Garden: Photographic Plantings, Interpretive Choices, and Alternative Narratives," in Terry Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past: Documenting Society and Institutions* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2011), 105-106.
[2] Hayden White, "Historiography and Historiophoty," *The American Historical Review* 93:5 (1988): 1194.
[3] Cambodian naming conventions are the reverse of what they are in the West, so that, for example, Hout is a family name and Bophana is a given name. I have followed the Western convention throughout for the sake of consistency.

smuggled across great distances and at great risk. In 1976, the Khmer Rouge secret police found Bophana's letters in her fiancé's barracks, arrested him, and sent him to Tuol Sleng prison, where he was executed.[4] They then arrested Bophana and brought her to Tuol Sleng.

Upon arrival at Tuol Sleng, Bophana was pinned with a tag indicating her group's processing batch number and photographed by a teenaged Khmer Rouge soldier who was part of the prison's documentation unit (*figure 1.1*). Bophana's mug shot then became part of an elaborate Khmer Rouge filing system used by Tuol Sleng staff to report arrests up the chain of command. Over the next six months, she was kept in deplorable conditions with thousands of other prisoners, tortured mercilessly with whips, electric shocks and water boarding, and forced to sign false statements confessing her alleged ties to the CIA and naming supposed conspirators back on the farm. She was executed ("smashed" in Khmer Rouge terminology) on March 18, 1977.

Yet while Bophana died, her Tuol Sleng mug shot has taken on a life of its own, being used in ways in which her Khmer Rouge torturers could not have predicted. Since 1979, the mug shot has been exhibited (along with thousands of others) at Tuol Sleng, now the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, where it has been viewed by hundreds of thousands of Cambodians and foreigners. In 1982, American journalist Elizabeth Becker viewed the mug shot, together with Bophana's prison file, which is the thickest in the Tuol Sleng archive due to Bophana's captured love letters. Becker used Bophana's story as a central narrative in her book *When The War Was Over: Cambodia And The Khmer Rouge Revolution* and later featured the mug shot on the cover of her 2010 book *Bophana*. Also in 1982, American human rights activist David Hawk photocopied Bophana's mug shot in an effort to collect evidence to put the Khmer Rouge on

[4] For a more detailed account of Hout Bophana's life story, see: Elizabeth Becker, *Bophana* (Phnom Penh: Cambodia Daily Press, 2010).

trial, and archivists at Tuol Sleng later sent copies of the mug shot negatives to his home in New York for safekeeping. In 1993, two American photojournalists cleaned a negative of Bophana's photograph and organized an exhibition of other Tuol Sleng mug shots like it at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1997. In 1996, Bophana's mug shot (together with Becker's account of her life) inspired the Cambodian-French film director Rithy Panh (himself a survivor of the regime) to make the documentary *Bophana: A Cambodian Tragedy* telling her life story. The documentary, which features the mug shot prominently, now shows twice a day at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. Panh later founded the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center, a Phnom Penh-based archives that collects and preserves Cambodian film, and named it after her. A painting by Tuol Sleng survivor Vann Nath depicting Bophana both as a happy teenager and a Tuol Sleng prisoner hangs in the archives' stairwell (*figure 1.2*). In 1997, staff at the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) digitized Bophana's mug shot, entered information about it and the other existent 5,189 Tuol Sleng mug shots in a database, and made that database freely accessible online, where people all over the world have since viewed it. In September 2000, the photo was printed next to an article addressing rape as a war crime and crime against humanity as defined by the United Nations in DC-Cam's newsletter, *Searching for the Truth*, which is distributed free of charge throughout Cambodia and is also freely available on DC-Cam's website. In 2001, it was reprinted on the back cover of *Searching for the Truth*, along with dates for Bophana's arrest and "smashing" by the Khmer Rouge. The photo reappeared in the first two 2011 issues of the magazine, this time along with other Tuol Sleng mug shots in a full page advertisement soliciting names of those to be included in the forthcoming *Book of Memory of Those Who Died Under the Khmer Rouge.* In 2010, Bophana's mug shot was included as legal evidence in the case file of Duch, former head of Tuol Sleng

prison, who was convicted of crimes against humanity and war crimes by the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, a jointly operated United Nations-Royal Government of Cambodia tribunal. Duch's trial was the first time a Khmer Rouge official was ever brought to justice in a credible, internationally-recognized court of law. Bophana, embodied by her mug shot, has become an icon of the Khmer Rouge's brutality in Cambodia. As Elizabeth Becker reports, Bophana has become a "folk heroine," "the Anne Frank of Cambodia," "a national figure" who "looms so large in the public imagination" that she has transcended her individual narrative.[5] Her mug shot and its many reuses constitute a complexly layered archive, documenting not only the Khmer Rouge's abuses, but a multitude of nuanced reactions to it from Cambodian survivors of the regime, their children, and the international community.

What is it about Bophana's mug shot and the thousands of mug shots like it from Tuol Sleng prison that continues to speak to us? What do these images tell us and why do we continue to be haunted by them? This dissertation examines these questions through the lens of the emerging field of archival studies, drawing on anthropology, history, cultural studies, science and technology studies, and library and information studies. By drawing on an array of approaches, I hope to contribute to the ways in which the mug shots are seen, not just as documents, objects, photographs, images, and memory texts[6] (all of which they are), but above all as records.[7] In so doing, I hope to both introduce scholars from other disciplines to the

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[5] Elizabeth Becker, "Minor Characters," *New York Times* (August 28, 2005): G27.

[6] Bastian paraphrases V.Y. Mudimbe's definition of a memory text as "a non-textual way of remembering, recording and communicating culture, history and identity." An expanded definition of record, as I later quote from Shannon Faulkhead, overlaps significantly with this term. Jeannette Bastian, "Reading Colonial Records Through an Archival Lens: The Provenance of Place, Space, and Creation," *Archival Science* 6 (2006): 276.

[7] This use of the terms documents and records is consistent with a records continuum approach whereby records are seen as "a special genre of documents in terms of their intent and functionality." Sue McKemmish, "Placing Records Continuum Theory and Practice," *Archival*

potential contributions of archival theory to the discussion about power and historical production, and challenge archival scholars to rethink their approach to records of human rights abuse in general and atrocity photographs in particular, acknowledging the potential of archivists to counter silences in the archivization and use of records.

This chapter begins by providing some brief historical background information on the Khmer Rouge. It then outlines the basic theoretical framework for the dissertation, drawing on three main bodies of theory: work in history and anthropology that interrogates the role of archives in producing history; work in anthropology and visual studies that examines the social life of material objects; and work within archival studies that explores and expands the concept of provenance. First, this chapter will address anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot's work on the ways in which silences are encoded in the creation of historical knowledge. Using Trouillot's theoretical approach, I will examine the relationship between power, archival sources, and the creation of historical narrative as it relates to the Khmer Rouge's use of records, the founding of DC-Cam, and the current uses of the documents today to spur individual and collective narratives. Next, drawing on work in anthropology, visual studies, and other fields which examines the social life of material objects, this chapter will discuss the Tuol Sleng mug shots as active agents which perform social duties as they travel through space and time. Thirdly, this chapter will address recent work in archival theory that re-conceptualizes notions of

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Science 1 (2001): 335. Furthermore, this dissertation also employs Sue McKemmish and Frank Upward's view of records as "inclusive of records of continuing value (archives), which stresses their uses for transactional, evidentiary and memory purposes, and which unifies approaches to archiving/recordkeeping whether records are kept for a split second or millennium." Frank Upward, "Structuring the Records Continuum Part I," *Archives and Manuscripts* 24:2 (1996): 275-6.

provenance to broadly conceive of societal actors as co-creators of records. After examining these theoretical considerations, this chapter will address methodological concerns, placing my work within a cultural studies context, describing the methods used for each chapter, and situating my own personal background within the context of this research. The chapter will then turn to the limitations of this research, and then briefly summarize the chapters to follow.

Background: The Khmer Rouge Regime and Its Elaborate Archive

From 1965 to 1973, the U.S. launched a massive bombing campaign in Cambodia in an effort to stop the spread of communism in Southeast Asia. More than half a million Cambodians were killed in this illegal military intervention. Over the course of these eight years, the U.S. dropped more tonnage of bombs on Cambodia than that dropped by the entire Allied Forces during World War II, making it possibly "the most heavily bombed country in history," according to new findings by historians Taylor Owen and Ben Kiernan.[8] Many Cambodians, terrified and outraged by the bombings, joined the Khmer Rouge, a radical Maoist regime engaged in a civil war with Cambodia's U.S.-backed Lon Nol regime.

With its numbers swelling, the Khmer Rouge gained significant ground, seizing control of the capitol city of Phnom Penh on April 17, 1975. From 1975 to 1979, the regime radically restructured Cambodian society, evacuating urban populations, enslaving people on rural farm communes, and abolishing private property and all educational, religious, and cultural institutions. The regime sought to obliterate all prior history in the hopes of ushering in a new era, free from colonial influence. With this goal in mind, they turned the Cambodian National

[8] Taylor Owen and Ben Kiernan, "Bombs Over Cambodia," *The Walrus* (October 2006): 67. Owen and Kiernan's study was based on recently released archival sources and corrects previous findings that the U.S. bombing of Cambodia began under President Nixon; In fact, they began under President Johnson and escalated under Nixon.

Library and Archives into a pigsty, declared it Year Zero, and outlawed all time-keeping devices. Society was divided up between new people—the formerly urban and or educated population, who were assigned to the hardest labor—and old or base people—former peasants who were appointed commune leaders. Over the next three years, eight months, and twenty days, roughly two million people—approximately 25% of the total population of Cambodia—died from execution, starvation, and disease.[9]

Cambodia served as a hotbed in which geopolitical disputes were enacted by larger foreign powers. While China and the Soviet Union were both communist, ideological differences and a disputed, shared border kept the two powers at odds with each other, to profound effect in Southeast Asia. The Khmer Rouge in Cambodia ideologically fashioned itself after Maoist China, maintaining close political and economic ties to that country, while the Viet Cong in Vietnam aligned themselves with the Soviets. Building on centuries of conflict between Cambodia and neighboring Vietnam, this rift meant that, while Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge and Vietnam under the Viet Cong were both communist, they were hostile enemies engaged in armed conflict for much of the Khmer Rouge period.

Marked by secrecy, the Khmer Rouge was said to be led by the mysterious faceless Angkar or "the organization," until September 1977, when Pol Pot publicly revealed himself to be the voice behind Angkar. French-educated, middle class, and well-connected to the royal family, Pol Pot was a far cry from the feudal peasant that his regime idealized.[10] Ruling with absolute authority and total consolidation of power, Pol Pot waged war with Vietnam and demanded unquestioning loyalty from his inner circle. He cultivated a culture of suspicion,

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[9] David Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991).

[10] Pol Pot's sister was a concubine of the King.

paranoia, and violence from the highest echelons of the Khmer Rouge on down. Throughout Pol Pot's rule, "purges" of anyone deemed suspicious, including in some cases entire villages, were commonplace.

The regime's secret internal police force, known as the Santebal (Khmer for "security police"), were obsessive record keepers, meticulously documenting orders, keeping detailed logbooks of torture sessions, compiling draft after draft of forced confession statements, and taking mug shots of prisoners. While the Santebal maintained 196 prisons throughout the country, Tuol Sleng Prison (also known as S-21), located in a former school in the evacuated city of Phnom Penh, served as its headquarters and central interrogation facility. The majority of the prisoners brought to Tuol Sleng were themselves Khmer Rouge members accused of treason including high-level officials, along with their families.[11] Under the direction of Kaing Guek Eav (most commonly known by his *nom de guerre*, Duch), workers in Tuol Sleng's Documentation Unit photographed prisoners eerily staring into the camera upon arrival as part of the registration process.[12] Prisoners were then tortured and forced into signing detailed confession statements listing their alleged crimes against the regime. All but 202 of these prisoners would be murdered—some at Tuol Sleng, but most killed at the nearby killing fields at Choeng Ek, where they were forced to dig their own shallow mass graves before being bludgeoned to death with the

[11] Documentation Center of Cambodia, *Factsheet: Pol Pot and His Prisoners at Secret Prison S-21* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2011).
[12] Ibid. Scholars estimate between 12,000 and 20,000 prisoners were processed at Tuol Sleng. It is unclear if not all prisoners were photographed or if thousands of mug shots were destroyed in the chaos preceding the Vietnamese invasion.

butts of guns and other instruments.[13] Their mug shots, 5,190 of which remain, provide the last trace of victims before their executions.

Today, more than three decades after the toppling of the regime, archivists at the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) are preserving, providing access to, and digitizing an extensive cache of Khmer Rouge records with the help of international training and funding. While original negatives of the S-21 mug shots are in the archives of what is now the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, the images have been copied (both digitally and through microfilm) and repurposed by other institutions and individuals throughout time, most notably by DC-Cam. DC-Cam maintains the world's largest collection of Khmer Rouge records, consisting of more than a million pages of documents, including detailed accounts of interrogations, photographs, forced confession statements, and high-level party directives. Since its founding in 1995 as a field office of the Cambodian Genocide Program at Yale, DC-Cam has launched numerous efforts to digitize, publish, and conduct outreach with Khmer Rouge records— including its copies of the S-21 mug shots— through its website, its newsletter *Searching for the Truth* and other publications, and display during public events. Though it is funded from international sources, DC-Cam is now a Cambodian-run organization; its Director, Youk Chhang, is a survivor of torture under the Khmer Rouge, while its 45-member staff is comprised of a younger generation of Cambodians, too young to directly remember the regime, but whose parents are survivors.[14]

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[13] While early reports listed the number of Tuol Sleng survivors at seven or eight, a recent DC-Cam publication clarifies that 179 prisoners were released and 23 survived the Vietnamese invasion. See Ibid.

[14] Youk Chhang admits to consciously hiring Cambodians too young to have personally experienced the regime in an attempt to shape a staff with some measure of emotional distance from the materials they collect. Youk Chhang, "Connecting the Broken Pieces After the Cambodian Genocide: Legacy as Memory of a Nation," UC Berkeley-UCLA Distinguished

DC-Cam is also providing most of the physical evidence being used in a joint Cambodia-United Nations Tribunal that is currently trying high-ranking Khmer Rouge officials for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and in some cases, genocide. Plagued by setbacks, diplomatic wrangling, and corruption allegations, the trial is the first time Khmer Rouge leaders have ever been brought to justice in a credible court of law and is a major milestone for reconciliation in the country.[15] Together with other archival records, mug shots play a prominent role in the trial, serving as both documentary evidence and visual aids that prompt survivors to give narrative testimony about their experiences during the Khmer Rouge regime.

Given the prevalence of these images in discussion about the Khmer Rouge, how are we to understand this ongoing impulse to save, reprint, and talk about these mug shots and why are there so many efforts to document their reuses? What is the focus of this mug shot-inspired discussion and what is missing from it? This chapter now turns to recent scholarship on historiography and power for some answers.

Archives, Voices and the Production of History

In the book *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, the anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot examines the relationship between power, archival sources, and the creation of historical knowledge. Walking a line between modernist historians who insist on the steadfast reliability of archival sources in determining the truth about the past and postmodern historians who claim that truth is merely a function of power, Trouillot simultaneously asserts

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Visitor from Southeast Asia Series, 2010, http://webcast.berkeley.edu/event_details.php?seriesid=dce46db2-c561-4e73-9e92-e3dab794ec1b.

[15] While the Vietnamese tried Khmer Rouge leaders in absentia, that trial is commonly dismissed as not complying with the standards of international law.

the importance of establishing historic facts and acknowledges the power relationships evident in their establishment. He posits that silences are encoded in historical production at four key moments: "the moment of fact creation (the making of *sources*); the moment of fact assembly (the making of *archives*); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of narratives); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of *history* in the final instance)."[16] In other words, not all events are recorded, not all records are incorporated into archives, not all archives are used to tell stories, not all stories are used to write history. Power is implicated in each of these moments.

While Trouillot acknowledges these four moments are not universally present in all instances of history-making,[17] they provide a concrete framework to "help us understand why not all silences are equal and why they cannot be addressed—or redressed—in the same manner."[18] At each stage, the silences are compounded; "…the combined silences accrued through the first three steps of the process of historical production intermesh and solidify at the fourth and final moment when retrospective significance itself is produced."[19] In this way, "any historical narrative is a particular bundle of silences," with silences reflecting specific instances of the assertion of power.[20] The four silences are "heuristic devices," exposing "when and where power gets into the story."[21] Following Trouillot's lead, these four moments of silence can be applied in

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[16] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 26. Postmodern archival theorists may bristle at Trouillot's emphasis on facts, instead asserting that archives are repositories of evidence, rather than free-floating facts.
[17] Indeed, they underestimate the importance of the oral tradition, performance, three-dimensional objects, and other memory texts not commonly found in mainstream archives.
[18] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 27.
[19] Ibid., 59
[20] Ibid., 27.
[21] Ibid., 28

examination of most historical narratives, and are particularly useful in deciphering meaning and power relationships in contested histories.

Trouillot begins by pointing out the ambiguity of the word "history" in English, which signifies "both the facts of the matter and a narrative of those facts, both 'what happened' and 'that which is said to have happened."[22] He writes, "the first meaning places the emphasis on the sociohistorical process, the second… on a story about that process."[23] He then refers to these as two meanings "historicity 1" and "historicity 2." Despite the ambiguity of the English word "history," there is a difference between the past (historicity 1), and the stories we tell about the past (historicity 2), as Trouillot clarifies. Applying this distinction to the history of Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, there is the socio-cultural process of Khmer Rouge rule, which happened in the past, and then there are the stories we tell about "Pol Pot Time" (as Cambodians call it), which are happening in the present.

In distinguishing between the past and the stories we tell about the past, Trouillot is simultaneously setting up the possibility of tests of credibility for past events (which either did or did not happen), and acknowledging that the stories we tell about those past events are determined by present circumstances. Here, he is positioned in a middle ground between the positivist and postmodern camps of historical inquiry, supporting both the positivist claim that the past is knowable (through use of the term "historicity 1"), and the postmodern claim that our stories about the past reflect present needs (through use of the term "historicity 2").

Trouillot's focus on the "production of history" builds on the work of scholars such as David William Cohen and David Lowenthal who examined the role of historians in producing narratives about the past. Cohen, in particular, coined "the production of history" to denote,

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[22] Ibid., 2.
[23] Ibid., *2*.

> [a] frame of reference that is intended here to augment the conventional senses of meaning of history and historiography [and]… refers to the processing of the past in societies and historical settings all over the world and the struggles for control of voices and texts in innumerable settings which animate this processing of the past.[24]

Cohen goes on to specify that inquiries into the production of history include the study of the sociology of history and historical commemoration, record-keeping practices, patterns of textual interpretation, and audience reception, among others. In this way, Trouillot emerges out of a larger enterprise within the academic field of history to question the ways in which history gets written and the way it is used in the present.

Furthermore, taking a lesson from Foucault, Trouillot acknowledges that power is intertwined in this high-stakes game; which stories get told, which get forgotten, and by whom, is inextricably linked to the power to tell and to remain silent. Power is not an external force that imposes itself on history and in so doing ruptures an objective inquiry, but is always part of the process of history making. "Power is constitutive of the story," Trouillot asserts.[25] It is there at each of the four moments, whether or not we acknowledge it. Addressing this intimate relationship between truth and power, Trouillot writes, "At some stage, for reasons that are themselves historical, most often spurred by controversy, collectivities experience the need to impose a test of credibility on certain events and narratives because it matters *to them* whether these events are true or false, whether these stories are fact or fiction."[26] In the Cambodian case, it matters—to survivors, to future generations of Cambodians, to the international community—if the stories about the deaths of nearly two million under the Khmer Rouge are fact or fiction.

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[24] David William Cohen, *The Combing of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 244.
[25] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 28
[26] Ibid., 11.

Furthermore, for Trouillot the truth about the past is ultimately knowable through tests of credibility.[27] He writes, "…as ambiguous and contingent as it is, the boundary between what happened and that which is said to have happened is necessary."[28] A steadfast belief in this boundary distinguishes Trouillot from constructivists, for whom he claims, "it does not really matter whether or not there were gas chambers, whether the death toll was one or six million, or whether the genocide was planned."[29] Here, Trouillot is clearly setting up Holocaust deniers as postmodern straw men, though his criticism extends to more respected historians as well. He has particularly harsh words for (what he interprets as) Hayden White's blurring of the boundaries between history and fiction, the line between which Trouillot asserts is clear and meaningful. As if to mock White's claims that history is as constructed as fiction, Trouillot asks, "But why bother with the Holocaust or plantation slavery, Pol Pot or the French Revolution, when we already have Little Red Riding Hood?"[30] Trouillot's point is clear; for him (and the rest of us) the truth about the past matters.

Yet Trouillot firmly detaches himself from the positivist stance by acknowledging the importance of the present in constructing our stories about the past. In this, he takes a relativist position to historical time. He writes, "…the past does not exist independently from the present. Indeed, the past is only past because there is a present, just as I can point to something *over there* because I am *here*…. The past—or, more accurately, pastness—is a position."[31] In this way, the past is referential to the present. While the stories we tell about the past can be factually credible or un-credible, they always reveal our present orientations.

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[27] Here, I argue, Trouillot is consist with the notion that archives are not repositories of truth, but rather provide evidence for or against truth claims, claims whose credibility can be judged.
[28] Ibid., 13.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid., 13.
[31] Ibid., 15.

By focusing on historicity, by seeing the past in relation to the present and the present in relation to the past, Trouillot moves beyond the gridlock between the modernist and postmodern camps, whom he both dismisses as extremist. "Any search for eternity condemns us to the impossible choice between fiction and positivist truth, between nihilism and fundamentalism, which are two sides of the same coin," he writes.[32] Rather than search for eternity, we are asked to examine the presence of the past in the present, to disclose the relationality between the two. Trouillot summarizes:

> Empirical exactitude as defined and verified in a specific context is necessary to historical production. But empirical exactitude alone is not enough. Historical representations—be they books, commercial exhibits, or public commemorations—cannot only be conceived only as vehicles for the transmission of knowledge. They must establish some relation to that knowledge.[33]

Facts can be established and falsehoods unearthed, but we should also examine how the tests of credibility we use to distinguish between the two are determined, to what aims, and who has power within that process. Here, records found in archives are not truths in and of themselves, but evidence in support of truth claims that are subject to tests of credibility.

Within this middle ground approach, Trouillot sets up a framework with which to trace how power gets encoded in the process of turning what happened in the past to stories about what happened in the past. Again, he draws on Cohen's discussion of the "complex moral and ethical" importance of silences, as if to respond to Cohen's assertion that "to take up the question of silence is at the same time to take up in a very specific way the general problem of how people handle and deploy knowledge."[34] Trouillot not only takes up the question of silences, but gives us a specific and concrete framework with which to trace them.

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[32] Ibid., 153.
[33] Ibid., 149.
[34] Cohen, *The Combing of History*, 247.

Trouillot's Four Silences as Framework

Trouillot's exploration of four moments of the encoding of silences (the making of sources, archives, narratives, and history) presents a particularly apt framework with which to examine the historiography of the Khmer Rouge. Using Trouillot's four moments of silence as a theoretical framework, this dissertation examines Tuol Sleng mug shots at the first three of these four moments: document creation (the moment of fact creation in Trouillot's terminology); archives creation (the moment of fact assembly); and narrative creation (the moment of fact retrieval). In each of these moments, silences are encoded and often compounded as the process of historical production progresses from fact creation to fact assembly to fact retrieval. As this dissertation posits, Trouillot's fourth moment, the making of history in the final instance, is as of now inapplicable as Cambodians are still grappling with historical production.

According to Trouillot, the moments in which documents are created are rife with silences; a small fraction of historical events ever get written down, a small fraction of voices are ever recorded, a small fraction of records are recognized as legitimate. These omissions and gaps create silences at fact creation, shaping the pool of available information that dictates the creation of facts about past occurrences. As a result, some voices are heard and some are silenced, some facts are created, while others languish in oblivion, unable to be proven with sufficient material evidence (according to dominant academic standards).

In light of Trouillot, a host of silences mark the Tuol Sleng mug shots at the moment of their creation. First, not every Khmer Rouge victim was processed through a prison system; the vast majority of the two million victims died from exhaustion, malnutrition, or untreated disease and not outright execution. Even most who were executed were killed in rural areas and not

processed in prisons. For these victims, the Khmer Rouge left no written record; bones serve as their only material trace. Furthermore, Tuol Sleng was only one of 196 Khmer Rouge prisons, yet a photographic documentation unit did not exist at the other sites, leaving no parallel set of mug shots at other locations. These instances are rife with silences in that no records are left behind, making the task of creating credible facts about these victims difficult. Without documentation, we simply do not have the evidence to be sure exactly how many people were tortured at Khmer Rouge prisons or how many people died in other ways during the regime; the best scholars can do is estimate based on forensic evidence (i.e. bones) and population projections. Furthermore, as the headquarters of the national prison system, Tuol Sleng disproportionately housed the elite of both pre-communist Cambodian society (professors, doctors, government officials) and the Khmer Rouge regime itself (commune leaders, high ranking officials). To focus solely on the iconic images from Tuol Sleng is to render silent all of the nameless victims who died in other ways.

But on top of the silences created by all of the victims who were not photographed at Tuol Sleng, is the overwhelming silence of the 5,190 Tuol Sleng victims whose mug shots we have. These mug shots are evidence of their silence. They stare at us, unable to fully voice the horrors they are about to experience. Photos are always mute, but in this case the silence is deafening.

In the second moment, the moment of fact assembly, Trouillot describes how, even when events are recorded, not all records are incorporated into archives. The inclusion of some records in the archives at the expense of others effectively silences those voices deemed unworthy of historical attention. For the Tuol Sleng mug shots, the gap between the estimated 20,000 prisoners photographed and the 5,190 mug shots that exist today in archives represents a silence

of some 15,000 Tuol Sleng victims whose faces we do not know, for whose deaths we do not have evidence. Yet, as I explore more fully in Chapter Three, these silences do not result from powerful archival appraisal decisions (indeed archivists have launched an active campaign to recover the missing mug shots), but rather the destruction of records in the chaos of the aftermath of civil war. And yet the effect is the same; for those Tuol Sleng victims for whom we do not have records, our histories remain silent, our facts about their lives not yet assembled.

At the third moment, the moment of fact retrieval, Trouillot posits that another layer of silencing happens during the creation of narratives, in that only certain archival records get used to tell stories about the past. As Chapter Four details, Tuol Sleng mug shots are now being used as powerful catalysts—"touchstones" in the language of recent archival theory—to spark memories and stories about the regime.[35] Yet many mug shots remain unidentified, the full weight of their evidence unexamined, their facts un-retrieved, the stories of those depicted conspicuously absent from our narratives. These silences result from many factors; perhaps all the people who could identify those portrayed in the mug shots were themselves killed by the Khmer Rouge, perhaps they simply do not have access to the mug shots, perhaps they don't want the stories of their loved ones publically told. Regardless of these reasons, the voices of those unidentified victims in the mug shots remain unheard, effectively silenced from our stories about the regime. Furthermore, when we focus on a few of these iconic images (that of Hout Bophana or Chan Kim Srun, for example) which are reproduced time and time again at the expense of others, we inadvertently silence the other victims, demanding these icons stand in for all the Tuol Sleng victims, despite the singularity of their stories.

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[35] Laura Millar, "Touchstones: Considering the Relationship Between Memory and Archives," *Archivaria* 61 (Spring 2006): 105-126.

Yet, despite this complex layering of silences, I argue that some of the silences encoded in these photographs at the moment of their creation are not perpetuated at the moment they are assembled into archives, nor at the moment they are used to create narratives. Indeed, one archival institution (DC-Cam), is ensuring that such silences are not perpetuated in the creation of archives by both using traces of the past for new purposes and creating new sources which reassert agency in the making of both archives and narratives about the regime. By digitizing and preserving the mug shots, documenting the act of bearing witness to them, and then preserving these witness-bearing records, DC-Cam is inserting the voices of survivors and victims' family members into the moments of fact assembly and fact retrieval. In this way, DC-Cam is making sure that, in words of Trouillot, the silences encoded at "the moment of fact creation" are not reiterated in "the moment of fact assembly."[36]

By using records to reunite disparate information, hold mass murderers accountable, and memorialize the dead, archivists and survivors are, in the language of Trouillot, retrieving facts in ways unimaginable—and subversive of—the aims of those who created the original sources. These reuses of the past reflect the ever-changing needs of the present; in this case, archivization is fulfilling the contemporary goals of identification, accountability, and memorialization. In each of the examined reuses of the mug shots we can employ Trouillot's framework to examine how archives can give voice to silences previously encoded at the creation of the documents in their collections.

Trouillot in the Records Continuum

[36] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*.

Yet while Trouillot recognizes the importance of archival labor in the process of historical production, records managers and archivists have developed more complex models to describe what Trouillot terms the making of sources, archives, and narratives. Indeed, in its traditional Western conception, the making of archives involves a whole host of functions (such as appraisal, arrangement, description, and preservation) that are not addressed by Trouillot. Furthermore, archival theorists rooted in postmodernism and deconstructionism would rightfully bristle at Trouillot's demarcation between archivists as fact assemblers and archival users as narrative creators, instead arguing that archivists themselves are storytellers and that archival functions inherently involve elements of narrative creation.[37] The records continuum model, first developed in Australia by Frank Upward and Sue McKemmish, provides an alternative to Trouillot's approach that is firmly rooted in archival theory and practice.[38] Influenced by Anthony Giddens's work on space and time distanciation, the continuum proposes a multidimensional model of concentric circles through which documents are *created* as the byproduct of activity, *captured* as evidence (disembedded from their creation and extracted into systems that allow them to be used), *organized* into personal or institutional archives as memory (migrated into systems which allow their use across an organization), and *pluralized* as collective memory (migrated into systems which allow their use across society).[39] The focus in this model is on records as evidence of human activity. As McKemmish summarizes:

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[37] As Wend Duff and Verne Harris argue, for example, archival description "is always storytelling—intertwining facts with narratives, observation with interpretation." Wendy Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 276.

[38] The continuum model represents a radical shift from the previously predominant records life cycle model.

[39] Frank Upward, "Modelling the Continuum as Paradigm Shift in Recordkeeping and Archiving Processes and Beyond," *Records Management Journal* (December 2000): unpaginated.

> From a continuum perspective, recordkeeping and archiving processes fix documents which are created in the context of social and organizational activity, i.e. human interactions of all kinds, and preserve them as evidence of that activity by disembedding them from their immediate context of creation, and providing them with ever broadening layers of contextual metadata.[40]

The continuum model is characterized by the dynamic and transformative nature of records and recordkeeping within multiple and interacting dimensions such that, "In continuum terms, while a record's content and structure can be seen as fixed, in terms of its contextualization, a record is 'always in a process of becoming.'"[41] In this view, the archives is not a stable entity to be tapped for facts, but rather, a constantly shifting process of re-contextualization.

In the continuum approach, Khmer Rouge mug shots are: 1) "documents-as trace" created by the Tuol Sleng staff as documentary traces of the act of photographing inmates; 2) "records as evidence" captured within the context of incarceration ; 3) records-as-evidence organized within the Tuol Sleng bureaucratic apparatus; and 4) records-as-collective memory pluralized such that they are used by survivors and victims' family members.[42] The many contemporary reuses of the mug shots add layers of contextual metadata to them as the originals are repurposed and pluralized through space and time.

Trouillot's approach and the record continuum model differ significantly in several key areas. Trouillot writes about sources, while the continuum model addresses documents and records. Trouillot's ultimate concern is with the production of history, while the continuum model is concerned with the transmission of evidence through time and space. Trouillot is

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[40] Sue McKemmish, "Placing Records Continuum Theory and Practice," *Archival Science* 1 (2001): 336.
[41] Ibid., 335.
[42] This conceptualization relies on that described in both Sue McKemmish, Ibid. 352 and Sue McKemmish, "Teaching Recordkeeping and Archiving Continuum Style," *Archival Science* 6 (2006): 223. The records do not move through the continuum in a linear, stage-like fashion, but rather co-exist in multiple spaces and times within the continuum.

concerned with the credibility of facts as knowable through sources, while Upward is concerned with evidence rather than information or truth. While Trouillot's approach is linear (silences move progressively through four moments of silence), the continuum model is multidimensional, interactive, and circular. Trouillot sees history as having a *final* instance, whereas Upward and McKemmish stress the endless layering and contextualization of records. Yet despite these differences, the two approaches have much to add to this dissertation's exploration of Tuol Sleng mug shots. Although I find Trouillot's framework more useful in which to trace issues of silence and agency in the Tuol Sleng mug shots, I return repeatedly to the continuum model's insistence on the layered contextualization of records, placing them in motion in a constant state of becoming rather than in final disposition in the archives.[43]

The Social Life of Images

Complementing Trouillot's four moments of silencing and the records continuum model, the next theoretical framework this dissertation employs is the social life of material objects. This approach spans the fields of anthropology, science and technology studies, cultural studies, and library and information studies and includes the work of scholars such as Arjun Appadurai (anthroplogy), Bruno Latour (STS), W.J.T. Mitchell (cultural studies), Gillian Rose (geography), Geoffrey Bowker (LIS), and Eric Ketelaar (archival studies).[44] By examining Khmer Rouge mug

[43] By contrast, the records life cycle model commonly used in records management posits distinct stages through which a record moves from creation to use, to storage to disposition. In this view, these records are in a state of final disposition once their original function was fulfilled and they were deposited in an archival institution, a position against which this dissertation argues.

[44] Other scholars who have explored the social life of material objects are John Seely Brown and Paul Duguid from science and technology studies. "The Social Life of Documents," *First Monday* 1:1 (1996), http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/466/387.

shots as objects with a social life, this dissertation traces transformations in the format, uses, and meaning of these photographs through space and time.

Scholarly work from a range of disciplines has taken a turn for the material over the past twenty-five years. Arjun Appadurai's groundbreaking edited volume *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, first published in 1986, heralded the new era of the object in anthropology and history. In his introduction, Appadurai contends that "commodities, like persons, have social lives." Furthermore not only do material objects have a social life, but also a "cultural biography," "a career," "a life history" and a "trajectory."[45] In this focus on material items, Appadurai shifts the methodological attention away from people and towards objects. He encourages scholars to "follow the thing" and writes, "even though from a *theoretical* point of view human actors encode things with significance, from a methodological point of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context."[46] Adding to Appadurai's proposal to write biographies of things, in that same volume, another contributor, Igor Kopytoff, provides some concrete questions that this new scholarship might investigate. Kopytoff encourages us to ask:

> Where does the thing come from and who made it? What has been its career so far, and what do people consider to be an ideal career for such things? What are the recognized "ages" or periods in the thing's "life" and what are the cultural markers for them? How does the thing's use change with its age…?[47]

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[45] Arjun Appadurai, ed. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). Other work has since stressed the co-modification and exchange value of material objects as they move through this trajectory. See Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).
[46] Appadurai, ibid., 5.
[47] Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as a Process," in Arjun Appadurai, ed. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 66-67.

Such questions belie both a theoretical framework (that objects are imbued with certain power) and a methodological framework (that we can ask certain types of questions to uncover that power).

Scholars in visual culture have since refined Appadurai's approach, turning attention to visual "things" in particular. In the 2007 edition of her book *Visual Methodologies*, geographer Gillian Rose describes how Appadurai's anthropological approach, which she terms "directly observing the social life of visual objects," stems from anthropology's recent turn toward the exchange of material objects and the social relationships produced by such exchanges.[48] Yet, unlike Appadurai, Rose's focus is not just on any kind of object, but *visual* objects. She asks, "What happens if… we start to think of visual materials less as texts to be decoded for their meaning, and more as objects with which things are done?"[49] Narrowing the focus of Kopytoff"s methodological questions, Rose then outlines three key elements of this approach: materiality, or how images "look and feel" within particular places and times; performativity, or how images are activated by and/or interact with people, what Rose also calls "the co-constitution of image and observer;" and mobility, or how images are recontextualized and reimagined as they travel.[50] These three themes—materiality, performativity, and mobility—provide theoretical and methodological guideposts throughout this dissertation.

Similarly, historian and anthropologist Elizabeth Edwards interrogates the performative nature of photographs, particularly those on display in anthropological museums. She asks, "Do

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[48] This exploration is absent from the first edition of this book. Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials* (London: Sage, 2007), 216.
[49] Ibid., 217. Another example of Appadurai's social life of images approach as applied to photographs is detailed in Christopher Pinney, *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997).
[50] Rose, *Visual Methodologies*, 220.

photographs have their *own agency*…? If there are performative qualities in photographs, where do they lie? In the thing itself? In its making? In its content?"[51] She then provides several case studies that illustrate how photographs perform in all of these contexts—their materiality, their creation, their reception, and their transcendence of time and space. Central to Edwards's claims is that photographs are agents who not only embody, but enact or perform certain meanings for their viewers. She writes, "Like the social saliency of the material object, active agency implies a level of performance, projection, and engagement on the part of the object. In the idea of performance… is implied a presentation that constitutes a performative or persuasive act."[52] The spoken words surrounding images—that "people talk about photographs, with photographs, and to photographs,"—is central to their performativity for Edwards.[53] Here, we are introduced to the possibility of photographs, through their creation, content, and ever-shifting reception, performing in service of political or social goals.

Adding to Rose and Edward's treatment of photographs as agents, is the work of cultural theorist W.J.T. Mitchell. Building on a career exploring the magical power of iconography, in 2005 Mitchell invited us to think as if photographs had desires. "What do pictures want?" he asks in a book of that same title.[54] "Magical attitudes" towards images proliferate, Mitchell insists, reminding us that pictures are imbued with an unprecedented power, despite (or maybe because of) their mutability through media.[55] Furthering Rose's discussion of materiality, Mitchell makes a crucial distinction between images, objects, and media. An image is "any

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[51] Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology*, *Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 5.
[52] Ibid., 17.
[53] Ibid., 21.
[54] W.J.T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?: The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
[55] Ibid., 8.

likeness, figure, motif or form that appears in some medium," an object is "the material support in or on which an image appears," and a medium is "the set of material practices that brings an image together with an object to produce a picture."[56] Together, images, object, and media form pictures, "complex assemblages of virtual, material, and symbolic elements."[57] Mitchell's distinction between images, object, and media is crucial as this dissertation examines the transformation of Khmer Rouge mug shots through several different incarnations, the images persisting as the object, media, and meaning change. In this way, this research accepts Mitchell's invitation to understand pictures "as complex assemblages," comprised of layers of meaning, that transform as they take on different formats across space and time.[58]

Yet for Mitchell, pictures not only have a social life, but are so much like "living organisms" that they have desires as well. It is "not just what they mean or do," but what "claim they make upon us, and how are we to respond," that interests Mitchell.[59] When pressed, Mitchell asserts that though he really does not believe that images want things, he invites us to play along in the "thought experiment" of asking the question of what they want (even if it seems "impossible to begin with") because "we cannot ignore that human beings… insist on talking and behaving as if they *did* believe" that pictures had wants.[60] However, Mitchell also plays on the double meaning of "want," asking not only what pictures desire, but what they *want for*, as well. He asks:

> What does this picture lack; what does it leave out? What is its area of erasure? Its blind spot? Its anamorphic blur? What does the frame or boundary exclude? What does its

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[56] Ibid., xiiv.
[57] Ibid., xiii.
[58] Here, in its insistence on layering through space and time, Mitchell's assemblage approach echoes the records continuum model.
[59] Ibid., xv.
[60] Ibid., 11.

> angle of representation prevent us from seeing and prevent it from showing? What does it need or demand from the beholder to complete its work?[61]

For Mitchell, images are simultaneously powerful and powerfully incomplete. Furthermore, one of the things pictures lack, in Mitchell's view, is a voice. Speaking of a particular piece of art, Mitchell writes, "above all, it wants to be *heard*—an impossibility for the silent, still image."[62] It is up to us, the human viewers, to "break [their] silence, making [them] speak and resonate" with our own concerns.[63]

Though not explicitly identified as such, this social life of objects approach has also filtered down to archival studies, most notably in the records continuum model previously addressed and the work of Eric Ketelaar.[64] Influenced by postmodernism and continuum thinking (though not a continuum theorist *per se*), Ketelaar sees records as dynamic objects in motion, continually shifting with each new use and contextualization. He traces the changing ways in which archival records are used to construct meaning and posits that archival records are "activated" with each use. For Ketelaar, such activations then become part of the records' "semantic genealogy," influencing all future activations of the record. He writes:

> Every activation of the archive not only adds a branch to what I propose to call the semantic genealogy of the record and the archive. Every activation also changes the significance of earlier activations…. Current uses of these records affect retrospectively all earlier meanings, or to put it differently: we can no longer read the record as our predecessors have read that record.[65]

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[61] Ibid., 49-50.
[62] Ibid., 45.
[63] Ibid., 27. Another related trajectory of this approach from science and technology studies is Brunto Latour's Actor Network Theory. Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
[64] Despite sharing the word "life," the social life of objects approach, when placed within the framework of existing archival theory, is not necessarily bound to the records life cycle model, but can be used to describe records within the continuum as well.
[65] Eric Ketelaar, "Tacit Narratives: The Meaning of Archives," *Archival Science* 1:2 (2001): 138.

Resonating with the work of Appadurai, Latour, and Upward, Ketelaar's focus is on the record moving through space and time, influencing human behavior and culture, and being transformed along the way.

Ketelaar's conception of the activation of records is particularly useful here; each use, each moment of meaning construction, constitutes archival activation. Ketelaar writes, "Every interaction, intervention, interrogation, and interpretation by creator, user, and archivist is an activation of the record. The archive is an infinite activation of the record. Each activation leaves fingerprints which are attributes to the archive's infinite meaning."[66] In this way, Ketelaar maintains a focus on records as a lens through which to examine the meanings people place on them. He writes:

> Each activation leaves fingerprints that are attributes to the archive's infinite meaning. The archive is therefore not static, but a dynamic open-ended process. All these activations are acts of cultivation determining the record's meaning…. Each activation is also a (symbolic) appropriation: using the records for one's own purposes and finding one's own meaning in it.[67]

Yet Ketelaar chides against assigning a singular or definitive interpretation of a record. He describes that archival records can be read in two different ways: the objectivist interpretation or "the meaning *of* the record"; and the subjectivist interpretation, or "the meaning *for* someone or *for* an occasion."[68] He then places himself decidedly in the subjectivist camp. According to Ketelaar, the subjectivist approach acknowledges that "any researcher, by assigning a meaning to a record, can find uses for that record (or vice versa, finding a use by assigning a meaning) that

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[66] Ketelaar, "Tacit Narratives,"137.
[67] Eric Ketelaar, "Cultivating Archives: Meanings and Identities," *Archival Science*, Published online 22 June 2011, unpaginated.
[68] Ibid.

no creator, collector, or curator ever imagined…. The record is thus awaiting and standing-in for the meanings people find in or for it."[69] He writes:

> The record is full of meanings. The author has given it a meaning…. Yet, by the very act of authoring/ writing, they have relinquished their controlling presence…. This allows the recipient(s) to assign a meaning or meanings to the document. They do so while reading it, but also by using and storing the record in a particular context.[70]

Furthermore, Ketelaar's emphasis on the multiplicity of meanings shifts the focus to the contexts in which archival records are used. He writes, "once we no longer assume that there is only one… meaning…, but many,… we can try to find these multiple meanings by interrogating not only the administrative context, but also the social, cultural, political, religious contexts of record creation, maintenance, and use—in other words, by interrogating the archive's semantic genealogy."[71] In this way, Ketelaar's semantic genealogy approach is an archival response to Appadurai and Latour, allowing us to trace the archival record as a material object with agency through a network of human actions, interpretations, and activations.

Taking Ketelaar's lead, this dissertation (particularly Chapters Three and Four) follows several activations of the Tuol Sleng mug shots, showing how they are used to construct meaning for particular groups of people (the international community, Khmer Rouge survivors, the family members of Tuol Sleng victims) at particular times (the tribunal, the retrospective shaping of collective memory thirty years after the regime) in particular realms (legal, political, cultural, economic, and religious). These activations of the mug shots influence all future activations, such that our future readings of them are inherently bound to their current and past activations; knowing that they have been used as legal evidence in the tribunal, or to help the family members of victims achieve closure through identification and religious ritual, or are being used

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[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ketelaar, "Tacit Narratives," 141.

as part of the marketing materials through which Tuol Sleng survivors are literally selling their stories, we can not read the mug shots in the same way again. Through the infinite archive of their future reuses, the Tuol Sleng mug shots are always in the process of becoming.

Adding to this theoretical discussion of the social life of objects, images, and archival records, is the exploration of the transformation of these "things" from the material realm to the digital realm. Here Geoffrey Bowker's work on memory, time, and information infrastructure proves helpful. Bowker asserts both that objects are transformed by migration into new formats and that these migrations represent deliberate choices made in the present for future use.[72] Furthermore, such migration poses significant ethical and political challenges, as Bowker's work with Susan Leigh Star reminds us. Bowker and Star suggest we read the information infrastructures that enable such digitization "both discursively and materially," as a "site of political and ethical as well as technical work."[73] In this way, digitization of paper records is not a value-neutral activity, but rather one with significant political and ethical consequences. Echoing Mitchell, Bowker and Star remind us that the picture lives on while the medium changes; we can continue to trace the social life of the images despite the absence of the material object enabled by digitization.

Given that Khmer Rouge mug shots are simultaneously material objects, visual images, digital objects, and records, all of these approaches to the social life of inanimate objects apply. While this dissertation only touches on the Tuol Sleng mug shots as commodities in the anthropological sense, it traces their careers, biographies, and trajectories as material objects, as Appadurai prescribes. As Appadurai and Latour would concur, these inanimate objects are

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[72] Geoffrey C. Bowker, *Memory Practices in the Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2005).
[73] Geoffrey C. Bowker and Susan Leigh Star, *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999).

actors in a complex network of social relations. At the same time, Rose's and Mitchell's expansion of Appadurai's framework to apply not just to material objects but pictures embedded *in* material objects is most helpful in this exploration. Here, Ketelaar's focus on the activation of archival records and the ways in which such activation transforms the semantic genealogy of the record is useful; as Tuol Sleng mug shots travel through various material formats, their meanings are irrevocably changed. Yet, following Bowker's lead, records are not always embedded in the material but can cross space and time through the digital realm as well. By bringing together each of these seemingly disparate theorists, this dissertation can trace the social life of these mug shots in a way which fully reflects their simultaneous status as material objects, pictures expressed in varying formats, inanimate actors, digital files, and records.

Societal Provenance, Co-Creatorship, and Archival Whispers

At the same time, this dissertation contributes to an ongoing discussion within archival theory about the concept of provenance, the notion of co-creatorship, and the possibility of reading archival sources "against the grain" in order to uncover the voices of those previously silenced. In this way, the question of who has ownership of and gets to speak through the reuses of this particular collection of photographs has larger implications for archival theory and practice.

Provenance (and its namesake principle) is a central theoretical and practical tenet in archival studies; indeed, some archivists like Peter Horsman have erroneously declared it to be "the only principle of archival theory."[74] Within the mainstream Western archival tradition,

[74] Peter Horsman, "Taming the Elephant: An Orthodox Approach to the Principle of Provenance," in *The Principle of Provenance: Report from the First Stockholm Conference on the Principle of Provenance*, September 2-3, 1993. Stockholm: Swedish National Archives. As

provenance has been defined as, "the origin or source of something," or "information regarding the origins, custody, and ownership of an item or collection."[75] The principle of provenance traditionally prescribes both that records made by different creators be kept separately, and that their original order is maintained. By this narrow reading of the concept, the provenance of Khmer Rouge records can be traced back solely to the regime that created them; the Tuol Sleng mug shots are the work of one or perhaps a few Khmer Rouge photographers, fixing their provenance to the settled, finished, and finite functions of a singular bureaucratic agency which existed in a particular place (Tuol Sleng prison) and date range (1975-1978). In this configuration, the Tuol Sleng mug shots are government records, whose custody (and potential use) can be confined to the current government of Cambodia as the successor state to the Khmer Rouge, under the doctrine of inalienability.[76]

However, this traditional conception of provenance has been challenged on several fronts within archival studies over the past two decades. This new re-conception of provenance views it not merely as an "organizing principle" or a "physical and intellectual construct," but a "sociohistorical context," in the words of Jennifer Douglas.[77] Tom Nesmith, for example, defines provenance as "the social and technical processes of the records' inscription, transmission, contextualization, and interpretation, which account for its existence, characteristics, and

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quoted in Jennifer Douglas, "Origins: Evolving Ideas about the Principle of Provenance," in *Currents of Archival Thinking*, Terry Eastwood and Heather MacNeil, eds. (Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2010), 23-43.

[75] "Provenance," *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*, Society of American Archivists, http://www.archivists.org/glossary/term_details.asp?DefinitionKey=196.

[76] The archival principle of inalienability posits that records generated by state or governmental institutions rightfully should be placed in the custody of state-operated or governmental archives.

[77] Douglas, "Origins," 23-43.

continuing history."[78] In this new re-conceptualization, provenance is an ever-changing, infinitely evolving process of recontextualization, encompassing not only the initial creators of the records, but the subjects of the records themselves; the archivists who acquired, described, and digitized them (among other interventions); and the users who constantly reinterpret them. Similarly, Laura Millar, who is influenced by archaeology and museum studies' much broader approach to provenance, posits that archival conceptions of provenance should include creator history or "the story of who created, accumulated, and used the records over time;" records history or "the story of the physical management and movement of the records over time;" and custodial history, "the explanation of the transfer of ownership or custody of the records from the creator or custodian to the archival institution and the subsequent care of those records."[79] In this estimation, archivists and users are active participants in the provenance of records, and are therefore important stakeholders in their custody, mediation and uses. Provenance is not only about the past, but the future of the records as well; Like Ketalaar's semantic genealogy, this postmodern approach to provenance "opens out into the future" by including all possible potential activations in its scope.

Furthermore, many of these recent reinterpretations open provenance up to broader community-based configurations. Joel Wurl, for example, has posited that, in the context of a multicultural society, ethnicity, rather than origin in an organization or governmental agency, forms a meaningful basis on which to trace provenance.[80] He challenges archivists to "widen [their] understanding of provenance to encompass entities not conveniently bounded by the walls

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[78] Tom Nesmith, "Still Fuzzy But More Accurate: Some Thoughts on the 'Ghosts' of Archival Theory," *Archivaria* 47 (1999): 146.
[79] Laura Millar, "The Death of the Fonds and the Resurrection of Provenance: Archival Context in Space and Time," *Archivaria* 53 (2002): 1-15.
[80] Joel Wurl, "Ethnicity as Provenance: In Search of Values and Principles Documenting the Immigrant Experience," *Archival Issues* 29:1 (2005).

of a government agency, set of business bylaws, or a household," and posits that, "human beings operate in collective fashion and develop collective identities that, while perhaps more complex and not so neatly contained as the more distinct organizational or familial entities, are nonetheless corporate and corporeal."[81] Similarly, Jeannette Bastian has urged archivists to expand the scope of provenance to include subjects of records and not just their creators—an arrangement that, in Bastian's case study, balances custody of colonial records between postcolonial nations and their former colonial rulers.[82] Bastian also argues that all of these stakeholders become part of a "community of records," which she defines as "the aggregate of records in all forms generated by multiple layers of actions and interactions between and among the people and institutions within a community."[83] For Bastian, provenance and community are intertwined, such that "the content, context and structure of record creation [are] inextricably bound together in a vision of provenance and community that seeks, weighs, and accommodates all the voices of a society."[84] In Bastian's expansive interpretation, provenance becomes a tool for community inclusion, rather than one of limitation, for hearing the voices of those previously silenced, rather than amplifying the voices of the powerful.

In most cases, these reinterpretations of provenance collapse previous distinctions between the creator and subject of records, so that both become co-creators of the record. As Millar describes, "the intellectual reality of provenance and the physical reality of the records have become so intertwined over time that the essential distinction between the creator and the

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[81] Ibid., 67.
[82] Jeannette Bastian, *Owning Memory: How a Caribbean Community Lost Its Archives and Found Its History* (Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2003).
[83] Ibid., 5.
[84] Jeannette Bastian, "Reading Colonial Records Through an Archival Lens: The Provenance of Place, Space, and Creation," *Archival Science* 6 (2006): 269.

created has been lost."[85] Central to this discussion is the definition not just of provenance, but of creatorship. Recently, a host of Australian archival theorists, influenced by indigenous Australian philosophies, have posited that, not only should records' subjects be included in provenance, but that the subjects of records themselves should be seen as co-creators. Writing about the records of Australian colonization, theorist Chris Hurley has described a "parallel provenance," that is, two differing claims to the origins of records—one provenance tracing records back to the colonizers who created the records, and one provenance tracing the records back to the colonized subjects of them, resulting from diverging conceptions of creatorship.[86] Building on Hurley's work, Livia Iacovino advocates for a participant model of provenance, whereby all participants in the creation of records are deemed co-creators, and as such enter into a relationship marked by a series of rights and responsibilities, with important implications for ownership, access, and privacy.[87] Bastian echoes the idea of co-creatorship when she writes:

> To a large extent, the content defines the records. Without the enslaved, there would have been no need for slave lists, without a population, there would be no need for a census. In these instances, the structure of the record is directly dependent on its content…. At the same time, the official creator of the record does not fully represent its context…. The full story is not told unless the [human] cargo has a voice and the population speaks.[88]

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[85] Millar, "The Death of the Fonds," 2.
[86] Hurley defines parallel provenance as "the coterminous generation of the same thing in the same way at the same time." However, I would add that in many contentious examples, particularly those involving disputes over the physical custody of records, the provenance is not parallel, but on a collision course. Chris Hurley, "Parallel Provenance," http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/research/groups/rcrg/publications/parallel-provenance-combined.pdf, 10. See also: Chris Hurley, "Parallel Provenance: What If Anything Is Archival Description?" *Archives and Manuscripts* 33:1 (2005): 110–145.
[87] Livia Iacovino, "Rethinking Archival, Ethical and Legal Frameworks for Records of Indigenous Australian Communities: A Participant Relationship Model of Rights and Responsibilities," *Archival Science* 10 (2010): 353-372.
[88] Bastian, "Reading Colonial Records Through an Archival Lens," 283.

Thus, in this conception, not only should provenance be expanded to include the society from which the records emerge(d), but the notion of creatorship is expanded to include the subjects of records.

In light of these radical re-conceptualizations of provenance and creatorship, the archivists and users of the Tuol Sleng mug shots would not only become part of their evolving provenance, but the subjects of the Tuol Sleng mug shots would become co-creators of the records. These two points have important implications for our attempts to hear their voices through the silence of the photographs. Writing about attempts to uncover the voices of the colonized within records created by colonizers, Bastian writes that by extending the notion of provenance to include the societal context of records creation, "the voiceless population is not the silent witness but a full partner in the record-creating process."[89] Given the active participation of the colonized in records creation, Bastian advocates that archival users "read against the grain" of the archives to uncover the voices of those previously marginalized so that we may find "the whispers of the colonized in the records of the colonizers."[90] While the Khmer Rouge context is not literally one of colonizer and colonized, the power differential between Tuol Sleng staff and prisoners was such that parallels can be drawn in this context. Like the colonizers' records of the colonized Bastian addresses, the Khmer Rouge records of prisoners are rife with the silences of the marginalized. Yet, what do we stand to gain by envisioning the Tuol Sleng victims as co-creators of the mug shots? Does seeing Tuol Sleng victims as co-creators project a false sense of agency on those photographed, prisoners who clearly had no choice in the situation? Is there a way that we can uncover the voices of the victims in these mug shots? To

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[89] Jeannette Bastian, "Whispers in the Archives: Finding the Voices of the Colonized in the Records of the Colonizer," in *Political Pressure and the Archival Record*, Margaret Procter et al eds., (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005), 41.
[90] Ibid.

restate postcolonial theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's famous question, can the subaltern speak to us?[91] Returning to Bastian's example, can the human cargo, long dead, ever have a voice through records they did not author?

In the vein of postmodern archival theory, this dissertation posits that, though we may never be able to uncover the whispers of the Tuol Sleng victims through the deafening silence of their photographs, we *can* (and should) hear the voices of Khmer Rouge survivors and the victims' family members who use the records and form an integral part of their provenance. Again, we must stretch the focus of provenance from the past (the dead victims depicted in the mug shots) to the future (the few Tuol Sleng survivors and the surviving family members of the victims who activate the records through reuse). By expanding our conception of provenance to include these active participants in the ongoing and constantly shifting "community of records" formed around the mug shots, we can hear, not the whispers of the victims, but the voices of witnesses. Through their varied use of the Tuol Sleng mug shots and the creation of new records which document this use, archivists, survivors of the regime, and victims' family members are constructing a complexly layered archive, adding a narrative of witnessing and memorialization over the silences of the original records. These new narratives form part of the provenance of these records, making the archivists, survivors of the regime, and victims' family members co-creators in an ongoing process of remembering the victims of the regime. Reframing provenance to acknowledge the unique political, economic, social, and cultural contexts of post-Khmer

[91] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" as reprinted in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, Bill Ashcroft et al, eds., (New York: Routledge, 1995), 28-37.

Rouge Cambodia, we can begin to develop a pluralist approach to archives which can accommodate the diversity of memory keeping practices in societies around the world.[92]

This dissertation's approach to the archive as infinite and ongoing complicates Trouillot's four silences in some important ways. While Trouillot sees history as a final product that is produced by the movement of facts through four distinct moments, I see history as an amorphous, ever-evolving entity that, like the records themselves, is not and can never be made in the final instance. In this reinterpretation, Trouillot's four moments of silencing are not linear, but simultaneous, as new records, archives, and narratives are constantly being made through the reuse and reinterpretation of records, with each newly created record "opening out into the future" for other unanticipated uses.

Silences and Agency as Complementary Approaches Within Archival Studies

Yet while the archive is infinite, this dissertation is (thankfully) not. As such, it uses these diverse theoretical approaches as complementary and imperfect heuristic devices. By following documents from the moment of their creation to their subsequent incorporation into archives and deployment in the construction of narratives, I am able to track both silence and agency throughout the record's many uses in a way that is manageable, organized, and finite. In this way, the four moments during which silences are encoded in history (as described by Trouillot),

[92] Archival scholars (including myself) have referred to this as the "archival multiverse." The Archival Education and Research Institute Pluralizing the Archival Curriculum Group, "Educating for the Archival Multiverse," *American Archivist* 74:1 (2011): 69-101. By opening archival theory to include Cambodian ways of using archival records, this dissertation heeds the call of Anne Gilliland et al to make the archival paradigm "more inclusive and less in danger of becoming a hegemonic or even neocolonial force." Anne Gilliland, Sue McKemmish, Kelvin White, Yang Lu, Andrew J Lau, "Pluralizing the Archival Paradigm: Can Archival Education in Pacific Rim Communities Address the Challenge?" *American Archivist* 71:1 (2008): 87.

correspond to key moments in the social life of records under Trouillot's framework, namely their creation, archivization, deployment for the formation of narratives, and deployment for the writing of history. Here, silence and agency are two sides of the same coin; the archived mug shots being used to spark narratives are agents with a social life, yet complex layers of silences (of those victims not recorded, those records not archived, those archives not used) are encoded in each moment within this social life. Employing multiple theoretical frameworks (silences in the production of history, the records continuum, and the social life of objects) allows us to explore the Tuol Sleng mug shots as the embodiment of a series of contradictions: presence and absence, voice and silence, agency and victimhood.

Existing within these contradictions, this dissertation is firmly positioned within the emerging field of archival studies. Through deconstructing the genealogy of these archival records and their reuses, this dissertation exposes both how records transform social contexts and are in turn, transformed with each use as their formats change over time. As Appadurai, Rose, and Ketelaar would concur, these changes contribute to the social meaning of the records. Knowing that the mug shots have a complicated colonial prehistory, that they were exhibited and viewed as art at MoMA, and that they are being used to identify and memorialize victims and prosecute former Khmer Rouge officials, we can no longer view the records in the same way again. These uses are now part of the social context of the record, its "semantic genealogy," as Ketelaar would term it.[93] Furthermore, as each use of the record constitutes an "activation" of the record, future uses present the possibility of an "infinite activation," as "the archive is never closed."[94] In this way, the archiving of these photographs allows them to "open out of the future"

[93] Ketelaar, "Tacit Narratives," 138.
[94] Ibid.

by enabling pathways for future activations, future uses, future meanings.[95] As the records move through space and time, their meanings change, along with their uses.

Using the photographs in different ways tells different stories, sometimes overlapping, sometimes conflicting, about the Khmer Rouge period. While each activation provides, in the words of archivist Verne Harris, "just a sliver of a window into the event," the archives are a glass house, made entirely of windows.[96] There is room for multiple slivers (and multiple stories) here. As always, archives are dynamic, contested spaces through which meaning is constructed and memory is shaped and archivists actively contribute to this shaping of meaning and memory by providing context to these now-familiar texts.

Through recent activations—digitization, admissibility as legal evidence, and print publication—the mug shots act as agents with an active social life and are themselves transformed, accommodating ever new and previously unforeseen uses (including their use in this dissertation). As Chapter Four explores, another reuse—images of survivors and victims' family members looking at them—has further transformed the mug shots from symbols of victimhood to symbols of the agency of bearing witness, allowing us to insert a voice into the creation of archives and narratives where previously a silence was encoded.

Methodology

As archival studies is defined by its objects of inquiry (i.e., the archive as entity and as records, as well as archival processes, policies and uses, etc.) and not by its methodology, its scholarship reflects a range of methodological approaches drawn from both the humanities and

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[95] Ibid.
[96] Verne Harris, "The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa," *Archival Science* 2:1-2 (2002): 64.

social sciences. In this vein, my work draws on methodologies commonly used in other fields. More specifically, this dissertation is situated in an interpretivist paradigm, draws from a cultural studies approach, and employs ethnographic and historiographical methods which reflect the larger move in anthropology and history away "from archive-as-source" towards "archive-as-subject."[97]

This research is based on an interpretivist paradigm whereby reality is viewed as socially constructed and mutually constitutive, and, is thereby "concerned with interpreting social meanings and personal sense-making," as Anne Gilliland and Sue McKemmish describe.[98] This interpretivist paradigm reflects an inductive approach by which a specific context is studied in order to generate transferable meaning.[99] By producing a detailed understanding of the use of Khmer Rouge records in Cambodia, I aim to shed light on archival uses in other societies emerging from periods of widespread violence, while at the same time acknowledging social, economic, cultural, and historical differences.

Additionally, my work is linked to critical theory and its use in cultural studies. Cultural studies gained strength in the 1970s as scholars from a range of fields turned attention to developing theoretical frameworks for examining how issues of power are made manifest in cultural formations. As James Schwoch and Mimi White explain, "…work in cultural studies is united by a loose array of theoretical touchstones, an abiding concern with understanding power and resistance in culture, and an oscillating interest in sometimes drawing together, and other

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[97] Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 44.
[98] Anne Gilliland and Sue McKemmish, "Building an Infrastructure for Archival Research," *Archival Science* 4 (2004): 166.
[99] Ibid., 167.

times pulling apart, approaches from the social sciences and the humanities."[100] This dissertation is situated within cultural studies because it explores the creation and uses of records and archives in the context of their relationship to power. In this vein, my work locates archives in the social, political, and historical context in which they are created and repurposed. At the same time, my research is supported by an enduring foundational commitment to ethical action and is informed by cultural studies' insistence on political engagement. In this way, my work is a manifestation of a larger agenda to engage archives for accountability and social justice, and thus contributes to the work of archival theorists like Verne Harris, who deploys deconstructionist theory to re-conceive of archives as tools for ethical political action in the context of post-apartheid South Africa.

Given the influence of cultural studies on my work, this dissertation reflects cultural studies' interest in multiple perspectives and a plurality of methods. As Paula Saukko describes, "The trademark of the cultural studies approach to empirical research has been an interest in the interplay between lived experience, texts or discourses, and the social context."[101] Studies of these three dimensions—lived experience, text, and context—call for methodological multiplicity. Richard Johnson et al. further explain cultural studies' methodological position:

> In the methodological literature, it is common to distinguish between different approaches to truth claims – namely, the 'empirical,' 'interpretive,' and 'critical'. Cultural studies straddles all three sets of conventions. It is 'intepretive', with affinities to hermeneutics, because understanding our own and others' life worlds is a central commitment. The stress on power, however, aligns cultural studies with critical traditions…. Research is seen, moreover, as political activity, an intervention in the situation studied and knowledge about it. Research is practice, or praxis in the strongest

[100] James Schwoch and Mimi White, "Introduction," in *Questions of Method in Cultural Studies* (Carlton, Australia: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 3.
[101] Paula Saukko, *Doing Research in Cultural Studies: An Introduction to Classical and New Methodological Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003), 11.

> sense, aimed at social betterment or emancipation…. Finally, cultural studies engages in critical dialogues with many aspects of the empirical tradition.[102]

Using this framework, my work is empirical in that it employs data gathered through interviews and observation, interpretive in its focus on hermeneutically analyzing documents, and critical in its focus on power relations. More specifically, my methods include: in-depth interviews with key figures in DC-Cam's creation conducted by me; interviews with survivors and prison guards conducted by staff of DC-Cam and documentary filmmakers; a detailed analysis of texts produced by Tuol Sleng guards, prisoners, and victims' family members; and a theoretical examination of how power is encoded in the creation and use of archival documents.

This plurality of methods also reflects Gillian Rose's description of how inquiry into the social life of images should address four areas: "the materiality of an image, what is done with it, how it has traveled, and what its effects are."[103] In Rose's estimation, these wide-ranging areas call for wide-ranging methods, including ethnography, interviews, and archival research, as well as reflexivity on the researcher's own relationship to the visual images being studied.

Furthermore, my wide-ranging methods reflect the plurality of methods commonly used in archival studies. The project is explicitly framed as a theory-building project which aims to evaluate existing archival theory with the goal of generating new theoretical approaches to the nature of the archival record, as described by Gilliland and McKemmish in their overview of archival studies methodologies.[104] In this way, this dissertation's introduction and conclusion examine key theoretical concepts related to archives and the production of history and propose a new theoretical construct regarding the ability of archival institutions to counter silences

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[102] Richard Johnson, Deborah Chambers, Parvati Raghuram, and Estella Tincknell, *The Practice of Cultural Studies* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2004), 50-51.
[103] Rose, *Visual Methodologies*, 225.
[104] Gilliland and McKemmish, "Building an Infrastructure," 178.

embedded in records at their creation. In light of this goal of theory building, this dissertation contributes to recent developments in archival theory, such as those made by Frank Upward, Sue McKemmish, Verne Harris, Terry Cook, and Eric Ketelaar.

Nestled within this theory-generating activity, is observation of very specific recordkeeping and archival practices within Cambodia. In this way, chapters Two and Three of this dissertation, which examine Khmer Rouge recordkeeping practices and the subsequent archivization of these records, constitute an "ethnography of the archive" of the sort described by anthropologist Ann Laura Stoler in her groundbreaking study of Dutch colonial records in Indonesia, *Along the Archival Grain*. Stoler redefines ethnography, shifting its focus away from Levi-Strauss's notion of anthropology as the study of that which is not written, toward an "ethnographic space of the archive" that both "reside[s]… in the disjuncture between prescription and practice, between state mandates and maneuvers people made in response to them," and "attend[s]… to processes of production, relations of power in which archives are created, sequestered, and rearranged."[105] In an archival studies context, these chapters are based on the foundational claim of archival theory that, "to understand an archive, one needs to understand the institutions that it served,"[106] and thereby seeks to understand both the Tuol Sleng prison and archival organizations like DC-Cam as institutions arising from specific social and political contexts. The chapters use primary sources, such as Khmer Rouge records and survivor testimony, and secondary sources, such as histories written about the Khmer Rouge, to trace the historical development of recordkeeping practices (Chapter Two) and archival institutions (Chapter Three). Chapter Three also draws heavily on more traditional ethnographic methods, such as interviews I conducted with key figures in the history of DC-Cam, using an in-depth

[105] Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain,* 32.
[106] Ibid., 25.

semi-structured interview technique honed through coursework in anthropology and religious studies.

In Chapter Four, the methodological approach is also ethnographical, in that I "aim to understand situations and events with reference to the actors' own construction of meaning and interpretations of reality," by focusing on how Cambodians make sense of Khmer Rouge mug shots within the context of contemporary Cambodian society.[107] This emic view of the uses of mug shots is achieved through an examination of texts generated by survivors; these texts have been published in the DC-Cam newsletter, in memoirs, and in testimonies given at the tribunal, and collected as oral histories by DC-Cam and documentary filmmakers. Although this combined methodological approach is complex, it allows me to more fully describe the work of archivists, archival organizations, and archival records, tracing records through space and time, from the moment of their creation to their acquisition in the archives and their various uses.

Furthermore, a cultural studies approach calls on me to address my positionality to the research. Cultural studies scholars like Richard Johnson et al. define positionality as "the multiplicity and movement of identities and power, especially in relation to knowledge."[108] In this way, I occupy a particular space in relation to the research and bring particular assumptions about it based on my experiences; I am an American, I am the daughter of a Vietnam War-era veteran, I am Jewish, I am trained as both an archivist and an Asian studies scholar, I spent several years working at a social service agency for Southeast Asian refugees in Chicago. Perhaps most importantly, I have volunteered to conduct policy research for DC-Cam. Given my positionality, I do not claim to be a neutral observer to the situations I describe and analyze, but

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[107] Gilliland and McKemmish, "Building an Infrastructure," 182.
[108] Richard Johnson, Deborah Chambers, Parvati Raghuram, and Estella Tincknell, *The Practice of Cultural Studies* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2004), 49.

rather, an active participant in the production of knowledge. Chapter Five includes a discussion reflecting on my positionality and locating my work within the ethics of viewing the Tuol Sleng images.

Limitations

This dissertation focuses on a very specific body of records: 5,190 mug shots taken at Tuol Sleng prison from 1975 to 1979. This focus is at the exclusion of other types of photographs and written records from Tuol Sleng, as well as other photographs and documents found at other Khmer Rouge offices throughout Cambodia. It is also at the exclusion of other forms of remembering the regime, such as unrecorded oral tradition, religious ritual, reenactment, dance and theatrical performances, and paintings.[109]

The primary limitation of this research is that it relies on archival sources that have been translated into English as well as interviews with key participants who speak English. It does not address sources in Khmer, Vietnamese, or other languages. Given the international nature of DC-Cam and the tribunal, much archival material as well as many legal testimonies have been translated into English.

Chapter Four, which deals in part with legal testimony, relies on testimony made during the Duch trial. As Duch was involved in the daily operation of Tuol Sleng prison, mug shots

[109] I fully acknowledge that these non-textual forms of remembering the regime are records according to the broad definition advocated by Shannon Faulkhead; "A record is any account, regardless of form, that preserves memory or knowledge of facts or events. A record can be a document, an individual's memory, an image, or a recording." (Shannon Faulkhead, "Connecting through Records: Narratives of Koorie Victoria," *Archives and Manuscripts* 37: 2 (2010), 67.) However, given the space and time constraints of this dissertation, I have chosen to focus on a collection of photographs and the specific document-based forms of remembering they inspire. In my future work, I hope to address non-textual records created by survivors of the Khmer Rouge period, such as: the dance performances of Khmer Rouge survivor Em Theay; DC-Cam-sponsored performances of the play *Breaking the Silence*; and survivor-enacted rituals of remembering that occur at Buddhist pagodas throughout Cambodia.

were a prime focus of his trial. The second trial, which is ongoing, has been excluded from this study. In many ways, this second trial is more important because it tries the highest-ranking surviving members of the regime and will be the subject of future research.

While key archival studies themes like accountability, legal evidence and collective memory are addressed throughout this dissertation, they are not its explicit focus. I have addressed these issues in my previous published work and have instead chosen to employ Trouillot's theoretical framework, the continuum model, and the social life of objects approach in the hopes of both expanding the limits of archival theory and contributing to a larger discussion about the role of the archives in the production of knowledge.

Furthermore, this dissertation does not describe in detail Trouillot's fourth (and final) moment of silencing, or the making of history. Indeed, from a records continuum perspective, both records and history are never made in the final instance, yet are in a constant state of becoming. Given how recently the Khmer Rouge regime ruled, that it was taboo to discuss the regime until the past decade, and that the highest-ranking members are only now standing trial, history in the final instance certainly has not yet been written about the Khmer Rouge. Despite a few groundbreaking books by historians David Chandler and Ben Kiernan, very little academic history has been written on the regime. At the present, only one published history book on the Khmer Rouge period has been written by a Cambodian—*A History of Democratic Kampuchea*—which was commissioned by DC-Cam.[110] Thanks to the work of DC-Cam, new Khmer Rouge records are still being uncovered and new narratives from survivors are being collecting, both of which can change the trajectory of scholarship on the regime. Cambodians and the international

[110] Khamboly Dy, *A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2007).

community are still grappling with the retrospective significance of these events, and will be for decades to come.

Summary of Chapters

In the subsequent chapters, I trace the social life of Tuol Sleng mug shots, exploring how silences are encoded in their creation, incorporation into archives, and use to spark narratives about the Khmer Rouge. While the images remain the same throughout their history, their meaning changes depending on the context in which they are displayed. By examining the creation and repurposing of one set of records documenting mass murder, this dissertation contributes to the growing body of archival theory that widens the scope of provenance and conceptualizes the ongoing social life of records, as well as research at the intersection of archives, silences, and the production of history.

Chapter Two explores the creation of the Tuol Sleng mug shots, including both their history as a genre and their function within Khmer Rouge bureaucracy. After giving some background information on who the Khmer Rouge were and how they came to power, this chapter traces the history of the mug shot in Cambodia, from its roots in the French colonial police force, to its use by the Khmer Rouge to both record and create criminal bodies within the regime's secret police system. This chapter explores why the Khmer Rouge took mug shots of the Tuol Sleng prisoners, what social function these photographs served, and how bureaucratic documents like mug shots helped streamline the administration of genocide. The primary sources used for this chapter include the oral histories of Tuol Sleng survivors, guards, and a photographer that were collected and translated by DC-Cam and documentary filmmakers; translations of printed memoirs written by survivors; and archival records such as mug shots and Tuol Sleng organization charts. Using Hannah Arendt's conception of the banality of evil, this

chapter addresses how such obsessive documentation in a totalitarian bureaucracy helped facilitate mass murder by alienating decision makers from the violence of their decisions. This chapter also addresses the silences encoded in the moment of document creation, pointing toward the unheard voices of the vast majority of those Khmer Rouge victims who were not photographed at Tuol Sleng. Through this examination, this chapter furthers scholarly understanding of the social function of Khmer Rouge documentation and makes a theoretical contribution to inquiries into recordkeeping practices in totalitarian regimes.

Chapter Three explores the archivization of these mug shots, or the moment of fact assembly, following Trouillot's framework, paying particularly close attention to their use by DC-Cam. This chapter uses interviews I conducted with people central to the creation of DC-Cam, as well as texts written by them, to trace how Khmer Rouge mug shots became incorporated in archival institutions in both their paper and digital formats. It traces the transformation of these mug shots into archival collections from the creation of the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide, to international attempts to preserve and collect them as scholarly material and legal evidence, to DC-Cam's use of the mug shots in its recent digitization and publications projects. Each moment in this history of archival collection is marked by shifting international alliances, competing claims to truth, and the politics of who gets prosecuted for human rights violations. After tracing this complicated history, this chapter examines how archives in general and this archival collection in particular are linked to silences, power, and politics. Again, the voices of the some 15,000 Tuol Sleng victims whose mug shots are not preserved in archives are silenced.

In Chapter Four, I explore how Khmer Rouge survivors and the family members of Tuol Sleng victims are using the Tuol Sleng mug shots to tell narratives about the regime, narratives

that then become records, contributing to an ever-evolving multi-layered archive. In this chapter, I analyze how the tribunal, documentary filmmakers, and DC-Cam are using mug shots to shape collective memory by inspiring narratives from these survivors. These narratives take many forms: legal testimonies; interviews conducted by documentary filmmakers; interviews, articles and family tracing correspondence published in the DC-Cam newsletter; memoirs written by Tuol Sleng survivors; and photos of survivors and victims' family members looking at the mug shots in DC-Cam publications. Across many formats, mug shots are used as a touchstone for people to tell stories about the regime, bear witness to abuse, and assert that such injustice should never happen again, constituting what some anthropologists refer to as "the performance of human rights."[111] These stories then become part of the archive, constituting a layering of archival records that is constantly expanding and opening out into the future. This chapter also details how the mug shots are gaining another life in reprints (both digital and paper) of photographs of people looking at them, inspiring narratives through which people can document bearing witness to the crimes of the Khmer Rouge. In light of Trouillot's four moments of silencing, these photos of survivors and victims' family members looking at the mug shots reintroduce an active voice, inserting a voice of witnessing where previously the silence of victims was encoded.

In Chapter Five, I conclude by returning to the key theoretical arguments made by this dissertation, exploring how archival institutions can respond to and counter silences encoded in archival records at the moment of their creation. The chapter addresses how the creation of records, archives, and narratives is leading to the production of history about the Khmer Rouge. It also includes a significant section reflecting on my own involvement in this research project

[111] Susan Slyomovics, *The Performance of Human Rights in Morocco* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

and the ethical responsibilities associated with writing, presenting, and teaching such gruesome and culturally sensitive images. The chapter concludes by positing that, while the future uses of these records are hard to predict, we can be certain that their active social life will continue as long as we continue to try to make sense of the horrific crimes of the Khmer Rouge.

Figure 1.1: Hout Bophana, mug shot on display at Tuol Sleng. Photo by author.

Figure 1.2: Painting of Bophana by Vann Nath in Stairwell at Bophana Audio Visual Resource Center. Photo by author.

Chapter Two: The Creation of Sources

> "To photograph people is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by having knowledge of them they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed. Just as the camera is a sublimation of the gun, to photograph someone is a sublimated murder—a soft murder, appropriate to a sad, frightened time."[1]
>
> --Susan Sontag

"In history, power begins at the source."[2] –Michel-Rolph Trouillot

Trouillot's framework begins with silence and the creation of sources, and so too does this investigation. As Trouillot writes, "Silences are inherent in the creation of sources, the first moment of historical production," this chapter explores the silences inherent in the creation of the Tuol Sleng mug shots as they relate to the historical production of the Khmer Rouge.[3] For Trouillot, records are the traces on which historical facts are based. Yet the formation of these traces is selective, wholly wrapped up with the power to create them. Trouillot writes:

> …facts are never meaningless: indeed, they become facts only because they matter in some sense, however minimal. Second, facts are not created equal: the production of traces is always the creation of silences. Some occurrences are noted from the start; others are not. Some are engraved in individual or collective bodies; others are not. Some leave physical markers; others do not. What happened leaves traces… that limit the range and significance of any historical narrative. This is one of many reasons why not any fiction can pass for history: the materiality of the sociohistorical process (historicity 1) sets the stage for future historical narratives (historicity 2).[4]

In Trouillot's framework, the stories we tell about the past are first limited by the creation of material traces documenting the past. As these material traces are selective—documenting only certain events in certain formats from certain perspectives—our stories about the past are always rife with the silences of those events, formats, and voices not recorded. Trouillot is

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[1] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Picador, 1997), 14-15.
[2] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 29.
[3] Ibid., 51.
[4] Ibid., 29.

positivist in his reliance on archival sources for the establishment of historical truth, but postmodern in his admission of the importance of power in creating and preserving such sources. While this framework is limited in its omission of the importance of oral history, story telling, performance, and other non-recorded traces of the past in constructing history, it serves as a useful device in which to explore the relationship between the past, the material traces it leaves behind, silences, and power.

Using this framework, this chapter turns to the first stage in the social life of the Tuol Sleng mug shots, namely their creation as bureaucratic documents within the Khmer Rouge prison system. Drawing on existing scholarship in history and visual culture as well as archival research, this chapter reframes the investigation of the history of the Tuol Sleng mug shots through the lens of archival studies and adds a significant historical lens to the discussion that roots Khmer Rouge photographic practices in colonial surveillance techniques. It will begin by situating both Tuol Sleng prison at the pinnacle of the Khmer Rouge regime, and photography at the center of the Tuol Sleng bureaucracy, using both the Tuol Sleng mug shots and the testimonies of survivors, guards, and a photographer (gleaned through memoirs, oral histories taken by DC-Cam staff, and interviews with other academics and journalists) as primary sources. Next, this chapter argues that the format and function of the Tuol Sleng mug shots can be traced back to the French colonial legacy in Cambodia, specifically the colonial police's implementation of the Bertillon system for documenting criminals in Cambodia. Influenced by Hannah Arendt's work on banal evil, this chapter then applies theoretical work at the intersection of records creation, state power, and bureaucracy to investigate the social function of the Tuol Sleng mug shots, positing that the mug shots both discursively produced the criminals they claimed to document and enabled the administration of mass murder within the Khmer Rouge

bureaucracy. In conclusion, this chapter will interrogate the silences encoded in the Tuol Sleng mug shots at the moment of their creation in light of both Trouillot and archival concepts such as co-creatorship and the records continuum. Through this examination, this chapter both furthers scholarly understanding of the social function of Khmer Rouge documentation in general and the Tuol Sleng mug shots specifically and makes a theoretical contribution to inquiries into recordkeeping practices in totalitarian regimes.

Tuol Sleng's Role within the Khmer Rouge, Photography's Role within Tuol Sleng

This section situates both Tuol Sleng within the larger Khmer Rouge bureaucracy and the practice of photography within Tuol Sleng's administration. The aim here is not to recreate the important research on Tuol Sleng already accomplished by historians, most notably David Chandler in his groundbreaking book *Voices from S-21*, but rather contextualize the mug shots according to the archival view that in order to best understand records, the organization that created them must be understood.

As briefly outlined in Chapter One, Tuol Sleng was one of 196 Khmer Rouge prisons dispersed throughout Cambodia, but also served as the national headquarters of the regime's secret police. Human rights activist David Hawk accurately described Tuol Sleng as the "apex" of a complex "pyramid of death" orchestrated by the Khmer Rouge. In Hawk's construction, at the bottom, the vast majority of Cambodian deaths during the regime can be attributed to starvation, disease, and exhaustion; moving up the pyramid, a smaller but significant number of deaths can be attributed to targeted killings of specific groups based on class, ethnicity, or political affiliation; and at the top of the pyramid, those victims executed by the regime's

"nation-wide prison-execution system," for which Tuol Sleng served as the centerpiece.[5] Thus while only a small number of people relative to the entire population of roughly two million victims were held at Tuol Sleng, the prison serves as an important symbol of the larger crimes of the regime. There are no exact figures for the number of prisoners held at Tuol Sleng, with estimates ranging from 12,273 (the tribunal's estimate) to 20,000 (historian David Chandler's estimate).[6] As much of the documentation kept at Tuol Sleng was destroyed (as will be detailed in Chapter Three), it is unlikely that exact figures will ever be known. The documentation that does exist reveals a steady increase in the number of prisoners at Tuol Sleng corresponding to major "purge" episodes within the party. Indeed, as Chandler reports, two events in 1976 lead to a surge in the prison population: the mutiny of a Khmer Rouge military unit whose members were then all arrested, and, in the wake of Chairman Mao's death, infighting between pro and anti-Vietnamese factions within the regime led to the arrest of Pol Pot's perceived challengers.[7] In 1977 and 1978, ongoing party directives to "purge" the northern areas of the country from suspected traitors within the Khmer Rouge kept an ever-expanding stream of prisoners flowing to Tuol Sleng. Tuol Sleng survivor Vann Nath writes that in September 1978, as the regime spiraled into deepening levels of paranoia, many of the Tuol Sleng guards themselves were arrested on suspicion of treason.[8] Chandler notes that, in the brutal distrust that marked the end of 1978, even Son Sen, the Khmer Rouge's Deputy Prime Minister for Defense under whose jurisdiction Tuol Sleng fell, was brought under intense suspicion and might have been arrested at

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[5] David Hawk, "Tuol Sleng Extermination Centre," *Index on Censorship* 15:1 (January 1986): 25.
[6] Documentation Center of Cambodia, *Factsheet,* unpaginated.
[7] David Chandler, "The Pathology of Terror in Pol Pot's Cambodia," *The Killing Fields*, Doug Niven and Chris Riley, eds., (Santa Fe: Twin Palms Publishers, 1996), 104.
[8] Vann Nath, *A Cambodian Prison Portrait* (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 1998), 83.

Tuol Sleng had the regime not collapsed.[9] Based on existing records, Chandler estimates that at least 2,700 prisoners were processed at Tuol Sleng in 1976, 6,500 in 1977, and 5,000 in 1978. These figures include women and children, who were often brought to the facility with their arrested husbands or parents.

Tuol Sleng operated under a system of absolute secrecy that was reinforced by the killing of virtually all prisoners and witnesses.[10] Like all of Phnom Penh, the area surrounding Tuol Sleng was cleared of residents. While many scholarly and press accounts report that only seven prisoners survived Tuol Sleng, recent evidence compiled by DC-Cam reveals that 179 prisoners were released between 1975 and 1978. Yet only 23 of them are known to have survived past 1979, and the majority of these 23 have since died or are missing.[11]

While Cambodians accused of lesser crimes by the regime may have been sent to local-level prisons within the network, the regime designated Tuol Sleng as the central holding facility for prisoners thought to be of national importance, including many high-ranking Khmer Rouge officials.[12] As Chandler describes, prisoners were brought to Tuol Sleng if they were directly accused of traitorous activities by the secret police or if commune leaders at the rural level gave their names to the national secret police.[13] Son Sen oversaw the secret police force at a distance and was also tasked with internal party surveillance. Sen designated Kaing Guek Eav (most commonly known by his *nom de guerre*, Duch), a former math teacher with a reputation for

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[9] Chandler, "The Pathology of Terror in Pol Pot's Cambodia," 104.
[10] David Chandler, *Voices from S-21: Terror and History in Pol Pot's Secret Prison* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2000), 16.
[11] Documentation Center of Cambodia, *Factsheet,* unpaginated. Bou Meng and Chum Mey are the only two known adult survivors of Tuol Sleng who regularly speak about their experiences.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Chandler, "The Pathology of Terror in Pol Pot's Cambodia,"103.

meticulously following orders, as its head.[14] As Cambodia scholar George Chigas asserts, Duch originally ran the prison out of an abandoned chapel in Phnom Penh, but moved the operation to the Tuol Sleng complex, a former high school, in May 1976 as the number of prisoners increased.[15] Tuol Sleng was large enough to accommodate 1,500 prisoners at one time. The complex is comprised of four three-story white concrete buildings, each divided into classrooms connected by long outdoor hallways that serve as open-air balconies running the length of the buildings in a style that is common in Cambodia. In the middle of the courtyard between these buildings is a small wooden house, which during the Khmer Rouge period was used to store documents.[16] The complex is also referred to as S-21, with some scholars positing that the S referred to the Santebal secret police and 21 to the walkie-talkie number of prison personnel.[17]

Tuol Sleng was simultaneously a prison, torture facility, holding pen, and extermination center. As a DC-Cam report explains, prisoners were first executed en masse at the complex, but the "the volume and stench of the corpses rapidly increased and became unbearable," and alternative arrangements were made.[18] While some prisoners were still killed during torture sessions at Tuol Sleng, the majority were sent to the Killing Fields at Choeung Ek, some fifteen kilometers away, where they were forced to dig their own shallow mass graves, hit on the back of the head with blunt instruments, and left for dead.

Under Duch's command, Tuol Sleng was divided into interrogation, documentation, and defense units, and was staffed with guards, medics, truck drivers, interrogators, torturers, and

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[14] Some of the surviving documentation from Tuol Sleng is communication between Son Sen and Duch.
[15] George Chigas, "The Trial of the Khmer Rouge: The Role of the Tuol Sleng and Santebal Archives," *Harvard Asia Quarterly* (Winter 2000): 45.
[16] Ben Kiernan and Chanthou Boua, "Bureaucracy of Death," *New Statesman* (May 2, 1980): 671.
[17] Documentation Center of Cambodia, *Factsheet*, unpaginated.
[18] Ibid.

administrators.[19] The Documentation unit was an important part of daily operations; Chandler describes how an undated internal Tuol Sleng telephone directory names forty-six staffers, fourteen of whom were employed by the documentation unit.[20] Duch deliberately picked teenagers from poor rural backgrounds to serve as guards and interrogators knowing they would be less likely to question his authority.

Duch created a systematic prison bureaucracy that hinged on documentation. Indeed, the entire complex was organized around extracting detailed confession statements from prisoners that described their alleged involvement in the CIA, KGB, or other acts of treason against the Khmer Rouge; in brutal torture sessions that could include water boarding, electric shock, and scorpions, guards (under Duch's instruction) made prisoners refine and edit their statements until a sufficiently traitorous act was confessed and the appropriate number of accomplices was named. Some of these statements carry on for more than two hundred pages.[21] Recordkeeping became more systematized with time; typewriters were introduced in 1977, adding typed records to the growing pool of handwritten records. Other forms of documentation at the prison include: prisoner registration files; daily logbooks of arrests; organizational charts; memos between Duch and Son Sen summarizing operations; reports describing torture methods; daily execution

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[19] Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 17.

[20] Ibid., 27. Chandler also reports that at least 10 members of the Documentation Unit themselves were accused of treason and became prisoners at Tuol Sleng.

[21] Interestingly, at the tribunal Duch testified that he estimated only 40% of the confession statements extracted at Tuol Sleng were true and that only 20% of the named accomplices were actually guilty. Seth Mydans, "Legal Strategy Fails to Hide Torturer's Pride," *The New York Times* (June 21, 2009). I have addressed the social function of these textual records in other articles and instead am limiting the focus of this dissertation on photographic records. For more information on Duch's role and the social function of textual records, see: Michelle Caswell, "Hannah Arendt's World: Bureaucracy, Documentation and Banal Evil," *Archivaria* 70 (Fall 2010): 1-25 and Michelle Caswell, "Khmer Rouge Archives: Accountability, Truth, and Memory in Cambodia," *Archival Science* 10: 1-2 (January 2010): 25-44.

schedules; and execution orders.[22] Photographs were just one part of a larger culture of record creation at Tuol Sleng. Furthermore, mug shots are only one type of photograph taken at Tuol Sleng; photographs were also taken of prisoners during torture sessions and after they were killed, and of guards and other staff for personnel files and as propaganda.[23] Within the documentation unit, Suos Thy led the photography subunit. Within this subunit, the taking of mug shots primarily fell on the shoulders of Nhem En.[24] While En has named five other photographers, only one other photographer has come forward or publicly claimed responsibility.[25] Tuol Sleng survivor Vann Nath recognized En as the photographer of his mug shot.[26]

Nhem En joined the Khmer Rouge at the age of ten, becoming part of an elite children's performance troupe that sang the regime's propaganda songs at events. At twelve, he received his first gun and was deployed to the frontlines. Having distinguished himself as a soldier, in 1975, when he was 15, En was sent to Shanghai to study photography for six months. He was assigned to take mug shots at Tuol Sleng on his return. As En told journalist Peter Maguire, "When I was first at Tuol Sleng I was scared, but after seeing the same thing everyday, I got

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[22] For a more exhaustive list, see David Hawk, "Tuol Sleng Extermination Centre," 25.
[23] Chandler, *Voices from S-21,* 27.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Interview with Youk Chhang, December 9, 2011, Phnom Penh. Indeed, En, now a deputy mayor of a small town in Cambodia, has made a cottage industry over being interviewed by reporters and participating in documentary films for a steep fee, garnering the distrust of many authors. For example, Peter Maguire reports that En was a "smooth operator" who asked for money and to be introduced to the U.S. ambassador. "I do not trust the aggressive En," he writes, a sentiment commonly echoed. Peter Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 4. En, who remained a Khmer Rouge member until 1995, has also been accused of trying to profit off of the sale of records that many claim belong to the Cambodian public. In 2007, En announced plans to open a museum of other photographs in his possession and charge admission and in 2009, En unsuccessfully tried to auction off two cameras and a pair of sandals he claimed once belonged to Pol Pot for $500,000.
[26] Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 113.

used to it. It became normal, like feeling numb."[27] According to the strict division of labor at Tuol Sleng, En was forbidden to ask questions of the prisoners or touch them, with the exception of removing their blindfolds. As they arrived by the busload, prisoners were lined up in a small wooden building in the courtyard of the complex. As En removed their blindfolds, many prisoners were stunned by the camera's flash and disoriented. Given that snapshot photography was reserved for the elite in pre-Khmer Rouge Cambodia, it was the first time that many prisoners were photographed and some might have been distracted by the novelty of it.[28] En instructed prisoners to sit in a specialized chair with a metal rod that nestled their heads and asked them not to blink or move as he took the photograph.[29] In most cases, En took profile pictures as well as front views. Sometimes, the prisoners' height and head circumference was measured.[30] Sometimes, other facial and corporeal features, like color of hair or depth of voice, were noted.[31] Talking to a *New York Times* reporter in 2007, En explained his work:

> I was alone in the room, so I am the one they saw. They would say, "Why was I brought here? What am I accused of? What did I do wrong?"… "Look straight ahead. Don't lean your head to the left or the right." That's all I said…. I had to say that so the picture would turn out well. Then they were taken to the interrogation center. The duty of the photographer was just to take the picture.[32]

One day in 1977, En's cousin was arrested and brought to Tuol Sleng. En took his mug shot, saying nothing. In a story that illustrates the "grey zone" that Tuol Sleng staffers like En occupied, Chandler reports that in 1977 En was accused of deliberately taking bad photographs

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[27] Ibid., 120.
[28] Interview with Youk Chhang, December 9, 2011, Phnom Penh.
[29] Nic Dunlop describes this chair as an "old colonial-era photographer's chair used in the past primarily for identification photographs." More on this chair to come. Nic Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005), 149.
[30] It is unclear why measurements and profile pictures were inconsistently taken.
[31] Interview with Youk Chhang, December 9, 2011, Phnom Penh.
[32] Seth Mydans, "Out from Behind a Camera at a Khmer Torture Center," *The New York Times*, (October 27, 2007): 3.

after a mark appeared on an image of Pol Pot he developed and was temporarily sent to a reeducation camp.[33] When asked by Maguire why he took the photographs, En responded, "I made them because I was ordered to."[34] In another news story, En is quoted as saying, "I was only one screw of the machine. I did nothing wrong except taking photos at the superior's orders."[35]

The mug shots were developed each night in a nearby building using chemicals and equipment looted from abandoned photography labs in Phnom Penh. En delivered the mug shots directly to Duch. The numbering system in the photographs developed over time, as the number of prisoners escalated; in 1975, none of the prisoners in the mug shots had numbered tags, in 1976 and 1977 the prisoners had numbered tags but no names, and by 1978 the prisoners held placards with numbers, their names, and the date. Thus, as Chandler reports, the prisoners photographed before 1978 are unidentified.[36] Furthermore, the numbers prisoners were made to hold up in the mug shots correspond to processing batches and not individual prisoner identification numbers. En explained to Maguire, "We set up the numbers every twenty-four hours. For example, if we had ten prisoners today, we would start from one to ten, and tomorrow if we had 1,500 prisoners we would start with one and go up to 1,500."[37] Curiously, while some mug shots were stapled to prisoner biographies, others were found in separate photograph files. It is unclear why the regime would go to such great lengths to take the mug shots if they were often separated from information about who was depicted in them. This absence of names encodes a

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[33] The grey zone is a concept first introduced by Holocaust survivor Primo Levi to describe the moral ambiguity of lower-ranked accomplices to mass murder, such as prison guards. Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 28.
[34] Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 122.
[35] Unattributed article, "Ex-Khmer Rouge Photographer Plans to Set Up Museum in Anlong Veng," *Japan Economic Newswire* (January 25, 2007).
[36] Chandler, "The Pathology of Terror in Pol Pot's Cambodia," 103.
[37] Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 120.

silence in the documents, coupled with the unbearably heavy silence of those voiceless prisoners captured in the images—prisoners who (for the most part) would not live to tell their stories.

A few of Tuol Sleng's survivors have described their experiences being photographed at the prison. Norng Chanphal, one of five child prisoners found when the Vietnamese liberated Tuol Sleng, was interviewed by DC-Cam staff in 2009. He described, "When we arrived in the prison… a photographer and note taker were there. They took photographs both in the front and sideways and gave us a number written in white… I also saw them kick my mother…. They pushed her against the wall. I felt so terrified."[38] Survivor Chum Mei told a DC-Cam staff member that upon arrival at Tuol Sleng, "They took [a] photograph of me and measured my height" before shackling him to other prisoners in a cell.[39] Another survivor, Bou Meng, recalls in detail:

> …The guards escorted me and my wife to the compound of S-21 prison. About 10 minutes later, I knew that I was in a room. "Sit down!" a security guard ordered me. I searched for a chair with my hands and sat. A security cadre untied the black handkerchief from my face, but my hands were still handcuffed. I tried to look for my wife with dazed eyes. She was still blindfolded and handcuffed. I saw new guards in the room. I knew that I was in a photo room; there were a lot of materials such as a camera, a height measuring tool, documents, and typing machines. A 20-year-old cadre ordered me to walk up to the wall to measure my height. He then ordered me to sit in front of the camera. He put a number plate on my chest. It read 570. Another cadre asked me a few questions about my background and he recorded my answers on a worksheet while security guards walked back and forth. Soon I was blindfolded again. After that, I never learned what happened to my wife.[40]

Meng also recalls seeing photography subunit chief Suos Thy arranging documents in the same room where his mug shot was taken. Similarly, survivor Vann Nath has described how his mug

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[38] Norng Chanphal, interview with Vanthan Peou Dara and Chy Terith, February 13, 2009, Documentation Center of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The name is also listed as Nong Chan Phal in other publications.
[39] Chum Mei, interview with Sim Soraya, March 23, 2006, Documentation Center of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
[40] Huy Vannak, *Bou Meng: A Survivor from Khmer Rouge Prison S-21* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2010), 35.

shot was taken. Blindfolded, Nath was transported by bus to Tuol Sleng from a rural area, arriving at three am. He was shackled to other prisoners and led into a room. He recalls being asked:

> "You, guy! What's your name? What did you do during the Sihanouk regime? The Lon Nol regime?" They'd already asked us these questions when we got off the trucks. Why were they asking us again? Every prisoner was interrogated again and then it was my turn. Afterwards, I felt someone undoing my blindfolds. At first my eyes were out of focus but then my vision cleared. In front of me was a chair with a camera set across from it. "Go sit on that chair," the guard said, pointing at me. The others handcuffed to me went with me but they sat on the floor as I was photographed. The guard took a picture of the front of my face, and then the side. Another guard measured my head and then they made an ID card. After me, they photographed the other people attached to me. Then they put our blindfolds back on.[41]

These four accounts are the only known descriptions from people whose mug shots were taken at Tuol Sleng; almost everyone else who sat in front of En's camera was killed. The differences between the location and styles of the photographs—some very formal, some exceedingly violent, revealing that prisoners had already been beaten—may be attributed to the prisoner's assignment into one of three groups: the "smashed" group who would be killed as soon as possible; the "hot" group, who would be tortured intensely during interrogation; and the "cold" group, who were treated slightly better in the prison hierarchy.[42]

Now that this chapter has contextualized Tuol Sleng within the Khmer Rouge regime and the mug shots within Tuol Sleng's bureaucracy, it will now shift focus to the history of the mug shots as a genre and their function within the prison. Why did the Khmer Rouge so meticulously document images of the prisoners they were about to kill? Why did they choose the mug shot as a photographic genre in which to perform this documentation? What is the history of this particular genre in Cambodia and what can this history tell us about the roles the mug shots

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[41] Nath, *A Cambodian Prison Portrait*, 40.
[42] Interview with Youk Chhang, December 9, 2011, Phnom Penh.

performed at Tuol Sleng? To answer these questions, this chapter now turns to the Cambodia's history as a French colonial protectorate and the role of police photography within France and its colonies.

French Colonial Police Photography and its Legacy in Cambodia

In order to best understand the origins of the mug shots taken at Tuol Sleng, one must first understand the French colonial legacy inherited by Cambodia. By tracing the origins of the mug shot as a genre in France and subsequently in Cambodia, we can examine the pre-history of the Tuol Sleng mug shots, following their evolution from instruments of colonial bureaucracy to their role in a postcolonial reign of terror. It is especially ironic that the Khmer Rouge regime, which outwardly shunned all artifacts of colonialism, the West, and modernity, would so extensively adopt a system of police photography so thoroughly entrenched in the French colonial legacy, as this paper argues. Given this backdrop, the prehistory of the mug shot in Cambodia becomes an essential component of the social life of the Tuol Sleng mug shots.

In 1863, Cambodia became a protectorate of France. Surrounded on both sides by hostile neighbors and threatened by French military aggression, Cambodia, led by King Norodom, entered into this protectorate agreement in an effort to stop Vietnamese and Thai expansion into its borders. While the agreement was successful in this aspect, France soon overstepped the boundaries of the initial protectorate agreement and gradually transformed Cambodian into a French colony. Over the next ninety years (until 1953), Cambodia would be under French rule.[43] While France eroded the political power of the Cambodian monarch, there was no large-scale effort to remodel Cambodian culture in the mold of France. As historian John Tully posits, at the

[43] For more thorough exploration of the French colonial period in Cambodia, see John Tully, *France on the Mekong* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002).

beginning of the Protectorate, the French were preoccupied with their more profitable colonies elsewhere (namely Vietnam), and generally maintained a policy of "official indifference" to Cambodia.[44] There was considerable variety in the degree to which France controlled its colonies and protectorates in Southeast Asia, and Cambodia was never under the intense cultural, political, and social influence of France in the same way Vietnam was.[45] Indeed, as Tully cites, very few French oversaw the colonization of Cambodia, with only 500 Europeans in Cambodia in 1901.[46]

Nevertheless, the French had a lasting influence on the Cambodian legal and penal systems. As Peter Zinoman notes in his comprehensive book on imprisonment in French colonial Vietnam, "The establishment of a colonial prison system in French Indochina during the nineteenth century coincided with the emergence of the modern penitentiary in Europe and the United States."[47] New European techniques for policing and imprisonment, together with their subsequent bureaucracies, had a tremendous influence on Europe's colonies in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Cambodia was no exception.

Prior to French colonization, the Cambodian legal code allowed for public torture and execution, despite Buddhist precepts to the contrary.[48] In this backdrop, as Tully details, in 1911, a special French commission on penal reform enacted widespread changes to the Cambodian legal system that discouraged torture and execution in favor of imprisonment, which was touted

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[44] Tully, *France on the Mekong*,121.
[45] Peter Zinoman, *The Colonial Bastille: A History of Imprisonment in Vietnam*, 1862-1940 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
[46] Tully, *France on the Mekong*, 122.
[47] While Zinoman's history of prisons in French colonial Vietnam is comprehensive, many of his findings remain specific to Vietnam and cannot be extrapolated to the Cambodian context given the different degrees to which the French administered each colony. Zinoman, *The Colonial Bastille*.
[48] Tully, *France on the Mekong*, 34.

as a more humane punishment.[49] However, the French colonial police force in Cambodia ignored their own reforms, sometimes using, in Tully's words, "almost unbelievably sadistic torture against political opponents."[50] By the 1920s, the French government in Cambodia had become "a dictatorship of civil servants and police," marked by an obsession with police surveillance, lack of basic rights like freedom of speech and assembly, "appalling" prison conditions, and rampant torture.[51] As Tully describes, "[King] Sisowath's Cambodia, in common with Indochina as a whole at the time [1904 to 1927], can be described as a colonial police state, ruled with an iron hand by a strict hierarchy of power with its apex in Hanoi."[52] In 1938, there were 14 French provincial prisons in Cambodia.[53]

Yet despite this attention to incarceration, the population in French colonial prisons in Cambodia remained relatively small until the 1940s, when the pro-Nazi Vichy French regime controlled Cambodia; Tully reports, "In 1936, there were 917 prisoners in all the jails of Cambodia. By 1943, this number had grown fourfold."[54] As Tully explains, despite the

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[49] Tully, *France on the Mekong*, (142. This shift from public execution to imprisonment in France is detailed by Michel Foucault. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*: *The Birth of the Prison*, (New York: Random House, 1977).

[50] Tully, *France on the Mekong*, 142. As Tully writes elsewhere, "The ideals of 1789 were not for export. The model was a colonial police state, not a democratic society." John Tully, *Cambodia Under the Tricolour* (Clayton, Australia: Monash University, 1996), xi.

[51] Tully, *France on the Mekong*, 288; 293. For details on just how appalling Cambodian prison conditions were, see John Tully, *France on the Mekong*, (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002), Chapter 15.

[52] Tully, *Cambodia Under the Tricolour*, vii.

[53] Zinoman, 46.

[54] Tully, *France on the Mekong*, 365. These figures contrast sharply with those from neighboring French colonial Vietnam, where, as Peter Zinoman writes, more than 90,000 people—half of one percent of the total population—were imprisoned in 1936. Zinoman, *The Colonial Bastille*, 63. While Pol Pot and many of his colleagues grew up in a Cambodia occupied by the Vichy French colonial power, and Pol Pot himself studied in France after the Second World War, there is no evidence as far as I know to suggest that the Khmer Rouge studied Nazi techniques. This is not to suggest that Khmer Rouge leaders had knowledge of, and/or were, consciously modeling their own organizational structure after Nazi bureaucracy. For more information on the possible

relatively small number of French nationals in Cambodia, France maintained tight political control over the country through its domination of the police force and prison system until Cambodian independence in 1953.[55] Despite some important differences in the way France administered its colonies in Cambodia and Vietnam, Zinoman's astute observations about Vietnamese colonial prisons—namely that local traditions of corporeal punishment, the development of colonial prisons out of prisoner-of war camps, and institutionalized French racism, combined to create a "hybrid prison system" marked by "coercion and control"—equally apply to Cambodia.[56]

Meanwhile, back in the metropole, the French penal system was undergoing a radical transformation in the nineteenth century, evolving from a system based on torture and execution, to one based on discipline, punishment, and reform through imprisonment.[57] While a more detailed account of other aspects of the transformation of the penal system is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is important to note that new attention to disciplining and categorizing the criminal body, coupled with technological advances such as photography, paved the way for the invention of techniques to more scientifically and systematically track criminals and predict criminal recidivism. Key to this evolution was the classification of criminals into two groups: first time offenders, who were singled out for reform, and repeat offenders or career criminals,

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influence of Vichy France on Pol Pot, see Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 540–48.

[55] Tully, *France on the Mekong*, 417.

[56] Zinoman, *The Colonial Bastille,* 17. Zinoman also notes that, due to complicated historical factors, prisons in each of the different territories within French colonial Indochina "functioned within their own distinct legal, bureaucratic, and financial frameworks," including totally "different kinds of institutions." In other words, there was no uniform French colonial penal system in Indochina, but rather discrete, decentralized, and fractured systems in each territory. Zinoman, *The Colonial Bastille,* 38.

[57] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

who were designated for longer terms of incarceration.[58] These changes would have enormous impact on policing and incarceration not only in the French colonies, but throughout the world.

While the French police had photographed criminals almost since the invention of photography, they lacked a standardized format and systematic indexing and retrieval system.[59] As both the size of the Parisian police force and the number of arrested criminals grew, the force could no longer rely on the ability of officers to recognize and remember individual criminals from the thousands of unorganized photographs documenting them.[60] In 1879, Alphonse Bertillon, a French police clerk and son of an anthropologist, introduced a new comprehensive system for identifying and classifying criminals.[61] Called *signaletics* or *bertillonage*, the system was comprised of four key components: meticulously documented anthropometric measurements of eleven facial and bodily features using a series of standardized measuring furniture and

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[58] Simon A. Cole, "Fingerprint Identification and the Criminal Justice System: Historical Lessons for the DNA Debate," http://www.hks.harvard.edu/dnabook/Simon%20Cole%20II.doc, accessed November 16, 2011: 3. Early attempts at the classification of criminals included alphabetized registers (ineffective for suspects lying about their names) and branding, which was outlawed by the French in 1832. Simon A. Cole, *Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 16.

[59] Joe Nickell reports that Belgium police departments introduced the daguerreotype in 1843, and France, and the U.S. followed suit in the 1850s. Joe Nickell, *Camera Clues: A Handbook for Photographic Investigation* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1994). Also see Cole, *Suspect Identities*.

[60] In the introduction to the 1896 American edition his handbook, Bertillon writes, "During the last ten years the Parisian police have collected over 100,000 photographs. Do you suppose it possible to compare successively each of these 100,000 photographs with each of the 100 individuals arrested daily in Paris?... The search would take more than a week of application." Alphonse Bertillon, *The Bertillon System of Identification* (Chicago: The Werner Company, 1896), 12.

[61] Bertillon's father was Louis-Adolphe Bertillon, a demographer and anthropologist. At that time, many anthropological projects were underway that included the systematic measurement of members of racial groups; no doubt these influenced Bertillon's thinking. Bertillon's system was at first rejected by management, but Bertillon remained persistent until it was adopted in 1883. Alphonse Bertillon, "Letter to Joseph Nicholson," as published in Joseph Nicholson, "The Identification of Criminals," Congress of the National Prison Association at Pittsburgh, October 10-15, 1891.

uniformly calibrated instruments such as calipers, rulers, and compasses; a "verbal portrait" that described "marks, scars, and moles," and tattoos; standardized photographs of subjects from both the front and profile views (which would document the shape of the ear) against a solid background (*figure 2.1*); and an elaborate filing system, including the file cabinets themselves, called "Bertillon cabinets," in which complete measurement cards could be systematically divided, filed, and retrieved.[62] (By 1900, fingerprints were also commonly added to the cards.) The cards were organized according to sex, head length, head breadth, length of middle finger, foot, forearm, height, and little finger, eye color, and then arranged within discrete file drawers according to ear length.[63] The indexing system worked well. As one author described, "Bertillon awed visitors to the Paris police department with his ability to retrieve matching cards in minutes from a vast archive containing tens of thousands of criminal records."[64]

The system was described in detail in an 1885 edition of 95 pages, but was elaborated and extended into a 260-page volume by 1896. This 1896 edition features 81 illustrative plates, including: drawings of measurement equipment (*figure 2.2)*; diagrams instructing readers on how measurements should be taken (*figure 2.3)*; photographic charts showing the different types of facial features such as noses, eyebrows, and head shapes (*figure 2.4)*; seven charts consisting of twelve photographs each dedicated to the "peculiarities of the ear;" and two fold-out charts, one consisting of a synoptic table of signaletic terms and one full color chart detailing the fifty-four distinct colors of the human iris. Perhaps most importantly for this dissertation's discussion of the Tuol Sleng mug shots, Bertillon's handbook contains a five-page chapter entitled, "Special Posing Chair Mechanically Assuring a Uniformity of Reduction Between Full-Face and Profile

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[62] Bertillon, *The Bertillon System of Identification*.
[63] Cole, *Suspect Identities,* 45.
[64] Cole, "Fingerprint Identification and the Criminal Justice System."

Photographs," and a diagram entitled "Measuring the Trunk," in which a suspect is shown sitting on one such "special posing chair" to which a ruler and measuring tool are attached (*figure 2.5*).[65]

The purpose of the system was to separate first-time offenders from repeat criminals so that different types of punishment could be enforced—reform and release for the first time offenders, and perennial incarceration for the recidivists. As Bertillon himself wrote, "Nobody disputes the fact that it would be losing time and money to try to regenerate an individual who has already foiled two or three attempts at moral salvation."[66] In this way, the Bertillon system (which ironically hinged on individuation of measurements) was part of a larger effort to classify criminals into types using the new field of "criminal science" (*criminalistique* in French); other categories criminals were commonly classified as include idiots, imbeciles, morons, lunatics, degenerates, delinquents, criminaloids, or born criminals.[67] In its dependence on classification through scientific rationalism, the Bertillon system was intimately linked to both anthropological classification that sought to document, measure and categorize racial difference (which often deployed photography to justify the logic of imperialism) and zoological and botanical classification that sought to order the planet's species.[68] As Bertillon explained the impetus for

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[65] Bertillon, *The Bertillon System of Identification*, Plate 7.
[66] Bertillon, "Letter to Joseph Nicholson," as published in Joseph Nicholson, "The Identification of Criminals," Congress of the National Prison Association at Pittsburgh, October 10-15, 1891.
[67] Martine Kaluszynski, "Republican Identity: Bertillonage as Government Technique," in *Documenting Individual Identity*, Jane Caplan and John Torpey, eds., (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 127. For further discussion of this classification, see Simon A. Cole, *Suspect Identities:* Chapter Two.
[68] Many other scholars have documented the role played by early photography and its exhibition in the creation of anthropological "truth" that justified imperialism in the Middle East, Africa, the Americas, Australia, and Asia. See Keri A. Berg, "The Imperialist Lens: Du Camp, Salzmann and Early French Photography," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 6:1 (2008): 1-18; Anne Maxwell, *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999); Eleanor M. Hight and Gary D. Sampson, eds., *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place* (New

his system, "There was a need of a method of elimination analogous to that employed in the sciences and of botany and zoology."[69] Indeed, in 1883, the same year the Parisian police department put Bertillon's system into effect, Bertillon, a member of the Societe D'Anthropologie de Paris, published an anthropological book, *Ethnographie Moderne: Les Races Sauvages* (or, translated, *Modern Ethnography: The Savage Races*). The book delineated the physical characteristics of the people of Africa, South America, and Oceania, and included several illustrations of colonial subjects in front and profile view alongside markers measuring their height (figure 2.6).[70] For his criminal indexing system, Bertillon merely applied the logic of colonial anthropology inward, towards the "undesirable" element within French society.

By the end of the 1890s, the Bertillon system was widely adopted, transformed, and simplified by police departments throughout the world.[71] The rhetoric surrounding its adoption is one of the global and inevitable march of progress, modernity, and science. In an impassioned

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York: Routledge, 2002); Deborah Poole, *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). Furthermore, it is no coincidence that the 1889 Paris Exposition featured an exhibition of the Bertillon system in the Palais de Justice, a series of lecture by the Societe d'Anthropologie, and a display of people from the French colonies. As one enthusiastic American visitor wrote, attendees could see, "twelve types of Africans, besides Javanese, Tonkinese, Chinese, Japanese, and other oriental peoples, living in native houses, wearing native costumes, eating native food, practicing native arts and rites on the Esplanade de Invalides side by side with the latest inventions and with the whole civilized world as spectators." Otis T. Mason, "Anthropology in Paris During the Exposition of 1889," *American Anthropologist* 3:1 (January 1890): 31.

[69] Bertillon, *The Bertillon System of Identification*, 12.

[70] Alphonse Bertillon, *Ethnographie Moderne: Les Races Sauvages* (Paris: Libraire de L'Academie de Medecine, 1883). This type of anthropometric image of colonized people did not originate with Bertillon. In 1869, the British biologist and follower of Darwin, Thomas Henry Huxley, undertook a project to photograph and measure all of the races found within the British Empire. The resulting photographs of naked subjects from front and profile views next to rulers are strikingly similar to the images produced in Bertillon's book. Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories* Chapter Six.

[71] Simon A. Cole reports it was adopted in the U.S. and Canada in 1887, Argentina in 1891, Colonial Bengal in 1893, Great Britain in 1894, and in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Russia, Sweden, Norway, Turkey, Monaco, Luxembourg, Romania, Tunisia, and much of South America by 1899. Simon A. Cole, *Suspect Identities,* 51-52.

plea to the attendees of the Congress of the National Prison Association in Pittsburgh in 1891, Joseph Nicholson, President of the Wardens' Association, vouched that the Bertillon system "demonstrated beyond a question its absolute certainty for purposes intended" and "urgently solicited the hearty cooperation of every prison manager on this continent" in adopting it.[72] In the 1896 preface to the American edition of *The Bertillon System of Identification*, the publisher writes, "As improved and developed with the aid of so many years of practical experience the system has reached a high degree of perfection, and its absolute efficiency is recognized by all competent authorities throughout the world."[73] Writing two decades later, soon after Bertillon's death, Raymond Fosdick posits, "[Bertillon's] system was adopted in nearly every civilized country. England, Germany, Austria, Russia, Switzerland, and many states in the United States applied it in their police departments, and the Bertillon cabinet became the distinguishing mark of the modern police organization."[74] However, as the system traveled, it was not only adopted, but adapted. Simon A. Cole explains:

> Most identification bureaus, too proud to simply adopt Bertillon's system wholesale, took it upon themselves to modify various aspects of the system. Foreign bureaus modified the number of type of measurements to be taken, added and deleted categories from the physical description, switched the measuring scale from metric to English, and even altered the design of the instruments themselves. Not surprisingly, the accuracy of the anthropometric identification decreased proportionally with the distance from Paris…. Whereas Bertillon had envisioned an internationally standardized system controlled and calibrated,… in Paris, instead an international patchwork of incompatible anthropometric systems developed.[75]

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[72] In response to Nicholson, Bertillon wrote that he hoped that Chicago would be wise enough to adopt the system for its upcoming World's Columbian Exposition. Indeed, Bertillon exhibited his new system at the 1893 World's Columbia Exposition in Chicago. Joseph Nicholson, "The Identification of Criminals," Congress of the National Prison Association at Pittsburgh, October 10-15, 1891.

[73] The Publishers, "Preface of American Publishers," *The Bertillon System of Identification* (Chicago: The Werner Company, 1896), vii.

[74] Raymond B. Fosdick, "The Passing of the Bertillon System of Identification," *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology* 6:3 (1915): 364.

[75] Cole, *Suspect Identities*, 52-53.

By the 1920s, the Bertillon system was replaced throughout much of the U.S. and Europe by finger printing, for which the British colonial police (and their native clerks) in India had developed an indexing system.[76] However, while the anthropometric and indexing aspects of Bertillon's system largely became obsolete, his standardized use of photography, and its accompanying slang label "mug shots," remain to this day.[77] For others, Bertillon's legacy is not just in the mug shot genre, but in the prevailing culture of surveillance and documentation; as visual culture scholar Allan Sekula writes, "'Bertillon survives in the operations of the national security state, in the condition of intensive and extensive surveillance that characterizes both everyday life and the geopolitical sphere."[78] Here, Bertillon's global reach is apparent.

Despite significant destruction of archives during Cambodia's civil war, some documentation remains on the use of the Bertillon system in French Cambodia.[79] A 1905 article published in the American magazine *Public Opinion* reveals how the previously mentioned characterization of the French Protectorate of Cambodia as a police surveillance state was linked

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[76] A 1903 controversy in which the identities of two suspected criminals, Will West and William West, were conflated in the Bertillon system contributed to the system's demise. Joe Nickell, *Camera Clues: A Handbook for Photographic Investigation* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1994).

[77] Indeed, as Simon A. Cole asserts, "It is because of Bertillon's belief in the identifying potential of the ear that today's mug shots include the profile." Cole, *Suspect Identities,* 43. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the slang use of "mug" to mean face is "perhaps in allusion to the drinking mugs made to represent a grotesque human face which were common in the 18th century." Jennifer Green-Lewis has suggested that the contemporary use of the term implies that the "the subject is being 'mugged,' or assaulted, by the camera." Jennifer Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 200. Many vestiges of the Bertillon system remain in archives scattered throughout the United States, as detailed in Paige "B" Gridack, "Bringing Bertillon Back: The Preservation and Research Application of Bertillon Materials in Museums, Archives and Historical Societies," *Journal of Archival Organization* (February 2010): 188-213.

[78] Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39 (Winter 1986): 62.

[79] Other evidence may exist in the National Archives of France, which I was unable to visit for the purposes of this dissertation.

to the implementation of the Bertillon system in Cambodia. The article, which can be justly classified as anti-Chinese propaganda in the wake of Chinese immigration to the U.S., details how the French colonial government in Cambodia required Chinese immigrants to "submit to the indignity of the Bertillon system of identification." The article continues, "This is done in a remarkably thorough manner, and a careful record is kept of every immigrant up to the time of his death or his departure from the colony. When the coolie is hired under yearly contract the contractor or employer may receive from the authorities copies of the Bertillon record. This admits of absolute identification."[80] Here, the evidence is not just of the system being used to document criminals, but to classify the ethnicity of and keep track of migrant laborers in the Protectorate. Similarly, a monograph on the growth of rubber plantations in colonial Cambodia published in 2007 by historian Margaret Slocomb confirms this use of Bertillon's system in the Protectorate. The book includes two mug shots of migrant Tonkinese laborers (or "coolies" as they were derogatorily called) taken in the 1920s by the colonial police force in Cambodia, confirming the adaptation of at least some aspects of the system as an instrument of colonial control in the region in the 1920s.[81] Most significantly, while earlier mug shots are missing, the National Archives of Cambodia has ample documentation to show aspects of the Bertillon system were fully in place in the French colony in the 1930s and 1940s.[82] Approved order request forms for new supplies of photographic identity cards in order to document the Chinese residents of the Cambodian provinces of Kampong Cham (1936) and Kampot (1937) confirm the

[80] Unattributed, "Dealing with the Yellow Peril in Indo-China," *Public Opinion* (September 23, 1905): 401.
[81] Margaret Slocomb, *Colons and Coolies: The Development of Cambodia's Rubber Plantations* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2007), back cover.
[82] These records may never have been deposited at the National Archives of Cambodia or may have been destroyed during the Cambodian civil war; it is impossible to determine.

use of Bertillonage to keep track of ethnic minorities in the French protectorate.[83] By 1940, there is clear evidence that parts of the system were in use in prisons in Phnom Penh. Twenty-nine extant Bertillon cards from 1939 and 1940 in the National Archives of Cambodia show that while the Bertillon cards were in widespread use, as were the standardized mug shot and fingerprints, little information other than birth date and height was recorded on the Bertillon card itself; the spaces to record measurements of body parts remain curiously blank (*figures 2.7; 2.8*).[84] The mug shots on these cards show the prisoners from both front and side views, head resting in a Bertillon metal arm (arising from a Bertillon measuring chair, as is visible in *figure 2.8*), the prisoners wearing placards that show a registration number, date of arrest, and, very often, a name. The empty spaces for measurements are at the top of the card, the photos were attached to the middle, and the bottom has the prisoner's fingerprints. Each Bertillon card itself was also formerly attached to a more detailed arrest record including history of previous arrests and time served, profession (overwhelmingly listed as "coolie"), and a section for "particularites" where the size and placement of facial warts is described in detail.[85] The collation of the Bertillon cards with the larger arrest record sheets reveals that Bertillon's indexing system, in which the cards were to be organized alone in special file cabinets, was not in place in Cambodian prisons by 1940. Yet despite the loss of some aspects of bertillonage, it is clear from these archival traces that the adaptation of standardized mug shots taken in a

[83] Request from Resident de Kompong Cham to Resident Superieur Phnom Penh for "Fourniture des photos d'identite des chinois residant dans la province de Kompong Cham," November 12, 1936, file number 31386 and Request from Resident de Kampot to Resident Superieur Phnom Penh for "Fourniture de photographie d'identite pour les chinois resident a Kampot," May 13, 1937, file number 31378, National Archives of Cambodia.
[84] Bertillon Cards, 1939-1940, National Archives of Cambodia, Folder PA1.
[85] No longer attached with glue, the Bertillon cards and their accompanying arrest record are now housed together in plastic folders at the National Archives of Cambodia.

specialized Bertillon chair and measurements of the height of prisoners were in place in colonial Cambodia.

Having now described the development of the Bertillon system and its adaptation in French colonial Cambodia, this chapter will now turn to the use of at least some aspects of the system by the Khmer Rouge. Visual evidence and eyewitness accounts directly link aspects of the Bertillon system to the Khmer Rouge's documentation of prisoners. Clearly the vestiges of Bertillon are apparent wherever a standardized mug shot is found, but more specifically, the Tuol Sleng mug shots show an adherence to Bertillon's recommendations for photographs in terms of their standardization. Furthermore, the Khmer Rouge's taking of measurements (as previously detailed in the testimony by Tuol Sleng survivors Chum Mey, Bou Meng, and Vann Nath) and the actual instruments and furniture used for such measurements (*figures 2.9 and 2.10*) can be traced back to bertillonage.[86] Similarly, other administrative elements at Tuol Sleng can be traced to French colonial policing techniques; Chandler writes that the confession statements extracted from prisoners at Tuol Sleng "resemble prerevolutionary Cambodian police reports [that] draw on the French police tradition of the *process verbale*… [and] include such colonial-era idiosyncrasies as spelling out dates, calling the prisoner 'the named,' and so on."[87] Given all of this historical, visual, and testimonial evidence, it is clear that the Tuol Sleng mug shots trace

[86] However, there is no evidence to show that Bertillon's detailed indexing system was used at Tuol Sleng; it is unclear if the indexing component of Bertillon's system was ever adopted in colonial Cambodia.

[87] Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 88. However, while Chandler posits that Duch and his colleagues at Tuol Sleng implemented such colonial vestiges as mug shots in an attempt to create a modern and efficient prison bureaucracy, their adaptation was not "a straight-forward extension of prerevolutionary police procedures." Rather, the administration of Tuol Sleng reveals a mixture of the influence of French colonial policing techniques, the communist obsession with confession and self-criticism, and a uniquely Cambodian manifestation of totalitarianism. Chandler writes, "S-21, therefore, like DK [the Khmer Rouge regime] itself, was a Cambodian, Communist, imported, twentieth-century phenomenon." Chandler, *Voices from S-21,* 152.

their lineage back to the Bertillion system of identifying and indexing criminals. Yet while this investigation has examined the form of the Tuol Sleng mug shots, it has not yet examined their function. In light of the complex colonial history of the mug shot genre, this chapter will now turn to their social function within Tuol Sleng.

The Social Function of Khmer Rouge Mug Shots

Scholars of the Khmer Rouge from a range of fields have theorized about the social function the Tuol Sleng mug shots performed with the prison bureaucracy. For example, David Chandler and Stephen Heder have proposed that, in light of the Khmer Rouge's restarting of time at Year Zero, the detailed records created at Tuol Sleng were to be used as archival sources for the creation of an extensive history of the regime.[88] Others, like anthropologist Alexander Hinton, have suggested that Khmer Rouge documentation reveals the combination of a modernist faith in bureaucracy with a uniquely Cambodian cultural tradition of "disproportionate revenge."[89] This chapter seeks not to refute or deny these claims, but rather adds to this conversation by investigating the function of the Tuol Sleng mug shots in light of two main bodies of theory: a Foucauldian analysis of the state's discursive creation of the criminal body applied to photographic archives as influenced by the work of John Tagg and Allan Sekula; and Hannah Arendt's conception of bureaucracy, mass murder, and the banality of evil. Throughout, this section argues that the mug shots played an important social function within Tuol Sleng, both by transforming the suspects depicted in them into criminals and by creating a layer of

[88] Ibid., 50.
[89] Alexander Laban Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?: Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

bureaucracy which separated the administrative order to kill from actual violence, thereby enabling Tuol Sleng staff to commit mass murder.

Two visual culture scholars—John Tagg and Allan Sekula—have written extensively about the social function the Bertillon system in general and mug shots specifically played within police departments in the U.S., the U.K., and France. Both of these authors link the indexical function of photography with a Foucauldian analysis of the discursive power of the state to create criminal subjects. Building on the foundation set by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*, both Tagg's and Sekula's work speaks to the power of discourse to produce subjectivity through institutional practice.[90] Through a set of rhetorical claims and institutional practices, discourses are created that determine not only how certain subjects are thought of and spoken about, but how they are acted upon. Thus for example, the practices embedded within the modern prison create a category of people—prisoners—who are then talked about and acted upon in particular ways: reformed, punished, disciplined, watched, corrected, and/ or made docile.[91] Similarly, in the late nineteenth century, the discourse surrounding photography as an instrument of realism created a particular "regime of truth" which produced our notion of photographs as scientific evidence.[92] This chapter extends Tagg's and Sekula's Foucauldian analysis of the nexus of prisons and photography to the function of the mug shots taken at Tuol Sleng, arguing that the mug shots, as an integral part of a larger bureaucratic institution, served a discursive function in turning arrestees brought to Tuol Sleng into criminal subjects.

Tagg's and Sekula's work on the function of the Bertillion system in the American and European contexts sheds light on the production of mug shots at Tuol Sleng. Tagg posits that in

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[90] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.
[91] Foucault's phrase "docile bodies" is particularly apt here. Ibid.
[92] Gillian Rose has two chapters on the Foucauldian discourse analysis of visual images that are particularly helpful in decoding Foucault. Rose, *Visual Methodologies*, Chapters Six and Seven.

bertillonage we see a confluence of science, the state, and the image, such that, "In a tightening knot, the local state pulled together the instrumentalities of repression and surveillance, the scientific claims of social engineering, and the humanistic rhetoric of social reform."[93] The use of photography by institutions like the prison, the hospital, and the school, here exemplified by the codified genre of the mug shot, was key to this process of scientific classification.[94] Building on Tagg's work, Sekula reveals how the early adoption and practice of photography by penal, medical, and colonial institutions are embedded within a scientific truth regime such that photography became an institutional technology for the construction of particular types of human subjectivities such as the criminal, the ill, the poor. Sekula astutely writes:

> With the rise of the modern social sciences, a regularized flow of symbolic and material power is engineered between fully-human subject and less-than-fully-human object along vectors of race, sex, and class. The social-scientific appropriation of photography led to a genre I would call *instrumental realism*, representational projects devoted to new techniques of social diagnosis and control, to the systematic naming, categorization, and isolation of an otherness thought to be determined by biology and manifested through the "language" of the body itself. Early anthropological, criminological, and psychiatric photography… constitute ambitious attempts to link optical empiricism with abstract, statistical truth, to move from the specificity of the body to abstract, mathematical laws of human nature. Thus photography was hitched to the locomotive of positivism.[95]

For Sekula, the camera was constructed as a truth apparatus firmly placed within a larger system of "archival rationalization." Through its central place in logical systems of measurement, classification, indexing, and retrieval, the camera became a scientific instrument constructed to record the truth.

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[93] John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 62.

[94] In fact, Bertillon's indexing and measurement system evolved out of his initial interest in standardizing police photography; his 1890 handbook on police photography, *La Photographie Judiciaire*, predates the adoption and publication of his indexing system. Alphonse Bertillon, *La Photographie Judiciaire*, (Paris, Gauthier-Villars Et Fils: 1890).

[95] Allan Sekula, "The Traffic in Photographs," *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self*, Coco Fusco and Brian Wallis, eds., (New York: International Center for Photography, 2003), 81-82.

In this examination of mug shots, art historian Brian Wallis's distinction between portrait and type is key; though of individuals, mug shots are meant to produce objective, scientific, publically accessible types rather than individual, private, humanistic portraits. Unlike portraits, the types produced by the mug shots are "fundamentally nonreciprocal… the subject [in them] already positioned, known, owned, represented, spoken for, or constructed as silent."[96] Of course not every subject depicted in a mug shot conforms to this silencing; as Peter Doyle explores in Australian police photographs from the 1910s and 1920s, many depicted criminal suspects found ways to assert their selfhood, transforming mug shots into portraits in defiance of the police photographers.[97] Still, the growth and standardization of police photographs signaled a switch in photography's history; as Tagg writes, "It was no longer a privilege to be pictured but the burden of a new class to be surveilled."[98]

Both Tagg and Sekula emphasize the discursive power of the Bertillon mug shots, detailing how photography not only documents reality, but creates it, simultaneously recording arrests and producing subjects as criminals. By capturing information and classifying it, Bertillon transformed photography into an archival instrument to know and thereby control the criminal body, both individually and in aggregate. As Tagg writes:

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[96] Brian Wallis, "Black Bodies, White Science: Louis Agassiz's Slave Daguerreotypes," *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self*, Coco Fusco and Brian Wallis, eds., (New York: International Center for Photography, 2003), 177. Similarly, Shawn Michelle Smith has noted the simultaneous growth in popularity in the U.S. of the criminal mug shot and the middle class portrait at the end of the nineteenth century. Shawn Michelle Smith, *American Archives: Gender, Race, and Class in Visual Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999). Sekula describes these two genres—mug shots and portraits—as mirror images, or shadow archives; he writes, "every proper portrait has its lurking, objectifying inverse in the files of the police." Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39 (Winter 1986): 7.

[97] A similar argument could be made of many of the Tuol Sleng mug shots, despite the absolute authoritarian nature of the Tuol Sleng administration. Peter Doyle, "Public Eye, Private Eye: Sydney Police Mug Shots, 1912-1930," *Scan Journal* 1:1 (January 2004): 1-30.

[98] Tagg, *The Burden of Representation*, 59.

> What we have in this standardised image is more than a picture of a supposed criminal. It is a portrait of the product of the disciplinary method: the body made object; divided and studied; enclosed in a cellular structure of space whose architecture is the file-index; made docile and forced to yield up its truth; separated and individuated; subjected and made subject. When accumulated, such images amount to a new representation of society.[99]

Yet while Tagg focused on the discursive power of the camera, for Sekula, photography is only one component of a larger archival system that aimed to produce the criminal body. "The central artifact of this system is not the camera, but the filing cabinet," Sekula writes.[100] In Sekula's view, "photography was to be both an object and means of bibliographic rationalization," which "rel[ied] heavily on the archival model for its legitimacy."[101] In other words, the "vast taxonomic ordering of images of the body" made possible by Bertillon was not just a photographic promise, but "an archival promise," as Sekula writes.[102] Such "archival rationalization," enabled in part by mug shots, reveals the fundamentally transformative nature of record creation in that it turns people and objects into documents that can be managed.[103]

This transformation is inherently political. As Tagg writes, "Like the state, the camera is never neutral."[104] Rather, the camera, particularly when it was employed by the institutions of the state, performed the political work of turning individuals into silent objects to be measured and indexed, human beings into types to be classified, and arrestees into criminals to be reformed

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[99] Ibid., 76.
[100] Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 16.
[101] Ibid., 57.
[102] Ibid., 16.
[103] In the words of Craig Robertson, "To locate archives within a larger process makes it apparent that archives do not neutrally store documents, but rather in capturing them, archives transform objects into knowledge." Craig Robertson, "The Archive, Disciplinarity, and Governing: Cultural Studies and the Writing of History," *Critical Studies, Critical Methodologies* 4:4 (2004): 453.
[104] Tagg*, The Burden of Representation*, 63.

and/or punished. In short, photography was key to the creation of the political discourse surrounding criminality at the turn of the twentieth century and beyond.

Applying these insights to the Tuol Sleng mug shots, we see how photography at the Khmer Rouge prison was essential in creating the discourse of criminality surrounding the prisoners. In the circular logic of the Khmer Rouge, the regime was infallible and those who were arrested and brought to Tuol Sleng were transformed into criminals by the creation of records (such as mug shots and confession statements) that attested to their criminality. The journalist Nic Dunlop writes, "Once prisoners were captured in the frame, they were no longer in possession of their lives…. For the prisoner at S-21, once they were photographed, they could never be anything but guilty—a kind of trial by camera. They had surrendered the last vestige of their individual identities to the Organization."[105] Through the click of Nhem En's camera, the arrestees became criminals, types rather than individuals, objects spoken for rather than human beings with voices. Such is also true for other forms of records at Tuol Sleng. As Cambodia scholar Penny Edwards writes about the Tuol Sleng confession statements, "The subject was made to speak so that her or his loudness could be made silent, absorbed on paper, sandwiched between cardboard, stacked on a shelf."[106] By extension, the Tuol Sleng prisoner was made visible by the mug shot only to be rendered invisible through death. In this way, the Tuol Sleng administration was a circular, self-fulfilling bureaucracy that justified its own existence by creating the criminals it sought to condemn. Just as Jorge Daniel Veneciano writes that, "torture will always succeed in finding *or* creating that which it seeks," the camera lens of the totalitarian regime will also succeed in finding or creating the criminality it seeks; the camera itself—and the

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[105] Nic Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005), 148.
[106] Penny Edwards, *Cambodge: The Cultivation of a Nation, 1860-1945* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), 4.

records it produces—are the instruments through which the institution produces that criminality.[107] The camera, as a truth apparatus of the totalitarian Khmer Rouge state, was invested with the power to produce the truth it recorded.[108]

In the context of Tuol Sleng, the camera both recorded and produced criminality, transforming arrestees into criminal types who deviated from the Cambodian ideal in ways that could be measured, indexed, and deemed criminal. This fits within the larger Khmer Rouge goal of promoting the Cambodian peasant ideal. As Edwards writes of Khmer Rouge ideals and the suppression of ethnic minorities under the regime, "It was not enough to *be* a Cambodian, born on the land: one had to speak, act, dress, and perform according to an ideal—that of the Original Khmer."[109] By virtue of being photographed at Tuol Sleng, the prisoners were classified not as "Original Khmers," but as others—criminals, traitors, and enemies of the state. In this way, the process of creating criminals at Tuol Sleng through the creation of records was part of a much larger Khmer Rouge system of classification that divided society along class lines into new people and old (or base) people, and along ethnic lines into Chinese, Vietnamese, Khmer Krom, and Cham and "Original Khmers."[110] As Eric D. Weitz reports, Khmer Rouge officials in some regions further divided their labor force into "bandits" (attempted escapees), "full-strength" workers and "weak-strength" workers. Weitz further characterizes the Khmer Rouge as having "an unrelenting drive to place every individual in a clearly defined category," such that

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[107] Jorge Daniel Veneciano, "Tuol Sleng, Abu Ghraib, and the Discourse of Torture," *Night of the Khmer Rouge: Genocide and Justice in Cambodia,* Jorge Daniel Veneciano and Alexander Hinton, eds., (Newark: Rutgers, 2007), 56.
[108] Penny Edwards makes a similar argument. Edwards, *Cambodge: The Cultivation of a Nation,* 4.
[109] Ibid. 1.
[110] Elsewhere, I have detailed the Khmer Rouge's ethnic classifications and its ramifications for genocide charges. Michelle Caswell, "Using Classification to Convict the Khmer Rouge," *Journal of Documentation*, forthcoming.

"categorization was an ideological and political process by which the regime identified its supporters and enemies, real or imagined."[111] The taking of mug shots at Tuol Sleng and their ability to transform suspects into criminal enemies of the state, was part and parcel of this larger Khmer Rouge obsession with classifying the population in an effort to create a purely Cambodian agrarian society.

Hannah Arendt and the Banality of Evil

Now that the discursive function of the Tuol Sleng mug shots has been explored, this chapter turns to their bureaucratic function. Elsewhere, I have employed Hannah Arendt's conception of the banality of evil to argue that bureaucratic records that order and document mass murder are what, in part, enabled Khmer Rouge bureaucrats to commit mass murder by isolating them from the consequences of their actions.[112] While I do not intend to repeat that same argument at length here, I would like to build on it by highlighting the bureaucratic function the mug shots performed within the Tuol Sleng administration as a way to examine their social function within the context of a totalitarian state. In the midst of a radically agrarian, Maoist regime, why such an emphasis on documentation in general and mug shots specifically? As part of the bureaucracy of a total institution like Tuol Sleng, the mug shots (and other forms of obsessive documentation) helped facilitate mass murder by alienating decision makers from the violence of their decisions. In this way, the mug shots functioned bureaucratically in three ways: first, they dehumanized people by reducing them to paper; secondly, they allowed for specific actions to be routinized and compartmentalized, thus distancing bureaucrats from the

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[111] Eric D. Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 161.
[112] Michelle Caswell, "Hannah Arendt's World: Bureaucracy, Documentation, and Banal Evil," *Archivaria* 70 (Fall 2010): 1-25.

larger murderous goal of their discrete tasks; and third, they encouraged a culture of thoughtlessness at the prison. Thus, through recordkeeping, bureaucrats are alienated from the fruit of their labors, both practically (by issuing the orders that designate someone further down the chain of command to torture a prisoner) and socially (orders for murder become nothing more than routine paperwork in a culture of obedience and efficiency).

In its emphasis on secrecy, allegiance, and isolation, Tuol Sleng was a total institution of the type described by both Erving Goffman and Michel Foucault.[113] Within this total institution, mug shots operated as a part of larger administrative reporting system in which people were reduced to paper. Nic Dunlop, the journalist who tracked Duch down for the first time since the regime's 1979 collapse, has suggested that using reusable batch numbers rather than unique identification numbers further transformed individuals into expendable numbers, adding to a seemingly endless workload for prison staff. "The numbers had replaced their names," he writes.[114] Yet, not only did the batch numbers replace the names of prisoners, but their mug shots replaced their physical bodies, the enduring record outlasting the people depicted in them. Captured as mug shots, prisoners could be shuffled around, discussed by the upper echelons of the Khmer Rouge regime, and their fates determined by administrative order. In a 1999 interview, Duch himself claimed that he ordered the mug shots to be taken in order to keep track of prisoners so that he could reassure his own bosses that no one who was arrested was let go, and that if any did escape, they would be caught.[115] This confirms Rachel Hughes's assertion

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[113] Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situations of Patients and Other Inmates* (Piscataway, NJ: Aldine Transaction, 2007), and Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*: *The Birth of the Prison*, (New York: Random House, 1977).
[114] Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 149.
[115] Duch's exact words were: "When a new detainee arrived at S-21, he was immediately photographed. This was to protect myself, and also, if the prisoner escaped, with the photograph, it would be easier to catch him back." David Chandler, Interview with Kaing Guek Eav, Also

that, "The meticulous production of the prison portraits was an important element of administrative control… reinforc[ing] the total institution," and serving as "emblems of the regime's omnipotence and efficiency."[116]

The creation of the archives, the bureaucratic function that produced and saved records ordering and documenting mass murder, is what, in part, isolated the "desk murderers" from the "administrative massacres" they ordered (in the words of Arendt).[117] Documents like mug shots allow for specific actions to be compartmentalized, thus distancing bureaucrats from the larger goal of their discrete tasks. Bureaucrats receive written orders to carry out specific compartmentalized tasks, the completion of which they must again document, and administer the next compartmentalized task through written orders to the closest subordinate level of bureaucrat. The larger bureaucratic machine functions through an elaborate system of documentation. Records are the media through which procedures are routinized; records enable repetition, which leads to "the nearly universal ability to make any activity into a routine that deadens the awareness of what is being done."[118] It is for this precise reason that the Khmer Rouge were such meticulous record keepers; through obsessive documentation they were able to transform the everyday, banal practice of recordkeeping into one in which mass murder was normalized. It is the records themselves that enable people to commit atrocious acts they normally would not perpetrate. Thus, through recordkeeping, Khmer Rouge bureaucrats like Son

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Known as Duch, Chairman of S-21, April-May 1999, 22. Available via David Chandler Cambodia Collection, Monash University Library, http://arrow.monash.edu.au/vital/access/manager/Collection/monash:64226, accessed December 20, 2011.

[116] Rachel Hughes, "The Abject Artefacts of Memory: Photographs from Cambodia's Genocide," *Media Culture Society* 25:23 (2003): 25.

[117] Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin, 2006).

[118] George Kateb, *Hannah Arendt: Politics, Conscience, Evil* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), 73.

Sen and Duch were alienated from the murderous fruit of their labors in that the orders they issued would designate someone further down the chain of command to torture and kill prisoners.

The culture of obsessive documentation (of which mug shots were a fundamental part) allowed Duch not only to order torture without direct involvement, but also report such torture back to his superiors, garnering their favor and demonstrating his efficiency. By fulfilling this function, the mug shots (and other documentation) are agents in the elaborate bureaucratic death machine. While historians once debated the degree to which the Khmer Rouge maintained a hierarchical, centralized power structure, new documents uncovered by DC-Cam demonstrate the consolidated nature of power under the regime.[119] Under Pol Pot, a clearly delineated hierarchy unfolded in which officials in the upper echelons were known not only by their revolutionary names, but also by numbered monikers, such as Brother Number 2, etc. While Duch was not high-ranking enough to serve on Pol Pot's National Security Committee, he did receive orders from, and reported back to, the Committee in a strict chain of command. As Duch himself has said, "The decisions to kill were made not by one man, not just Pol Pot, but the entire central committee…. Pol Pot knew about S-21, but did not direct it personally. He left that job to Nuon Chea as No. 2 in the party and to Son Sen as head of the army and police."[120] Khmer Rouge security documents corroborate this chain of command, revealing, in the words of Craig Etcheson, "a centralized execution system operated at high efficiency over the entire course of

[119] Craig Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields: Lessons from the Cambodian Genocide* (Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech University Press, 2005), 54.
[120] Kaing Guek Eav ("Duch"), as quoted in Etcheson, Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields*, 83.

the … regime."[121] In this consolidated hierarchy in which every cadre knew their place, the order to kill was separated by the act of murder by several chains of command.

As Arendt's commentary on the Eichmann case demonstrated, strict recordkeeping in a centralized bureaucracy enables mid-level managers to delegate gruesome acts so that their direct involvement in torture or murder is minimal. Curiously, Duch testified in the early weeks of his trial that the only time he stepped inside Tuol Sleng was during a recent visit he made to the Genocide Museum (housed in the former Tuol Sleng complex) during the investigative phase of the trial.[122] Later, Duch testified that, "while he was not directly involved in the daily operation of S-21, he did receive daily updates," revealing how documents such as daily torture summaries enabled Duch to efficiently run the facility without getting blood on his hands. Furthermore, "Duch confirmed that 'noxious odors' dominated S-21 but that he himself did not go inside the facility."[123] Again, Duch was physically distant from the realities of torture, thanks to written reports from his inferiors. Later, Duch denied having participated in any interrogations, with two exceptions. As the *KRT Trial Monitor* reported:

> The accused persistently dissociated himself from both the decision-making and the actual implementation of the execution process. He steadfastly maintained that the upper echelon had already decided that the people sent to S-21 were to be smashed. He claimed that the only thing he could do was turn a blind-eye to the torture and killing at S-21, and refrain from participating in its daily operations. Duch maintained that he only witnessed killings when specifically ordered to do so.[124]

Repeatedly, Duch asserted that he had never killed anyone himself. Kok Sros, a former guard at S-21, also testified that he never witnessed Duch interrogate, torture, or execute detainees, and

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[121] Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields,* 78–79.
[122] Asian Justice Initiative, *The KRT Trial Monitor*, Report Issue No. 4 (April 26, 2009): 2.
[123] Asian Justice Initiative, *The KRT Trial Monitor*, Report Issue No. 9 (21 June 2009): 3.
[124] Asian Justice Initiative, *The KRT Trial Monitor*, Report Issue No. 9 (21 June 2009): 7.

that Duch merely walked past detention cells and watched from the outside.[125] What enabled Duch to "watch from the outside" was the culture of documentation at S-21, ensuring that no important detail would escape the daily reports he received from his inferiors. For example, daily "execution logs," signed by both Duch's deputy director and the chief guard at S-21, reported the names of prisoners executed that day, while "torture logs" reported the names of prisoners tortured that day, the techniques used, and their duration, as well as confession statements obtained as a result of such torture.[126] Such documents allowed Duch to efficiently monitor the daily operations of Tuol Sleng, while distancing and, ultimately, alienating him, from the gruesome acts he ordered.

In turn, such exact and detailed documentation allowed Duch to report up the chain of command to his superiors. Duch testified, for example, that photographs of disemboweled prisoners were "requested by the upper echelons in order to confirm the execution" and that other photographs of dead prisoners were taken "in anticipation of superiors' inquiries."[127] Similarly, during the trial, "Duch confirmed that the purpose of the interrogation was to obtain confessions about traitorous acts," which were then "used to both justify the arrest as well as apprehend others who were implicated."[128] Thus, by documenting confessions (obtained through torture), Duch and his staff at S-21 were able to prove to the upper echelons that their own top-level decisions regarding arrests were prudent, thereby reaffirming the omniscience of the highest-ranking Khmer Rouge leaders; while the use of the records was to document killings, the

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[125] Asian Justice Initiative, *The KRT Trial Monitor*, Report Issue No. 15 (August 2, 2009): 3.
[126] Craig Etcheson describes a particularly gruesome execution log from 23 July 1977, which lists the names of eighteen prisoners killed that day, as well as a handwritten note from the chief guard at the bottom of the log that reads, "Also killed 160 children today for a total of 178 enemies killed." Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields*, 83.
[127] Asian Justice Initiative, *The KRT Trial Monitor*, Report Issue No. 9 (June 21, 2009): 6.
[128] Ibid., 4.

purpose was to flatter the upper echelon. In this twisted tautology, when a high-ranking Khmer Rouge leader suspected someone of being a traitor, that person had to be tortured so that he would confess, so that his confession would serve as written proof confirming the original suspicion. The truth of such confessions was irrelevant; what ultimately mattered was the existence of the document, not its underlying truth or fallacy. As Duch testified, he believed "only 50% of the confessions obtained at S-21 were true … that only 20% of their implications were accurate … [and that] even the upper echelon at one time did not believe in the truthfulness of the confessions."[129] In this way, documentation surpassed truth, replacing lived reality with a dangerous and steadfast belief in the infallibility of records.

Documentation like the mug shots also encouraged a culture of thoughtlessness in which administrators did not question the morality of their actions. Here, Arendt's analysis of the banality of evil continues to provide insight into the minds of seemingly ordinary individuals who commit murder on an incomprehensible scale. Arendt, deeply troubled with reconciling the frail and inane Eichmann on trial with the calculating and murderous Eichmann who organized the Holocaust, shifted her own prior conceptions of radical evil to explain how a new category of thoughtless bureaucrats became capable of committing mass murder. She wrote:

> The trouble with Eichmann was precisely that so many were like him, and that the many were neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were, and still are, terribly and terrifyingly normal. From the viewpoint of our legal institutions and of our moral standards of judgment, this normality was much more terrifying than all the atrocities put together, for it implied… that this new type of criminal… commits his crimes under circumstances that make it well-nigh impossible to know or to feel that he is doing wrong.[130]

In this new conception, the opposite of evil is not good, but thought. It is thoughtfulness, not goodness *per se*, that allows human beings to question the ethical basis of the larger society and

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[129] Ibid.
[130] Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 276.

to resist orders that run contrary to personal morality. The thinking individual, according to Arendt, maintains moral judgment and an ethical basis for action even when society's values are skewed enough to endorse mass murder. Arendt constructs the banal, bureaucratic murderer, as epitomized by Eichmann, as a uniquely modern form of criminal, alienated from the impact of his murderous efforts in the same way modern men and women are alienated both from the fruits of their labor and from the rigid goals of the bureaucratic system by which they are imprisoned. What separates the new "enemies of the human race" from the old, in Arendt's conception, is a deliberate and willful lack of awareness of the consequences of their actions engendered by modern technologies and documentary practices.

Within this centralized execution system, Duch, a former math teacher, prided himself on thoughtless obedience to his superiors. In fact, after joining the Khmer Rouge he gave himself the name Duch after an obedient schoolboy character in a Cambodian children's book. Testifying in the tribunal, he explained, "I wanted to be a well-disciplined boy who respected the teachers and did good deeds…. In my entire life, if I do something, I'll do it properly."[131] While Duch admitted some guilt and responsibility for the deaths at S-21, he repeatedly fell back on the claim that he was only following orders. Duch himself drew on the cog analogy made famous by Eichmann, claiming on the final day of his trial, "I ended up serving a criminal organization. I could not withdraw from it. I was like a cog in a machine."[132] He also testified, "everyone obeyed orders, and if you disobey orders, you run the risk of losing your life."[133] This culture of thoughtlessness in which bureaucrats simply do not question the orders they have been given is

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[131] As quoted in Seth Mydans, "Legal Strategy Fails to Hide Torturer's Pride," *The New York Times* (June 21, 2009).
[132] Seth Mydans, "Verdict Due in Khmer Rouge Trial," *The New York Times* (July 25, 2010).
[133] Asian Justice Initiative, *The KRT Trial Monitor*, Report Issue No. 3 (April 12, 2009): 3.

made possible, in part, by the reduction of people to paper, and the compartmentalization of tasks, as previously addressed.

However, in the case of Duch, the records themselves, while distancing Duch from the actual act of murder, did not create a situation in which it was "well-nigh impossible" for Duch to know the consequences of his actions. On the contrary, such gruesome photographs and reports, arriving on Duch's desk on a daily basis, made it "well-nigh impossible" for him *not* to have full knowledge of the murderous consequences of his orders. However, drawing on Arendt, the essential distinction is not between knowing and not knowing, but between knowing and thinking. While Duch clearly knew the murderous inner workings of S-21, he willfully refused to think about them.

Both the culture of documentation and the culture created *by* documentation are at issue here. For example, the records of totalitarian regimes serve not only the specific functions they directly address (such as documenting the arrival of a prisoner or ordering a prisoner to be tortured in a specific way), but also enable a culture of alienation and irresponsibility that divorces the functions of the records from their end results. Ciaran Trace has called on archivists to expand the traditional view of records as merely "by-products of activity," and to acknowledge, "the record has, as one of its functions, a strong element of social control."[134] While Trace examines records put to less sinister aims than the Khmer Rouge mug shots discussed here, her distinction between the "use" of records (whereby records carry out "a purpose or action of an organization,") and the "purpose" of records (which "encompasses the social factors that impinge upon record creation and record keeping") is helpful in understanding

[134] Ciaran B. Trace, "What is Recorded is Never Simply 'What Happened': Record Keeping in Modern Organizational Culture," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 139, 143.

the culture of recordkeeping at Tuol Sleng.[135] While the use of such records was to document prisoners and administer specific acts of violence, the purpose of such records was to transform arrestees into criminal subjects and further alienate bureaucrats from knowledge of and responsibility for mass murder. In light of this view, the mug shots are not just "the detritus of bureaucracy," but also the mode through which bureaucracy functions practically and socially.[136]

I also wish to draw here, as Trace does, on recent scholarship applying postmodern theory to archival studies to examine the greater context of record creation. Terry Cook, for example, defines archival postmodernism as "focusing on the context behind the content; on the power relationships that shape the documentary heritage; and on the document's structure, its resident and subsequent information systems, and its narrative and business-process conventions as being more important than its informational content."[137] While the informational content of the records in question here is of obvious importance, this chapter has focused on the context of the creation of records, the power relationships inherent in their creation, and the systems and conventions that dictate their creation, form, and use. As this chapter argues, the Tuol Sleng mug shots not only functioned to record prisoners, but served a social role as well. If we accept, as Trace suggests, a "framework [that] allows for an understanding of records as social entities, where records are produced, maintained, and used in socially organized ways," then we can begin to see how the Tuol Sleng mug shots not only served the specific bureaucratic functions of extracting confessions and eliminating enemies of the state, but also how the Tuol Sleng record-keeping practices served a *social* function; they both turned those arrested into enemies of the

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[135] Ibid.,153.
[136] Michael Thad Allen, "The Banality of Evil Reconsidered: SS Mid-Level Managers of Extermination through Work," *Central European History*, 30:2 (1997): 255.
[137] Terry Cook, "Fashionable Nonsense or Professional Rebirth: Postmodernism and the Practice of Archives," *Archivaria* 51 (Spring 2001): 25.

state and created a culture whereby bureaucrats were recognized, promoted, and rewarded based both on their efficiency in advancing records through the system and their ability to separate the creation of records from their ultimate use. [138]

Furthermore, the social function of the creation of these records calls into question the archival notion of impartiality, as Trace has suggested in other settings. From the traditional archival view, records are impartial "by-products of activity rather than… conscious players in the activity itself."[139] As we have seen in this exploration, the creation of these mug shots serves an active social purpose, not only recording events, but constituting events themselves. They are not impartial to the activities to which they attest, but are active discursive elements in the transformation both of Tuol Sleng arrestees into enemies of the state and of mindless bureaucrats into mass murderers.

Silences, Power, and the Community of Records

Returning to Trouillot, we can examine how silences were embedded in these mug shots at the moment of their creation and how power is implicated in these silences. The creation of these mug shots is rife with silences—both the silences of those not depicted and the silences of those depicted—and these silences are deeply linked to issues of power. Trouillot writes:

> Thus the presences and absences embodied in sources (artifacts and bodies that turn an event into fact) or archives (facts collected, thematized, and processed as documents and monuments) are neither neutral or natural. They are created. As such, they are not mere presences and absences, but mentions or silences of kinds and degrees. By silence, I mean an active and transitive process: one "silences" a fact or an individual as a silencer silences a gun. One engages in the practice of silencing. Mentions and silences are this active, dialectical counterparts of which history is the synthesis.[140]

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[138] Trace, "What is Recorded is Never Simply 'What Happened'," 152.
[139] Ibid., 139.
[140] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*: 48.

In this way, the silence embedded in these photographs is not just the natural by-product of the photographic medium itself (in the way that all photographs are silent), but rather, an active attempt by the Khmer Rouge to silence the people depicted. Yet, despite the Khmer Rouge's attempts to silence these victims, we, the contemporary viewers of these mug shots, attempt to uncover their whispers in these photographs. These silences and whispers have important implications for the archival conceptions of provenance and co-creatorship, as well as the writing of history.

While Tuol Sleng may have been at the apex of the regime's interrogation system, the Khmer Rouge did not create records documenting the deaths of the vast majority of its approximately two million victims. Trouillot writes, "Silences are inherent in history because any single event enters history with some of its constituting parts missing. Something is always left out while something else is recorded."[141] For most victims, the constitutive parts of the Khmer Rouge archive are missing. Their lasting traces take three main forms: the bones they left behind, any records such as family photographs which predate 1975 and managed to survive the regime, and the memories of their friends and family. For the Cambodians whose loved ones were not captured in the Tuol Sleng mug shots, their missing family members remain a void which cannot be filled, a question which may never be answered. For these Cambodians, the Tuol Sleng mug shots provide only the uncertainty of absence.

Yet even for the victims whose Tuol Sleng mug shots we do have, the photographs are rife with silences. As we have seen in this chapter, through these photographs, the victims were spoken about, transformed into enemies of the state, and ultimately denied both their humanity and their lives. The mug shots are not only evidence of their deaths, but evidence of their

[141] Ibid., 49.

silencing. These are records of absence that deeply implicate the power of the Khmer Rouge to not only kill, but silence their victims. In this way, the silence of these victims is not an unintended consequence of some larger bureaucratic aim, but rather, was the direct aim of the Khmer Rouge recordkeeping apparatus; the Khmer Rouge actively silenced these victims through the creation of these photographs.

In light of this active silencing and our attempts to the contrary, it is virtually impossible to uncover the whispers of the victims in these photos. This argument responds to recent calls by archival theorists, most notably Jeannette Bastian, that archivists should read against the grain to find the voices of the powerless in records created by powerful.[142] In reading against the grain, we look for ways of interpreting records that were not intended by their creators, searching for evidence of resistance, contention, and voice in the face of oppressive power. In reading the Tuol Sleng mug shots against the grain, we empathize and align ourselves with the victims they depict, but we are left with a deafening silence. While we see the photographs, not as evidence of the criminality of the prisoners (as the Khmer Rouge intended them), but rather as evidence of the criminality of the regime that took them, we strain to hear the victims' voices. Taken within a total institution within a totalitarian state, there was little room in these records for prisoners to voice resistance; we can only project our own voices on these silent witnesses. Here, we must tread carefully for fear of conferring a false sense of agency on the part of the victims; the subjects of these mug shots did not choose to be photographed, they did not have any ownership over the way they were depicted, they were acted upon against their will. In these circumstances, the idea of co-creatorship is a fallacy that grants too much agency to the subjects of these photos.

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[142] Jeannette Bastian, "Whispers in the Archives: Finding the Voices of the Colonized in the Records of the Colonizer," in *Political Pressure and the Archival Record*, Margaret Proctor et al eds., (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005), 25-43.

The people in these mug shots were transformed into enemies of the state by the act of records creation; to reinterpret the records to grant these victims creatorship is to deny the discursive power of the creation of records in a total institution.[143]

In our attempts at listening closely for the whispers of the Tuol Sleng victims, we are reminded of W.J.T. Mitchell's question: "What do pictures want?"[144] We can imagine that the people captured in these mug shots want to be exonerated, to be released, to survive. Yet, as we read them after the fact as traces of the past, we project on the pictures themselves the desire to be remembered. Here, the Tuol Sleng mug shots are materialized contradictions: they are silent photographs that speak, insentient objects with desires, lifeless things with a social life, the embodied presence of absence. In the wake of the loss created by genocide, the mug shots are inanimate surrogates for the dead with which we imbue human desires; given the legacy left by the Khmer Rouge, the images are perversely imbued with a social life that the people they portray were denied.

In the subsequent chapters, this dissertation traces the next phases in the social life of these images, exploring the ways in which these photographs are being remembered and mobilized for different aims by the international human rights community, Tuol Sleng survivors, victims' family members, and the younger generation of Cambodians. While we may never hear the whispers of the victims, we can certainly hear the voices of "the community of records" formed around these photographs as they struggle to preserve, exhibit, and deploy the mug shots for memory and justice.

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[143] However, as Chapter Four addresses, the creation of new records that incorporate the mug shots by survivors and victims family members adds another layer of agency to this situation; while the Tuol Sleng prisoners are not co-creators of their mug shots, their surviving relatives are creators of records that bear witness to the mug shots.

[144] W.J.T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?*.

Chapter Two Illustrations

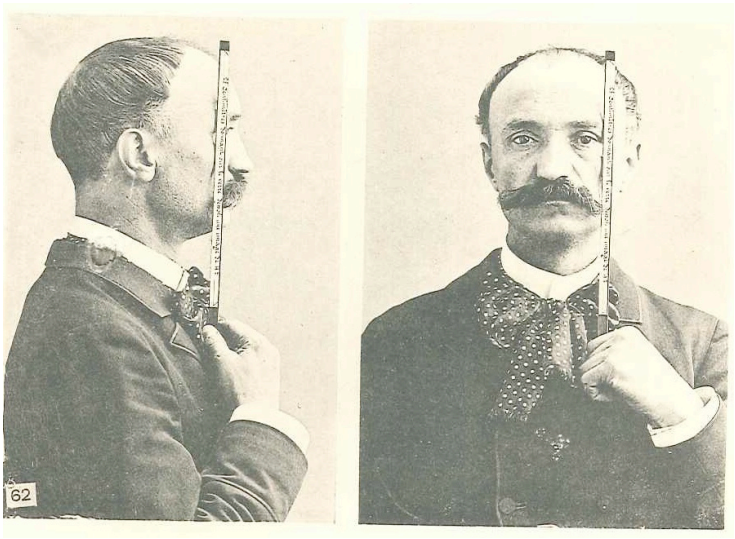

Figure 2.1: Standardized photographs from both the front and profile views in the Bertillon style. From Alphonse Bertillon, *La Photographie Judiciaire* (Paris, Gauthier-Villars Et Fils: 1890), no page number given.

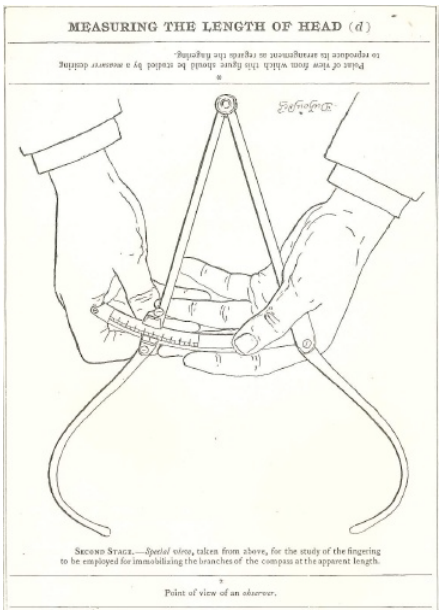

Figure 2.2: "Measuring the Length of the Head," drawing of calipers for measurement. From Alphonse Bertillon, *The Bertillon System of Identification*, Plate 11.

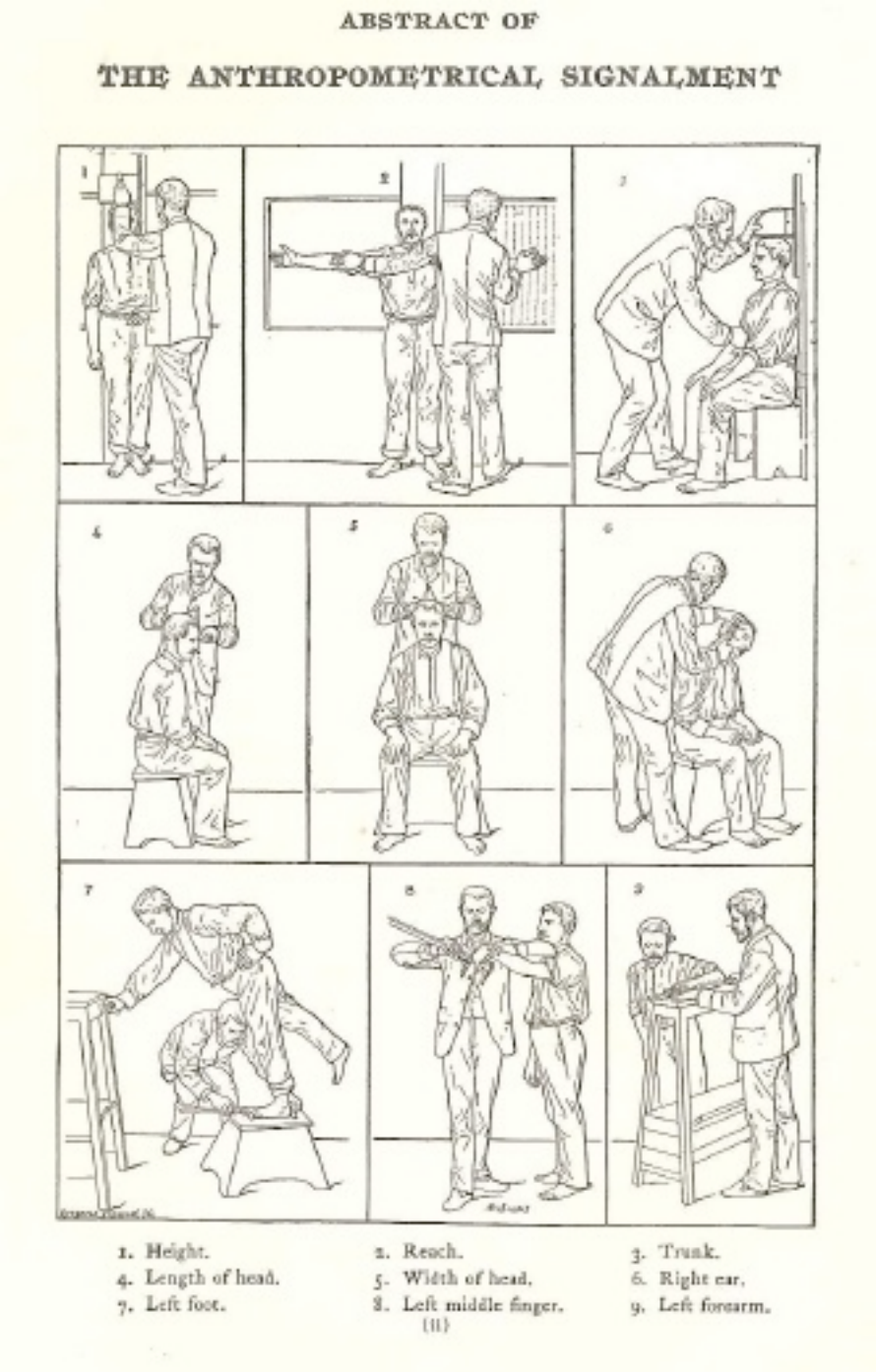

Figure 2.3: "Abstract of the Anthropological Signalment." From Alphonse Bertillon, *The Bertillon System of Identification*, Plate 11.

Figure 2.4: Photographic charts showing the different types of noses. From Alphonse Bertillon, *The Bertillon System of Identification*, Plate 33.

Figure 2.5: Measuring the Trunk. From Alphonse Bertillon, *The Bertillon System of Identification*, plate 7.

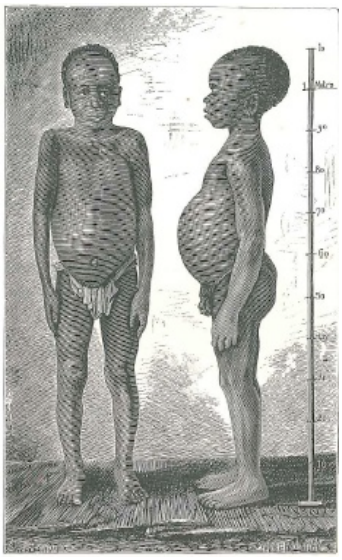

Figure 2.6: Bertillon illustration of an African man in front and profile view alongside markers measuring height. From Alphonse Bertillon, *Ethnographie Moderne: Les Races Sauvages* (Paris: Libraire de L'Academie de Medecine, 1883), 57.

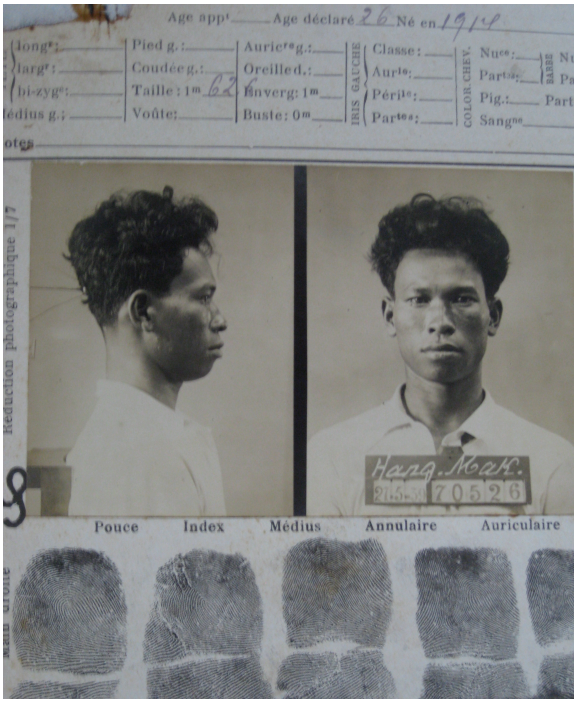

Figure 2.7: Hang Mak Identification Card, 1939. National Archives of Cambodia, Folder PA1.

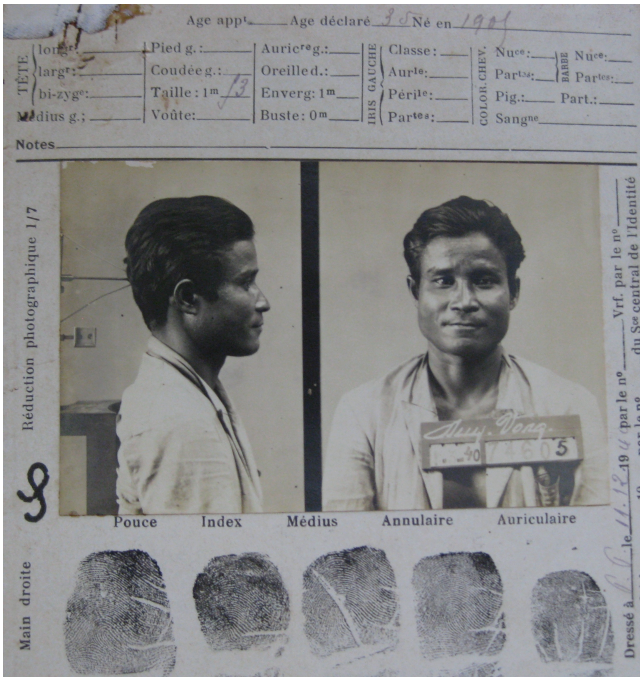

Figure 2.8 Muy Vong, Identification Card, 1940. National Archives of Cambodia, Folder PA1.

Figure 2.9: Photograph of Measurement Chair in Display Case at Tuol Sleng with Chan Kim Srun Mug Shots, December 29, 2011. Photo taken by the author.

Figure 2.10: Tuol Sleng Mug Shot of Chan Kim Srun showing measurement chair in use. As reprinted in Documentation Center of Cambodia, *Searching for the Truth* 4 (2003): 2.

Chapter 3

The Making of Archives

> "A lot of people think the death of Pol Pot is the end of the Khmer Rouge**…** . That's not true**…** . [Many other Khmer Rouge leaders are] still at large. We should not let them escape justice. I have 150,000 pages of high-level documents and I can get them to any lawyer in the world by e-mail within 15 minutes."
>
> –Youk Chhang, Director, Documentation Center of Cambodia[1]

> "You stupid idiot, why didn't you burn all those archives?"
>
> –Nuon Chea, the second highest ranking official in the Khmer Rouge to Duch, Head of Tuol Sleng, as quoted by Ben Kiernan[2]

While Chapter Two addressed the creation of Tuol Sleng mug shots as records, Chapter Three turns to the archivization of these records, or the process by which the mug shots were collected, preserved, and presented as archives. For Trouillot, archives are institutions of immense social power in that they both "organize facts and sources" and "condition the possibility of existence of historical statements."[3] In Trouillot's view, there is no significant distinction between the Foucauldian definition of the archive as "the first law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events,"[4] and the physical (and now digital) collection of material traces of the past; rather, the existence and assembly of physical materials in archives dictate which statements about the past historians can render true and which are deemed false. Trouillot writes:

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[1] Seth Mydans, "Death of Pol Pot: The Analysis," *The New York Times* (17 April 1998).
[2] Nuon Chea, the former second highest ranking official in the Khmer Rouge to Duch, former Head of the Santebal Secret Police, as quoted by Ben Kiernan in "Cambodia and Its Documentation" (lecture, Global Resources Network Conference and Forum, Yale University, March 24, 2005), http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/globalrecord/new_web/kiernan_richie.html#text
[3] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 52.
[4] Michel Foucault, *Archeology of Knowledge*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 129.

> Archives assemble. Their assembly work is not limited to a more or less passive act of collecting. Rather, it is an active act of production that prepares facts for historical intelligibility. Archives… are the institutionalized sites of mediation between the sociohistorical process and the narrative about that process. They enforce the constraints on "debatability"… they convey authority and set the rules for credibility and interdependence; they help select the stories that matter.[5]

Following Trouillot's lead, this chapter views archives as "the institutionalized sites of mediation between the sociohistorical process and the narrative about that process" and the assembly of Tuol Sleng mug shots into archives as an ongoing and often contested process influenced by a variety of social, political and historical factors. Using Trouillot's claims that the inclusion of materials in archives is intertwined with the power to determine historic facts, this chapter traces the processes by which Khmer Rouge mug shots became (physical and digital) archival collections. From their initial inclusion and exhibition in the Vietnamese-run Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide, to their microfilming, preservation, publication, and exhibition by human rights activists, Cornell University, the Photo Archive Group, and Yale University, to their digitization by DC-Cam, the Tuol Sleng mug shots have been figured and reconfigured as archival collections by a host of governments, individuals and organizations. Each of these moments in the archivization of the mug shots is pregnant with power—the power to determine which sources constitute legitimate historical evidence, the power to claim physical and intellectual custody of the records, and the power of the political will to deem them objects of national and international attention. This chapter will trace the political and historical factors that shaped the archivization of the Tuol Sleng mug shots, examining the relationship between the creation of archives, the contentious assembly of facts, and the formation of political power.

Throughout, this chapter will argue that various institutions and individuals assembled and reassembled Tuol Sleng mug shots as archival collections in order to advance particular

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[5] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 52.

(often politically-motivated) truth claims about the Khmer Rouge. From 1979 to 1989, the ruling Vietnamese forces in Cambodia exhibited the photographs at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in order to justify their own overthrow of the Khmer Rouge and subsequent decade-long occupation of the country.[6] Next, from 1989 to 1997, American individuals, institutions and organizations such as Cornell University and the Photo Archive Group, conducted large-scale preservation, microfilming, and exhibition efforts aimed primarily at increasing international awareness of and scholarship about Khmer Rouge atrocities. Finally, from 1994 to the present, DC-Cam, first as a field office at Yale and later as an independent Cambodian-run nongovernmental organization, classified, preserved, and digitized the mug shots in support of efforts to hold the Khmer Rouge legally accountable in an international court of law. In each of these reconfigurations, Cambodians have used the mug shots to match the faces with the names of dead loved ones, creating new facts were silences previously resided. After tracing the formation of archives, this chapter will provide a detailed theoretical analysis of the creation of archives as an expression of political power.

Vietnamese Involvement: The Formation of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum

The Vietnamese Army invaded Phnom Penh and overthrew the Khmer Rouge in January 1979. For the next ten years, Cambodia would be run by a Vietnamese-backed coalition of Cambodian Khmer Rouge defectors. Vietnamese power and influence were pervasive. The Vietnamese army (and later the Vietnamese-backed Cambodian government) transformed Tuol Sleng into a Genocide Museum and exhibited the Tuol Sleng mug shots as a way to publicize Khmer Rouge

[6] This political motivation was first posited by Judy Ledgerwood. Judy Ledgerwood, "The Cambodian Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes: National Narrative," *Museum Anthropology* 21(1), 1997: 82-98.

atrocities, thereby justifying Vietnamese military intervention.[7] This section will trace initial efforts to preserve and display Tuol Sleng mug shots, paying close attention to the underlying political motivations for their archivization.

Before the Vietnamese army invaded Phnom Penh, they gave one day's warning. Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge dictator, issued immediate orders to officials to destroy as many documents as possible in that time period. At Tuol Sleng, the murderous impulses of Duch ironically led to the preservation of records which would one day incriminate him; Ignoring Pol Pot's orders to destroy records, Duch spent his final time at Tuol Sleng killing the remaining prisoners, leaving behind more than 100,000 documents, including at least 5,190 mug shots.[8] (Fleeing Tuol Sleng, Duch changed his name, slipped across the Thai border, and spent several years living in anonymity at a refugee camp. It was not until British photojournalist Nic Dunlop tracked him down in 1999 that his identity was widely revealed.[9])

On January 8, 1979, a day after the Vietnamese army marched into Phnom Penh, two Vietnamese photojournalists noticed the awful stench of decaying bodies coming from the Tuol Sleng compound. Entering the complex, they found fourteen recently murdered bodies, five orphaned children, and rooms full of torture equipment.[10] The photojournalists photographed the rooms as they discovered them and alerted the Vietnamese army. In the following days, the Vietnamese uncovered troves of documents, printed photographs, contact sheets, and

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[7] Ibid.
[8] Duch was convicted by the Extraordinary Chambers in the Court of Cambodia in 2010 of crimes against humanity and war crimes.
[9] Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*.
[10] David Chandler estimates that the number of bodies found at Tuol Sleng was fifty. Chandler, *Voices from S-21*.

undeveloped negatives that Duch and the guards under his command left behind in nearby buildings.[11]

In this way, the preservation of photographs and other documents at Tuol Sleng began almost immediately after the fall of the Khmer Rouge and was linked to international politics from the start. The Vietnamese army recognized the importance of Tuol Sleng records in efforts to hold the Khmer Rouge accountable. In August 1979, the Vietnamese staged a weeklong show trial—the People's Revolutionary Tribunal—in which documentary evidence from Tuol Sleng and other offices was used to convict Khmer Rouge leaders Pol Pot and Ieng Sary in absentia for war crimes. This trial is generally known as a politically-motivated show trial that failed to meet the minimum standards of international law.[12] John Quigley, a foreign lawyer who participated in the trial, complicates this view, but writes, that it the trial is "widely viewed as an event staged by Vietnam to justify its military intervention," and that, "in holding the trial, the new government of Cambodia sought to discredit the Khmer Rouge and to challenge the international community over its recognition policy on Cambodia."[13] Khmer Rouge records—referred to as "captured documents"—admitted as evidence in the trial include party directives, the personal notebooks of Khmer Rouge officials, reports to high-ranking officers, minutes from high-level meetings, and lists of people arrested by the regime. Documents used in and created by that trial are now housed at the National Archives of Cambodia, where access to them is restricted to those with special permission from the Council of Ministers; however, English translations of the

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[11] Ibid.
[12] For a more detailed discussion of the use of the term "show trial" and its accuracy in describing the People's Revolutionary Tribunal, see: Howard J. De Nike, "Reflections of a Legal Anthropologist on the Trial of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary," *Genocide in Cambodia: Documents from the Trial of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 19-28.
[13] John Quigley, "Introduction," *Genocide in Cambodia: Documents from the Trial of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 8.

trial documents were published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 2000, and are thus widely available to foreign scholars.[14] However, despite this early Vietnamese interest in documentation from Tuol Sleng, many records were pillaged for use as scrap paper; Nic Dunlop writes that in 1979 paper could be found in the street near Tuol Sleng and he interviewed a survivor who bought a pile of bananas wrapped in his friend's Tuol Sleng confession.[15] There is no way to know how much was lost.

In addition to their use in early efforts to hold the regime legally accountable, Khmer Rouge mug shots were used in attempts to shape collective memory of the regime through museum displays. The Vietnamese converted Tuol Sleng prison into a "Museum of Genocidal Crimes" with the help of East German funding and opened the doors for foreign tours as early as 1979.[16] The museum and archives were directed by Mai Lam, a Vietnamese national well known for creating the Museum of American War Crimes in Ho Chi Minh City. Lam arranged the records left behind and printed copies of an estimated 5,000 mug shots for display at the museum. The mug shot exhibition attracted throngs of people (despite the lingering stench), many of who were hoping to identify pictured friends and relatives. Visitors who recognized people in these unidentified mug shots wrote the victims' names directly on the photographic prints on display.[17] As Judy Ledgerwood describes, a staggering 320,000 people (309,000 Cambodians and 11,000 foreigners) visited the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum from July to

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[14] Howard J. De Nike, John Quigley, and Kenneth J. Robinson, eds. With the assistance of Helen Jarvis and Nereida Cross, *Genocide in Cambodia: Documents from the Trial of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000). Documents used in and related to the People's Revolutionary Tribunal are also listed in DC-Cam's Bibliographic Database.
[15] Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 182.
[16] Ledgerwood, "The Cambodian Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes."
[17] Yale's Cambodian Genocide Program, "Documentation of the Photographic Database," http://www.yale.edu/cgp/cimgdoc.html.

October 1980.[18] Throughout the 1980s, Cambodians continued to visit Tuol Sleng searching for the fate of missing loved ones in the mug shot display. For example, in a 1989 *New York Times* article, photojournalist Dith Pran (who was the subject of the film *The Killing Fields*) recounts visiting Tuol Sleng with a Cambodian American refugee who "suddenly" discovered her father's mug shot on display and started "to cry uncontrollably." He writes, "Her parents were killed by the Khmer Rouge but, until this moment, she didn't know where they were killed or when."[19] This heartbreaking scene played out thousands of times in front of mug shots at Tuol Sleng in the first decade the museum was open and still plays out (though less frequently) today.

In addition to victim identification, Ledgerwood asserts the museum's displays and their popularity helped construct a national narrative of suffering under the Khmer Rouge, while simultaneously reinforcing the "master narrative" advanced by the Vietnamese-backed government, namely that "a glorious revolution [was] stolen and perverted by a handful of sadistic, genocidal traitors who deliberately exterminated three million of their countrymen."[20] In other words, the museum blamed the few top leaders in the "Pol Pot clique" rather than broader Cambodian society or communist ideology for the violence at Tuol Sleng.[21] Similarly, David Chandler writes that "Mai Lam wanted to arrange Cambodia's recent past to fit the requirements of the PRK [the new Cambodian government] and its Vietnamese mentors," and that "the history that he constructed in the exhibits at S-21 denied the leaders of the CPK [the Khmer Rouge] any socialist credentials and encouraged viewers to make connections between… Tuol Sleng

[18] Ledgerwood, "The Cambodian Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes."
[19] Dith Pran, "Return to the Killing Fields," *New York Times*, September 24, 1989, SM30.
[20] Ledgerwood, "The Cambodian Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes," 82.
[21] This view is still advanced by the museum in what little English wall text there is. A pamphlet picked up at the museum in January 2012 blames "Pol Pot's clique" for the evacuation of Phnom Penh, as if there were only a handful of high-level perpetrators. "Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum," pamphlet, (Phnom Penh: Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum), undated.

[and]…. Auschwitz."[22] Chandler also reports that Cambodian Tuol Sleng survivor Ung Pech was named director of the Tuol Sleng Museum in 1980 and traveled extensively with Mai Lam to Holocaust memorial sites in Europe in a conscious attempt to mold Tuol Sleng in that vein. Similarly, sociologist Serge Thion describes how the Vietnamese experts behind the transformation of Tuol Sleng into a museum wanted to "evoke part of the sinister charisma of Auschwitz."[23] According to Chandler, Lam worked at Tuol Sleng until 1988, but often hid his role there in order to "creat[e] the impression that the initiatives for the museum and its design had come from the Cambodian victims rather than from the Vietnamese."[24] Indeed, Mai Lam's involvement and the heavy-handed pro-Vietnamese rhetoric of the museum may have contributed to false rumors that Tuol Sleng was a Vietnamese hoax. As Chandler writes, "On several occasions, Cambodians have suggested… that S-21 was invented by the Vietnamese to blacken the reputation of the Cambodian people and to indict them en masse for genocide crimes."[25] Here we see one of the first in a long line of examples that illustrate the complex interplay between politics, the assembly of facts, and the construction of narrative through the use of these archival documents.

Under the direction of Ung Pech and Mai Lam, the museum hired several former prisoners as guides. Tuol Sleng survivor Vann Nath was hired in 1979 to paint scenes from his imprisonment. He writes:

> The idea of returning to [that] horrifying place filled me with dread but it was my decision to return… On my first day back I tried to distance myself from my feelings so

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[22] Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 5.
[23] Serge Thion, "Genocide as Political Commodity," *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia*, Ben Kiernan, ed., (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1993), 184. Thion calls any direct comparisons between the Khmer Rouge and Nazis "nothing but sloppy thinking," 189.
[24] Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 6.
[25] David Chandler, "Tuol Sleng and Choeung Ek," *Searching for the Truth*, First Quarter 2008, 34.

> that I wouldn't be overcome with sadness…. As I entered the prison compound I had an indescribable feeling. The place was very quiet, but full of rubbish everywhere because no one was living there. Prisoner records were scattered all the way from the entrance to the office…My friends and I walked around and quietly picked up the documents, putting them into one pile.[26]

Nath describes running into another former prisoner, whom he identifies as Uncle Kong, at the museum, who told him, "We have come with the duty to organize this place into a museum. I believe the spirits of the dead would be very glad about this."[27] Nath also recounts how visitors to the museum screamed and cried when they recognized their family members in the photographs on display. He writes, "I believe that the spirits of the people who died must have applauded our work. Contributing to the establishment of this Genocide Museum was the most meaningful thing I have ever done."[28]

In 1981, another Tuol Sleng survivor, Bou Meng, was identified and asked by Pech to join the museum staff and found survivors Vann Nath, Im Chan, Ruy Neakong already working there. Meng writes, "I never thought of returning to that bitter place again; however, I saw that it was my opportunity to tell the Cambodian people and the world about the tragedy that I had suffered under the Khmer Rouge."[29] Like Nath, Meng believes that the Tuol Sleng victims spoke to him through their displayed photographs at the museum. He writes:

> Sometimes, I examined the photos of the prisoners…. Many prisoners' eyes showed their cries, pain, and fear, and seemed to be telling me that they had been harshly killed although they were innocent. Moreover, those eyes seemed to be telling me to share their suffering with the rest of the world to avoid a repeat of the brutal crimes against humanity that the Khmer Rouge had committed. Like me, they also needed justice.[30]

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[26] Nath, *Cambodian Prison Portrait*, 100.
[27] Ibid, 101.
[28] Ibid., 108.
[29] Bou Meng as told to Huy Vannak, *Bou Meng: A Survivor from Khmer Rouge Prison S-21*, 55.
[30] The ability of these photographs to "speak" will be explored in further detail in chapter four. Ibid., 57.

Through both Nath and Meng's biographies, the importance of Tuol Sleng survivors to the establishment of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum is made apparent. These survivors served as living witnesses, supplementing the artifacts on display and adding legitimacy to the museum.

Yet while the museum on the first floor of the Tuol Sleng complex was popular, the archives on the second floor remained uncataloged, exposed to the elements, and largely unused in the 1980s. The collection included the mug shot negatives; logbooks of arrests; forced confession statements; daily lists of prisoners; and, most chillingly, page after page of dated name lists, labeled "the names of prisoners crushed to bits."[31] As scholars Chanthou Boua and Ben Kiernan described in 1980, "In the Tuol Sleng offices, papers are piled on open desks, [and] old cupboards are stacked unsystematically…."[32] Boua and Kiernan also reported that important documents were missing. These include a forced confession statement that was borrowed to be used as evidence in the People's Revolutionary Tribunal and never returned, as well as other documents that were allegedly "stolen by staff who have defected and sold them, apparently to Pol Pot supporters."[33] "An invaluable record is being lost," Boua and Kiernan lamented.[34] Similarly, Tom Fawthrop and Helen Jarvis report that in 1979, Min Khin, "recalls sending instructions out through the governmental apparatus to village level, asking the people not to touch the remaining physical or documentary evidence of the crimes committed. While this was indeed done in some places, on others the local population tore down prisons both to vent their anger and also to salvage building materials."[35] In light of the chaos after the Vietnamese

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[31] Chanthou Boua and Ben Kiernan with Anthony Barnett, "Bureaucracy of Death," *New Statesman*, May 2, 1980, 671.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Tom Fawthrop and Helen Jarvis, *Getting Away with Genocide?* (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto, 2004), 41.

invasion, it is impossible to tell just how many Khmer Rouge records were destroyed and how many survived but are still not in the custody of archives or museums; clearly many were dispersed from their original locations, leaving their chain of custody untraceable.

The Start of American Involvement in the Archives

While the Vietnamese-backed government maintained the mug shot exhibition at Tuol Sleng, American individuals and organizations launched efforts to preserve and microfilm the mug shots and related Khmer Rouge records so that they could be used as historical sources and legal evidence. This section traces such efforts, from collection attempts by American human rights activists, to Cornell University's microfilming project and the Photo Archive Group's cleaning, exhibition, and publication programs. Although the motives for these efforts were varied, they generally sought to increase international attention to and scholarship about Khmer Rouge atrocities.

Human Rights Collections

Adding to the initial Vietnamese-driven collection efforts, the first decade after the fall of the Khmer Rouge also saw some initial attempts by American activists to collect documentation in support of an international legal tribunal against the regime. In the early 1980s, David Hawk and Gregory Stanton, two American human rights activists who had led humanitarian relief and human rights projects in Cambodia, began to gather evidence and garner support for an international tribunal against Khmer Rouge officials. In 1982, Stanton founded a U.S.-based nonprofit organization called the Cambodian Genocide Project. Stanton, who became a law professor at Washington and Lee University, enlisted the help of Cambodia historian Ben

Kiernan in the project. The organization initially tried to get the Australian government to support a Khmer Rouge tribunal, yet they were unable to find the necessary political backing.[36] Due to personal and political conflicts between Hawk and Stanton, Hawk soon distanced himself from the Cambodian Genocide Project.[37] Hawk formed another group, the Cambodian Documentation Commission, "to document and analyze the Khmer Rouge genocide, advocate remedy and redress, and prevent those responsible from returning to power."[38] Hawk spent the next several years working towards this three-fold mission of historical accountability, legal accountability, and political action through the collection of documentation. Writing in 2002, Hawk, who had served as the Director of Amnesty International U.S.A. and the Khmer Program Director for the World Conference on Religion and Peace, notes that none of the contemporary mechanisms to monitor, collect evidence and respond to large-scale human rights violations were in place during the late 1970s.[39] He made it his mission to collect and create such documentation. Hawk traveled repeatedly to Cambodia to photograph recently unearthed mass graves and to conduct archival research and make photocopies of documents at Tuol Sleng. Working with a translator, Hawk encountered extraordinarily cooperative staff at the Tuol Sleng archives, who handed over pile after pile of Khmer Rouge records. "You're kidding me. This stuff is written down?" Hawk recalled thinking when he first encountered the detailed records.[40] Hawk writes,

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[36] For a more detailed account of this organization, see: Gregory H. Stanton, "The Call," Samuel Totten and Steven Leonard Jacobs, eds., *Pioneers of Genocide Studies* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002).
[37] Fawthrop and Jarvis, *Getting Away with Genocide?*, 71.
[38] David Hawk, "Confronting Genocide in Cambodia," Samuel Totten and Steven Leonard Jacobs, eds., *Pioneers of Genocide Studies* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 521.
[39] Ibid., 529.
[40] David Hawk, as quoted in Seth Mydans, "Word for Word/ Torturers' Archive: Cambodia's Bureaucracy of Death: Reams of Evidence in Search of a Trial," *The New York Times*, July 20, 1997, Section 4, Page 7.

"the next step was to get this rare archival material from Phnom Penh to the West so it could be analyzed and circulated globally."[41] Yet while a nongovernmental organization donated a photocopy machine for use at Tuol Sleng, the electricity proved unreliable, making attempts at photocopying erratic. Hawk remembers, "I spent hours and days standing at this photocopier located in a room without ventilation, fans, or air-conditioning, continually wiping the sweat off my forehead to get a clear look at the voltage meter and press the photocopy button whenever the meter registered 200 volts."[42] Clearly this was an ad hoc operation.

Yet Hawk's replication of the Tuol Sleng mug shots would have a significant impact on public opinion and future documentation efforts. He had initially taken photos of the mug shots on display at Tuol Sleng, but reports that after returning home from Cambodia, "out of the blue, hundreds of rolls of negatives arrived in my mailbox in New York. The staff at Tuol Sleng, no doubt delighted that someone in the outside world valued their work, had sent me a complete duplicate set of photographic negatives of the prisoners executed at S-21…."[43] Nine of the mug shots Hawk photographed on display at Tuol Sleng were reproduced in a 1982 article he authored in *The New Republic*[44]; twenty-one of the mug shots in Hawk's possession were later reproduced in a 1986 article he authored in the British publication *Index on Censorship*.[45] These publications were one of the first times the West was exposed to the Tuol Sleng mug shots. Additionally, Hawk reprinted twenty of the mug shots (as well as images of mass grave sites and dozens of photographs the Khmer Rouge took to document dead prisoners) to accompany his article "The Photographic Record," in the 1989 edited volume *Cambodia 1975-1978:*

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[41] Hawk, "Confronting Genocide in Cambodia," 531.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] David Hawk, "The Killing of Cambodia," *The New Republic*, November 15, 1982, 17-21.
[45] David Hawk, "Tuol Sleng Extermination Centre," *Index on Censorship* 15:1 January 1986, 25-31.

Rendezvous with Death.[46] Other copies of Hawk's negatives were displayed in an Amnesty International-sponsored exhibition called *Cambodia Witness* that was mounted at the U.S. House of Representatives, among other places in the U.S. and Europe. Later, Hawk donated his copies of the Tuol Sleng negatives to Cornell University Library. In 2000, he donated the remaining materials he collected to DC-Cam. Although these efforts by human rights activists did not directly lead to the creation of a tribunal as intended, they were successful in that they constituted a "sustained public campaign… in opposition to the US policy," which at that point still supported the Khmer Rouge and led to other such efforts.[47]

Cornell University's Microfilming Project

Cornell University has longstanding research ties to Southeast Asia. Cornell graduate Eva Mysliwiec was one of only a few Americans living in Cambodia in the early 1980s and spent several years trying to negotiate with the Cambodian government to allow Cornell to establish a preservation program there.[48] In 1988, with Mysliwiec's help, Cornell doctoral student Judy Ledgerwood, along with librarian John Badgley, flew to Cambodia and successfully negotiated permission from the Cambodian government to start a limited microfilming project of palm leaf manuscripts that addressed Buddhist and literary topics. The goals of the project were twofold: acquire microfilm copies for the benefit of Cornell faculty and students who could not travel to Cambodia, and help Cambodian institutions preserve materials which had suffered

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[46] David Hawk, "The Photographic Record," in *Cambodia 1975-1978: Rendezvous with Death*, Karl D. Jackson, ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 209-214 and unpaginated photo insert.
[47] Fawthrop and Jarvis, *Getting Away with Genocide?*, 109.
[48] John F. Dean, "The Preservation of Books and Manuscripts in Cambodia," *American Archivist* 53, Spring 1990: 282-297.

during the decades of civil war.[49] One copy of the microfilm would be deposited at Cornell; another copy would be given to the Cambodian National Library. The Cambodian government granted initial permission for Cornell staff to microfilm these palm leaf manuscripts at the Cambodian National Library, the Cambodian National Museum, and the Royal Palace, but denied repeated requests to microfilm any Khmer Rouge records at Tuol Sleng.[50]

In 1989, Cornell sent its first team of preservation librarians to Cambodia. The project was funded by the Christopher Reynolds Foundation and the Luce Foundation and built on work previously organized by Australian librarian Helen Jarvis, which was funded by the National Library of Australia, AusAID, and the Asia Foundation.[51] The Cornell team undertook a major re-housing project on this trip, created preservation guidelines for the National Library collection that had been dismantled during the Khmer Rouge take over, trained National Library staff how to house archival documents in storage boxes and restored some palm leaf manuscripts which had been rescued by Cambodians after the Khmer Rouge threw them away.[52] While Cornell library staff took short trips to Cambodia, Ledgerwood, who had previously completed an extensive microfilming course with the Church of Latter-day Saints, would remain in Cambodia and oversee the microfilming process.[53]

While the palm leaf manuscripts were being microfilmed, the Cornell team determined "that the filming of the Tuol Sleng archives should be accomplished as a matter of urgency" due

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[49] Judy Ledgerwood, Interview with Author, July 21, 2011.
[50] Judy Ledgerwood, Interview with Author, July 21, 2011.
[51] Helen Jarvis, Interview with Author, July 24, 2011.
[52] John F. Dean, "The Preservation and Conservation Needs of the Upper Regions of Southeast Asia," *Libri* 47 (1997): 129.
[53] Ledgerwood was not a member of the Church of Latter-day Saints, but was rather sent to Salt Lake City for microfilm training. The Mormons were at that time the world's preeminent experts on microfilming under difficult conditions due to their experience copying genealogical records worldwide. Judy Ledgerwood, Interview with Author, July 21, 2011.

to preservation and security threats.[54] However, it took a shift in political power before Ledgerwood was granted permission to microfilm records at Tuol Sleng. From 1979 to 1989, Cambodia was led by a Vietnamese-backed government. The U.S. strongly discouraged Americans from visiting the country, and many Cambodians viewed Americans with suspicion. Most foreigners in Cambodia were Vietnamese or Russian. Ledgerwood describes the political situation at the time: "When I first got there, there were still weekly self-criticism sessions where people would denounce whatever hegemonic thing. This quickly changed when the Vietnamese government left in 1989."[55] In September 1989, after the Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia, government permission for Cornell staff to microfilm at Tuol Sleng was granted through "an informal, oral agreement."[56] Tellingly, Tuol Sleng was operated by the Cambodian Ministry of Propaganda at that time, which changed its name to the Ministry of Culture in 1991.

From 1989 to April 1993, Cornell, under the auspices of its John M. Echols Collection on Southeast Asia, entered into a partnership agreement with the Tuol Sleng Museum to make preservation microfilm copies of 400,000 pages of handwritten prisoner confession statements and internal prison documents. (Copies of the mug shots, which had previously been made by David Hawk, were soon donated to Cornell for inclusion in the collection.) Ledgerwood set up a database on a Macintosh computer and did data entry for each document (including Hawk's mug shots), while Cornell preservation expert John Dean trained Tuol Sleng staff how to make boxes to house documents, moved the documents into an enclosed room, and purchased an air conditioner and back up electrical generator for Tuol Sleng.

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[54] John F. Dean, "The Preservation and Conservation Needs of the Upper Regions of Southeast Asia," 130.
[55] Judy Ledgerwood, Interview with Author, July 21, 2011.
[56] John F. Dean, "The Preservation and Conservation Needs of the Upper Regions of Southeast Asia," 130.

The biggest challenge to the microfilming project was political. Ledgerwood's status as an American still made her suspect under the eyes of the Cambodian government. She said, "Microfilming made me suspicious. The Ministry of Interior had people following me around, making sure I wouldn't leave Phnom Penh."[57] Due to government interference, there was "a constant interruption of the work by various government officials and a consequent defection by Khmer project staff."[58] Ledgerwood managed to train two Cambodian staff members how to microfilm despite these politically-motivated interruptions.

Processing the film was also difficult, as no developing facilities existed in Cambodia and there were very few reliable delivery options. Film was sent via a delivery service contracted by foreign NGOs on a weekly flight to Bangkok, flown to Ithaca, developed and inspected by Cornell staff, and then requests for corrections were faxed back to Bangkok for delivery in Phnom Penh.[59] Additionally, Cambodia's tropical environment and unreliable electrical supply posed significant challenges to storing the film. Ledgerwood recalls that the only constant and reliable refrigeration was available at a veterinarian's office a few miles away from Tuol Sleng; Ledgerwood negotiated to store the film among veterinary medication in the walk-in refrigerator and motor biked to and from the office each time she needed a new roll of film.[60] And yet, despite these challenges, these early microfilming efforts prevailed, resulting in the filming of a significant portion of the Tuol Sleng collection, and providing a framework for future efforts to

[57] Judy Ledgerwood, Interview with Author, July 21, 2011.
[58] John F. Dean, "The Preservation and Conservation Needs of the Upper Regions of Southeast Asia," 130.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Judy Ledgerwood, Interview with Author, July 21, 2011.

microfilm Khmer Rouge documents. "It worked amazingly well for conditions at that time," Ledgerwood recalls.[61]

During the time of the Cornell project, most visitors to Tuol Sleng were still Cambodians. "People were still trying to figure out what happened to their loved ones and went there hoping to find their photos," Ledgerwood described.[62] However, while the mug shots were on display in the museum's public exhibition spaces, the rest of the archives remained virtually closed. "People had to ask permission to use the archives. It was not an everyday thing," said Ledgerwood.[63]

Photo Archive Group

In 1993, Cornell University hired two American photojournalists in Cambodia, Christopher Riley and Douglas Niven, to help preserve some 6,000 negatives in a rusty file cabinet in a back office at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum.[64] The negatives included mug shots, photos taken during and after torture sessions, and some propaganda photographs from a model Khmer Rouge community. As Niven described it in a 1998 BBC documentary:

> We were invited upstairs [at Tuol Sleng] and up inside was this gray rusting metal cabinet. And we opened the drawers and inside those drawers were thousands of negatives, victims of dust, mildew, fungus, bugs—in the worst conditions negatives could be kept. We pulled out some of the negatives and held them up to the light. In that initial moment, we knew that we had to print them.[65]

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[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Curiously, none of the materials produced by Niven and Riley reveal that they were contracted by Cornell to begin the preservation work, nor is this included in any other published sources. This information was revealed by Youk Chhang and has not been confirmed in other sources. Interview with Youk Chhang, January 9, 2012, Phnom Penh.
[65] Douglas Niven as quoted in *Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*, 1998, BBC, Films for the Humanities and Sciences. As previously states, it is unclear what changes at the Tuol Sleng Museum led to this change in the preservation of the negatives, from being well-kept

Similarly, Riley detailed the deteriorating state of the negatives and the need to preserve them:

> It was sort of incredible finding this… photographic archive just sort of in this cabinet covered in rat droppings. Some of them had been nibbled away, actually eaten on by hungry rats. Literally some of the negatives were rotting away…. As photographers, finding this material and recognizing we could do something [with them] with our training, there was never a question of why. It was like this has to be done. And more people need to see these.[66]

Riley and Niven established the independent nonprofit organization Photo Archive Group. They set up a darkroom at the Agence-France Presse headquarters where Niven was employed, gained permission from the Cambodian Ministry of Culture to clean and catalogue the negatives, recruited volunteers, made contact sheets and organized them in binders to help survivors identify victims, and selected images for publication and exhibition.[67] They also raised $25,000 from private sources in the U.S. to fund the project.[68]

While Riley and Niven were clearly working in close contact with Tuol Sleng Museum staff, they also questioned the staff's competence and motives. In the 1998 BBC documentary *Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*, Niven said, "I wish that the archive was a little more accessible to the average Cambodian. Like most official bureaucracies, anyone who wants to see the archive has to pay the proper bribe to get into the rooms."[69] (This allegation was not confirmed by other sources.)

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in 1982 when David Hawk received a copy of them, to deteriorating in 1993 when Christopher Riley and Douglas Niven found them.

[66] Chris Riley as quoted in *Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*, 1998, BBC, Films for the Humanities and Sciences.

[67] Dawne Adam, "The Tuol Sleng Archives and the Cambodian Genocide," *Archivaria* 45 (1998): 21.

[68] Guy Trebay, "Killing Fields of Vision," *The Village Voice*, June 3, 1997: 34.

[69] Douglas Niven as quoted in *Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*, 1998, BBC, Films for the Humanities and Sciences.

Riley and Niven were particularly puzzled by the discrepancy between the 14,000 to 20,000 prisoners scholars estimated to have been incarcerated at Tuol Sleng and the 5,190 mug shots they found. This discrepancy was particularly haunting, given that some Tuol Sleng images shown in two East German documentaries from 1979 were no longer available at the Tuol Sleng archives.[70] They became convinced that additional negatives were locked away in a backroom at Tuol Sleng, effectively rendered inaccessible by museum staff. Riley said:

> It would be nice to… complete what is known about S-21 through the photographic material [and] complete this process that we began, but at this point it is daunting to face the obstacles we have to overcome. Unfortunately, in Cambodia… particularly with the museum because there are so many mysteries associated with it, it is extremely difficult and… as we have gone on it seems there are more and more strings that we find and pulling those strings will just lead to more strings…. I think there's a good chance that there may still be negatives at the museum that we haven't found. We know that recently a room we wanted to get into was opened and there was a large amount of very interesting material in that room. We had talked to various people at the museum about going into these locked rooms and got various responses that added up to no. Given that there's a possibility I think it's worth the effort to try to get into those rooms.[71]

The documentary then reveals Riley and Niven asking Chey Sophera, Tuol Sleng Museum Director, for permission to gain access to the buildings locked backrooms. Remarkably, Sophera responds, "There is nothing there but old stuff and photos. But yes, you can."[72] Riley and Niven then cut the locks to a backroom, finding a wasp-infested file cabinet overflowing with Khmer Rouge documents, as well as the chair outfitted with the Bertillon-inspired measuring device on which prisoners sat while many of the mug shots were taken. Despite these remarkable finds, Riley and Niven did not uncover any additional mug shot negatives in these rooms.

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[70] Peter Maguire, upon viewing the East German footage, writes, "I had not seen many of these images…. The unfamiliar photos were definitely not among the 5,000 in the Tuol Sleng archive and were lost, probably forever." Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 96.

[71] Douglas Niven as quoted in *Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*, 1998, BBC, Films for the Humanities and Sciences.

[72] Chey Sophera as quoted in *Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*, 1998, BBC, Films for the Humanities and Sciences.

Riley and Niven then went on a hunt beyond Tuol Sleng to find the missing negatives, traveling to rural areas to interview former prison staff. After tracking down former Tuol Sleng guard Him Huy, Niven asked Huy if he knew were the negatives might be, but Huy responded that all he knew is that the Tuol Sleng couriers and photographers all fled to Thailand after the 1979 invasion of Phnom Penh. They then interviewed Sous Thy, a former Tuol Sleng clerk in charge of the prisoners' lists, but he responded, "I'm not the one to ask. I am not sure who would have been assigned to remove that stuff."[73] Eventually, Niven speculated, "I don't think the negatives are at S-21 anymore. I think there's a chance that a good chunk of them were taken to Vietnam and maybe sitting in some military archives there. It's very frustrating for us."[74] While there are reports that a Khmer Rouge photographer was selling some photos from the regime on the black market, additional mug shots prints or negatives specifically from Tuol Sleng have yet to be found and Niven's speculation that they might be in Vietnam remains unconfirmed.[75] In a 1994 interview with former Tuol Sleng Museum Director Mai Lam, then retired in Saigon, Riley and friend Peter Maguire were told rather mysteriously that a "third person knows about pictures, negatives, [and] prisoners," but they were unable to find out any further details.[76] Maguire later investigated the possibility that an East German film crew failed to return some Tuol Sleng negatives they borrowed for a documentary in 1979, but was told by the film's director "we did not keep a single piece" of material evidence.[77]

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[73] Sous Thy as quoted in *Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*, 1998, BBC, Films for the Humanities and Sciences.
[74] Douglas Niven as quoted in *Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*, 1998, BBC, Films for the Humanities and Sciences.
[75] Interview with Craig Etcheson, May 30, 2011.
[76] Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 90.
[77] Ibid., 96-97.

As Riley and Niven cleaned and printed the existing negatives, they made significant contributions to the historical understanding of Tuol Sleng. While many of the mug shots on display at the museum had been cropped, the negatives restored by Riley and Niven revealed a more complete picture. Riley said,

> One of the most important things we have been able to contribute is a better understanding of what happened here by printing the whole negative. It is a very simple photographic thing, but it's vital because the pictures on the museum walls now have been heavily cropped. And curiously, in some of the pictures, when we open it up to the full frame, mothers were photographed with their children, individuals were photographed in a cell, surrounded by other people. So by printing the full frame we were able to get more… narrative information about the prison.[78]

There is a direct link between archival preservation and the construction of facts about the regime; had the negatives been destroyed, scholars and the public would be left with fewer traces of the child prisoners or of the crowded and deplorable conditions of the prison cells. In this way, Riley and Niven's work represents a significant contribution to the archival record, or the moment of fact assembly, as Trouillot would term it.

Furthermore, Riley and Niven note that the damage done to the negatives from insects, humidity, and other preservation problems actually adds to their meaning. Riley said:

> There is a violence that is evident… metaphorically through the negative damage. In some of the photographs it appears as if the blackness [caused by stains] is shattering the person, as if its ripping them literally apart. There is another individual where there is one small hole right in the head, almost as if it's a bullet hole…. There is a number of other prints that have this watery, almost liquid blackness that can be seen as the blood that flows from these individuals, when they were struck, when they were beaten, when they were tortured. It's almost leaking out of them, that life force is flowing out of the individual. Some of the more provocative images in the collection are ones where it is very clear from the individuals photographed that something very, very frightening is going to take place. That they are powerless to combat what is going to happen to them. That is the kind of information that a photograph can communicate that text can't communicate, so it allows you to understand more the plight of these people.

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[78] Chris Riley as quoted in *Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*, 1998, BBC, Films for the Humanities and Sciences.

This is a curious paradox; Riley and Niven are trying to stop the deterioration of the negatives while at the same time acknowledging the tragic beauty and meaning conveyed by such deterioration. This deterioration is now part of the history and provenance of the mug shots.

However, while Riley and Niven's preservation efforts were clearly successful, their subsequent attempts to exhibit the mug shots in art galleries and museums around the world rightly met much criticism. In 1997, they helped organize a controversial exhibition of twenty-two of the mug shots at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York. The mug shots were displayed as art works, evaluated by their aesthetic value alone, and divorced from their gruesome creations.[79] In a scathing review of the exhibition in *The Village Voice*, cultural critic Guy Trebay writes, "The Cambodian dead are held up for consideration in the cool light of formalist concerns," displaying at best an insensitivity and at worst blatant racism, given that such display would be inconceivable if the photos were of Holocaust victims.[80]

At the MoMA exhibit, curators provided little background information to contextualize them. Even though the name of the photographer Nhem En was widely known at that time, labels accompanying the images merely read: "Photographer unknown. *Untitled*. 1975-79. Gelatin-silver print. 14x11."[81] Furthermore, none of the people depicted in the mug shots were identified by name. As one museum visitor wrote, the photographs, "were transcending their

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[79] Much criticism has been written about this exhibition, which I will only summarize here. See: Rachel Hughes, "The Abject Artefacts of Memory," and Paul Williams, "The Atrocity Exhibition: Touring Cambodian Genocide Memorials," In *On Display: New Essays in Cultural Studies*, Edited by Anna Smith and Lydia Weaver (Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press, 2004). While I visited the MoMA Archives in August 2011, all of MoMA's exhibition files are embargoed for fifteen years after the date of the exhibition; the files related to this exhibition will not be available until 2012.

[80] Guy Trebay, "Killing Fields of Vision," *The Village Voice*, June 3, 1997: 34.

[81] Paul Williams, "The Atrocity Exhibition," 210. When asked by Nic Dunlop how museum goers should view these photos, Nhem En said, "Firstly, they should thank me…. When they see that the pictures are nice and clear, they'd admire the photographer's skill." Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 168.

original time, place and function, and becoming, to our western eyes and consciousness, significant works of art."[82] Without any context, viewers were left to extrapolate historical details. As one reviewer of the MoMA exhibition claimed, "These mug shots cannot document history. The visitor must fill in the gaps by becoming the imaginative history maker."[83] Such "imaginative" history does a real disservice to the victims, particularly when scholars and archivists at DC-Cam were hard at work at that same time preserving and providing access to the historical context of these very mug shots.[84] As Trebay wrote, "That this audience [at MoMA] might also include those Cambodians still attempting to find their loves ones seems not to have occurred to the museum's curators."[85] Trebay then quotes Dinah PoKempner, deputy general counsel at Human Rights Watch, as saying: "*Everyone* in Cambodia is still looking for relatives…. Simply print [the pictures] up in books and make them accessible to people in the country. That's what's needed. Not a show in an American art museum."[86] Clearly the human rights community was not impressed by this aesthetic display. Furthermore, without adequate contextual information, American viewers were able to disconnect Cambodian atrocities from their own government's role in allowing the Khmer Rouge to come to power and in keeping

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[82] William Dunlap and Linda Burgess, "Facing the Past: Cambodia Then and Now," The Works of William Dunlap Website (2003), http://www.williamdunlap.com/writing/cambodia.html.
[83] Ibid.
[84] A similar (but less egregious) example of this decontextualization can be found in Susie Linfield's otherwise nuanced treatment of atrocity images. She writes that all of the Tuol Sleng victims depicted in the mug shots are unidentified ("There are no names,"), and refers to the prisoners by the numbers in the photographs, seemingly unaware that those are processing batch numbers and not unique identification numbers. This oversight is highlighted by the fact that Linfield places a Tuol Sleng mug shot on the cover of her book and identifies the person portayed as an "unidentified child prisoner… Date and photographer unknown." Perhaps the child prisoner is still unidentified, but it is unclear if Linfield conducted research at DC-Cam to make sure. She also mislabels all of the Tuol Sleng victims as "weather-beaten peasants" when we know that the elite were particularly singled out for imprisonment at Tuol Sleng. Susie Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance,* 56*;* Inside Back Cover; 56.
[85] Guy Trebay, "Killing Fields of Vision," *The Village Voice*, June 3, 1997: 34.
[86] Dinah PoKempner as quoted in Trebay, "Killing Fields of Vision," 34.

them in power. "Showing the images in this way can also encourage us to forget what governments do in our name," writes Nic Dunlop.[87]

Furthermore, critics noted that framing these images as primarily aesthetic objects calls their evidentiary value into question. As art critic Stephanie Benzaquen writes:

> The particular context offered by art settings for looking at such images makes it compelling to ask to which extent aestheticization affects the evidential status of these images…. One cannot but acknowledge that the evidential status of the mug shots has already been seriously undermined as their reception in widening geographic and cultural circles charged them with new meanings.[88]

Without adequate contextualization, the mug shots (temporarily) lost their value as records of Khmer Rouge crimes, to the detriment to the memory of those portrayed in them. As Trebay asks:

> Is it ignorance, though, or moral attrition that makes possible the exhibition of pictures from a genocide with the only the flimsiest framework of context? Who are the people in the Tuol Sleng photographs? Who are their families? What is the role of our own amnesiac culture in the atrocities that took place…? Where, a viewer might ask, are the bones?[89]

By displaying the mug shots as artworks first and evidence second, the MoMA exhibition undermined attempts by others to frame them as historical and legal evidence.

Even more objectionably, Riley and Niven claimed copyright ownership of a select group of 100 of the mug shots and sold several of the images to the Los Angeles County Museum, MoMA, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, despite significant outcry. They even tried to sell copies of the images to DC-Cam.[90] Trebay poignantly asked, "The pictures from Tuol Sleng are the sole remaining evidence of 6,000 human lives. Can anyone truly own

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[87] Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 167.
[88] Stephanie Benzaquen, "Remediating Genocidal Images into Artworks: The Case of the Tuol Sleng Mug Shots," *Rebus* 5, Summer 2010: 4-5.
[89] Trebay, "Killing Fields of Vision," 34.
[90] Interview with Youk Chhang, January 9, 2012, Phnom Penh.

them?"[91] Riley and Niven also reprinted 78 of them in a catalog to accompany the exhibition.[92] The catalog, entitled *The Killing Fields*, was published by an art press and includes the claim: "The photographs are copyright Chris Riley and Douglas Niven."[93] It is unclear if Riley and Niven made any money from the sales of the book; indeed, Maguire asserts that Riley and Niven were "deeply in debt" from the Photo Archive Group's work and that income generated from the exhibitions and catalog were not enough to eliminate this debt. "Nobody got rich in the process," Maguire writes.[94]

The catalog is rife with silences. The photographs appear without caption. Curiously, the catalog provides no contextual information until page 94; the first 93 pages consist of page-sized unlabelled mug shots alternating with page-sized black boxes.[95] Finally, on page 94, the book provides some basic information on Tuol Sleng, then a translation of Tuol Sleng survivor Vann Nath's account of his imprisonment and escape, followed by a historical essay entitled, "The Pathology of Terror on Pol Pot's Cambodia," by David Chandler. Thus, though this context is not denied, it recedes into the background; readers are led to interpret the photographs primarily as works of art and secondarily as evidential artifacts from a particular historical context. Dunlop writes, "To view them in this way one feels almost predatory…. There is a danger of it becoming a self-defeating exercise in highbrow voyeurism."[96] Faced with such criticism, Maguire asserts, there was "little interest" among publishers in the Tuol Sleng photos and that the format and

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[91] Trebay, "Killing Fields of Vision," 34.
[92] Other than the Santa Fe Press catalog, I have only seen one publication which acknowledges Riley and Niven's claims to copyright; Peter Maquire, a high school friend of Riley's, credits both the Tuol Sleng Museum and the Photo Archive Group in the reproduction of several of the Tuol Sleng mug shots in his book. Peter Maquire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*.
[93] Chris Riley and Doug Niven, *The Killing Fields* (Santa Fe, NM: Twin Palms Publishers, 1996), 112.
[94] Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 151.
[95] Riley and Niven, *The Killing Fields*.
[96] Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 166.

design of the book were left up to the publishers; they were completely out of Niven and Riley's control.[97] Interestingly, *New York Times* Southeast Asia reporter Seth Mydans, in his review of Riley and Niven's catalog, argues that the lack of victim identification in the book contributed to its impact. He writes, "the subjects' anonymity only adds to the power of this book. These faces speak for the hundreds of thousands of bewildered victims of a murderous national psychosis."[98] In contrast, I would argue, the photographs tell a more accurate, nuanced and powerful story when the victims in them are named and we can begin to understand mass murder through the lens of individual lives.

Riley and Niven's work raises significant questions about the politics of preservation and ownership. On the one hand, their preservation efforts constitute a timely intervention that rescued important archival material from imminent destruction, increasing historical understanding of Tuol Sleng prison and allowing victims' family members greater access to the last traces of their dead loved ones. On the other hand, who were Americans to intervene in the preservation of the historical record when Cambodians themselves were letting that record deteriorate? And more importantly, how can foreigners appropriate and claim copyright of images that were taken by the Cambodian state, however rogue the Khmer Rouge government was? While there are no easy answers to these questions, we will see similar issues resurfacing as we continue to trace the uses of these mug shots.

Documentation Center of Cambodia: Archives for Accountability

In 1994, the collection and preservation of Khmer Rouge records entered a new phase. With the founding of DC-Cam, first as a field office at Yale and later as an independent Cambodian-run

[97] Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*,150-151.
[98] Seth Mydans, "Faces from Beyond the Grave," *New York Times*, May 25 1997, BR21.

nongovernmental organization, Tuol Sleng mug shots and related documents were collected, microfilmed, and digitized with the explicit purpose of supporting a legal case against surviving Khmer Rouge officials in an international tribunal. This section first traces the political motivations behind DC-Cam's founding and the political challenges to its ongoing success. Next, in light of these political concerns, this section will outline DC-Cam's digitization of the Tuol Sleng mug shots in an attempt to link the names and faces of the victims they depict, thereby assembling new facts about the regime. Throughout, archivization and digitization are analyzed as inherently discursive and political acts.

Archives Formation and the Pursuit of Legal Accountability

Despite the success of initial Vietnamese and American collection, exhibition, and preservation efforts, it was a large-scale shift in international politics in general and American politics in particular that would ensure the continued preservation of Khmer Rouge records and bolster calls for accountability. From 1979 to 1990, the U.S. and the United Nations continued to recognize the Khmer Rouge as the legitimate government of Cambodia. This was due largely to the politics of the Cold War and the aftermath of the Vietnam War; any enemy of Vietnam (in this case the Khmer Rouge), was an ally of the U.S.[99] As a result, the United States and its supporters in the United Nations condemned Vietnam for violating Cambodia's sovereignty under the Khmer Rouge and refused to recognize the Vietnamese-backed People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) government. A U.S.-backed international economic embargo on the PRK government and a U.N. ban on development aid had disastrous consequences for the people of Cambodia (particularly on poor women and children), resulting in stalled reconstruction

[99] Fawthrop and Jarvis, *Getting Away with Genocide?*.

efforts.[100] In 1991, when the involved parties within Cambodia and in the international community signed the Paris Accords guaranteeing elections under the supervision of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), they paved the way not only for initial stages of (for the most part) peaceful self-government in Cambodia, but also international involvement in holding the Khmer Rouge accountable.

As international involvement in Cambodia shifted, so to did American involvement. In January 1990, a group of antiwar activists and academics, together with at least two Cambodian refugees, founded the Campaign to Oppose the Return of the Khmer Rouge (CORKR).[101] One of the organization's primary goals was to prevent the Khmer Rouge from becoming part of an official quadripartite peace settlement in Cambodia; this goal was soundly defeated with the inclusion of the Khmer Rouge in the 1991 Paris Accords.[102] The organization then shifted gears to draw further attention to the Cambodian genocide and ramped up its efforts to hold the Khmer Rouge legally accountable through a tribunal. In 1990 and 1991, Cambodia historian Ben Kiernan, then co-chair of the CORKR's Justice Committee, met several times with Peter Cleveland and other congressional aides working on Cambodia through the Aspen Institute's Indochina Program, and discussed drafting legislation calling for a tribunal with them.[103] According to Kiernan, Cleveland proposed the idea of drafting such legislation to Senator Charles Robb of Virginia, who supported it.[104] Cleveland, in consultation with Kiernan, then drafted the bill, which was originally called, "The Khmer Rouge Prosecution and Exclusion

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[100] Chanthou Boua, "Development Aid and Democracy in Cambodia," in *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia*, Ben Kiernan, ed., (New Haven, CT: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1993) 273-83.
[101] Interview with Ben Kiernan, April 19, 2011.
[102] Interview with Craig Etcheson, May 30, 2011.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.

Act." The bill was first read to Congress in May 1992. Meanwhile, CORKR's board expanded and the group successfully forged alliances with dozens of other nonprofit organizations. By 1992, CORKR hired Craig Etcheson, a political scientist specializing in Cambodia, as its Executive Director.

The bill went through several drafts and, in 1994, after the inauguration of President Clinton, the U.S. Congress passed the Cambodian Genocide Act.[105] The act presented a radical departure from the pro-Khmer Rouge stance the U.S. government had taken since the Vietnamese invasion and signaled the end of old Cold War hostilities toward Vietnam. The reversal in U.S. policy was surprising. Etcheson said, "Previously the State Department had said there would not be any international tribunal.… But almost overnight they went from being utterly opposed [to a tribunal] to all kinds of different bureaus becoming engaged. I went from being the enemy to being the main man."[106]

This shift in U.S. policy toward Cambodia met critics from both sides of the aisle. The act was denounced as "hypocritical" by those on the left who perceived it as too little too late, as well as blind to both the U.S.'s own role in setting the stage for the Khmer Rouge through its sustained bombing campaign, and the U.S.'s ongoing support which propped up the regime subsequent to the Vietnamese invasion.[107] By limiting the dates of the crimes to be investigated from 1975 to 1979, the act ruled out the possibility of indicting Henry Kissinger, Nixon's National Security Advisor and later Secretary of State, who expanded the U.S. bombing of Cambodia in alleged violation of international law, much to the chagrin of antiwar activists. Furthermore, many critics denounced what they saw as the political motivations behind the

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[105] Craig Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields*, 43.
[106] Craig Etcheson, as quoted in Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 487.
[107] Fawthrop and Jarvis, *Getting Away with Genocide?*, 109.

genocide label. Calling genocide a "political commodity," French sociologist Serge Thion writes:

> Genocide is nothing more than a political label aimed at the excluding a political leader or party from the bonds of mankind [sic]. Accusing others of genocide leads us to believe we are good, that we have nothing to do with these monsters. This is entirely misleading. Pol Pot was produced by our political world, is part of it, is using it, and is growing strong from it. Before saying he is dirty—which, without a doubt, he is—we should first clean our own house.[108]

This view is echoed by leftist scholars and activists like Noam Chomsky, Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, who recently argued that, across the board, genocide is a label the West uses to condemn the rest of the world in order to publicly justify the politics of foreign aid and invasion.[109]

The Cambodian Genocide Justice Act also had its critics on the right, as Fawthrop and Jarvis report, "many US government officials were far from enthusiastic about the new mandate, fearing that it might also turn up incriminating evidence concerning US bombings and other acts of warfare against the countries of Indochina."[110] Furthermore, many conservatives sought to uphold the U.S.'s Cold War alliances, which actively supported the Khmer Rouge against Cambodia's Vietnamese-aligned government.

The act definitively linked efforts to collect and preserve documents with calls to hold the Khmer Rouge accountable through the establishment of the Office of Cambodian Genocide

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[108] Thion also makes it clear that despite his distaste for the genocide label, he was in favor of holding Pol Pot (and his American, Thai, and Chinese associates) legally accountable through a trial under Cambodian law. Serge Thion, "Genocide as Political Commodity," *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia*, Ben Kiernan, ed., (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1993), 187. For a more detailed account of the political implications of the use of the term genocide, see, Michelle Caswell, "Using Classification to Convict the Khmer Rouge."

[109] Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, *The Politics of Genocide* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010). Foreward by Noam Chomsky.

[110] Fawthrop and Jarvis, *Getting Away with Genocide?*, 110.

Investigations in the U.S. State Department. Reproduced in its entirety on the ‘‘About’’ page of the Documentation Center of Cambodia’s website, the Cambodian Genocide Act stated:

> The purpose of the Office shall be to support, through organizations and individuals with whom the Secretary of State may contract to carry out the operations of the Office, as appropriate, efforts to bring to justice members of the Khmer Rouge for their crimes against humanity committed in Cambodia between April 17, 1975, and January 7, 1979, including.
>
> 1. to investigate crimes against humanity committed by national Khmer Rouge leaders during that period;
>
> 2. to provide the people of Cambodia with access to documents, records, and other evidence held by the Office as a result of such investigation;
>
> 3. to submit relevant data to a national or international penal tribunal that may be convened to formally hear and judge the genocidal acts committed by the Khmer Rouge; and
>
> 4. to develop the United States proposal for the establishment of an international criminal tribunal for the prosecution of those accused of genocide in Cambodia.[111]

The new bill tied the collection of and access to documents with efforts to hold the Khmer Rouge legally accountable. According to Craig Etcheson, the State Department originally proposed awarding funds to CORKR to carry out the proposed work, but Etcheson refused, determining that “a project of this scope needed a firmer institutional background and more infrastructural resources” than CORKR could provide.[112] The Cambodian Genocide Program (CGP) at Yale, which Kiernan had founded in 1994, seemed like the ideal choice. Kiernan, together with Etcheson and Jarvis, applied for the State Department funds under the auspices of the CGP.[113] The newly created Office of Cambodian Genocide Investigations “held an open competition” for organizations proposing to complete the described work, and then voted unanimously to award

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[111] “About,” The Documentation Center of Cambodia, http://www.dccam.org/Abouts/History/Histories.htm.
[112] Interview with Craig Etcheson, May 30, 2011.
[113] Interview with Craig Etcheson, May 30, 2011.

grant funds to the CGP to conduct research, training, and documentation of the Khmer Rouge.[114] CGP, under Kiernan's direction, was awarded $499,000 in the competition. In the next two years, the governments of Australia and the Netherlands and the Henry Luce Foundation awarded CGP additional funding and in 1997, the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor contributed another $1 million in funding.[115]

In January 1995, Kiernan established DC-Cam as the Phnom Penh field office of CGP. Kiernan added significant legitimacy to the project. He was one of only a handful of historians studying the Khmer Rouge period at that time. His field research in a village on the Thai-Cambodian border began in 1979, before the fall of the Khmer Rouge, and he was one of the first foreigners to view the Choeung Ek mass grave site as it was first being excavated in 1980.[116] He worked tireless both as an academic and activist within Cambodia and, as a result, possessed the ideal contacts, Khmer language fluency, and cultural agility to collect Khmer Rouge documents that had been dispersed throughout the country.

Kiernan hired Youk Chhang, a Cambodian-American refugee and survivor of torture under the Khmer Rouge, as director of the field office. After witnessing the Khmer Rouge murder his sister and being imprisoned for stealing food for another pregnant sister, Chhang escaped Cambodia at the age of 17, eventually resettling in Texas. In the U.S., he increasingly became involved in activist efforts to hold the Khmer Rouge accountable and began volunteering for the CGP. He moved back to Cambodia to start the field office in 1995, even before the State Department grant came through. Chhang recalls:

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[114] Gregory H. Stanton, "The International Campaign to End Genocide: A Review of Its First Five Years," Genocide Watch (undated), http://www.genocidewatch.org/reviewoffirstfiveyrs.html.
[115] Cambodian Genocide Program, "Introduction," http://www.yale.edu/cgp/cgpintro.html.
[116] Interview with Ben Kiernan, April 19, 2011.

> My research budget was $25 a month…. The day I left America to go back to Cambodia, there was no money for the air ticket so Ben Kiernan used his American Express card to buy a ticket for me. He said, 'Go. You survived the Khmer Rouge. You can eat [fish paste] there, you can survive, so don't worry.' I had no money, I had nothing. I went there with empty hands, with nothing but my heart. The grant [from the State Department] got approved, but it wasn't available until one year later, and 75% of it had to be spent at Yale. So [when I arrived in Phnom Penh], I had $25 in my pocket to do research to put Khmer Rouge leaders on trial.[117]

Thus, with $25, a credit card, and hopes of a State Department grant, the archival repository which now houses the world's largest collection of Khmer Rouge materials was founded.

Helen Jarvis, then a faculty member at the School of Library and Archive Studies at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, lent her documentation expertise to the project. Along with her colleague Nereida Cross, Jarvis designed DC-Cam's databases, selected appropriate software, trained staff, and implemented storage and access protocols and platforms.[118] She also worked closely with the School of Geomatic Engineering at the University of New South Wales to conceive and implement DC-Cam's GIS mapping of mass gravesites, a project which was cutting edge for its time.

When DC-Cam started, its intent was to index all existing Khmer Rouge materials in Cambodia, a goal that appeared to be "relatively manageable" at first.[119] However, as Craig Etcheson, who then served as a program manager at CGP writes, "What the leaders of the Cambodian Genocide Program did not immediately understand, however, was that an enormous quantity of previously unknown primary material lay hidden in various caches around Cambodia and that an extraordinary range of additional types of evidentiary materials also existed and was

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[117] Youk Chhang, "Connecting the Broken Pieces After the Cambodian Genocide: Legacy as Memory of a Nation," UC Berkeley-UCLA Distinguished Visitor from Southeast Asia Series, 2010, http://webcast.berkeley.edu/event_details.php?seriesid=dce46db2-c561-4e73-9e92-e3dab794ec1b.
[118] Interview with Helen Jarvis, July 24, 2011.
[119] Craig Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields*, 55.

in dire need of preservation, cataloging, and analysis."[120] Kiernan expressed similar surprise at the amount of materials they uncovered. He recalled, "…We really didn't expect to find all that much. Our major anticipated focus was to catalogue and assemble an archive of what had already been found…. Luckily, there was a huge collection of archives, which had remained undetected from 1979 until we located them in 1996."[121] Thus an indexing project quickly turned into an archival collection project.

DC-Cam began collecting the materials they found, first acquiring 100,000 pages of Santebal secret police files in 1996 that had been abandoned in a house during the Vietnamese invasion.[122] The files belonged to Son Sen, the Khmer Rouge's Deputy Prime Minister for Defense, and complemented an existing 100,000 pages of Santebal records in the possession of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. The records included biographies of Khmer Rouge leaders, forced confession statements signed by victims under torture, and communications between high-ranking Khmer Rouge officers. As Kiernan described:

> [The first records DC-Cam acquired were…] not just the central prison records, but the high-level reporting to the Pol Pot leadership. Many of these documents, which were also about 100,000 pages, include their handwritten annotations on the margins. There are documents with Pol Pot's signature on them. There's a list of prisoners arrested, and a confession by one of them listing all of his family members and contacts. And the words scribbled on the margin by Pol Pot himself, "Follow up" on this person. In other words, arrest all of the people named on the list. So it was a big find to come across these Santebal archives of the Khmer Rouge prison system across the country, showing high-level involvement and the implication of the top leaders of the Khmer Rouge in the crimes that were committed.[123]

Similarly, DC-Cam's senior legal advisor, John Ciorciari confirmed in an interview:

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[120] Ibid., 55-56.
[121] Ben Kiernan, "Cambodia and Its Documentation" (lecture, Global Resources Network Conference and Forum, Yale University, March 24, 2005), http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/globalrecord/new_web/kiernan_richie.html#text.
[122] George Chigas, "The Trial of the Khmer Rouge," 44-49.
[123] Ben Kiernan, "Cambodia and Its Documentation."

> The greatest wealth of information… was a set of documents that was left behind by the Khmer Rouge in January 1979 as they fled toward the Thai border and the Vietnamese came and found them and stuck them in a warehouse and 15 years later the Documentation Center inherited them. So, certainly as of 1995, when those documents were handed over [to DC-Cam] and organized and catalogued and parsed over by scholars, that was a huge game-changing thing in terms of understanding the history of the period.[124]

The Santebal records DC-Cam acquired provided an unprecedented wealth of information about the top leadership of the Khmer Rouge, information that DC-Cam staff hoped would aid in their conviction. George Chigas, who served as Associate Director of CGP writes, "The Santebal archive is considered the most valuable find of any set of documents from the DK [Khmer Rouge] period. While the Tuol Sleng archive primarily concerns the torture and execution of prisoners…, the Santebal documents record the regime's military and security activities… and may well connect individual top leaders to specific crimes."[125] At this time, DC-Cam staff decided not to remove the Tuol Sleng mug shots from their location at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, as copies of them had already been made and preserved at Cornell.

As DC-Cam organized the Santebal records in its offices in a house in Phnom Penh, word began to spread around Cambodia that an organization was collecting Khmer Rouge records. DC-Cam soon not only acquired the Santebal secret police files, but thousands of records found by disparate sources deteriorating in the tropical heat of several warehouses, abandoned Khmer Rouge offices, and homes throughout the country.[126] DC-Cam staff negotiated an agreement with the highest levels of the Cambodian government and the ruling party which authorized the

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[124] Interview with John Ciorciari, March 23, 2011.
[125] Chigas, "The Trial of the Khmer Rouge," 47.
[126] Today, DC-Cam still routinely acquires new materials through word of mouth. Indeed, on a May 2010 visit to DC-Cam, Chhang showed me an envelope full of Khmer Rouge records that DC-Cam had recently acquired from a villager. The villager had heard of DC-Cam, gave the envelope to a friend who was going to Phnom Penh, who gave the envelope to a friend who knew were DC-Cam offices were located.

organization to go anywhere in Cambodia, including government offices, and seize any item they deemed relevant to their investigation.[127] This agreement may surprise followers of current Cambodian politics, who note Prime Minister Hun Sen's public opposition to expanding the scope of the tribunal. However, at the point this agreement was reached, Hun Sen, then co-prime minister of Cambodia, publically supported the creation of the tribunal. As William Shawcross has written:

> In 1997 Hun Sen requested an international tribunal to try the Khmer Rouge, but it is now clear that he did so as only part of a strategy for defeating them politically and strengthening his own hand. He was not interested in seeking justice for Cambodians or in trying to figure out, as Cambodians wanted, why the Khmer Rouge had killed so many of its own people.[128]

One can also assume that Hun Sen's allowance for the agreement is connected to the Cambodian government's dependence on foreign aid. Hun Sen later "began to throw up obstacles to a tribunal at every opportunity," and then again shifted gears to publicly support international involvement in the tribunal, as long as he controlled several key aspects of the court's set up.[129]

The agreement had a profound effect on DC-Cam's growing collection. Etcheson recalled, "When we first got this agreement [from the government] I assumed that it would be of some use, but wouldn't get us into that many places, but over the subsequent years I have just been amazed at how much that agreement has been honored in all but a couple of very specific instances."[130] Materials DC-Cam soon acquired through this agreement include: documents from another Khmer Rouge prison (Krang Ta Chan in Takeo Province); records produced by the Lon Nol regime relating to its treatment of Khmer Rouge prisoners of war and intelligence reports;

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[127] Interview with Craig Etcheson, May 30, 2011.
[128] William Shawcross, "Lessons of Cambodia," in Nicolas Mills and Kira Brunners, eds., *The New Killing Fields: Massacre and the Politics of Intervention* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 46.
[129] Ibid., 47.
[130] Interview with Craig Etcheson, May 30, 2011.

the personal notebooks of Tuol Sleng prison guards; and the Renakse petition, through which Cambodians demanded that the United Nations stop recognizing the Khmer Rouge as the official government of Cambodia.[131]

In a 2011 interview, Etcheson expressed initial surprise at how much material DC-Cam was able to collect. He said, "We imagined there would be lots of stuff that we already knew about that needed to be carefully secured… and that here and there we would find new things, but as we began to get into our work on the ground in Cambodia… we began to get astonished again and again at what we were finding." He gave another example of one of DC-Cam's early discoveries:

> We found one very large cache of documents in the archives of the Ministry of Interior, which nobody outside of the Ministry had previously known about, and I really don't think [the Ministry of Interior] even knew what they had. For want of a better term, [these] were the records of the Khmer Rouge human resources department. One of the things they did in Democratic Kampuchea is that they had everybody write biographies of themselves. That was universal; everyone had to do that. But cadres in the Communist Party of Kampuchea had to do them regularly and repeatedly. There was a very high premium on precision in these biographies because to be caught in an inconsistency between two versions of your biography or they actually went and investigated these biographies, going back to your home village, and talking to family members and… if they caught you in a lie, it was a very career ending kind of thing…. We found over the subsequent years that those cadre biographies are very accurate. So suddenly we had an unprecedented mother lode of information on exactly who the Khmer Rouge were, where they were from, and the history of the careers in the organization.[132]

Using the permission gained from the Cambodian government, DC-Cam acquired these records.

While untold numbers of records were destroyed by cadres following Pol Pot's orders, thousands remained untouched in warehouses and offices throughout the country. Yet, even records that survived this initial Khmer Rouge purge were repurposed and unintentionally

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[131] By 2005, these materials were all microfilmed for preservation reasons, with copies deposited at the Center for Research Libraries. See Richard Richie, "Preserving Khmer Rouge Archives," Focus on Global Resources, http://www.crl.edu/focus/article/493.

[132] Interview with Craig Etcheson, May 30, 2011.

destroyed in a society in which paper was scarce. As Helen Jarvis, who helped rebuild the National Library of Cambodia reported, books and documents were used to light cooking fires and roll cigarettes after the 1979 overthrow.[133] Indeed, historian Ben Kiernan reports trying to do research soon after the fall of the regime at another one of the Khmer Rouge's prisons and being told that the records from the prison "had been smoked."[134] In the chaos following the Vietnamese invasion, many Khmer Rouge records (along with the information they contain and the evidence they embody) were "smoked," decomposed by tropical humidity, eaten by insects, or destroyed by those they implicated.

Additionally, DC-Cam was prevented from acquiring some archival materials for political reasons. Etcheson reports that in 1998 a collection of 100 Khmer Rouge films were mysteriously transported from the Ministry of Culture to a private company in Paris one week before DC-Cam was set to acquire them.[135] The films were said to have footage of the Cambodian King and Prime Minister Hun Sen collaborating with the Khmer Rouge. Etcheson characterizes this incident as "political interference with [the] acquisition of evidence."[136] Furthermore, he reports DC-Cam staff got "infinitely more cooperation" from the Cambodian government than the U.S. government in its collection efforts, despite the U.S. State Department's initial funding of the program.[137]

Without the intervention of Yale and DC-Cam, many Khmer Rouge records would have, at best, gone unnoticed by scholars or, at worst, have been destroyed. For example, in the case of the Ministry of Interior files, Etcheson said, "by all indications they might have kept them

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[133] Helen Jarvis, "The Cambodian National Library: Surviving After 70 Years," *Libraries & Culture* 30: 4 (1995): 403.
[134] Kiernan, "Cambodia and Its Documentation."
[135] Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields*, 61.
[136] Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields*, 65.
[137] Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields*, 73.

forever, but no one knew it was there or what it was, so it was never usefully exploited by historians much less for legal purposes." More tragically, large collections of documents in rural areas were destroyed during the civil war after the Khmer Rouge was overthrown. In one case, a collection of records was destroyed in 1992, when the house it was stored in was requisitioned by the Cambodian government to house a United Nations unit, and in the words of Etcheson, "these soldiers showed up and looked around and said get all this crap out of here and took it out back and burned it."[138] Etcheson characterizes the general attitude toward preserving these records at the time as "carelessness and lack of interest," coupled with the tropical conditions in which "physical things just get consumed by the environment."[139] Similarly, Jarvis states:

> As most of [the records] were already in institutional hands, perhaps they may have survived, but given the combination of lack of resources (both in terms of money or expertise) to preserve and/ or copy them, lack of interest in old things, and increasing anxiety about the risks of being seen to have incriminating material as the Khmer Rouge was accorded political legitimacy (in 1991-1993 [through the Paris Peace Accords]) and later as the prospect of trials increased, I think it is more than likely that [the records] would have disappeared or decayed beyond salvation.[140]

In these early years of DC-Cam, Chhang named three significant challenges to the organization. First, there was the international and domestic political challenge. Given that the Khmer Rouge still controlled strongholds in the jungle from which they were fighting the Cambodian government, political allies were few. Few foreign governments supported DC-Cam's work.[141] Next, Chhang said that the growing number of human rights organizations in Cambodia posed a major, if unexpected challenge. Surprisingly, the human rights community was only concerned with ongoing human rights abuses, and not the deaths of nearly two million people that had happened in the recent past. "Everywhere I went, people asked me, 'Why do you

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[138] Interview with Craig Etcheson, May 30, 2011.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Interview with Helen Jarvis, July 24, 2011.
[141] Chhang, "Connecting the Broken Pieces After the Cambodian Genocide."

want to poke at old wounds?' I felt like I was crazy… No one wanted to support me," said Chhang.[142] And finally, security was a major threat. Chhang received death threats daily, some publicly, from Khmer Rouge leaders who wanted to put a halt to DC-Cam's work. Chhang recalls telling Yale's CGP staff, "I put my life in the hands of God. That is my insurance policy. It is free. Don't worry about me." All of these challenges, Chhang said, "made our project stronger because we wanted to push forward."[143]

Like Chhang, Kiernan has written extensively about political threats to the establishment of DC-Cam. According to Kiernan, Khmer Rouge leaders, apologists for the regime, American Republicans, and the *Wall Street Journal* all attacked DC-Cam. Kiernan calls this opposition an odd "anti-Soviet alliance between the United States and China during the later stages of the Cold War, an alliance which often brought together conservative anti-communists and Maoist radicals."[144] As Kiernan details, the *Wall Street Journal* launched a particularly vicious attack on him, denouncing him as a communist and calling on the State Department to reverse its decision to fund the CGP and DC-Cam. Prominent Republicans subsequently accused CGP of fiscal mismanagement—allegations which were soon disproved.[145] At the same time, the Khmer Rouge called Kiernan an "arch-war criminal." Later, a faction of the regime created its own "Research and Documentation Center" to mount evidence in its defense.[146] Echoing Chhang's defiance in the face of threats, Kiernan writes, "Despite attacks from two sides, we pursued our mandate to establish a comprehensive, publicly accessible archive and documentation database

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[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ben Kiernan, "Bringing the Khmer Rouge to Justice," *Human Rights Review*, April-June 2000, 103.
[145] For a more detailed account of the allegations and their refutation, see: "State Department Clears Yale's Cambodia Program of Wrongdoing," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 27, 1998.
[146] Kiernan, "Bringing the Khmer Rouge to Justice," 102.

on the Khmer Rouge genocide, and to train Cambodian scholars and archivists to manage and enhance it."[147] Kiernan, Chhang, and other DC-Cam staff simply could not be silenced.

DC-Cam's growing collection provided evidence countering what Kiernan has characterized as "two forms of denial of the Cambodian genocide and one of suppression" regarding scholarship and political engagement about the Khmer Rouge period.[148] In Kiernan's estimation, the first form of denial consists of early reports from scholars such as Bunroeun Thach, Sorpong Pepu, and Stephen Heder, which grossly underestimated the damage caused by the Khmer Rouge.[149] While they are not specifically mentioned by Kiernan, this view is also embodied by the early work of Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, who in 1979 claimed that the Western media's reports of mass killings in Cambodia were exaggerated, based solely on biased refugee accounts, and constitute nothing more than propaganda aimed at shifting the blame away from the U.S.'s disastrous devastation in Southeast Asia.[150] The second form of denial in Kiernan's view is the insistence by scholars like David Chandler that while millions died during the regime, these mass killings do not necessarily fit within a narrow legal definition of genocide. Kiernan calls this view "incorrect" but "legitimate" with a "defensible intellectual basis."[151] Gregory H. Stanton, one of the early pioneers of gathering evidence to support a tribunal in Cambodia, asserts that, "Debating whether mass killing fits the conventional definition of genocide is most often an excuse for non-action."[152] Finally, Kiernan contends that concerted efforts to block DC-Cam's investigations through personal attacks on himself and

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[147] Ibid, 103.
[148] Ibid., 94.
[149] Kiernan himself initially underestimated the number of deaths caused by the Khmer Rouge, quickly revised these estimates as further evidence was gathered.
[150] Noam Chomsky and Edwards S. Herman, *After the Cataclysm* (Boston, South End Press, 1979).
[151] Ben Kiernan, "Bringing the Khmer Rouge to Justice," 97.
[152] Gregory H. Stanton, "The Call," 406.

unfounded allegations of fiscal mismanagement constitute an attempt "simply to suppress the facts of the case."[153]

Here we see the very political nature of archival collecting. However, while Kiernan asserts that "political pressure is the greatest threat to honest inquiry,"[154] I would argue that the creation of archives, rather than being a neutral antidote to political discourse, is in and of itself a political act, as will be analyzed later in this chapter.

In addition to the international political disputes, academic political disputes also proliferated. The politics of the Khmer Rouge genocide are so contentious that even those scholars and activists who agree that the Khmer Rouge should be held legally accountable for mass murder have engaged in highly charged public rows. Speaking of his own experience in Cambodia, Stanton writes:

> If we do not convert our anger into constructive actions, it can… be displaced upon the very people with whom we should be working. The result is a phenomenon that is paradoxical: that people in the human rights movement can be even more turf-conscious, back-stabbing, and self-righteous than people in other fields. The internecine battles among Cambodia scholars and human rights advocates are among the bloodiest cases of academic fratricide I have ever experienced.[155]

Indeed, highly charged political disputes were evident in several of the interviews conducted for this chapter.[156]

DC-Cam was the only organization (international or domestic) with the interest and funding to collect dispersed Khmer Rouge materials in the 1990s. The National Archives of Cambodia, itself straining to recuperate after decades of civil war which left its collection partially dismantled and many of its senior staff dead, did not have the resources, expertise, or

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[153] Ben Kiernan, "Bringing the Khmer Rouge to Justice," 97.
[154] Ibid.,103.
[155] Gregory H. Stanton, "The Call," 405.
[156] Instead of rehashing accusations, I have chosen to focus on scholarly and political issues.

political directive to undertake new collections.[157] While the National Archives is today a "very professionally-run institution,"[158] it took years after the 1975 Khmer Rouge takeover and the 1979 Khmer Rouge overthrow to achieve its current status. Reports from scholars visiting Cambodia in the 1980s described "the condition of libraries and archives in Cambodia [as] probably the worst in… Southeast Asia."[159] Much has improved since then, but to this day the National Archives of Cambodia remains underfunded, with only one computer shared amongst the staff and researchers. Few Khmer Rouge records are in the National Archives, with the exception of those of the regime's Commerce Ministry, which have also been cataloged and included in DC-Cam's databases, and are not accessible at the National Archives without high-level government permission.[160] Most researchers consult the National Archives for its strong French colonial-era collections, and not its small and restricted Khmer Rouge collection.

Additionally, DC-Cam was unparalleled among nongovernmental organizations in its interest in the records and its ability to attract international resources to fund the archival collection project. Although Cambodian civil society was slowly redeveloping in the 1980s, most

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[157] Until 1986, the National Archives and National Library were part of the same department. It has been reported that 35 of the 41 employees of the National Library were killed during the Khmer Rouge period; Only two returned to their jobs. See Howard J. De Nike, John Quigley, and Kenneth J. Robinson, eds., *Genocide in Cambodia: Documents from the Trial of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 358 and Helen Jarvis, "The Cambodian National Library: Surviving After Seventy Years," *Libraries & Culture* 30: 4 (1995): 391-408.

[158] David Chandler, interview with the author, March 24, 2011. Even so, foreign visitors to the National Archives of Cambodia may be shocked to find that the entire institution only has a single computer terminal, that many of the staff go months without being paid by the government, and that squatters still occupy the grounds of the archives, where they live in a makeshift abode, run a plant nursery, and hang laundry out to dry on the National Archives building.

[159] John F. Dean, "The Preservation and Conservation Needs of the Upper Regions of Southeast Asia," 128.

[160] National Archives of Cambodia, "Introduction to the Collection of the National Archives of Cambodia," http://www.camnet.com.kh/archives.cambodia/English/naccoll.htm

nongovernmental organizations were aimed at meeting the vast and immediate needs of post-war Cambodia, such as removing landmines, stopping child prostitution, providing safe drinking water, counseling victims of trauma, and reestablishing a public education system. In this sea of worthy causes, only DC-Cam made it its mission to collect records as a tool for accountability. Furthermore, unlike staff at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, DC-Cam staff possessed the political savvy and professional legitimacy to attract American and Western European funding after the end of the Cold War. Certainly, its connection to Yale University and its endorsement by well-established historians like Kiernan added to the project's legitimacy, while Chhang's personal story of torture under the regime, his unwavering dedication to holding the perpetrators accountable, and his talents navigating through both the Cambodian political system and the world of international funders lent an unprecedented drive to the organization. As a result, DC-Cam's initial grant from the U.S. State Department was soon matched by funding from a host of governments and foundations.

DC-Cam's Preservation and Digitization Efforts

The Yale program sparked renewed international funding and interest in archival work in Cambodia. Adding to the work Cornell University accomplished earlier, the Yale project placed microfilm safety copies of records newly uncovered by DC-Cam in repositories in the U.S. and Australia in case of the destruction of originals by political opponents in Cambodia. Additionally, digitization efforts aimed to make Khmer Rouge records accessible to Cambodian refugees and human rights workers around the world.

As DC-Cam's collection grew, it became increasingly clear that the organization could become a target for violence. Security was such a major threat that initially the location of the

DC-Cam repository was not made public. DC-Cam staff "feared that ex-Khmer Rouge cadres might discover the secret Documentation Center location and attempt to destroy the archives to prevent future criminal investigations."[161] In 1999, a journalist described DC-Cam's offices: "Housed in a building behind a black metal gate, the documentation center does not broadcast its presence, for many in this country are afraid that they might be found complicit in war crimes, or else will be asked to testify against someone who will kill them."[162] He also described the elaborate process of entering the repository, with a security guard inspecting him through a window before allowing him to enter. As Paul Conway, then head of the Preservation Department at Yale University Library, described, "We were concerned about this nightmare scenario of that house in Phnom Penh [where DC-Cam was located] going up in flames."[163]

In light of such security threats, it was crucial for DC-Cam to create safety copies of its collection and place them in secure locations outside of the country. While DC-Cam staff originally attempted to digitize the newly discovered documents, these efforts were plagued by "an undependable power supply at the Documentation Center and outdated scanners and computers."[164] Additionally, the staff at DC-Cam quickly realized they did not have the server space to store 100,000 digital images, and turned to preservation experts at Yale and Cornell for advice. Conway proposed that DC-Cam first microfilm, rather than digitize, the collection. Conway explains the reasoning behind initially picking microfilm over digitization: "the standards for digital were still being worked out and what you do [to preserve] digital files was

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[161] Rich Richie, "Cambodia and Its Documentation."
[162] David Wheeler, "Documenting Genocide in Cambodia, One Face After Another," *Chronicle of Higher Education* 45:38 (May 28, 1999): B2.
[163] Interview with Pail Conway, October 21, 2010.
[164] Rich Richie, "Preserving Khmer Rouge Archives," *Focus: Critical Resources for Research and Teaching in the Humanities, Sciences, and Social Sciences* 25 (Fall 2005), http://www.crl.edu/focus/05FallKhmer.asp?issID=1.

still a wide-open question in 1996," he said. David Walls, then a preservation librarian at Yale working on the project, explained the decision-making process:

> Imagine how fussy scanning equipment and digitization was in the mid-1990s and you're talking about a country where there was still a revolution going on, there is no such thing as clean electricity. The power is off and on. There are few computers of any kind. We just couldn't see it working. We didn't think they were capable of managing the technology and we thought that the digital files were too fragile. At that time there was no way to ftp content reliably, especially not from half way around the world. So given the conditions and the political situation, we decided to take a backwards step in technology. So we went with a really tried and true microfilm and a very ancient microfilm camera that was fairly easy to operate and pretty robust rugged technology. Instead of making the people in Cambodia deal with microchips and computers, we gave them something they could fix with copper wire and electrical tape. And something that almost any person with some mechanical skill could fix if it broke.[165]

Cost was also a factor in choosing to microfilm first. Conway said:

> They were using really cheap scanners that were breaking all the time and there were power surges that made scanning difficult. Our first strategy was to see if we could raise some money to buy a better quality scanner and get it over there and get them trained, but when we started looking at the cost of doing that, all of a sudden microfilming became incredibly cost effective. It was cheaper to microfilm it than it was to do digitization properly.[166]

The project was mostly funded by Yale University Library and received some additional funding from Center for Research Libraries (CRL) and Cornell University. It aimed to create microfilm use copies for DC-Cam and two preservation copies for safekeeping in the U.S., to be stored at Yale and CRL (where they could be accessed at other universities via interlibrary loan). Armed with a "borrowed World War II-era portable microfilm camera," Rich Richie, Yale's Bibliographer for Southeast Asia, flew to Phnom Penh to begin training DC-Cam staff how to microfilm.[167] Richie writes, "the project went awry almost immediately due to overheating

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[165] Interview with David Walls, October 22, 2010.
[166] Interview with Paul Conway, October 21, 2010.
[167] Richie, "Cambodia and Its Documentation."

equipment, which was intensified by tropical temperatures and the need for a closed room."[168] Fortunately, the purchase of a portable generator and air conditioner alleviated these issues.

Developing the film presented another formidable challenge given the state of technology in Cambodia in 1995. Yale staff sent undeveloped film to DC-Cam staff in Cambodia with instructions on how to load the film. DC-Cam staff would send an email confirmation of receipt from an internet café, take the images of the records, and as soon as they had amassed four rolls of shot film, they would send the film to New Haven via DHL, which was the only international courier operating in Cambodia at that time. Back in New Haven, the film was processed according to preservation standards. Yale Libraries kept the master copy, made two duplicate copies and a positive, and gave the positive copy and duplicate negatives to DC-Cam.[169] Despite these challenges, the microfilm project prevailed and all of the Santebal records were microfilmed and Yale's copies are now available for loan through the Center for Research Libraries.[170] Walls said, "Those logistical operations of managing a project like that were sometimes frustrating, but in all of those years, nothing ever got lost, nothing was ever opened and destroyed…. By and large, it worked. As crazy as it sounds, it worked.[171] Conway also noted how challenging the logistics of the project were. He said,

> The urgency of the project and the complexity of the logistics were challenging from a traditional preservation perspective. The logistical complexities… forced us to think about preservation standards. In theory, with preservation microfilming, you control very tightly the filming process. And we had no control over the filming process. So what does it mean to do a preservation project when the actual creation of the images is totally out of your control? We were acutely aware of the compromises we had to make in order to get the project done.[172]

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[168] Richie, "Preserving Khmer Rouge Archives."
[169] Interview with Paul Conway, October 21, 2010.
[170] For a complete list of microfilm made during this project that is available via ILL from the Center for Research Libraries see Richie, "Preserving Khmer Rouge Archives."
[171] Interview with David Walls, October 22, 2010.
[172] Interview with Paul Conway, October 21, 2010.

He also describes the project as one of the most challenging and important in his preservation career. Similarly, Walls said, "We were very much aware that these documents were telling a story for a group of living people who were going to try and get justice."[173] In the political environment of Cambodia in the 1990s, security was an ongoing concern during the microfilming process. As Walls said, "We had an agreed gag order… that we were not going to publicly talk about the project in deference to security concerns."[174]

With preservation microfilm projects successfully underway, DC-Cam once again turned its attention to digitization. Etcheson notes that the creation of a database of digitized documents initially served internal purposes. He said, "We needed some way to organize the information. And a database just seemed like the logical way to do it in terms of keeping control of… significant quantities of data, which turned out to be much more significant than we originally had realized. It was short while later that we came up with the idea of putting these databases on a website."[175] However, database creation and digitization soon turned into a much larger and more significant project supported by the technical expertise of Helen Jarvis and Nereida Cross, expanding to include information on documents which were not in the physical custody of DC-Cam, such as the Tuol Sleng mug shots. As a result of this project, four databases were created and made accessible online: a biographic database of information on more than 30,000 victims and perpetrators; a bibliographic database of information on more than 3,000 records; a geographic database mapping mass grave sites; and a photographic database consisting of 5,190 digitized mug shots found at Tuol Sleng (*figure 3.1; figure 3.2*). While the other databases contain information on documents which are not digitized and which can only be accessible in

[173] Interview with David Walls, October 22, 2010.
[174] Interview with David Walls, October 22, 2010.
[175] Interview with Craig Etcheson, May 30, 2011.

person at DC-Cam, the photographic database consists of digitized mug shots. The photographic database was created as the result of a 1995 agreement in which DC-Cam, under the auspices of Yale, gained permission from the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum to digitize its mug shot collection. The online databases were visionary for their time. As Jarvis explained, "We always had in mind making information available widely inside and outside of Cambodia, and were aware of the (only then emerging) power of computers and the internet."[176]

The photographic database was an effort, in part, to reunite the mug shots with the names of the victims and, subsequently, their interrogation files. As stated on the Yale site, "The purpose of the CGDB Photographic Database is to bring together in one place the most complete collection ever assembled of images pertaining to gross violations of human rights under the Democratic Kampuchea regime."[177] One of the key intentions in creating this database was identification; by circulating digital copies of these images, the project aimed to link Cambodian knowledge—the names of victims—with the mug shots. As Yale's website reveals, "The photographs are presented here in the hope that these Khmer Rouge victims -- most of whom remain unidentified -- might be recognized by friends or family members, and thus they will no longer be forced to linger in the status of 'unknown victim.'"[178] Similarly, an April 21, 1997 *New York Times* story about the website states, the Cambodian Genocide Program's "internet site, which may be accessible in Cambodia at the end of this month, will allow people to put names to the photos."[179]

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[176] Interview with Helen Jarvis, July 24, 2011.
[177] Yale's Cambodian Genocide Program, "Documentation of the Photographic Database," http://www.yale.edu/cgp/cimgdoc.html.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Tina Rosenberg, "Cambodia's Blinding Genocide: A Web Site Exhumes the Faces of Death," *New York Times*, April 21, 1997, A14.

The project represents an early attempt at the digital unification of disparate information from archival and other sources online. Paul Conway, then Yale's preservation librarian, worked on the project. In a 2010 interview, Conway said,

> The vision that Ben Kiernan and the Yale staff had was that they would use digitization to marry chaotically arranged testimonies with separated and equally chaotically arranged photographs of victims. They thought they could use the web as a way of having survivors unite these files so that people could look at that and say 'I recognize this person' or 'I know whose testimony this was.' It was a decade ahead of its time.[180]

These newly united digital files would then serve as "an open testimony to the horrors of the Khmer Rouge," as Conway puts it.[181] Conway posits that the databases prefigure the social networking concept that archives are only now starting to employ for participatory archival description. Conway explained:

> Yale was an early adopter of browser technology…. It didn't take Ben [Kiernan] much time to envision how this brand new technology would be used. The mechanics of it were not worked out, but the vision was to have a split screen, essentially to have two browser windows open that allowed you to flip through photographs and testimonies at the same time. The idea was that if you were looking at these photographs and you recognize someone, there would be an information box that you could type in information… and then that data would go into a database so that it could be matched to testimonies… And then there would be this connection between the photograph and the forced confession statement. In terms of how it would work out technically, I don't think they had the specifications. But it is a very significant vision of what has become our kind of meta-tagging approach to identifying information… before there was even the concept of tagging.[182]

This plan presents an important chapter in the social life of the mug shots. On the one hand, digitizing materials separates objects from the information they contain, so that users no longer need to be in the presence of the material artifact of the mug shots to view the images. The act of viewing a digital image online is a wholly different experience than viewing it in person, and one that presents a significant challenge for archivists in terms of providing context

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[180] Paul Conway, Interview with Author, October 21, 2010.
[181] Ibid.
[182] Ibid.

and ensuring authenticity and reliability. As Stephanie Benzaquen has written, "These are well-known photographs. Yet is one thing to see them on the computer screen or browsing through Flickr web pages, and it is another thing to see them in their original context."[183] On the other hand, the vision for this digitization project was to unite disparate sources of information in a sort of virtual reunification of facts, if not of the actual archival records.

Mug shots, a turn of the twentieth century technology, were being transformed and reinterpreted through new technology at the turn of the twenty-first century. Here Geoffrey Bowker and Susan Leigh Star's work on memory, time, and information infrastructure sheds light. Bowker and Star suggest we read information infrastructures "both discursively and materially," as a "site of political and ethical as well as technical work."[184] In this way, the database of digitized mug shots formed a "memory bank" that aimed to induce survivors of the Khmer Rouge to remember tragic events, with important personal, ethical and political consequences.[185] By migrating the historical Khmer Rouge records from a paper to digital format, archivists were both performing a "conscious act in the present," and changing the nature of the document itself, so that it can be "read in new ways" in the future.[186] The digitization process is inherently one that crosses temporal boundaries, preserving documents of the past for future users, but also changing them irrevocably. Bowker writes, "Each new medium imprints its own special flavor to the memories of that epoch."[187] By digitizing these records, the project aimed to unite disparate information online, allowing people to reinterpret documents and events,

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[183] Stephanie Benzaquen, "Postcolonial Aesthetic Experiences: Thinking Aesthetic Categories in the Face of Catastrophe at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century," Paper presented at the European Congress of Aesthetics, November 10-12, 2010: 2.
[184] Bowker and Star, *Sorting Things Out*.
[185] The phrase "memory bank" originates from Bowker's other work. See, *Memory Practices in the Sciences*.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid., 26.

thereby shaping memory of them. As Andras Riedlmayer and Stephen Naron have written about the digital documentation of genocide:

> "…Despite the staggering loss of human lives and cultural heritage, communities of survivors… have found remarkable ways to collectively reconstruct and remember what was lost…. Of course communal commemoration of the dead… is nothing new…. But each group of survivors, each generation, reinvents the process by which their lost community is commemorated. And in so doing, survivors employ those technologies most prevalent at the time."[188]

At the cusp of the 21st century, digitization was the most prevalent technology through which the world could remember Khmer Rouge victims, and this digitization altered the uses and meaning of the mug shots, simultaneously decontextualizing them and enabling them to serve as conduits for new types of information. A key aspect in this envisioned digital reunification was the identification of victims by name. Susan Sontag writes that the "…the scale of war's murderousness destroys what identifies people as individuals, even as human beings."[189] The DC-Cam database (and the newsletter, which will be discussed later) is, like the names visitors to Tuol Sleng wrote on the displayed photographs in the 1980s, an attempt to restore the individuality—and thus the humanity—of the victims. The act of naming counters Susan Sontag's impressions of the photos, presumably gathered primarily from the MoMA exhibition:

> These Cambodian women and men of all ages, including many children, photographed from a few feet away, usually in half figure, are… forever looking at death, forever about to be murdered, forever wronged…. The prison photographer's name is known—Nhen Ein—and can be cited. Those he photographed, with their stunned faces, their emaciated torsos, the number tags pinned to the top of their shirts, remain an aggregate: anonymous victims.[190]

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[188] Andras Riedlmayer and Stephen Naron, "From Yizkor Books to Weblogs: Genocide, Grassroots Documentation, and New Technologies," in Jeanette Bastian and Ben Alexander, eds., *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory* (London: Facet, 2009), 151-2.
[189] Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York, Picador: 2003), 61.
[190] Ibid.

Linking the photos with the names of the people portrayed is a form of memorial, of remembering victims as the individuals they were and not the aggregate nameless mass of "traitors" that they were transformed into by the Khmer Rouge.

However, the limits of the technology in 1995 when the photos were being scanned, coupled with budgetary constraints and the eventual acrimonious dissolution of the partnership between Yale and DC-Cam, prevented the widespread use of these digitized mug shots for this intended reason.[191] Furthermore, global digital divides to this day prevent the majority of Cambodians from accessing the photographs on line, with less than half of one percent of Cambodians having internet access.[192] Etcheson wrote in 2005, "Only a small trickle of suggested identities has been forwarded to the Cambodian Genocide Program, but it is hoped that with time, identities can be restored to at least some of these anonymous victims of the Cambodian genocide."[193] Yet, even with that caveat, the digitized mug shots—now accessible via two separate databases, one at Yale and one at DC-Cam—have played a major role in raising awareness of the crimes of the Khmer Rouge among scholars and the international legal community. Furthermore, Cambodian refugee communities around the world use the database to look up their loved ones and find out more information about the Khmer Rouge period.[194] Also, as Susan E. Cook writes, "many Cambodians are grateful to know that the information is available [online] for the rest of the world to see, so that their suffering might be acknowledged

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[191] Despite repeated attempts, I was not able to get anyone to speak on record in detail about the discordant nature of the split between Yale and DC-Cam.
[192] Internet World Stats 2010, "Internet Usage in Asia. http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats3.htm.
[193] Craig Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields*, 61.
[194] Interview with Ben Kiernan, April 19, 2011.

and understood by the world."[195] As I will discuss in chapter four, DC-Cam's newsletter is now largely filling the database's intended function of victim identification within Cambodia.

DC-Cam as Cambodian NGO

In 1997, DC-Cam's two-year contract with Yale expired and it became its own independent nonprofit nongovernmental organization under the direction of Chhang. Its mission is to both ''record and preserve the history of the Khmer Rouge regime for future generations…[and] to compile and organize information that can serve as potential evidence in a legal accounting for the crimes of the Khmer Rouge.''[196] Since then, Chhang has been a tireless advocate within Cambodia to end the ''culture of impunity'' by using the preserved documents as legal evidence in a tribunal.[197] He has consistently, relentlessly, and successfully ensured that media attention and government action both within Cambodia and abroad over the past fifteen years have addressed the growing demands of Khmer Rouge victims to hold the regime accountable. Chhang's efforts, together with those of his staff, were essential in sparking and later reviving United Nations interest in a tribunal and assuring international legal experts that there would be enough evidence for convictions. Indeed, a 145-page memorandum from DC-Cam staff to the United Nations detailing all of the evidence compiled against five specific

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[195] Susan E. Cook, "Documenting the Cambodian Genocide," *Fathom*, 2002, http://www.fathom.com/feature/35577/.
[196] "About," The Documentation Center of Cambodia, http://www.dccam.org/Abouts/History/Histories.htm.
[197] Dinah PoKempner, "The Tribunal and Cambodia's Transition to a Culture of Accountability," in *Bringing the Khmer Rouge to Justice*. (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 2005)" 333–358.

individuals for specific crimes is what convinced the U.N. Group of Experts to pursue the tribunal.[198] As explained on the ‘‘About’’ page of DC-Cam’s website:

> Based principally on their examination of DC-Cam holdings, in February 1999 the UN Group of Experts found a prima facie case against certain former Khmer Rouge leaders for war crimes, genocide and other crimes against humanity…. A memorandum from the United Nations, A/59/432 of 12 October 2004 stated: ‘‘It is expected that the Chambers will rely heavily on documentary evidence. Some 200,000 pages of documentary evidence are expected to be examined. The bulk of that documentation is held by the Documentation Centre of Cambodia, an NGO dedicated to research and preservation of documentation on crimes perpetrated during the period of Democratic Kampuchea.”[199]

Thus, rather than being an apolitical or neutral repository as many archives have historically claimed to be, DC-Cam has taken an active role in bringing about the tribunal. As Jarvis explained, “Unquestionably our documentation work provided not only great support for the arguments for the tribunal, but much of the evidence that was examined by the U.N. Group of Experts in 1998, whose mandate included assessing whether there was sufficient evidence to pursue the case, and of course much of the evidence [DC-Cam collected] has been placed subsequently in the case files at the ECCC [Tribunal] and presented in court.”[200]

As the trial has begun, it has become virtually impossible to overestimate the scope of Chhang and DC-Cam’s impact. Through countless media interviews, educational outreach

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[198] Interestingly, this memorandum admits that DC-Cam falls short of evidence convicting Khmer Rouge officials with genocide against the Khmer population, but specifically makes the case for genocide charges against ethnic minorities by providing both a case study of how the Cham Muslim population was targeted and a list of Vietnamese prisoners who were killed at Tuol Sleng. Elizabeth Moorthy, Youk Chhang, Putheara Lay, Dara Peuv Vanthan, and Beth Van Schaack, “Memorandum: A Preliminary Evaluation of Evidence Held by the Documentation Center of Cambodia,” November 1998, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Available via the David Chandler Cambodia Collection at Monash University Library, http://arrow.monash.edu.au/vital/access/manager/Collection/monash:64226, accessed December 20, 2011.

[199] “About,” The Documentation Center of Cambodia, http://www.dccam.org/Abouts/History/Histories.htm.

[200] Interview with Helen Jarvis, July 24, 2011.

programs, publications, digitization efforts, and training programs for DC-Cam staff with international archival and legal experts, Chhang has become the voice of accountability in Cambodia, epitomizing the 'archivist activist' model that has been popularized in recent archival studies literature.[201] In 2007, Chhang was named one of *Time* magazine's 100 Most Influential People.[202] The profile, written by Senator John Kerry, called Chhang "a hero confronting the past's villains."[203] Similarly, there is a striking overlap between the founding staff of DC-Cam and ECCC staff; Jarvis retired in 2010 after three years as the ECCC's Head of the Victims Support Section and Etcheson is Lead Investigator for the Office of the Co-Prosecutors.

Today, DC-Cam employs an all-Cambodian forty-five-member staff under the direction of Chhang, houses more than 600,000 documents, 6,000 photographs, and 4,000 oral histories, and is the main source of documentary evidence being used by the tribunal. DC-Cam receives funding from the governments of the U.S., Norway, Australia, United Kingdom, Canada and the Netherlands, and from private foundations such as the MacArthur Foundation and the Open Society Institute.[204] Its programs include: a Public Information Room in Phnom Penh whereby members of the public can access primary and secondary sources on the Khmer Rouge; a genocide education and teacher training program which trains teachers throughout Cambodia how to address the Khmer Rouge period; a robust publication program, including the publication and free distribution of both the first Cambodian high school history textbook to address the Khmer Rouge period and a monthly Khmer language newsletter *Searching for the Truth* (which

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[201] Randall Jimerson, "Archives for All: Professional Responsibility and Social Justice," *American Archivist* 70 (2007): 252–281. Indeed, such activism has recently led to DC-Cam coming under fire for political bias; Chhang was even summoned to testify about DC-Cam's political bias at the ECCC in February 2012.
[202] John Kerry, "Heroes and Pioneers," Time May 8, 2007, reprinted at http://ki-media.blogspot.com/2007/05/youk-chhang-time-magazine-2007-most.html.
[203] Ibid.
[204] For a complete list of funders, see: http://www.dccam.org/Abouts/Finance/Finances.htm.

is translated into English on a quarterly basis); a Living Documents project whereby Khmer Rouge survivors from rural areas are brought to Phnom Penh to witness the tribunal and go back and inform their neighbors about it; an extensive oral history project in which staff interview both Khmer Rouge victims and perpetrators alike throughout Cambodia; a forensic program which maps mass graves and memorials; and ongoing archival collection, preservation, microfilming, digitization, and cataloguing of materials.

DC-Cam is a much more well-funded, well-staffed, and well-organized organization than the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, which is government-run. The contrast is striking. Like most government-run memory institutions in Cambodia, the museum is in a total state of decay; visitors can easily make a wrong turn in a hallway and wind up in a dusty room full of construction debris and old toilets, as the author did in January 2012 (*figure 3.3*). Backrooms are covered in graffiti (in Khmer, English, and other languages) and there are no security or educational staff stationed in the buildings. Many of the museum staff have been working there since 1979, when it was an undesirable government assignment that attracted the least educated, least qualified government workers.[205] The Director, Chey Sophera, was promoted to that position from that of security guard. While foreigners are charged a $2 admission fee, admission is supposed to be free and the fees are pocketed by and distributed among museum staff at the end of each day.[206] Many on the staff remain due to the lucrative nature of collecting fees from tourists, which significantly add to their meager and unpredictable government salaries. There are donation boxes near all of the bathrooms in order to pay for upkeep. Most foreign visitors pay an additional $5 to get a private tour of the museum from Cambodian guides, who are free agents (not museum staff), some of whom had family members who were imprisoned there. If it

[205] Interview with Youk Chhang, January 9, 2012, Phnom Penh.
[206] Interview with Youk Chhang, January 9, 2012, Phnom Penh.

were not for DC-Cam produced exhibitions, there would be virtually no explanatory information at the museum; DC-Cam's exhibitions remain up at Tuol Sleng long past their official runs, despite significant fading and the defacement of photographs of Khmer Rouge leaders. The Tuol Sleng mug shots on display are in a state of disrepair, many showing signs of mildew; the largest image on display, that of Chan Kim Srun's mug shot, has been torn and taped together multiple times. The atmosphere is one of abandonment, decrepitude, and neglect, despite the tour buses that line up in front; perhaps the tourists think the decay and mismanagement add authenticity to the site. Virtually all of the resources at the museum have been donated; DC-Cam has donated the AV system used at Tuol Sleng for its twice daily screenings of the documentary *Bophana* and tour companies have donated the benches on which visitors can sit in the courtyard and film screening room.

The Tuol Sleng Archives also reflect this same fiscal disregard. When asked to be directed to the archives on a December 2011 visit, I was told to go to DC-Cam. When I asked again on a January 2012 visit, I was told that the archives were closed that day because the archivist has a second job that meets at the same time as her job at Tuol Sleng.[207] The Tuol Sleng staff could not predict when the archivist might make an appearance. Neither the museum nor the archives has a functioning official website. The email address listed on the pamphlet given out to visitors does not work. The message here is clear; the current administration does not deem the preservation of history—even history that justifies the government's own political agenda—an important enough cause to allocate resources to it.[208]

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[207] Such double booking is not unheard of in Cambodia, where government jobs pay very little—that is when the salary check arrives at all. Youk Chhang confirmed that the Tuol Sleng archivist works few hours each week. Interview with Youk Chhang, January 9, 2012, Phnom Penh.

[208] The National Archives of Cambodia operates in similar state of neglect, despite the attentive care of a team of dedicated archivists; squatters occupy the grounds of the Archives, hanging

By contrast, DC-Cam is a dynamic, functional, modern office in the heart of Phnom Penh, across from the city's landmark Independence Monument. Housed in three adjacent buildings, DC-Cam is virtually unmarked due to security concerns, but the public is welcome to use the resources in its public information room during set business hours.[209] The office teems with life; dozens of young Cambodian staffers mill about working on various projects. Its website is frequently updated with information and director Chhang responds promptly to email requests and keeps an international database of contacts to whom he sends out biweekly updates. DC-Cam recently announced plans to build a permanent educational facility, named the Sleuk Rith Institute after the leaves on which ancient Cambodian manuscripts are inscribed, that will house a museum, archives, policy research center, and degree-granting school.[210] After visiting both institutions, one cannot help but feel relieved that DC-Cam has copies all of the materials at the Tuol Sleng Archives.

In July 2011, DC-Cam entered into a formal agreement with the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts to preserve and develop the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum.[211] Under the agreement, DC-Cam transformed unused space at Tuol Sleng into a classroom in order to run genocide prevention and education programs. DC-Cam staff will also provide management training to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum staff and mount photography exhibitions at the museum. While this agreement in no way constitutes a formal takeover of the archival documents in Tuol Sleng's collections (including the mug shots) by DC-Cam, it reveals the development of a much closer

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laundry to dry on the building, while archivists are rumored to have gone months without a paycheck. There is only one computer terminal for the entire institution.

[209] Access to archival materials is more restricted, again due to security concerns; requests for access are made directly to Chhang. The sign outside the building merely reads "Public Information Room."

[210] Sleuk Rith Institute, http://www.cambodiasri.org/.

[211] Email from Youk Chhang, July 1, 2011.

working relationship between the organizations and is a possible harbinger of DC-Cam's further involvement with the reuse of the Tuol Sleng mug shots in the future.

Political Power, Silences, and the Making of Archives

As the Tuol Sleng mug shots (and other records) were transformed from active bureaucratic records to material and digital archival collections over the course of the past thirty-three years, they were imbued with the power to establish historical and legal facts about the Khmer Rouge and its victims. This power to establish fact is wholly intertwined with politics, as each successive archival collection effort was enabled by and steeped in the political context from which it emerged. This section will analyze the influence of political power on the history of the Tuol Sleng mug shot collection, and address the silences embedded in the archival collection efforts detailed in this chapter.

Trouillot posits that power is imbricated in each moment of the creation of archives, a process he defines as "the moment of fact assembly." He writes:

> In short, the making of archives involves a number of selective operations: selection of producers, selection of evidence, selection of themes, selection of procedures—which means, at best the differential ranking and, at worst, the exclusion of some producers, some evidence, some themes, some procedures. Power enters here both obviously and surreptitiously.[212]

While Trouillot lacks the vocabulary of archival administration, his delineation of the various types of "selection" can be accurately mapped to the archival functions of appraisal, description, preservation, and access, as in each case, archivists are "selecting" records to be included in archives, to be described in archival ways, to be preserved by archival standards, and to be made accessible through print, digital, and material archives. In terms of the transformation of Tuol

[212] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 53.

Sleng mug shots into archival collections, each archival function belies a relationship of power; only certain actors (the Khmer Rouge's Vietnamese-backed successors, Western human rights activists and librarians, the U.S. State Department, and finally, the Cambodian-run DC-Cam) had the power to archivize these photographs, to determine they were worthy of collection, sustained preservation attention, exhibition, publication, and digitization. Trouillot writes that "…archival power at its strongest, [is] the power to define what is and what is not a serious of research, and therefore, of mention."[213] Clearly, throughout the course of their transformation into archival collection, the Tuol Sleng mug shots were deemed objects of serious research, worthy of attention from historians, lawyers, lawmakers, Khmer Rouge survivors, and tourist visitors to the museum.

Taking Trouillot's claims a step further, through the examination of the Tuol Sleng mug shot collection we see how such archival decisions are not based on just any type of power, but *political* power in particular. Writing about his work at DC-Cam, Etcheson asserts that archival collection is

> inherently submerged in a political context, and thus any organization involved with such matters will also find itself swimming in a turbulent political sea. Given the origins of the Cambodian Genocide Program in an explicitly political advocacy effort, the officers of the [CGP] were fully aware of the political character infusing their otherwise largely scientific undertaking.[214]

Note the distinction Etcheson makes between the political and scientific aspects of archival collection; such distinction, I posit, is rendered meaningless upon closer examination, both in the sense that archives are always political, and in the sense that politics and science are never a hard and fast binary. Chhang himself sees the political implications of archival work. "Documentation is a political act," he said, "and therefore it alarms politicians who don't want to see truth

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[213] Ibid., 99
[214] Etcheson, *After the Killing Fields*, 72.

revealed."[215] Here, the work of South African archivist Verne Harris is particularly useful. Shunning critiques that political power interferes with archival duties, Harris asserts, "The archive is the very possibility of politics."[216] He writes:

> Firstly, the very structure of recordmaking both invites politics in and generates a politics of its own. Ultimately, there is no understanding of the record, or of the archive, without understanding of politics. Secondly, and this argument flows directly from the first, political pressure never only comes from "outside." It is always also at work from "inside"; from within the process of recordmaking. Recordmakers, including archivists, are, from the beginning and always, political players. Thirdly, not only is recordmaking ("the archive") woven through by the political; politics is woven through by the archival…. This is to go beyond a claim that the archive is political. It is to assert that the archive *is* politics.[217]

In light of Harris's assertions, the three decades of competing international claims to the Tuol Sleng mug shots are not a political *intrusion* on the archives, but rather central to the very fabric of the archival endeavor. There are no archives without politics; the process of transforming Tuol Sleng mug shots into archives is inherently and inescapably political. Harris writes:

> Struggles for social justice are battlegrounds over values, priorities, resources, dignity, and survival. To claim that such initiatives politicize archives misses the point that *archives are already political* and always manifested and shaped at the coalface of power, privilege, and resourcing. These are realities we cannot escape…. [T]he work of archives is politics by other means. Wishing this away will not evaporate politics.[218]

While the history of the Tuol Sleng mug shots provides a particularly extreme example of the ways in which politics infuses the work of archives, such political power is always present to some extent, both "obviously and surreptitiously" in the words of Trouillot.

Yet while archival collecting is on the one hand an affirmative act of political power (the power to determine something worthy of archiving), it is also always an act of silencing those

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[215] Interview with Youk Chhang, January 9, 2012, Phnom Penh.
[216] Verne Harris, *Archives and Justice* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2007), 245.
[217] Ibid., 254.
[218] David A. Wallace, "Locating Agency: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Professional Ethics and Archival Morality," *Journal of Information Ethics* 19:1 Spring 2010, 184.

voices not worthy or not capable of being included in the archives on the other hand. Compounding the unbearably heavy silences of those voiceless victims the mug shots depict, as well as that of the Khmer Rouge victims who left no trace as discussed in Chapter Two, the archivization of the Tuol Sleng mug shots belies two crucial silences: the silence of the missing mug shot negatives and the silence of the missing names of the unidentified victims depicted.

The missing negatives create a silence in our facts about Tuol Sleng, causing the omission in our collective memory of those thousands of Tuol Sleng victims not depicted in the 5,190 mug shot images that currently form the archives. Given the varied estimates for the number of people killed at Tuol Sleng (between 12,000 and 20,000), the missing negatives represent between 7,000 and 15,000 victims whose faces the world does not now know. For Cambodians searching for missing loved ones, this silence of omission is deafening, leaving unanswered questions and unresolved grief. These silences add to those inherent in any archival collection, as Harris describes:

> …In any circumstances, in any country, the documentary record provides just a sliver of a window into the event. Even if archivists in a particular country were to preserve every record generated throughout the land, they would still have only a sliver of a window into that country's experience. But of course in practice, this record universum is substantially reduced through deliberate and inadvertent destruction by records creators and managers, leaving a sliver of a sliver from which archivists select what they will preserve. And they do not preserve much. Moreover, no record, no matter how well protected and cared for by archivists, enjoys an unlimited life span. Preservation strategies can, at best, aim to save versions of most archival records. So archives offer researchers a sliver of a sliver of a sliver.[219]

For Cambodians still looking for answers about dead relatives, a sliver of a sliver of a sliver is simply not enough.

Yet, as this chapter has argued, archivists have tried to counter another type of silence embedded in the Tuol Sleng collection—the silence of the names of those depicted. Through

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[219] Verne Harris, "The Archival Sliver," 64-65.

exhibition, digitization, and publication, archivists as the Tuol Sleng Museum and DC-Cam have helped Cambodians identify the previously anonymous victims in the photos, collected these names, and added them to the archival record (via finding aids, databases, and publication of the now-captioned photos). Using Trouillot's language, archivists have countered the silences embedded in the moment of fact creation (the taking of the mug shots) by adding voice in the moment of fact assembly (the archivization of the mug shots). While this act of matching names to photographs in the process of archivization is seemingly small and simple, it has had an overwhelming impact on countering larger societal silences about the Khmer Rouge, as Chapter Four will explore.

This chapter has traced the formation of archival collections of the Tuol Sleng mug shots, from their initial collection and display at the Vietnamese-run Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, to their collection as legal evidence by American human rights activists and historical evidence by Western libraries, to their preservation and exhibition as art objects by the Photo Archive Group, to their digitization and publication by a Cambodian organization with American roots. In each of these moments, the mug shots were transformed from records into archival collections, representing a significant chapter in the social life of these images. As we have seen throughout, the formation of archives is a contested, political act, imbued with moments of empowerment and conversely, silencing. In light of Trouillot, the assembly of these photographs into archives constitutes an attempt to establish facts about the Khmer Rouge, facts which can then be used to create narratives that honor the dead, shape history, and hold those responsible legally accountable, as Chapter Four will address.

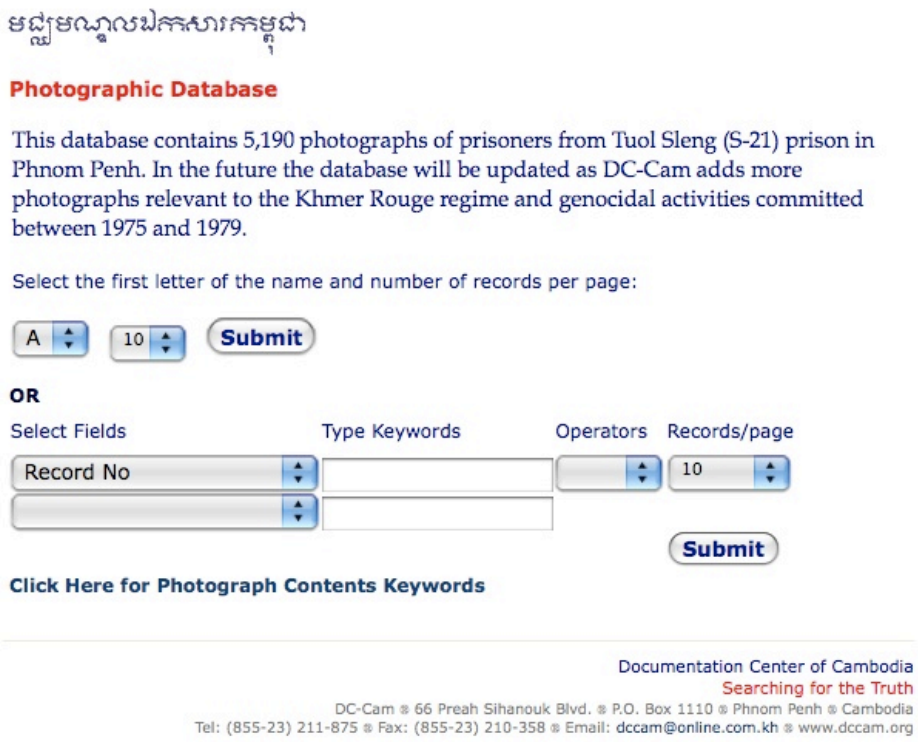

Figure 3.1 "Photographic Database," Documentation Center of Cambodia, http://www.d.dccam.org/Database/Photographic/Cts.php, accessed December 15, 2011. Appears courtesy of DC-Cam.

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

Photographic Database

Record No:	1990
Photographic Information:	t1990z01, B
Photographic Contents:	F, M, C. Y
Sources of Photograph:	Photographed by S-21 (1975-1979), Restored by Photo Archive Group (1994), Scanned by DC-Cam (1995-1996). KH TSL
Location of Photograph:	KH, DC-CAM ; US, CtY-CGP ; AU, NUNB
Image No.:	t1990 ; z01

Documentation Center of Cambodia
Searching for the dccam
DC-Cam ⊛ 66 Preah Sihanouk Blvd. ⊛ P.O. Box 1110 ⊛ Phnom Penh ⊛ Cambodia
Tel: (855-23) 211-875 ⊛ Fax: (855-23) 210-358 ⊛ Email: dccam@online.com.kh ⊛ www.dccam.org

Figure 3.2, "Mug Shot 01990," name unidentified, from Photographic Database, Documentation Center of Cambodia, http://www.d.dccam.org/Database/Photographic/Detail2.php?Record_ID=1990%20&&%20screen=0&&RowNumber1=10&&FieldName=Record_ID&&Request=1990&&FieldName1=&&Request1=&&Operator=, Accessed December 15, 2011. Appears courtesy of DC-Cam.

Figure 3.3: Debris at Tuol Sleng, January 2012, photo by author.

Chapter Four: The Making of Narratives

> "The people pictured here are important and unique, their photographs heartbreaking cries for recognition. Frozen by the lens, the prisoners stare out at their captors. Nearly twenty years later, they are also regarding us. Their expressions ask their captors: 'Who are you? Why am I here?'—and ask us: 'Why did this happen? Why have we been killed?'"[1] --David Chandler

> "If the prisoners' expressions pleas for answers from the photographer, they ask us, the inheritors of history, a different question. Why have I been killed? They are between a state of witness, and already being a corpse."[2] --Paul Williams

> "But a truth about all photographic portraits, including the Cambodian pictures, is that they are mute. We can never be sure what their expressions mean." [3] --Michael Kimmelman

> "Photographs cannot tell stories. They can only tell evidence of stories, and evidence is mute; it demands investigation and interpretation."[4] --Philip Gourevitch

Until very recently, it was taboo in Cambodia to discuss the Khmer Rouge period. The regime was conspicuously absent from classrooms, parents rarely discussed their experiences with their children, and, in the past decade, the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum was visited primarily by foreign tourists. Until 2009, when DC-Cam commissioned a historian to write a new history textbook and distributed it free of charge to hundreds of thousands of high school students, young Cambodians were formally taught very little about the regime. The ninth-grade history textbook prepared by the Royal Government of Cambodia in 2000 contained only the

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[1] Chandler, "The Pathology of Terror in Pol Pot's Cambodia," 102.
[2] Williams, "The Atrocity Exhibition," 211.
[3] Michael Kimmelman, "Hypnotized by Mug Shots That Stare Back: Are They Windows or Mirrors?" *The New York Times* August 27, 1997, C9.
[4] Philip Gourevitch, "The Abu Ghraib We Cannot See," *The New York Times*, May 24, 2009, WK10. These four quotes illustrate Georges Didi-Huberman's point that "we often ask too much or too little of the image," either demanding total truth from them or relegating them to the unreliable and inconsequential. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Images in Spite of All*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 32-33.

following information on the Khmer Rouge, reproduced here in its entirety, as quoted on the ‘‘Genocide Education’’ page of the DC-Cam website: “From April 25 to April 27, 1975, the Khmer Rouge leaders held an extraordinary Congress in order to form a new Constitution, and renamed the country ‘Democratic Kampuchea.’ A new government of the DK, led by Pol Pot, came into existence after which Cambodian people were massacred.” By 2002, even this passage was omitted, as a political dispute over coverage of the United Nations-sponsored elections in 1992 caused the entire modern history section to be removed. A whole generation of Cambodians, too young to have firsthand memory of the Khmer Rouge, was being raised with literally no formal information about the regime. A 2009 survey conducted by the University of California at Berkeley’s Human Rights Center found that, out of the 68% of Cambodians aged 29 or younger (who therefore did not live under the Khmer Rouge), 81% of respondents described their knowledge of that time period as either poor or very poor.[5] Quoted in 2002, Youk Chhang lamented, “To this day most Cambodians know about what Pol Pot did more through an American movie, *The Killing Fields*, than through anything learned at home.”[6] Anecdotally, a guide at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum told me in 2005 that even her own children did not believe her stories about forced labor, starvation, and execution under the Khmer Rouge. Cambodia’s Prime Minister, Hun Sen (himself a former Khmer Rouge officer), has encouraged this national amnesia, resisting many efforts to publicly memorialize victims of the

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[5] Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck, Mychelle Balthazard, Sokhom Hean, and Eric Stover, *So We Will Never Forget: A Population-Based Survey on Attitudes About Social Reconstruction and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia*. (Berkeley: Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley, 2009). http://hrc.berkeley.edu/pdfs/So-We-Will-Never-Forget.pdf.

[6] Youk Chhang, as quoted in Samantha Power, *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 489.

Khmer Rouge, and instead urging Cambodians to ‘‘dig a hole and bury the past in it.’’[7] In this information vacuum, the Berkeley survey found that 77% of all respondents and 85% of respondents too young to have lived during the 1970s reported that they wanted to learn more about what happened during the Khmer Rouge's rule.[8] Both DC-Cam and the tribunal have emerged against the backdrop of this national amnesia, and have made significant strides in getting Cambodians to talk about the country's bloody past.

Building on Chapter Three's discussion of how the Tuol Sleng mug shots became archival collections, Chapter Four explores how these mug shots are inspiring survivors and victims' family members to tell narratives about the regime and its victims.[9] These narratives take many forms: legal testimonies; interviews conducted by documentary filmmakers; and articles published by DC-Cam.[10] Each of these types of narratives is accompanied by new visual records that document survivors and victims' family members looking at the mug shots. Across

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[7] Hun Sen, as quoted in Colin Long and Keir Reeves, "'Dig a Hole and Bury the Past in It?' Reconciliation and the Heritage of Genocide in Cambodia," in *Places of Pain and Shame: Dealing with 'Difficult' Heritage,* ed. William Logan and Keir Reeves (New York: Routledge, 2009), 68–81.

[8] Pham et al., 4.

[9] The use of family photographs to memorialize the dead provides a striking counterpoint to this chapter's discussion of mug shots and is a topic for future research. Some examples of family photographs used in this way can be seen throughout *Searching for the Truth* and other DC-Cam publications such as Wynne Cougill, *Stilled Lives: Photographs from the Cambodian Genocide* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2004). I also touch briefly on the use of family photos for collective memory in Michelle Caswell, "Khmer Rouge Archives: Accountability, Truth, and Memory in Cambodia," *Archival Science* 10 (2010): 25-42.

[10] The mug shots have also inspired many other forms of records which will not be addressed directly in this chapter, including: biographies of Tuol Sleng prisoners; dance performances such as Em Theay, "The Continuum: Beyond the Killing Fields," Sydney 2009; and drama such as DC-Cam's many productions of the play *Breaking the Silence*. For examples of Tuol Sleng prisoner biographies, see: Vann Nath, *Cambodian Prison Portrait*; Huy Vannak, *Bou Meng: A Survivor from Khmer Rouge Prison S-21*; Ysa Osman, *Oukoubah: Justice for the Cham Muslims under the Democratic Kampuchea Regime* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2002); and Elizabeth Becker, *Bophana*. These biographies and the ways in which they rely on and interact with Tuol Sleng mug shots is the subject of future research.

many formats, mug shots are used as a touchstone for people to remember—and more importantly—to tell stories to others about the regime.[11] These stories then become records themselves, adding a layer of meaning and context to the ever-expanding archive of the Cambodian genocide. As these stories draw the listeners and viewers into the act of witnessing trauma, they answer the paradoxical questions of how to speak about the unspeakable, how to witness (in the words of Holocaust scholars Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub) "an event which eliminated its own witness."[12] Engendering narratives about the regime, the mug shots become active agents in the performance of human rights in Cambodia as they are reused by survivors and recaptured into new records.[13]

These stories represent the moment of fact retrieval, or the creation of narratives, which is also the third moment of silencing for Trouillot. In acts of story telling, Trouillot posits, "retrieval and recollection [of facts] proceed unequally."[14] Any storyteller is selective, including some facts while excluding others, emphasizing some events at the expense of others. As Trouillot writes, "Some facts are recalled more often than others; some strings of facts are recalled with more empirical richness than others…."[15] The creation of narratives is built on a foundation of sources and archives. The silences encoded in the first two phases of historical

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[11] This use of the word "touchstone" to discuss a material object that triggers a memory is taken from Millar, "Touchstones: Considering the Relationship Between Memory and Archives," 105-126. Yet, I argue that what is most important is not the individual memory triggered by material objects like the mug shots, but the stories—and the performative act of telling them to others—that the objects trigger. These stories then form the basis of collective memory. This formulation complicates the simplistic equation of archives with collective memory found in archival studies literature.

[12] Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (New York: Routledge, 1991), xvii. Felman and Laub are writing about the Holocaust, but the term applies equally well here.

[13] This phrase—the performance of human rights—is borrowed from the work of Andrea Noble and Susan Slyomovics, as will be discussed later.

[14] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 53.

[15] Ibid., 53-54.

production (the creation of sources and archives) are compounded in the creation of narratives; in Trouillot's words, "Historical narratives are premised on previous understandings, which are themselves premised on the distribution of archival power."[16] In this framework, narratives about the Khmer Rouge are built on records created by the Khmer Rouge. In this chapter, I explore how Tuol Sleng mug shots are being used to spark narratives that counter the previous collective silence about the regime. And yet, these narratives, while extraordinarily important, also belie another series of silences—the silences of those stories not told, those records not archived, and those victims not documented. Despite these deafening silences, this chapter will argue that DC-Cam is using archival records to assert the voices of victims and the agency of survivors where previously silences once prevailed, and that the use of archival materials in this way performs human rights work in Cambodia.

Writing about the role of video footage in contemporary memory, Marita Sturken has written, ''Memory is often embodied in objects—memorials, texts, talismans, image. Though one could argue that such artifacts operate to prompt remembrance, they are often perceived actually to contain memory within them or indeed to be synonymous with memory.''[17] This chapter argues that the mug shots are shaping public memory of Tuol Sleng specifically and the Khmer Rouge period in general in a way that directly relates to the current shaky status of human rights in the country. The archives are inscribing and creating memory by providing a space for the voices of survivors to be heard, the names and photos of victims to be recorded, the tribunal to be publicized, and the younger generation of Cambodians to be educated. In the process, the mug shots are being incorporated into new records that document the act of witnessing, revealing

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[16] Ibid., 55.
[17] Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 19.

both how photographs specifically are an active part of the performance of memory and human rights in Cambodia and how records in general are dynamic performative entities whose meaning and context change as they travel through space and time with reuse.

Legal Testimonies

> "The 'perfect crime' does not consist in killing the victim or the witnesses (that adds new crimes to the first one and aggravates the difficulty of effacing everything), but rather in obtaining the silence of the witnesses, the deafness of the judges, and the inconsistency (insanity) of the testimony. You neutralize the addressor, the addressee, and the sense of the testimony; then everything is as if there were no referent (no damages)."[18]

In 2010, the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) convicted Duch, former head of Tuol Sleng prison, of crimes against humanity and other violations of international and domestic law.[19] Thirty years in the making, the ECCC was the result of much diplomatic wrangling, intense political negotiations, and relentless advocacy by organizations representing victims and their families, including DC-Cam. The tribunal is unique for two reasons: first, legal decision-making is shared unequally between Cambodian and United Nations judges, with decisions requiring a supermajority from the Cambodian judiciary, and second, victims are allowed to file claims as civil parties to the case. While the tribunal is ongoing, this chapter focuses solely on the first case, that of Duch, which ended in 2010. Using transcripts and digital footage of the tribunal, this section will describe how mug shots were used in Duch's trial by attorneys for the prosecution as legal evidence, by civil party witnesses as catalysts for telling

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[18] Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 1988), 8.

[19]The ECCC is a unique hybrid tribunal jointly operated by the government of Cambodia and the United Nations. A detailed account of corruption allegations, political motivations, and judicial incompetence in the tribunal is beyond the scope of the proposed dissertation, but will be mentioned as important background information. Duch was sentenced to a mere thirty-five years in prison, creating an outcry from victims.

narratives about Tuol Sleng victims, and by Duch himself as final arbiters of truth. This section will end with a discussion of the problematic relationship between truth and records as well as a discussion about video footage and the construction of public opinion about international tribunals.

Mug shots were a key component of evidence compiled in Duch's trial, comprising some of the 16,000 documents in his case file.[20] During the proceedings, several witnesses, including photographer Nhem En and Duch testified that prisoners at Tuol Sleng were photographed by the photography unit in Building E as part of their registration process. Lawyers for the prosecution projected mug shots on overhead screens during these testimonies so that judges, lawyers, and trial observers could see them (*figure 4.1*).[21] Throughout the trial, attorneys used mug shots to corroborate witness testimony and to communicate the sense of loss experienced by victims and family members. For example, one witness at the trial clutched a mug shot of his wife taken at Tuol Sleng; his attorney said, "To this day, all he has left of her is a copy of her S-21 photograph."[22] In this way, the mug shots were used as physical evidence that embodied the absence of the dead, serving as powerful symbols of remembering. Yet most importantly, the mug shots inspired narrative testimony about Tuol Sleng victims from their family members. In the interest of space, this section will address the use of mug shots in legal testimony about three

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[20] This estimate is included in KRT Trial Monitor Report, but can not be confirmed since Duch's case file is closed to the public. *The KRT Trial Monitor* 4 (April 26, 2009): 6.

[21] Two examples of mug shots being used in the tribunal can be seen in these digital video clips footage of the tribunal. For an example of a lawyer for the prosecution discussing the mug shots taking at S-21, see "Trial of Kaing Guek Eav (Alias 'Duch') March 31, 2009 - Part 3," from 2:45 on at http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6252322569882809042#. For an example of a mug shot being used as evidence in Duch's trial, see that same clip from 20:00.

[22]"Trial of Kaing Guek Eav (alias "Duch") - March 31, 2009 - Part 3," from 2:45 on at http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6252322569882809042#. Also available from: Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, "Transcripts of Proceedings," 31 (March 2009): 28.

victims: Ouk Ket, as told by his wife, Martine Lefeuvre and his daughter, Ouk Neary; Ma Yoeun, as told by her husband, Bou Meng; and that of Nong Chan Phal's mother as told by Nong Chan Phal.[23] These three cases are primary examples of how mug shots were used to tell stories about the dead, evoke the presence of their absence, and transform the family members into witnesses who are compelled to speak on behalf of the dead.

On August 17, 2009, the ECCC heard the testimony of two civil party witnesses regarding Tuol Sleng victim Ouk Ket. First, Ouk Ket's wife, Martine Lefeuvre, told the court Ket's story. She first met Ket, a Cambodian national, in Paris, where he was studying engineering. Ket's father had close ties to the Cambodian royal family, and after Ket graduated in 1970 he was given a diplomatic position at the Cambodian Embassy in Senegal. Ket and Lefeuvre married in 1971, moved to Senegal, and had two children. In 1977, Ket received orders from the Foreign Ministry in Cambodia to return to Phnom Penh. Lefeuvre and the children moved back to France, and Ket, unaware of the dire situation in Cambodia, flew back there on June 7, 1977, sending two postcards to his family during the journey. They never heard from him again. Lefeuvre spent years searching for him, unsuccessfully trying to enlist diplomatic help in finding him and traveling to refugee camps on the Thai-Cambodian border in 1979 looking for him. Eventually, a family friend told Lefeuvre that he had seen Ket's name in a file at the Tuol Sleng archives. In 1991, Lefeuvre and her children traveled to Cambodia, where they found Ket's name on a list of people to be sent from Tuol Sleng to the killing fields for extermination. Not until 2009, with the help of DC-Cam staff, did they find Ket's Tuol Sleng mug shot. Lefeuvre's testimony directly references this photograph:

On the 15th of June [1977] he was kidnapped with his hands tied behind his back,

[23] Nong Chan Phal's mother's name remains curiously absent from the testimony. Phal's name is also listed as Norng Chanphal in other publications.

> blindfolded and brought in a truck, beaten in the face -- as we can see in his photograph that we finally found. When he arrived at Tuol Sleng he was therefore tied up like a slave to a metal bar, chained up in a filthy cell. He was deprived of his most elementary rights, arbitrarily detained because he was of course not entitled to a lawyer and he doesn't know why he has to go to this hell. He was deprived of his most fundamental needs -- no food, no care, no medical care, no hygiene, psychological solitude, torture with Nazi methods; six months of this and I am sure that Ket was able to face it and that he did everything in his power to be able to resist this and to be able to return back to us one day. We were like the fingers of one single hand. So now I understand his physical and psychological degradation. I can picture it. He died a slow death at S-21 in the most complete secrecy, in solitude, and on the 9th of December 1977 murderers broke his skull at Choeung Ek and then cut his throat while throwing him into a pit. This is an absolutely inexcusable murder. And for the past 32 years Ket's absence is something that we cannot bear. It is a permanent absence. My children grew up without the presence of their father; a presence that was comforting, a presence that would protect them; without his affection, without a fatherly figure. That is to say everything that organizes the life of a child. Ket's suffering was and is still our suffering and it does not go away with time, and I can tell you that the suffering in fact is more and more intense. It is like a gigantic screen that would be too close to our eyes. Until today we still haven't found the body. We do not have any kind of restitution.... So therefore I came before this Chamber in order to ask for justice to be done -- justice to be done for this barbaric crime so that we can finally take into consideration Ket's suffering and the suffering of all of the other Cambodians, whether they were in S-21 or anywhere else in the country, and so that they can also take into consideration the suffering of the survivors.[24]

Having never directly experienced Tuol Sleng firsthand as a prisoner, Lefeuvre testifies as a secondary witness who experienced Tuol Sleng through its images. She seems to experience her pain through the lens of visual images, describing the suffering as "a gigantic screen" that is "too close" for her eyes to take in. After viewing the photographs at Tuol Sleng, she "can picture it," it becomes more real than it did when she had written evidence alone. Furthermore, in Lefeuvre's testimony, the presence of Ket's absence is made palpable through his image. The photograph simultaneously stands in for Ket, breaking the silence left by his absence by providing key information about his arrest and torture, and yet is not enough to fill the void left by his disappearance.

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[24] Martine Lefeuvre, "Transcript of Trial Proceedings," The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, 17 August 2009, 29-30, as made available on Cambodia Tribunal Monitor. http://www.cambodiatribunal.org/multimedia/trial-footage/archive/2009-08.

Yet it is not until the conclusion of Lefeuvre's testimony and the beginning of her daughter Ouk Neary's testimony that the mug shot itself is displayed at the trial. Before Neary begins, her lawyer requests on her behalf that the court view two sets of photographs, which are then projected overhead: the first, a series of images of Ket in happier times, posing with his family, at parties, and shaking the hands of Senegalese government officials; the second, Ket's Tuol Sleng photograph, in which he appears in solitude, wearing all black and barefoot.[25] The cataloging number assigned to the photograph by DC-Cam staff is also visible. The photographs stand in stark contrast to each other, the first set showing all that was made possible by Ket's life, the second showing all that was lost in his death. The court is left to view these images for a few minutes before Neary begins her testimony. After describing her experiences growing up without a father, she directly discusses the Tuol Sleng mug shots, telling the court that, on her first visit to Tuol Sleng in 1991, she was fascinated by them:

> …and on the wall we could see black and white photographs -- and I'd like to say black and white photographs of a rare violence because could you imagine how violent these pictures would have been if they had been coloured pictures? … I remembered how much I was traumatized by these photographs but it was very much soothing for me to see them…. With my brother we continued with the visit and in the next room, going through that door which plunged us into an unreal world, and in the second room there were ID pictures that covered all of the walls and we were drawn to these faces which stared at us, one after the other, drawing them to each one of these faces. And I wondered if the horror was to see these emaciated faces of children, men, women, babies sometimes, or if it was to think that there are others whose pictures aren't even there. So I continued to walk through this room and saw another one of these doors taking us to a third room with just as many pictures on the walls and just as many people staring back at me. And I told my brother, "We have to start all over again and look at each one of them because perhaps my father is there. And if he is amongst them, we can't afford to miss him."… The reason why I'm describing S-21 to you at such length, it's because that day that is the day when a drop of poison came to me, and I have never since that day stopped trying to find out what happened. [26]

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[25] The photos are displayed at 46:00 to 48:00 at http://vimeo.com/22355984.
[26] Ouk Neary, "Transcript of Trial Proceedings," The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, 17 August 2009, 54-55, as made available on Cambodia Tribunal Monitor. http://www.cambodiatribunal.org/multimedia/trial-footage/archive/2009-08.

Despite this thorough search, Neary did not discover her father's Tuol Sleng photograph on display during that first visit. Again, the presence of his absence is made palpable through the missing mug shot. She is both comforted and traumatized by the mug shots she sees at Tuol Sleng, and even more disturbed by the absence of those whose photographs aren't on display. The photos mercifully lack color, their black and white status somehow removing them from a more intense realism. Later, she testifies about finally finding her father's Tuol Sleng photograph, eighteen years after her initial visit to Tuol Sleng: "I went to DC-Cam in February [2009] where I managed, thanks to Youk Chhang, whom I wish to thank in passing even though I didn't understand at first his hesitations and reluctance. I managed to recover the picture of my father in S-21 which this time represented for me the confirmation that he had been through that venue and that he was no longer alive."[27] For Neary, the photograph provides the ultimate confirmation, despite other types of documentary evidence found at Tuol Sleng. She concludes her testimony by saying that the "walls [of Tuol Sleng] are shouting," that the "whole world is looking at Cambodia," and that "the only way to relieve things is to testify."[28] In Neary's testimony, we learn not only about Ket's life and the suffering his death has caused his family, but also the ways in which family members process the mug shots as visual evidence that represents the Tuol Sleng experience as a whole, filling the void left by the missing family member with visual details. Through the mug shots, the walls of Tuol Sleng shout at the world, compelling Neary and other family members to tell the stories of the dead, transforming those who testify from silent victims into witnesses. The judge then asked Duch to respond. Faced with

[27] Ibid., 65.
[28] Ibid., 70.

Ket's mug shot, Duch accepted responsibility for his death and apologized to Lefeuvre and Neary.

On July 1, 2009, Tuol Sleng survivor Bou Meng took the witness stand in the Duch trial on behalf of his dead wife, Ma Yoeun. Meng had been separated from Yoeun at Tuol Sleng and tortured, but saved from death due to his skills as a painter and made to paint portraits of Pol Pot.[29] Haunted by his dead wife's ghost, Meng claims her spirit, in the form of her Tuol Sleng mug shot, appears to him often, encouraging him to participate in the trial by telling him, "Only you, Bou Meng, can find justice for us."[30] He still carries a tattered copy of her Tuol Sleng mug shot in his wallet, an image of which was projected overhead in the courtroom during his testimony. Meng was visibly shaken throughout his testimony, in many instances crying too hard to speak in detail about his own experiences and unable to follow the judge's orders to "recompose." Asked by the judge if there is anything Meng would like to ask Duch, Meng turned to Duch and asked, "Where was my wife killed? Was my wife killed in Phnom Penh, at Choeung Ek or elsewhere? When I get the answer, I will go there to get the remains in order to pray for

[29] Meng's story will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

[30] Meng recounts this story of being haunted by his wife in Seth Mydans's forward to Huy Vannak's biography of Bou Meng. Seth Mydans, "Forward," in Huy Vannak, *Bou Meng: A Survivor from Khmer Rouge Prison S-21*, 3. There are also many other accounts of Tuol Sleng being haunted by the victims in the mug shots. One Tuol Sleng archivist claims that during the afternoon, "the images around her almost seem to come to life." See: Seth Mydans, "Coming Khmer Rouge Trial Rouses Jail's Ghosts," *The New York Times*, June 30, 1999, A4. Similarly, Peter Maguire reports that Sopheara Chey, the current director of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, claims that, "All of us [museum staff] have been haunted by ghosts, even myself." Peter Maguire, *Facing Death in Cambodia*, 22. Furthermore, in the introduction to his comprehensive book *Voices from S-21*, historian David Chandler makes a connection between the Tuol Sleng mug shots, the ghosts of the dead, and the compulsion to speak. He writes, "Moving through the museum, absorbing its archive…, we can still hear many of thee ghostly voices. They control the narrative that follows." David Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 12-13.

her soul."[31] Duch, for whom Ma Yoeun was only one of tens of thousands he was responsible for killing, was unable to provide Meng any solid answers. "Please accept my highest regards and respect towards the soul of your wife. Emotionally, I am responsible for all these crimes," Duch responded, breaking down into tears. Through Bou Meng's testimony, we see how the Tuol Sleng mug shots both embody the memory of the victims, but also how they have inspired efforts to hold the regime legally accountable for their actions. For Meng, it is his wife's photograph itself that seems to be possessed, reaching back from the dead to demand justice. In this case, the mug shot literally induces Meng to testify.

However, these two cases also reveal a problematic relationship between the mug shots and the construction of truth. While Duch admitted guilt for the deaths of those victims for whom there is an existing mug shot such as Ouk Ket and Ma Yoeun, he denied any responsibility for those victims whose photographs were missing from the case file. This is made apparent by the case of Nong Chan Phal. Phal testified to being arrested with his mother and brother and being held as a child prisoner at S-21. His father had already been arrested. Phal told the court, "We were sent into an office and there was a room with white walls and a camera. My mother was made to sit down and her photo taken. She was given a number to hold. They pushed her and threatened her. She had never been photographed before and it was very unsettling for her. They then pushed her backwards and forwards. I was terrified."[32] Phal breaks into tears as he

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[31] In Cambodian Buddhism, the dead must be honored at the place and on the date of their death or else they will haunt the living as angry ghosts. Footage from this month is conspicuously missing from the Cambodia Tribunal Monitor site. In order to reconstruct Meng's testimony, I have relied on reports of it from Huy Vannak's biography of Meng, as cited above, and edited tribunal footage broadcast via the "Duch on Trial" television show, episode 10, available at http://vimeo.com/5467572.

[32] Like Meng's testimony, unedited footage from Phal's testimony is not posted on the Cambodia Tribunal Monitor site. Again, I have relied on edited tribunal footage broadcast via the "Duch on Trial" television show, episode 10, available at http://vimeo.com/5467572.

recounts the taking of his mother's mug shot. He was separated from his mother the next day and never saw her again. However, unlike the previous two cases described, Phal's mother's mug shot is missing. In this case, it is the experience of having witnessed the taking of the mug shot and not the mug shot as an existing material object that inspires his testimony. Unable to project the image in the courtroom, Phal's testimony is marked by the absence of this photograph. In this absence, Duch denied the allegations based on the lack of documentary evidence. Holding up a copy of Phal's father's Tuol Sleng file, Duch admitted that Phal's father was killed at Tuol Sleng, but also stated that he would only acknowledge that Phal's mother was killed and that Phal was held at the prison ''if some evidence was shown to him to support this claim." Duch continued, "Regarding Nong Chan Phal and his mother, where did they suffer? I am uncertain in this matter. Is there another letter that proves she and her children were in S-21?"[33] Phal was clearly distraught at Duch's questioning.

Subsequently, an article in *The Phnom Penh Post* reports that researchers at DC-Cam uncovered Nong Chan Phal's mother's Tuol Sleng biography and submitted it to the court. Having seen the newly submitted document, Duch is quoted as saying, "So through this court I would like to seek forgiveness from Mr. Norng Chan Phal. Now I would accept it [his testimony] entirely."[34] Here we see how the relationship between testimony and documentary evidence such as mug shots was fraught with problems throughout the trial. Participants in the tribunal, particularly Duch, continually referenced records as the embodiment of veracity, revealing little understanding of the incomplete nature of any archive.[35] In another example, Duch questioned

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[33] "Duch on Trial" television show, episode 10, available at http://vimeo.com/5467572.
[34] Robbie Corey-Boulet, "Challenges to Civil Parties," *The Phnom Penh Post*, July 9, 2009. Phal's name is transliterated both as Nong and Norng depending on the source.
[35] For more examples, see Michelle Caswell, "Khmer Rouge Archives," 25-44.

the testimony of several witnesses who could not confirm through documentary evidence such as photographs and log books that the prison at which they had been detained was in fact S-21, since they were blindfolded at the time of their arrival.[36] In this way, Duch conceived of the archive as the complete and final arbiter of truth, reflecting both an arrogance about the infallibility of his own recordkeeping system and the widespread misconception that the records reflect the truth. As some trial observers have noted, Duch's public acceptance or rejection of testimony based on supporting physical evidence was perceived as a miscarriage of justice in and of itself; in the words of Cambodia scholar Judy Ledgerwood, Duch "seemed to have been playing the tribunal,… at the center of every performance,… relish[ing] the role as star."[37] There is no explanation as to why was this man was given so much leeway by the court to confirm or deny testimony based on records he created thirty years earlier.

Yet, in some cases, survivors and victims' family members also seemed to follow Duch's logic, seeking confirmation of their narratives through the mug shots. For example, one witness, Nam Man, testified in Duch's trial that she was a medic at S-21 and that she witnessed Duch beat two of her uncles to death. Denying the allegations, Duch said Man's testimony could not possibly be true since there were no mug shots of or confession statements signed by her uncles. Man was later quoted in *The New York Times* as saying, ''Now I have to find the records to prove I am telling the truth.''[38] However, clearly Man herself knows the truth of her claims regardless of their confirmation in the archives; she knows that her uncles died at S-21, even if there are no mug shots to prove it.

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[36] Asian Justice Initiative, "Khmer Rouge Tribunal Monitor" 12 (2009): 11. http://www.cambodia tribunal.org/eccc-a-ngo-reports/ngo-reports.html.
[37] Judy Ledgerwood, "Seeing Duch on Trial," *Searching for the Truth* 1 (2001): 54.
[38] Seth Mydans, "Torture and Death Recounted at Cambodian Trial," *The New York Times* (15 July 2009).

As archives are never complete, and always mediated through archivists, granting them the sole capacity to establish the forensic truth is highly problematic. Addressing the recordkeeping practices of oppressive regimes, archivist Eric Ketelaar has written that ‘‘the corollary of the assertion: ‘if it does not appear in our records, it does not exist,’ is ‘it appears in the records, therefore it exists.’’’[39] In Duch’s trial, both Duch and victims have drawn repeatedly on this tautological argument, despite overwhelming information that thousands of Tuol Sleng mug shots are missing and that no recordkeeping system, however detailed, is ever absolutely complete. The use of mug shots in legal testimony reveals a complicated and problematic relationship between narrative and archival record, in which the presence of mug shots can inspire narratives about the regime, while their absence can undermine the veracity of other narratives, effectively silencing them. Furthermore, this reliance on mug shots is ironic given the complicated history of photography as legal evidence. Courts often see photographs as unstable, unreliable, and easily manipulated; legal decisions are hardly made based on photographic evidence alone.[40] However, in the Duch trial we see a stunning reversal in this loss of faith in photography, with mug shots simplistically constructed as truth materialized.

Through their use in the trial, the mug shots have taken on a new life as tools for the creation of narratives that expose the criminality of those who orchestrated them. They also gain another life as they are incorporated into new records that document the tribunal. These photographs, now embedded in footage of the trial, were shown in the weekly television show *Duch on Trial: Time for Justice* that was broadcast throughout Cambodia, watched by a

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[39] Eric Ketelaar, “Archival Temples, Archival Prisons: Modes of Power and Protection,” *Archival Science* 2, 2002: 231.
[40] Rodney G.S. Carter, “’Ocular Proof’: Photographs as Legal Evidence,” *Archivaria* 69 (2010): 23-47.

staggering 20% of the Cambodian population, and posted via the online video platform Vimeo.[41] Digital footage of the tribunal has also been posted online via Vimeo by Cambodia Tribunal Monitor, a website jointly operated by DC-Cam and Northwestern University.[42] Through digital footage, the mug shots have an ever-increasing audience, as not only tribunal participants view them, but as Cambodians, Cambodian refugees around the world, and the international community view them in the context of footage of the tribunal.[43] They become, in the words of Catherine M. Cole (addressing television broadcasts of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission), "moving," in the sense that they are not only emotionally expressive, but "spatially mobile… across geographic distances," and, I would add, temporally mobile as well, as I watched them online almost two years after the trial.[44] In this way, the mug shots have not only taken on a new social life as tools for legal accountability, but also have been subsumed into new digital records which document not only the Khmer Rouge's abuses, but efforts by survivors and victim's family members to bring Khmer Rouge leaders to justice. Incorporated into tribunal footage, they become part of the performance of justice as media event in Cambodia. Placed in these new contexts, the mug shots *as legal evidence* in the Duch trial

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[41] A 20% viewing rate is especially high given that only 20% of Cambodians have electricity. The figure is quoted in *Asia in View: Facing Khmer Rouge Atrocities*, Japan Broadcasting Corporation/ Ortis Japan, 2011. Viewed at Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center, Phnom Penh.

[42] http://www.cambodiatribunal.org/. The website also includes transcripts of the tribunal. Abridged video footage of the tribunal was also shown in a weekly television show broadcast in Cambodia called "Duch on Trial" which is also available on Vimeo.

[43] The Duch trial, like what Eyal Sivan writes about the Eichmann trial fifty years earlier, "was conceived as a show" in the sense that "millions of people around the world could follow it on television." Eyal Sivan, "Archive Images: Truth or Memory? The Case of Adolf Eichmann's Trial," in *Experiments with Truth: Transitional Justice and the Processes of Truth and Reconciliation*, ed. Okwui Enwezor et al (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2002), 278-9.

[44] Catherine M. Cole, "Mediating Testimony: Broadcasting South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission," in *Documentary Testimonies: Global Archives of Suffering*, ed. Bhaskar Sarkar and Janet Walker (New York: Routledge, 2010), 211.

subsume and supersede all previous uses of them, transforming them from records of oppression to records of accountability. Building on this argument, this chapter will now turn to another reuse of the mug shots, more specifically their use to spark narratives in documentary films.

Documentary Films

> "Not all cultures reject the visible representation of trauma, valuing the spoken or written word above all other means of witnessing."[45]

While the tribunal often tasked mug shots with establishing a singular definitive legal truth (regardless of their capabilities to do that), documentary filmmakers—including those on staff at DC-Cam—are using these photos to create an extrajudicial space for survivors to tell their stories. Over the past fifteen years, many documentary films use mug shots as powerful visual tools that induce Tuol Sleng survivors and guards to recount their horrific memories and inspire victims' family members to tell stories that memorialize the dead. These documentaries, directed by Cambodians and foreigners alike, reflect a wide range of motives, backgrounds, and agendas. In the interest of space, this section will focus on five such films: *The Secrets of S-21*; *The Conscience of Nhem En; Samsara: Survival and Recovery in Cambodia; S:21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine;* and *Preparing for Justice.*[46] The first three films were directed by Westerners, while the second two films were made by Cambodian Khmer Rouge survivors. Yet, despite these important differences, Tuol Sleng mug shots are used in strikingly similar ways across all of the films.

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[45] Deirdre Boyle, "Trauma, Memory, Documentary: Reenactment in Two Films by Rithy Panh (Cambodia) and Garin Nugroho (Indonesia)," in *Documentary Testimonies: Global Archives of Suffering, ed.* Bhaskar Sarkar and Janet Walker (New York: Routledge, 2010), 162.

[46] Many more documentaries that use the Tuol Sleng mug shots are available at the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center in Phnom Penh. The five films discussed here were selected for relevance and ease of access.

The Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison is a 30-minute BBC production dating from 1996. The film is primarily concerned with documenting the efforts of Doug Riley and Chris Niven in restoring the Tuol Sleng photographs (as described in Chapter Three) and follows them on their fruitless search for missing negatives. With the focus of the film on the allegedly heroic efforts of these two American photographers, the film is clearly aimed at a Western audience. Yet while Riley and Niven occupy most of the screen time, the film contains glimpses of the ways in which victims and the family members of victims interact with the mug shots Riley and Niven restored. One memorable scene depicts an interview with Jun Chhoun Srien, a widow whose husband was imprisoned at Tuol Sleng. Srien is looking through a well-ordered book of photographic prints of the mug shots, presumably a book created by Riley and Niven for that purpose. Pointing to her husband's mug shot, Srien says:

> I feel very sorrowful when I see my husband like this. It isn't right that he should have died in this way, being beaten and badly tortured. I'm now in a pitiful state. There was just me, my husband, and the two boys. After my husband, they also killed my boys. Now I'm all alone. When I see my husband's photograph, I am in agony. My heart wants to stop and I can't speak.[47]

The camera then focuses on Srien shaking and obsessively picking at her eyebrow in utter despair. As Srien tells the camera, her husband's mug shot induces this mental anguish. She is both rendered silent by the mug shot ("I can't speak,") and compelled to tell her husband's story. This paradox of being simultaneously without words and compelled to speak echoes the work of Holocaust scholars Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, who have described how mass acts of violence leave victims speechless, without adequate words to convey the horror they have

[47] British Broadcasting Corporation, *Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*, Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 1998.

experienced.[48] Slowly and with time, victims can form narratives about (previously) unspeakable trauma, regaining words where silence once prevailed. In the footage of Srien, we see a survivor caught in the middle of this paradox, trying to speak but not yet able to fully testify.

The documentary also includes footage of two Tuol Sleng survivors, Vann Nath and Im Chhan, speaking about their experiences and (almost impossibly) looking at their own mug shots. Vann Nath, a painter, was kept alive at Tuol Sleng in order to paint propaganda. The film shows Nath at Tuol Sleng, walking through a display of his more recent paintings depicting some of the graphic scenes he witnessed there.[49] He tells his story:

> Prisoners were tortured in many ways. The screams and other noises could be heard at all hours. It was terrifying. When they brought me out of my cell, I was in no shape to paint. But I knew a lot of artists who hadn't made the grade had been killed. Fortunately they liked my work so they allowed me to live. I never imagined I would be standing here today looking at these images because back then my time was up. I was lucky to escape that peril.[50]

The camera focuses on Nath holding up his own mug shot and then turns to another survivor, Im Chhan, a sculptor who was kept alive to create busts of Pol Pot. As the camera shows Chhan walking through Tuol Sleng and viewing the sculptures he created under duress, he tells his story:

> We were questioned about our background. They tested our skills. Those who did poorly were killed. Those who did well were spared. We all thought we were going to die. No matter how hard one tried to sculpt, one couldn't get a perfect likeness. Sometimes I feel angry and think that they [the sculptures] should be destroyed. But if they were, we'd

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[48] Felman and Laub posit that through testimony, survivors of trauma achieve "a retrieval of the possibility of speaking and to a recovery and a return of the voice." Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (New York: Routledge, 1991), xix.

[49] Nath's paintings depicting torture at Tuol Sleng have been exhibited at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, DC-Cam and the Bophana Film Archives, and constitute a new archive documenting the abuse there. While a more thorough exploration of Nath's work is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it presents a potential topic for future research.

[50] BBC,*Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison*.

> lose something. It's better to preserve them, to show them to our people and to the world.[51]

Chhan then holds up his own mug shot to the camera. These are two rare instances when the people in the mug shots literally *can* speak to us. By simultaneously telling their stories and showing their mug shots, these survivors defy their former captors and force us, the viewers, to bear witness to the trauma they have experienced firsthand.

Another example of how survivors interact with the records on film is provided by the Academy Award-nominated documentary *The Conscience of Nhem En*, a 26-minute 2008 HBO production. Directed by Japanese-American director Steven Okazaki, the film traces three Tuol Sleng survivors (Bou Meng, Chum Mey, and Chim Math) as they return to the prison, grapple with survivor guilt, and confront Tuol Sleng photographer Nhem En. Raising complicated issues of culpability and complicity, the film portrays Nhem En as a remorseless perpetrator concerned only with his own ongoing survival and financial wellbeing.

The film follows survivor Bou Meng (whose legal testimony was already addressed in this chapter) as he points at mug shots on display at the Tuol Sleng genocide museum. Meng says, "When I see these photos, I think about my wife. I wonder how much she suffered before she died… Both of us were detained here, but I lived and she died. After the first day, I never saw her again."[52] Later, Meng encounters a group of schoolgirls looking at the mug shot display at the museum. He begins crying as he recounts his story to them and some of them awkwardly smile and/or turn away from him and the photographs. Meng implores them, "It is important you know about this. This is your history. Your grandparents lost their lives. No one is teaching our

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[51] Ibid.

[52] Steven Okazaki, Director, *The Conscience of Nhem En*, HBO Documentary Films, 2008. Meng gives a more lengthy oral history in Documentation Center of Cambodia, *Behind the Walls of S-21: Oral Histories from Tuol Sleng Prison*, 2007, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2xmOq_dj8k.

young people about the Khmer Rouge."[53] Here, we see how mug shots inspire not only personal narrative about dead family members, but also underscore the drive for collective narrative about the Khmer Rouge.

In that same film, survivor Chim Math points to her own mug shot on display in the museum. She says, "I arrived, sat down, and answered some questions. They took the picture quickly. All I thought was, 'I am going to die.'"[54] Math was tortured for two weeks and inexplicably released. Her survivor guilt is palpable; she has no idea why she was spared. The experience, embodied by her photo, has haunted her despite her attempts to move on. Reflecting the cultural taboo about discussing the regime, she confesses, "I've tried to forget. I never told my husband and children. But I remember what they did like it happened yesterday."[55] Here, Math's mug shot and her filmed interaction with it are a powerful tool for breaking this silence; in the film she is telling not only her husband and children, but the world, about her Tuol Sleng experience.

Yet another striking scene in the film reveals how the mug shots serve as powerful memory-texts for the family members of victims. Speaking outside the ECCC Tribunal building, an unnamed man holds up a print of his wife's mug shot. He says, "I must speak for my wife. She was completely innocent. That's why I am here, to demand justice from the tribunal. The wounds inside still haven't healed. The pain continues. The hurt won't stop until there is justice."[56] This interview is revealing for two reasons. First, like Bou Meng, it seems as if the husband is channeling his wife's voice through the mug shot ("I must speak for my wife.") Secondly, it belies an intimate connection between the voices heard through the mug shots and

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[53] Okazaki, *The Conscience of Nhem En.*
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.

the demands by victims' families for legal accountability; this man will continue to speak for his wife until those responsible are found guilty. In this way, the mug shots are being used to craft narratives of redemption in which the records of the perpetrators are tools for enacting justice for the victims.

Samsara: Survival and Recovery in Cambodia is another short documentary directed by a Westerner. Filmed in 1989, it is the oldest of the films discussed and is meant as an educational film to be shown in the Western classroom.[57] Without an overarching narrative structure, the film follows Cambodians in their daily lives as they attempt to recover after decades of war. Yet the opening scene, which was shot at Tuol Sleng, illustrates the profound tension between presence and absence, silence and agency in the ways the family members of victims use the mug shots. The film focuses on several individual mug shots as a male voice says:

> People killed by cruel punishment and torture cannot die with their eyes closed. If we look into the faces of those who died here we can see they suffered great pain. They were tortured and then killed. They suffered pain beyond human measure. [The camera pans to a young man standing in front of the mug shots display at Tuol Sleng. It is his voice we have been hearing. He continues speaking.] I heard that if my relatives were missing I should look for their photos here at Tuol Sleng Execution Center. Pol Pot might have sent them here. But I haven't found them yet. I haven't found their photos. For those we know to have died, we the survivors already made the offerings to send their spirits out of this world. But if we feel in our hearts that our relatives are still alive we are afraid to make the offerings to release their spirits. So we continue to search. As for us, the survivors, we must salvage what is left from this destruction. We have been through such hardship and danger together. Now, we must love one another… even more than before Pol Pot time. Because before Pol Pot we thought only of ourselves…. Now if we want the spirits of those who died to rest in peace, those of us who are left must change our ways. We must stop being selfish, stop thinking only of ourselves, or we will betray the spirits of those who died here.[58]

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[57] The film won a Golden Apple Award at the National Educational Film Festival and its promotional website highlights a review calling it "a natural" for classrooms from high school through college. http://www.brunofilms.com/samsara.html

[58] Unnamed Cambodian man, as quoted in Ellen Bruno, Director, *Samsara: A Film About Survival and Recovery in Cambodia*, (Harriman, NY: Bruno Films, 1989), 29 minutes. Clip available at: http://www.brunofilms.com/samsara_movie.html.

The camera zooms in on the eyes of one of the mug shots before continuing to the next scene in which a woman is performing Buddhist rites in honor of her siblings who were killed by the Khmer Rouge. The viewers are set up to make a connection between the visitor to Tuol Sleng searching for his relatives' mug shots, and the performance of religious rituals honoring the dead. Indeed, as the man interviewed in *Samsara* alludes, there is a profound religious crisis which ensues from not knowing with certainty if a relative is dead or alive, and if dead, on which date the death occurred; it is improper to perform death rituals for someone who might still be alive, but equally as consequential to not perform the rituals for someone who is in fact dead, as a dead spirit, not properly honored, is said to haunt the living as an angry ghost.[59] For those Cambodians who recognize faces at Tuol Sleng, the mug shots provide that certainty, while those who do not find their relatives are condemned to keep searching while their relative's spirit is in limbo. In this clip from *Samsara*, the mug shots are imbued with an immense religious and cultural significance that is also tied into a moral message for the country's future. For the young man in the film, Cambodians can honor the spirits through the performance of religious rites, but also by changing their behavior in the present. In this way, the young man depicted in this scene is tying his personal search for a relative's mug shot into a collective message of action for all Cambodians.

This use of mug shots to connect personal with collective memory about the regime is also apparent in films directed by Cambodians. Rithy Panh is the most well-known Cambodian documentary film director. Panh's parents and siblings died of malnutrition and exhaustion

[59] For fifteen days each year during the Pchum Ben festival, Cambodian Buddhists believe that the boundary between earth and the afterworld is opened up and the spirits of dead ancestors return home. During this time, Cambodians return to their home towns and make food offerings to their ancestors; it is said that if the spirits are not properly feed, they will curse their descendents.

during the Khmer Rouge period, his uncle was killed at Tuol Sleng, and Panh himself escaped to a refugee camp in Thailand from which he was resettled to France. After studying filmmaking in Paris, he returned to Cambodia to direct several documentaries on social issues ranging from rural poverty to urban prostitution. One of his short films, *Bophana: A Cambodian Tragedy,* chronicles the life of Tuol Sleng victim Hout Bophana, as described in the introduction to Chapter One of this dissertation. The film currently plays twice daily at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. (Panh is also the founder of the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center, an archive in Phnom Penh that preserves Cambodia's film, television and radio history, as discussed in Chapters One and Five). While all of Panh's films reveal an interesting relationship with records, reenactment, and performance, this dissertation focuses on one of Panh's projects (and perhaps the most well-known documentary on the Khmer Rouge): the 2003 film *S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine.*[60]

In *S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine*, Panh brings together former Tuol Sleng guards and prisoners for an uneasy reunion. As the former prisoners grapple with why they were tortured and who bears responsibility, the former guards slip back into the daily routines of prison life from twenty-five years earlier, reenacting torture, barking orders, and pretending to type up forced confession statements. As film scholar Deirdre Boyle writes, "What Panh does

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[60] Another Rithy Panh produced film bears mention here, despite inadequate space to explore it at length. *About My Father* documents Phung-Guth Sunthary's search for information about her father, Phung Ton, a Tuol Sleng victim who was a dean at a Cambodian university prior to the Khmer Rouge takeover. (Two of the Khmer Rouge officials currently standing trial were professors at his university, where he also had Duch as a student.) Phung-Guth Sunthary reports returning to Phnom Penh in 1979, and trading in some rice for some palm sugar; astonishingly, the sugar was wrapped in her father's newspaper obituary, which showed his Tuol Sleng mug shot; she almost didn't recognize how gaunt he had become it it. The photo was her first confirmation that he had been killed there. Rithy Panh, *About My Father* (Phnom Penh: Bophana Center, 2009). The documentary also shows that a framed copy of Vann Nath's mug shot is hung up in the wall of his apartment.

throughout the film is summon traumatic memory by repeatedly exposing both perpetrators and victims to the site of trauma. By placing them in the empty rooms of S-21 and amid its artifacts, he propels them to live beyond reenactment to 're-live' the past."[61] Boyle posits that it is trauma itself that engenders this reenactment, leaving both victims and perpetrators speechless such that they can recall events only through bodily memory. Traumatic memory sits at the disjuncture between that which is "virtually inaccessible through language,"[62] and that which *must be* told. Yet, as *S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine* reveals, it is the victims, and not the perpetrators, who feel compelled to speak.

The film repeatedly uses Tuol Sleng records as ways to invoke memory.[63] In one scene, two Tuol Sleng survivors, Vann Nath and Chum Mey, brush layers of dust off mug shots at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum as they search for familiar faces. Nath recognizes someone he knows and, pointing at the mug shot, names the person depicted and begins to recount a story: "Seak Thap. He was arrested with me. He was from Ksoy. We arrived the same day on the same truck but our feet weren't shackled together. He was with his brother. I don't know his name, but they were together."[64] "Were there many of you?" Mey asks. "The day I arrived, 32," Nath responds. "Was it at night?" Mey asks. "Three in the morning. We had left at noon," Nath responds. Here, the mug shots are prompts to get survivors to both speak about their own experiences and remember those who were killed. Nath then says that he is looking for a mug shot of his cousin, who was also arrested on the same night at the same cooperative and brought on the same motorbike and truck to Tuol Sleng. Nath says, "If I find it, I'll make a copy for his

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[61] Deirdre Boyle, "Trauma, Memory, Documentary: Reenactment in Two Films by Rithy Panh (Cambodia) and Garin Nugroho (Indonesia),"158.
[62] Ibid., 160.
[63] While forced confession statements, log books, and written orders play a major role in this film, I will focus primarily on the use of mug shots in this discussion.
[64] Rithy Pann, Director, *S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine,* Human Rights Watch, 2003.

mother…. She cries when she sees me."[65] Here we see the profound tension between presence and absence, silence and agency. Just as the survivor clutched his wife's mug shot in the Duch trial, Nath's intention to give a copy of his cousin's mug shot to his aunt reveals that mug shots are powerful tools for memory and mourning. Nath survived and is visible and audible in the film, while his cousin, arrested under similar circumstances, is inexplicably dead, his photo is missing, his voice is silent. The cousin serves as Nath's dead doppelganger, the absent counterpart to Nath's presence. His mug shot is never found. For those victims not captured in the surviving collection of mug shots (or in other Khmer Rouge records), the documents, facts, and narratives remain conspicuously silent, histories remains markedly incomplete.

Later, Nath and Mey discuss the possibility of reconciliation. Nath asks:

> Until now, has anyone said this past action was wrong, that two million dead among the Khmer people was wrong? Has anyone begged forgiveness? Have you heard that from the lips of any leaders or underlings? Have you? Neither have I. So how can we help the families of victims and survivors find peace again? How do we know it was wrong? Why ask for forgiveness if they did nothing wrong?... But to tell us to forget, because it belongs to the past… it's not like you step over a puddle and get your pants wet. They dry and you forget. This is something painful, really painful and even if it has been 20 years it's not so far back. It hasn't 'dried'.[66]

Tearfully, Mey responds, "To my dying day it won't, Nath. So long as I live, nothing will be erased."[67] Like the mug shots Mey just looked at, his memory remains vivid, despite the dust that accumulated over time. As each of these men speak, they are haunted by their memories, unable to forget despite the tragic toll remembering has had on their lives. By telling their stories, these survivors seek acknowledgement from both their former torturers and the world at large.

The film's depiction of Nath's search for meaning at Tuol Sleng is devastating. Throughout the film, Nath calmly confronts his former captors with documentary evidence,

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[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.

asking them to take responsibility for their actions and to explain why they forced their captives to pose for photographs and to sign elaborate confession statements that they knew weren't true. After Nath reads his own confession statement to Khan, his torturer, the following dialogue ensues:

> Nath: You invented a law that forced people to lie, not to the interrogators like you, Khan, but to lie to ourselves. We denounced people we didn't know, confessed to acts we never did, but we had to so they'd let up a little… So there was nothing human left, was there?
> Khan: We had to have a story, words and phrases.
> Nath: You crushed all humanity. Document in hand, you left us in the cell without food, a living corpse, neither man nor animal. And when the time came, you took them away. When you killed them, they were no longer human.
> Khan: At that time, any person who worked here, whether he liked it or not, owed absolute obedience to Angkar.
> Nath: I don't want to hear that, "obedience to Angkar." If everyone only thinks Angkar, discipline, obeying orders, "carry out orders or be killed," it's the end of our world, of justice. There are no more human ideals, no more human conscience. We distinguish man from animals. Men are different from animals, they're two distinct things, man and animal. If men turn human beings into animals, or worse than animals, then… that's not right… Look, all this is left [points to mug shots and confession statements]. All this evidence is left, all these testimonies. It's lying there, but you pay no attention.[68]

Nath is both grappling with the function of records creation in the Tuol Sleng bureaucracy and trying to get his former captors to own up to their actions by confronting them with the same records. When Nath confronts another former guard, the guard says that thinking about his actions at Tuol Sleng gives him a headache. Nath responds, "We are not here to tell pleasant stories. We only talk about this unbearable past, which we cannot escape. I can't anyway. I'm trying to understand what happened, to make sense of it. I want to understand it…."[69] Nath is compelled to tell his unbearable story and that of the other victims as part of a sense-making quest, and yet, despite his efforts, the violence remains senseless.

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

In the same film, some of the former guards are also induced into remembering by the mug shots, but their stories are reluctantly told and their memories are strikingly different from those of Nath and Mey. As the guards scan the mug shots on display, they are first silent and then slowly recall how they tortured those prisoners depicted in them. One former guard looks at the mug shot of Nay Nan, a young female "doctor"[70] and describes beating her, but getting no response. After consulting Duch, the head of Tuol Sleng, the guard decided to use "strong arm tactics." Pointing at her photograph and forced confession statement, he remembers:

> I took their advice. I insulted her, intimidated her, pounded on the table, I broke off a tree branch and beat her. When I hit her, she pissed herself. Then she asked to make her confession: Nay Nan's confession. I made her write it in four or five days. I got a page of it. Reading it, I didn't know what network was involved, what party. It contained nothing. So I explained and suggested she write it using my method. She should describe a network, a party, an activity of sabotage, a network leader. In the end, we managed to write up this document.[71]

He is shown with her confession statement. As he tells this story, the guard seems cold, showing no sign of emotion of remorse. And yet, confronted with the documentary evidence, he is still induced to speak about the victims, even while ultimately denying responsibility.

Another Cambodian-directed documentary has an explicit agenda connecting how family members use mug shots to remember Tuol Sleng victims to efforts to hold the perpetrators legally accountable. *Preparing for Justice* is a short 16-minute film produced and directed by DC-Cam staff in 2007 and made available via DC-Cam's YouTube channel.[72] The film explains basic information about the establishment of the ECCC and was shown by DC-Cam staff in rural villages as part of the organization's outreach efforts to educate the public about the tribunal. The

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[70] The regime killed all trained medical professionals, and then enlisted teenagers into "medical" courses in which they were taught rudimentary and often detrimental medical procedures.
[71] Rithy Pann, *S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine,* Human Rights Watch, 2003.
[72] DC-Cam, *Preparing for Justice* (2007), http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOngbCZQ1BA&feature=related

project documents DC-Cam's outreach programs in which groups of rural Cambodians of all ages and religious backgrounds are brought on daytrips to Phnom Penh to visit the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, the Killing Fields at Choeung Ek, and the ECCC building, with the explicit goals of getting them to talk about the regime and participate in the tribunal. The participants in and the audience for the film are information-poor rural residents who might not otherwise know about DC-Cam, the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, and the ECCC.[73]

As the rural visitors make their first stop at Tuol Sleng, one woman recalls that she visited the site in 1983. "Today it's different," she says, followed by, "The blood stains are gone, but the agony remains." While looking at the mug shots and the shackles on display, one man says, "When we see new clothes,[74] it makes us sad because our dead relatives cannot wear them like we can. What can we do? We are all old. We cannot cry. We are too reserved." Another woman is in tears as she looks at the mug shots. She says:

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[73] DC-Cam's outreach efforts have been criticized by the American journalist Joel Brinkley, who has accused DC-Cam of "re-traumatizing" Khmer Rouge victims by encouraging them to speak about their experiences and then providing little or no psychological support to deal with the effects of PTSD. While it is true that psychiatric research has shown that speaking about past trauma has no clear immediate positive impact on those who suffer from PTSD, Brinkley's critique has been refuted by DC-Cam staff, who point out that from 2003 to 2009, DC-Cam closely collaborated with the organization Transcultural Psychological Organization (TPO) to provide counseling to victims through its Victims of Torture Project. Furthermore, as Brinkley himself cites, there are only twenty-six licensed psychiatrists in all of Cambodia; providing psychiatric support in the Western sense to participants in DC-Cam projects is simply not feasible. Furthermore, as DC-Cam staff point out, Cambodians have many culturally rooted practices for dealing with trauma, including religious rituals and other communal activities. For more detailed information on this debate, see: Joel Brinkley, *Cambodia's Curse: The Modern History of a Troubled Land* (New York: Perseus, 2011), 326-330, and Sayana Ser, Savina Sirik, Farina So, Dacil Keo, Sarah Jones Dickens, "A Response to Brinkley's Writing about the DC-Cam Outreach Activities," Email from Sarah Jones Dickens to author, May 5, 2011. Given that Brinkley's book rests on the Orientalist premise that Cambodia is virtually unchanged by modernity (its "customs and practices set in a stone a millennium ago,") and the book's irrational central premise that Cambodia is somehow predestined or "cursed" to suffer misfortune, it does not merit further attention in this dissertation.

[74] New clothes have symbolic significance in Cambodia, as they are often given as gifts and worn during religious holidays.

> I never came here before. I feel pity for the Khmer people. It makes me very sad. My relatives, your relatives, I miss all of them. Why did Khmers mistreat Khmers? I can't hold back my tears. I lost six to seven family members. My father was killed and so was my uncle and brothers. I had never visited Tuol Sleng before. I feel anger and horror now that I have seen with my own eyes the crime of Pol Pot.[75]

Her grief is both personal ("*my* relatives") and collective ("*your* relatives.") Even though she did not find her own relatives' photos at Tuol Sleng, she grieves for the entire nation.

In the next scene, an unnamed man (who, based on his age, must have been a young child during the Khmer Rouge period) points at a mug shot on display. Recognizing the face in the photograph, he says:

> I know it's him because he's my brother. I recognized him by his hair and lips. When I look at this photo, I can see his misery. In 1974, he was a soldier in the 110th unit. His rank was Deputy Commander for the Special Sector which protected Phnom Penh. Until 1975, he still came but in 1975 he disappeared. I was very worried and could only hope that he went abroad. I don't feel hopeless, but I'm sad because I know him only through his photo.[76]

His comments underscore both the ability of the mug shots to spark stories about the victims of the regime, as well as to embody the memory of those depicted. Again, the family members are confronted with the presence of the victim in the photo and their absence in life; a photograph is no substitute for a living brother. The mug shots are simultaneously unwelcome because they confirm death, abruptly halting any hopes of alternative possibilities ("I could only hope that he went abroad,") and welcome in that they provide some knowledge of and connection to the dead. If this surviving brother only knows his dead brother through the photo, without it, the dead brother would remain unknown.

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[75] Documentation Center of Cambodia, *Preparing for Justice*, (2007). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOngbCZQ1BA&feature=mfu_in_order&list=UL

[76] Documentation Center of Cambodia, *Preparing for Justice* (2007). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOngbCZQ1BA&feature=mfu_in_order&list=UL

In the following scene, an elderly woman, now a Buddhist nun,[77] speaks about discovering her husband's mug shot at Tuol Sleng. She begins by telling her husband's story:

> The Khmer Rouge deceived my husband into telling them about his work in the previous regime. He admitted that he was a soldier serving the royal family. They took him to Phnom Penh. A man, who was arrested with him, managed to escape and said my husband was hung at Tuol Sleng. I came here to see for myself. I only saw his photograph. I have no hope. They took him forever because he told them the truth. It's too painful to even talk about. Now I am all alone. I lost all my brothers and sisters.[78]

The experience of viewing her husband's mug shot simultaneously provides evidence of his fate ("I came here to see for myself,") and is utterly inadequate ("I *only* saw his photograph") (emphasis mine). Paradoxically, viewing the mug shot serves as a catalyst for the construction of a narrative about the dead, but at the same makes survivors feel that they are rendered speechless ("It's too painful to even talk about"). Words are inadequate in the face of such images, yet survivors are compelled to speak.

The film then follows the participants to the Killing Fields at Choeung Ek and the ECCC building, which the narrator claims is "the most important stop on the tour." Participants are told that when they get involved with the tribunal, "you can determine for yourself whether the court can bring justice." In subsequent interviews participants remark how "satisfied" they are after seeing the ECCC, how the court "will give perpetrators the chance to reveal the truth," "give people a great sense of relief," and "bring justice to the dead and relieve their spirits of anger." Only one woman seems unconvinced by the ECCC's potential merits; "they should be punished with torture and death, the same way they treated us," she says. However, the underlying message of the film is clearly summarized by one man's final comments: "I am glad to participate in this tour because there will be no more bloodshed in our country if the

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[77] This assumption is made based on her shaved head and white clothing, signs of Buddhist nuns in Cambodia.
[78] Ibid.

establishment of the court is successful." In this way, the film explicitly links the past injustices as documented at Tuol Sleng with the possibility of future redemption through the rule of law. The footage captures a unique moment after the establishment of the court but before the start of the first trial; after Duch's paltry 30-year sentencing in 2010 and repeated allegations of court corruption and mismanagement, such optimism about its importance have cleared waned in the eyes of both the Cambodian public and DC-Cam's staff in particular.[79] Yet, as *Preparing for Justice* reveals, the families of Tuol Sleng victims clearly make a connection between the mug shots (and other Tuol Sleng records) as personal evidence that inspires their own stories about the dead and legal evidence that they hoped would inspire collective memory and justice.

Despite their differing agendas, directors, and styles, these five films are united in their use of Tuol Sleng mug shots as catalysts to spur survivors and victims' family members to talk about the Khmer Rouge. In these films, it is the survivors themselves who use the mug shots as a way to talk about what happened to them. Yet, for the most part, we are still confined to secondary testimony. With the exception of the handful of Tuol Sleng survivors and guards we hear and see in these films, the torture at Tuol Sleng and subsequent mass murder at the Killing Fields is an event with few surviving direct witnesses. We are left with the mug shots themselves as silent witnesses, brought back to life (figuratively) through the telling of stories by their family members. As Eric Ketelaar writes about records in a different context, "Some records… had, as it were, to be 'performed.' Records do not speak for themselves: to make them alive requires a rhetorical act."[80] In these documentaries, family members use the mug shots to

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[79] Youk Chhang's many published editorials addressing the corruption of the tribunal reveal how some Khmer Rouge survivors quickly became disillusioned with the court after a decade of advocating for its establishment. Duch's sentence has since been changed to life in prison.
[80] Eric Ketalaar, "Records Out and Archives In: Early Moden Cities and As Creators of Records and As Communities of Archives," *Archival Science* 10 (2010): 207.

perform remembrance, making them "alive" through the act of narrative creation. Through this performance of memory in the trial and on film, victims' family members are also performing human rights, linking memory to legal and historical accountability and asserting the right to remember in the face of a regime that encourages forgetting. Continuing this discussion, this chapter now turns to another venue for this type of memory performance, DC-Cam's newsletter.

DC-Cam's Newsletter: Searching for the Truth

> "The archive is the repository of memories; individual and collective, official and unofficial, licit and illicit, legitimating and subversive. And on the basis of such memories we strive, however ineffectively and partially, to reconstruct, restore, recover the past, to present and re-present stories of the past within our narratives…. Through the archive we strive to recover what we (and the thousands of Is that constitute that we) have lost, and to relive the lost past by retelling its stories."[81]

Adding to the use of the mug shots in the tribunal and in documentary films, is their use in DC-Cam's magazine, *Searching for the Truth*. DC-Cam began publishing *Searching for the Truth* in January 2000. The publication comes out monthly in Khmer language and quarterly in English. It is distributed free of charge in Khmer throughout Cambodia, for a small fee in English in Cambodia's two major cities (Phnom Penh and Siem Reap), and available for download in both languages free of charge via DC-Cam's website.[82] The circulation is 7,000 for each Khmer issue and 1,000 for each English issue. Bound copies compiling English editions are also available for a steep fee at foreigner-oriented bookstores in Phnom Penh and are periodically

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[81] Harriet Bradley, "The Seductions of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found," *History of the Human Sciences* 12 (1999): 108-109.

[82] Documentation Center of Cambodia, *Searching for the Truth*, http://www.d.dccam.org/Projects/Magazines/Magazine_Searching.htm For the first two years of publication, each issue of the magazine was translated into English, resulting in monthly English editions. In 2003, DC-Cam began selecting articles from the monthly Khmer issues to translate into quarterly English editions. This dissertation relies on the English language translations.

sent by DC-Cam staff free of charge to select research libraries in the U.S.[83] The magazine has changed through time, but currently contains several regular features: a letter from DC-Cam Director Youk Chhang; a Documentation section that reproduces images and/or translations of Khmer Rouge records in DC-Cam's collection; a History section which has reprinted scholarly articles written by scholars of the Khmer Rouge from around the world; a Public Debate section in which Cambodians write in with their stories about the Khmer Rouge period and opinions on accountability efforts; a Legal section which explains the intricacies of the tribunal; and a Family Tracing section in which Cambodians write in soliciting information from both DC-Cam staff and the Cambodian public about loved ones missing since the Khmer Rouge period.[84] Any information in response to such requests is gathered through archival research and then printed in subsequent editions of the magazine. As Chhang introduced the column in *Searching for the Truth*'s first issue, "While it will be a column of horrific and tragic pain, it is a column that will help eliminate doubt and bring an eternal happiness. The column will help honestly disseminate information to the public, and it will describe new lives after the Khmer Rouge time."[85] As I have written about elsewhere, the Family Tracing section often uses pre-1975 family photographs to show the disappeared in happier times and provides a space in which personal memory becomes collective memory.[86]

Yet while *Searching for the Truth* reprints many types of photographs, its frequent use of Tuol Sleng mug shots is striking. Every issue has at least one Tuol Sleng mug shot; several

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[83] This includes the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Conversation with Larry Ashmun, Bibliographer for Southeast Asia, University of Wisconsin, Madison, September 1, 2011.
[84] Another way that Cambodians are finding missing relatives is through the popular television show *It's Not a Dream,* in which television crews scour the country to reunite separated families.
[85] Youk Chhang, "About the Magazine," *Searching for the Truth* 1 (2000): 4.
[86] Caswell, "Khmer Rouge Archives," 2010. The use of family photographs for memorialization will also be the subject of future research.

issues feature dozens of them. To show an example of how mug shots are used, Issue Eight includes: a mug shot of an identified woman (Hong Hun) to accompany a reprinted chapter from historian David Chandler's book *Voices from S-21*; another of an unidentified woman holding a child to accompany that same article; ten smaller mug shots of named children, all approximated to be under five years of age, again accompanying the Chandler chapter on Tuol Sleng; and three mug shots of unidentified men whose faces are visibly swollen to accompany an article in the Legal section about prosecution for torture under international law.[87] The next issue includes: an unidentified mug shot accompanying an article about an unrelated man's forced confession statement; another image of Hong Hun's mug shot to accompany the next installment of Chandler's book; thirteen identified mug shots of Vietnamese prisoners at Tuol Sleng to accompany an article about Vietnamese prisoners of war; and the mug shot of Huot Bophana (whose biography was recounted in the introduction to Chapter One) accompanying a story in the Legal section about rape was a war crime which does not directly address Bophana's story.[88] Another issue, Issue Twelve from 2000, reproduces four unidentified mug shots on the inside back cover, with the headline, "The Victims," and no accompanying story (*figure 4.2*.)[89] The mug shot of Hong Hin, identified by name and as "a female combatant arrested in October 1976" is reprinted wherever text from Chandler's book is reproduced; Hin's eyes are closed in the photograph, making it a particularly interesting choice to accompany an article which essentially brings the viewers into a mutually constitutive act of witnessing (*Figure 4.3*). As these examples show, some mug shots accompany related articles, some are void of context, some reproduced over entire back covers, many appear on the table of contents page, some depict named victims,

[87] DC-Cam, *Searching for the Truth* 8 (2000): 22; 24-25; 30.
[88] DC-Cam, *Searching for the Truth* 9 (2000): 4; 19; 22-24; 28.
[89] DC-Cam, *Searching for the Truth* 12 (2000): 49.

some depict unknown victims with the hope that readers will be able to identify them.[90] In fact, identification is one of the main reasons DC-Cam publishes the mug shots. As one unattributed article states:

> Some of the photographs published in the magazine are associated with biographies, while others, especially those of victims, bear no identification and are unrelated to any specific article. We will appreciate any relevant information, such as age, place of birth, and whereabouts of the individuals whose photographs appear in our pages, so that we may further improve our data regarding the Democratic Kampuchea regime. The Documentation Center of Cambodia would like to thank you in advance for any additional information the reader may be able to provide relating to unidentified photos. Our sincere thanks.[91]

Yet while Tuol Sleng mug shots are commonly reproduced on the pages of *Searching for the Truth* for identification purposes, I will limit this chapter's discussion to five key instances that illustrate the ability of these photographs to induce detailed narratives through their reuse on the pages of the magazine. These instances are the stories of Tuol Sleng survivor Bou Meng (who was also discussed in the legal testimony and documentary film sections of this chapter) and Tuol Sleng victims Chan Kim Srun, Poeung Kim Sea, Yuk Chantha, and Norng Kim Gech as told by their surviving family members.

In the October 2001 issue of the magazine, DC-Cam staffer Sorya Sim profiled Tuol Sleng survivor Chum Manh.[92] Manh openly acknowledged in the article that he was still afraid that speaking about his experiences might led Khmer Rouge officials to target him, but that he would tell his story anyway, because he wants to "document the history and tell the leaders about

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[90] The mug shots are also reprinted in the magazine in images of people looking at them, which will be discussed later in this chapter.
[91] Unattributed, "About the Photographs," *Searching for the Truth* 5 (2000): 49.
[92] Chum Manh and Chum Mey are the same person; there names are translated differently in different publications. My spelling reflects the use in the publication being discussed.

what happened, so that they won't repeat the same tragedy."[93] The article then details Manh's graphic story of being arrested, tortured, and forced to sign a confession statement at Tuol Sleng.[94] Manh explains how he was briefly reunited with his wife and child after the Vietnamese invasion, only to witness them both being killed by retreating Khmer Rouge soldiers. The article is accompanied by a 1979 photograph of the seven then-known surviving Tuol Sleng prisoners, as well as an enlarged image from that same photograph of a prisoner named Bou Meng, whom the article states has since passed away. However, a subsequent article in the April 2003 edition of the newsletter corrects this error. The article reveals how Bou Meng, alive and well and living in a rural area of Cambodia, came forward to tell DC-Cam his story after seeing his own photograph in the article about Manh.[95] He received a copy of the newsletter from the head of the Buddhist pagoda in his province. Meng is quoted as saying, "I am not dead. I am one of the victims of this prison. I want to see former KR leaders prosecuted and I'll be a witness."[96] Meng then gave a 40-page statement to DC-Cam staff member Sorya Sim, a much shorter version of which was published in the magazine, spoke at public events at DC-Cam, agreed to tell his story for the DC-Cam documentary, *Behind the Walls of S-21: Oral Histories from Tuol Sleng Prison,* and later testified against Duch in the Tribunal.[97] In the article, Meng recounts how, like Vann Nath, he was spared from being killed because of his skills as an artist; the Tuol Sleng administration marked "keep a while" on his prison record and used him to paint portraits of Pol

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[93] Sorya Sim, "Chum Manh: An S-21 Survivor," *Searching for Truth* 22 (October 2001): 13.
[94] Manh gives a more lengthy oral history in DC-Cam, *Behind the Walls of S-21: Oral Histories from Tuol Sleng Prison*, 2007, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2xmOq_dj8k.
[95] Meng later became one of Tuol Sleng's most famous survivors and is profiled in the 2008 documentary *The Conscience of Nhem En*. Vannak Huy, "Bou Meng: Survivor of S-21," *Searching for the Truth* (April 2003): 23-4.
[96] Ibid., 23.
[97] Documentation Center of Cambodia. *Behind the Walls of S-21: Oral Histories from Tuol Sleng Prison*. 2007. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2xmOq_dj8k.

Pot. Meng's narrative, inspired by the publication of Manh's narrative and the accompanying photographs, is now part of the historic record, and an integral component of the burgeoning collective narrative that DC-Cam is helping to shape about the regime. By seeing his own photograph in *Searching for the Truth*, Meng was compelled to step forward with his story of surviving Tuol Sleng. Furthermore, Meng's narrative has the explicit end goal of legal accountability in that he wants his story to be heard, not just by the readers of *Searching for the Truth*, but by a legal court as well.

In several cases, victims' families are reunited with their dead loved one's mug shots through publication in *Searching for the Truth*, leading not only to identification of the victim in the photo, but further details of the victim's life as well. For example, the July 2000 issue of the magazine included several unidentified mug shots. The following year, a 2001 article entitled, "Want to Know the Truth," published in the Family Tracing section recounts how Van Sar saw the mug shot of his cousin Yuk Chantha reprinted in that July 2000 issue of the magazine.[98] Sar then wrote to DC-Cam identifying his cousin in the photo and asking for any further information on Chantha. Having connected the name with the photograph, DC-Cam staff were then able to find Chantha's Tuol Sleng file, which had been separated from the mug shot. The article recounts the details of Chantha's life culled from this file, including his position in the government before the Khmer Rouge takeover, his date of arrest, his wife's name, and the number of children he had. It also includes the accusation, taken from his Tuol Sleng file, that he was a Soviet spy and lists his date of death as July 18, 1978. After being presented with this information about his cousin, Van Sar is then quoted as saying, "I want to seek real justice."[99] The article ends with an explanation of the purpose of the Family Tracing section, "to heal the

[98] Dara P. Vanthan, "Want to Know the Truth," *Searching for the Truth* 14 (2001): 48.
[99] Ibid.

mental wounds of the victims' families by providing knowledge about their relatives' fates, including the place, time, and reasons for execution."[100] While Chantha's mug shot is not reprinted here, three unidentified Tuol Sleng mug shots appear beside the article, presumably awaiting identification by another reader who, like Sar, "wants to know the truth" about a missing family member. Again, in this case reprinted mug shots not only lead to narratives about the dead, but demands for justice in the form of a tribunal.

Another published letter in the Family Tracing section, "The Confession of My Father," reveals how the mug shots allow family members to both request further information from DC-Cam's records about the deceased and publicly tell their own stories about the lives cut short.[101] In the letter, Sea Kosal writes, "Reading such material [in *Searching for the Truth*] reminds me of the considerable suffering of my parents experienced [sic], as well as all Cambodian citizens who lost their lives due to the barbarous, disgusting reign of the leaders of Democratic Kampuchea."[102] Kosal then describes finding the unidentified mug shot of his father, Proeung Kim Sea, in a CD-Rom produced by DC-Cam. He describes his father as a former medical doctor "who was tortured to death by the Khmer Rouge monsters."[103] His letter includes the mug shot identification letter and requests that DC-Cam staff look up his case file and provide additional information. It concludes by Kosal wishing DC-Cam "continued success in the research and documentation of genocidal perpetrators to be brought to justice very soon."[104] The letter appears next to a full-page reproduction of the father's Tuol Sleng mug shot, which is identified by name and includes the caption: "Before 17 April 1975, he was a chief of Health

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[100] Ibid.
[101] Sea Kosal, "The Confession of My Father," *Searching for the Truth* 32 (2002): 48.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.

Office in Battambang province and he ran the state-owned Provincial Hospital of Battambang. He graduated from a University in Paris, France."[105] In these letters, the family members make public their personal memories about the dead, and yet their own stories are never enough; they request more information from the archives as external proof of their loved one's existence and death. Furthermore, the end goal of this drive for more information and to tell stories about the dead is not just remembrance, but justice; individual memory, collective memory, and legal accountability are intimately connected in these narratives.

Another article provides some clues about the importance of these mug shot reunions and their ensuring narratives in the cultural and religious context of Cambodian Buddhism. A July 2002 *Searching for the Truth* article entitled "From the Border to S-21" tells the story of Chan Lim, whose wife, Norng Kim Gech, and son, Chauv Kea, were imprisoned at Tuol Sleng in 1978. The article is accompanied by both of their mug shots and recounts the story of where the family lived, what business they were in before the Khmer Rouge takeover, and their escape to a Vietnamese border town that was eventually taken over by the Khmer Rouge. Lim recalls how the Khmer Rouge arrested his wife and son while he was away and he never heard from them again. The article describes:

> In 1981 [Lim's] brother-in-law Hong Chea visited the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh. There, he came across portraits of Lim's wife and son. Hong told Cham Lim about this when he returned home. Cham Lim was stunned and afraid to go and see the photographs. So Hong brought Lim's children to see them and take photographs of the portraits… The family still uses the photographs for ceremonies. Chan Lim cannot forget his family's suffering during the regime, even though more than 20 years have passed. He is still preoccupied with the image of his wife and son. During the Hungry Ghost Festival, Cham Lim always pays homage to the pictures. He never dares to burn incense before the portraits; he cannot bear the suffering. Instead, he asks his children to do this.[106]

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[105] Ibid., 49.
[106] Dany Long, "From the Border to S-21," *Searching for the Truth* 31 (2002): 24-25.

In this example, the victims have already been identified through the photo exhibition at Tuol Sleng, yet photos of their mug shots on display at Tuol Sleng serve important cultural and religious functions for the living. In this narrative, the grief of the living is palpable. The mug shots, once used as instruments to streamline mass murder, have now come to embody the dead and serve as tools to honor them for the living. In this way, the archive is complexly layered and ever-expanding, encompassing all of these attempts to make meaning through the use of records. Once again, this story concludes with demands for a tribunal. The story ends, "Cham Lim supports an independent tribunal to prosecute Khmer Rouge leaders and obtain justice for his wife and son as well as the other innocent people of Cambodia who perished under the Khmer Rouge regime. The longer he waits, the less hope he has that justice will be done."[107] In this way, the mug shots are political tools as well as personal memory texts.

Yet another example of the circle of narrative construction enabled by these printed mug shots is the story of Chan Kim Srun. Chan Kim Srun was the wife of Sek Sath, a high-ranking Khmer Rouge officer (Secretary of Region 25 Southwest) who was accused of treason in 1978. Srun, her husband, and one year-old son were all brought to Tuol Sleng and executed. Srun's mug shot is one of the mostly widely known iconic images from Tuol Sleng; in it, she holds her sleeping son (*figure 4.4*). Exhibited at MoMA and reprinted in the accompanying catalog, her face has become an international emblem of maternal grief.[108] Srun's mug shot has also been reprinted dozens of times in *Searching for the Truth*, including as the full-page cover of the fourth issue in 2003 (*figure 4.5*) as well as one of nine mug shots (some identified, some not) on

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[107] Ibid.

[108] Srun's photograph appears in Doug Niven and Chris Riley, eds., *The Killing Fields*, no page number provided. As an example of how iconic the Srun's image has become, British journalist Nic Dunlop writes, "Looking at Chan Kim Srun and her baby, it is easy to believe she is imploring you to help. It is the illusion of intimacy that is so troubling." Nic Dunlop, *The Lost Executioner*, 164.

the cover of the first issue of 2011. [109] In 2008, the magazine ran a story entitled "30 Years Later," which describes how Chan Kim Srun's surviving daughter, Sek Say, was separated from her remaining family in 1979 at age twelve.[110] Say's cousin, Sek Saron, had been searching for her ever since, and in 2003 had broadcasted several announcements looking for her on both television and radio to no avail. In 2007, Saron wrote an article in *Searching for the Truth* asking for any information on her cousin Sek Say's whereabouts.[111] As a result of this article, Saron and Say were reunited. The 2008 article describes this reunion:

> Say was so happy the first time she reached her hometown…. Say smiles as she remembers the reactions of her family when they saw her for the first time in nearly 30 years…. However, Say's happiness soon turned to sadness. The reunion was joyous for only a moment because Say realized that nothing could equal the feeling of seeing her parents again…. She could only see a photo of her mother with her baby brother.[112]

It was the first time Say had seen her mother's Tuol Sleng mug shot. The article continues by recounting details of Say's memories of her parents, how her mother was strict, what her father wore each day. It describes how Say asked for a copy of her mother's mug shot and, when she received confirmation from DC-Cam staff about her parents' death dates, donated money in their honor to the local pagoda. It concludes with Say's demands for justice; "her desire is to directly participate in the trials as a witness but she worries that she may not be able to speak well because she does not have a higher education."[113] The article is accompanied by a photograph of Say, holding both her own child and the framed mug shot of her dead mother and brother (*figure 4.6*).[114] In this case, the mug shot did not reunite Say with her cousin (indeed, the written word

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[109] DC-Cam, *Searching for the Truth* 4 (2003): cover; DC-Cam, *Searching for the Truth* 1 (2011): cover.
[110] Sophal Ly, "30 Years Later," *Searching for the Truth* 1 (2008): 7.
[111] Sek Saron, "A Messenger from Region-25," *Searching for the Truth* 97 (2003).
[112] Sophal Ly, "30 Years Later," *Searching for the Truth* 1 (2008): 10.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid, 7.

did), but the mug shot linked Say with evidence of her dead parents and brother. The mug shot serves as both visual proof of their imprisonment at Tuol Sleng as well as a prompt for Say to tell both their stories and her own during the regime. The mug shots are evidence of both a larger narrative of mass torture at Tuol Sleng, and very personal reminders of the dead. In the hands of DC-Cam staff writers, they also become calls to action, linking memory to the formation of a tribunal.

As these five cases have illustrated, by printing mug shots in various forms, DC-Cam is providing a space in which private memories become public memory, personal narrative becomes collective narrative. Through the pages of the Family Tracing and Documentary Photographs columns, survivors' missing family members become all of Cambodia's missing family members; survivors' grief becomes Cambodian collective grief over all of the victims of the Khmer Rouge.[115] By using the mug shots as a tool for both information gathering and narrative generation, DC-Cam is providing a space for individual trauma and memory to become collective trauma and memory through the construction of collective narratives about the dead. The seemingly simple act of reprinting the mug shots and, when possible, the corresponding letters from victims' families, transforms these documents into powerful testimony to which we are all implicated as witnesses to the crimes of the Khmer Rouge and are compelled to negotiate a collective narrative about the regime.

And yet, for DC-Cam's writers and the victims' family members the narratives are not only about the lives of the dead, but ultimately about justice for the living. In all five of the featured stories, telling stories about the dead is not an end in and of itself; the final goal of the remembering engendered by the mug shots is legal justice. In this way, DC-Cam is mobilizing

[115] For another example of the creation of collective memory through DC-Cam's publications, see: Michelle Caswell, "Khmer Rouge Archives."

these mug shots for an explicitly political aim: the conviction of a few top-ranking Khmer Rouge leaders. This narrative—that archival evidence will lead to the legal conviction of those who bear the most responsibility for the genocide—is made explicit throughout DC-Cam publications. The readers of *Searching for the Truth* are to look at the mug shots as overwhelming evidence for the guilt of the regime and be compelled into action in support of a tribunal by them. Yet while DC-Cam's newsletter gave voice to the majority of Cambodians who supported the ECCC's efforts at legal accountability (at least at the start of the tribunal), it omitted the voices of Cambodians who think the tribunal is a waste of resources. Indeed, while the 2009 University of California, Berkeley survey showed that nine out of ten Cambodians support efforts to hold the regime legally accountable, very few Cambodians (only 2%) mentioned justice for the victims of the Khmer Rouge as a top priority. Instead, the overwhelming majority of Cambodians surveyed prioritized job creation, economic opportunity and poverty alleviation (83%), basic services like healthcare (20%) and access to food (17%). Furthermore, 76% of respondents said that the government should prioritize current problems rather than past atrocities and 53% of respondents said the government should spend resources earmarked for ECCC towards projects other than the ECCC.[116] While there is no proof that DC-Cam actively silenced or censored those perspectives leading up to the Duch trial, it clearly used its newsletter to highlight those voices in support of the tribunal. Indeed, in the formulaic way in which the discussed narratives all end with the family members of victims calling for legal accountability, DC-Cam staff linked narrative creation to the organizational mission of working towards justice. As Chapter Three addressed, this political agenda is explicit in DC-Cam's history and mission.

[116] Phuong Pham, et al., *So We Will Never Forget*.

Furthermore, another important narrative is being played out in these articles. By placing blame on a few high-ranking officials of the regime who are standing trial, these publications overlook the responsibility of rank and file Khmer Rouge members who were complicit in violence. In this way, the *Searching for the Truth* articles overlook those Cambodians who think lower ranking Khmer Rouge members bear responsibility and should also be prosecuted. This reading of the newsletter articles is consistent with other DC-Cam publications and exhibitions. For example, a DC-Cam organized exhibition at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the accompanying DC-Cam publications called *Genocide: The Importance of Case 002* and *The Duch Verdict: Khmer Rouge Tribunal Case 001* construct a narrative both of the guilt of the top four accused Khmer Rouge officials and of the redemption of the rule of law established by the tribunal. As Chhang writes in *The Duch Verdict: Khmer Rouge Tribunal Case 001*, "The [Duch] verdict benefits all survivors immediately…. Now it is necessary to conduct meaningful outreach about the [Duch] verdict to increase support for the Court in advance of Case 002, the next and most important trial."[117] By focusing on legal adjudication for the highest ranking officials, DC-Cam crafts an explicitly political narrative that places faith in the tribunal and concentrates moral responsibility for the crimes of the regime at the top.

Images of people looking

In each of the featured formats—video footage of the tribunal, documentary films, and print publication—there is also another layer of looking going on. In each of these three examples—legal testimony, interviews in documentary films, and still images in the DC-Cam newsletter—not only are mug shots reprinted and repurposed, but are sometimes reproduced as

[117] Youk Chhang, *The Duch Verdict: Khmer Rouge Tribunal Case 001* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2010), 3.

the focal point of new images of people looking at them. Video footage from the ECCC shows judges, lawyers, witnesses, and observers looking at the mug shots projected on a screen as legal evidence. Documentary film footage shows Tuol Sleng survivors and the family members of victims looking at the mug shots either at the Tuol Sleng archives or on display at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. Similarly, *Searching for the Truth* routinely features photographs of Cambodians looking at the mug shots, particularly the family members of victims and rural villagers and students on DC-Cam-sponsored trips to Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum as part of the organization's outreach efforts on behalf of the ECCC.[118]

The printed reuses of Chan Kim Srun's mug shot in photos of people looking at them provide a particularly rich example. Adding to the photograph of Srun's daughter, Say, holding her mother's mug shot previously described (*figure 4.6*) are additional images of Srun's surviving family members looking at her mug shot. In 2010, *Searching for the Truth* ran another image of Say holding a photograph, yet this time the photograph was not just of her mother's mug shot, but a photo of Hilary Clinton and Youk Chhang looking at her mother's mug shot during a recent visit Hilary Clinton made to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum as part of a trip to bolster international support of the Tribunal (*Figure 4.7.*) A more recent image used by DC-Cam documents the next generation of Srun's family witnessing her mug shot; the cover of a 2011 monograph published by DC-Cam, *Cambodia's Hidden Scars: Trauma Psychology in the Wake of the Khmer Rouge*, shows Chan Kim Srun's nine-year-old granddaughter, Phan Srey

[118] Examples of photographs of people looking at the mug shots include photos captioned: "Survivors visiting Tuol Sleng on February 25, 2006," *Searching for the Truth* 2 (2006): 6-7; "Villager looking at the photo of the prisoners at S-21," in *Searching for the Truth* 2 (2007): 15; "Villagers looking at the photo of the prisoners at S-21," in *Searching for the Truth* 3 (2007): 49; and "College students and Muslim youths tour to Tuol Sleng, Choeng Ek and ECCC on September 25, 2008," in *Searching for the Truth* 3 (2008): 28-29.

Leab, holding her grandmother's mug shot (*Figure 4.8)*.[119] In these images, the witnesses looking at Srun's mug shot stand in for larger constituencies; Clinton is a symbol of the international community, Leab, a direct descendent of a Khmer Rouge victim, is a symbol of the next generation of Cambodians. In the case of Sey's photo, a survivor of the Khmer Rouge is witnessing the international community witness her mother's murder. In the case of Leab's photo, the next generation of Cambodians is witnessing the murder of their ancestors. In both cases, witnessing the mug shots is an antidote to forgetting.

These complexly layered images reflect the creation of new records that document the act of looking at the mug shots and provide an opportunity for us, the viewers of these images, to enable another layer of looking. In this way, the mug shots are performing human rights by becoming a vehicle through which people can document bearing witness to the crimes of the Khmer Rouge and garner international attention to the assertion that such crimes should not be repeated.[120] As they gain another life in reprints of images (digital and paper, video and still) of people looking at them, the mug shots are transformed from records of oppression to records of justice, the narrative transformed from one of the helplessness of victims in the face of genocide to one of the agency of survivors in the act of witnessing.

These images (of people looking at the photographs) attempt to forge a narrative of agency where a narrative of grief once prevailed. It's as if to say to the victims, "You had no choice to be photographed, but I have a choice to look at those photographs and I want the world to know

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[119] Beth Van Schaack, Daryn Reicherter, and Youk Chhang, eds., *Cambodia's Hidden Scars: Trauma Psychology in the Wake of the Khmer Rouge* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2011).

[120] My argument here is in contrast to Janina Struk's claims that people photograph atrocity photographs either to distance themselves from the atrocity, or unthinkingly, as taking photographs is just what tourists do. Here, she outrageously compares tourists taking pictures of memorial sites to Nazi soldiers taking pictures of Holocaust victims. Janina Struk, *Photographing the Holocaust* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 190.

that I am looking."[121] By documenting the viewing of these images, DC-Cam and other creators of records are inserting agency—both through the viewing and the documentation of the viewing. These photos document the very act of memory. Taken together, they form an archive of the act of archiving, again implicating us, the viewers, as bearing witness to the testimony of these victims.

This exploration of the creation of narratives of bearing witness builds on the work of psychiatrist Dori Laub and film studies scholars Frances Guerin and Roger Hallas. Dori Laub, an expert on treating post-traumatic stress disorder in Holocaust survivors, addresses the importance of the presence of the listener when taking oral histories about trauma events. She writes:

> Bearing witness to a trauma is, in fact, a process that includes the listener. For the testimonial process to take place, there needs to be a bonding, the intimate and total presence of an *other*—in the position of one who hears. Testimonies are not monologues; they cannot take place in solitude. The witnesses are talking to somebody; to somebody they have been waiting for for a long time.[122]

Following Laub's cue, Guerin and Hallas define witnessing as a mutually constitutive and performative act. They write:

> The encounter with an other is central to any conception of bearing witness. For a witness to perform an act of bearing witness, she must address an other, a listener who consequently functions as a witness to the original witness. The act of bearing witness thus constitutes a specific form of address to an other. It occurs only in the framework of

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[121] This formulation is, again, a direct response to Janina Struk's assertion that Holocaust photographs should be removed from circulation—a rather curious assertion given that her book reproduces fifty-six such images. About the Holocaust victims who are depicted in these photos, she writes, "They had no choice but be photographed. Now they have no choice but to be viewed by posterity. Didn't they suffer enough the first time around?" I posit that images of people looking at atrocity images do not further victimize the victims, but rather perform the work of human rights in the present. Ibid., 216. For a thoughtful argument against Struk, see Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance.*

[122] Dori Laub, "Bearing Witness," in *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* ed. Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, (New York: Routledge, 1991), 70-71.

> relationality, in which the testimonial act is itself witnessed by an other. This relationality between the survivor-witness and the listener-witness frames the act of bearing witness as a performative speech act… [which] affirms the reality of the event witnessed.[123]

For Laub, the testimony is verbal, the witness a listener. As media studies scholars, Guerin and Hallas expand Laub's conception of testimony and the witness to apply to visual materials, specifically addressing the viewers of images documenting trauma. They use the term "secondary or retrospective witnessing" to describe the act of looking at photos of genocide.[124] In this reworking of Laub's ideas, the viewers of such images become retrospective witnesses, not present in the original documentary act, but essential to the performance of witnessing through subsequent viewing.

In this vein, we, the viewers of these images of Cambodians viewing the mug shots, are implicated in the process of witnessing; it is a mutually constitutive act between the witness *in* the photograph and the witness *to* the photograph. Our looking at these images enables the subjects in them to become witnesses and we, the viewers to become retrospective witnesses. Transformed into witnesses, the Cambodians pictured in these images are asserting a sense of agency in the creation of new documents. These new documents then become part of the archives, serving as springboards for new narratives to be crafted. In this way, a narrative of victimhood, in which two million people were murdered by the Khmer Rouge, is transformed into a narrative of witnessing, in which countless people are remembering genocide and even more are witnessing this remembering through the circulation of digital and print photographs that document the act of looking.

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[123] Ibid., 10.
[124] Frances Guerin and Roger Hallas, *The Image and the Witness: Trauma, Memory and Visual Culture* (London: Wallflower Press, 2007), 12.

In this secondary layer of witnessing, the viewers of these images and the listeners of these narratives are burdened with almost unbearable knowledge. As Laub posits about Holocaust testimony, the listeners to testimony of traumatic events become an integral component of the process, "co-owners" of the trauma, who are forever changed by the experience.[125] As secondary witnesses to the violence of Tuol Sleng, we are to become transformed into advocates for justice, as legal accountability is the explicit agenda of many of the narratives explored in this chapter. Here, archivists become (in the words of Ricardo Punzalan) not just "co-witnesses" to the act of looking, but accomplices to witnessing, and as such, political actors.[126]

Adding to this argument, the occasion of taking these photos of survivors and victims' family members looking at the mug shots constitutes a political act marking the performance of human rights in Cambodia. In this view, the creation of new records of witnessing constitutes a performative deployment of the archive for political activism. This analysis draws on work by Andrea Noble on the uses of photographs of the disappeared in Latin America and by Susan Slyomovics on the various ways human rights are performed by the family members of political prisoners in Morocco. Here, as Noble claims, photographs are not merely props, but rather "centrally important element[s] in the material culture of protest and struggles for justice."[127] Arguing that staged photos of family members holding photos of the disappeared in Argentina constitute "a mode of photographic performance," that taps into an "established iconography of

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[125] Dori Laub, "Bearing Witness," 57.
[126] Ricardo Punzalan, "All the Things We Cannot Articulate: Colonial Leprosy Archives and Community Commemoration," in Jeanette Bastian and Ben Alexander, eds., *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory* (London: Facet, 2009), 197-219.
[127] Andrea Noble, "Traveling Theories of Family Photography and the Material Culture of Human Rights in Latin America," *Journal of Romance Studies* 8:1 (2008): 44. Noble is primarily concerned with family portraits rather than mug shots, but the similarities are evident.

human rights activism," Noble contends that "the photograph within the photograph has become a poignant symbol of forced disappearance."[128] Furthermore, as Noble claims, these photos of photos constitute political performances, as "the physical deployment of images, particularly identity photographs, is central to the representation of absent bodies of the missing," performed in direct opposition to the regimes that promote forgetting, destroy evidence, and actively encourage silence.[129] Applying Noble's insightful analysis to a different context, the images of Cambodians looking at the mug shots become a photographic genre, establishing a repetitive pattern that becomes instantly recognizable as part of the performance of human rights in Cambodia.[130] In Cambodia as in Argentina, the staging of the photo itself is an act of political protest that extends beyond local and national borders by creating a spectacle that moves through space and time as it is published and reproduced in various media and formats. Through their strategic deployment in such media spectacles, the photographs become active agents in the human rights struggle in that they perform the act of bearing witness.[131] And here in the Cambodian context (as in Argentina), the photos within the photos shift our focus, not just to the presence of the absence of the victim, but to the unpictured perpetrator, at whom (in the Cambodian case) we are witnessing the victim literally staring in the mug shots.

Undergirding this assertion that images of witnessing perform important human rights work is the theoretical and methodological framework of the social life of images. Through the

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[128] Ibid, 45-46.
[129] Ibid., 47.
[130] Susan Slyomovics discusses the importance of repetition and pattern in the performance of human rights in Morocco. Susan Slyomovics, *The Performance of Human Rights in Morocco* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).
[131] Here, I am echoing Guerin and Hallas's assertion that Holocaust testimony undergirds the "ultimate agency of the image in the performative act of bearing witness to historical trauma." Frances Guerin and Roger Hallas, "Introduction," in *The Image and the Witness: Trauma, Memory, and Visual Culture* (New York: Wallflower Press, 2007), 11.

lens of Appadurai, Tuol Sleng mug shots are material objects given various meanings and values as they circulate through times and space. For Mitchell, the Tuol Sleng images would be "complex assemblages" of meaning incarnated in objects, made tangible through media, behaving as agents that shape human behavior and "want to be heard."[132] The Tuol Sleng mug shots perform this desire to be heard for us, but, as Mitchell asserts, this desire is an impossibility; the images remain silent regardless of the voices we impose on them. And yet, while the victims pictured in the images remain silent, their surviving family members are compelled to speak by the images, breaking the silence of the images with the voices of those left behind to witness.

In light of Trouillot's four moments of silence (silences encoded at the creation of documents, archives, narratives, and histories), the witnessing engendered by these photographs reintroduces an active voice into the archive of mug shots, disrupting the silences of the first two moments. Through the deployment of the Khmer Rouge records for the creation of narratives, victims' family members are induced from silence into testimony, transformed from secondary victims into secondary witnesses. We, the listeners to their stories and the viewers of their images, are tertiary witnesses to this struggle. The photos of people looking at the mug shots compel us to bear witness to those who remember. In so doing, they create new records that document the act of witnessing, transforming us, the viewers, into tertiary witnesses. These records then become incorporated into archives (DC-Cam and other institutions), and used to create new narratives. In Trouillot's framework, these new records incorporating the Tuol Sleng photos insert the voices of survivors and victims' family members at the moments of

[132] W.J.T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?*, 45.

archivization and narrative creation where there was a silence embedded in the original moment of document creation.

From a records continuum perspective, the reuses of the mug shots highlight the circular and pluralist nature of the archive. The record isn't just created once, but re-created (as the by-product of the act of witnessing), re-captured (as new records such as tribunal footage, documentary films, and magazine articles), re-organized (in internal institutional systems), and re-pluralized (as it published and viewed in formation of collective memory) as it used again and again, or "activated" at various points in time and space.[133] While claiming that the Tuol Sleng victims in the mug shots are co-creators of the records gives them a false sense of agency, the witnesses in these photographs of people looking at the mug shots are co-creators of these newly recaptured records. In this way, these new records that reuse the Tuol Sleng images shift the balance from the Khmer Rouge's power to create records of control to the survivors' power to create records of witnessing. The empowerment expressed in and engendered by the creation of these records imbues them with another layer of agency as they are transformed into agents in the performance of human rights.

Furthermore, the meanings of the mug shots are never fixed in a final instance, but rather are in a continual "process of becoming," as they are re-contextualized in new records that incorporate them. The mug shots, are in the words of Ketelaar, "membranic" in the way they enable "the infusing and exhaling of values which are embedded in each and every activation,"

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[133] While this dissertation has focused on records in tangible forms such as digital footage, VHS tapes, and paper materials, I also recognize that orality itself is a form of record, in line with Sue McKemmish's assertion that "records in oral forms including the words spoken, heard, remembered, recalled and witnessed" form part of the stories told around and about images. See: Sue McKemmish, "Traces: Document, Record, Archive, Archives," in *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, ed. Sue McKemmish et al, (Wagga Wagga: Center for Information Studies, 2005), 14. "Activation" is a term frequently used by Eric Ketelaar to describe the uses and reuses of records.

allowing for different meanings to be constructed with each use.[134] Thus they can simultaneously be tools for legal accountability, witnessing, memorialization, personal and collective memory, and other aims we can not yet anticipate. As Sue McKemmish describes about a different set of controversial images, "we see records as dynamic objects, fixed insofar as their original content and structure can be re-presented, but 'constantly evolving, ever-mutating,'… as they are linked to other records and ever-broadening layers of contextual metadata that manage their meanings, and enable their accessibility and usability as they move through spacetime."[135] Thus while the content of the Tuol Sleng mug shots does not change, the context is continually shifting to incorporate new uses for them. For McKemmish and other records continuum theorists, records "never exist… in all their complexity in any one place or time, and [are] only definable in terms of their multiple and dynamic documentary and contextual relationships."[136] In this vein, this dissertation posits that the Tuol Sleng mug shots cannot be adequately viewed on their own, but must be viewed in the context of their complex and shifting relationships with people, events, and new records that incorporate and respond to them. Furthermore, these new records that incorporate the mug shots add to what Ketelaar would call the "semantic genealogy" of the records, impacting all future meanings.[137] Once we know the mug shots have been used in legal testimony, in documentary films, and on the pages of *Searching for the Truth*, we can never view them in the same way again; the mug shots themselves have been transformed with each reuse. By extension, the archives are multi-layered, dynamic, and in constant motion. This view directly contrasts with more traditional views of archives (as intimated by Trouillot), which sees

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[134] Eric Ketelaar, "Recordkeeping and Societal Power," in *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, ed. Sue McKemmish et al, (Wagga Wagga: Center for Information Studies, 2005), 295.
[135] Ibid., 14.
[136] Ibid., 15.
[137] Ketelaar, "Tacit Narratives," 138.

them as static repositories of facts that are merely tapped for the raw materials to begin the more creative process of story telling. Instead, the act of narrative creation is integral to the archives itself, as the narratives become part of the ever-changing semantic genealogy and provenance of the records. In this way, the legal, video, and print testimonies discussed in this chapter are now part of the Tuol Sleng mug shots themselves, locating them at specific moments and places of interpretation, but also imprinting their future uses.

While survivors and victims' family members craft these narratives, DC-Cam, as a community-based survivor-led archival institution, also plays a crucial role in the creation of this new sense of agency.[138] In each of the testimonial formats addressed—legal testimony, documentary films, and magazine articles—DC-Cam has taken the lead in role in soliciting, documenting, and disseminating testimony,[139] serving as a hub for a "community of records," comprised of survivors, victims' family members, and new generations of Cambodians. For DC-Cam, archival work has an explicit end goal of holding Khmer Rouge leaders legally accountable for their actions. In Cambodia's contentious climate where former Khmer Rouge members have infiltrated the highest levels of government and in the international community where only certain leaders are ever held responsible for war crimes,[140] this is an inherently political agenda. In this way, DC-Cam is stepping way beyond the boundaries of the traditional archival role,[141] engaging archival collecting as a political act that performs the work of human rights in a hostile

[138] As Chapter Three detailed, DC-Cam did not start out as a community-based organization, but can now be defined as such given that its director, paid staff, and board members are comprised entirely of Cambodians.
[139] While DC-Cam staff directed only one of the five documentary films addressed in this chapter, DC-Cam provided records and research support for all of them.
[140] Chapter Three described how many critics argue that international law is selectively enforced to serve the needs of dominant countries.
[141] At least as it has been conceived in the West, as seen through Hilary Jenkinson's calls for archivists to be impartial custodians of records.

environment. This political agenda underscores the claims of deconstructionist archivist Verne Harris, that archival functions, rather than being apolitical, neutral or objective, are not only inherently political, but that the archive itself is "the very possibility of politics."[142] By countering the silences with witnessing, DC-Cam is an active agent in the political struggle for remembrance and justice, countering the silences of the victims encoded in the records, with the voices of family members who bear witness in new records.

And yet, there is a silence embedded here as well. Here, there is a danger that the victims of Tuol Sleng have come to stand in as representatives for all of the victims of the Khmer Rouge, despite the unique position of Tuol Sleng at the apex of Khmer Rouge surveillance. Indeed, this focus on Tuol Sleng may hide or distort how most victims of the regime died—from starvation, disease and exhaustion—rather than from the efficient and systematized incarceration, torture, and murder at Tuol Sleng. As Stephanie Benzaquen writes, "While one focuses on the 17,000 victims of Tuol Sleng one forgets about the other two millions dead who left no trace."[143] While the Tuol Sleng mug shots gain new life as they are recaptured in new documents that perform human rights, the vast majority of the dead remain silent, leaving no material trace, except, perhaps, for their bones resurfacing at Cambodia's many mass grave sites. Furthermore, the disproportionate rate with which certain Tuol Sleng mug shots—Chan Kim Srun's is a prime example—get reproduced on book covers, in publications, and DVDs, misrepresents Khmer Rouge victims as women and children and as elites, silencing the other victims of Tuol Sleng and

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[142] Verne Harris, "Archives Politics, and Justice," in *Political Pressure and the Archival Record*, ed. Margaret Procter et al, (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005), 175.
[143] Stephanie Benzaquen, "Postcolonial Aesthetic Experiences: Thinking Aesthetic Categories in the Face of Catastrophe at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century," European Congress of Aesthetics, (2010): 6. http://www.uam.es/otros/estetica/DOCUMENTOS%20EN%20PDF/STEPHANIE%20BENZAQUEN.pdf.

the Khmer Rouge. Even the narrative of the empowerment and agency of witnessing—created in part by DC-Cam—is bounded by the limits of record creation. As Trouillot writes, "the production of traces is always the creation of silences. Some occurrences are noted from the start; others are not. Some are engraved in individual or collective bodies; others are not. Some leave physical markers; others do not."[144] For those victims not captured in the Tuol Sleng mug shots (or in other Khmer Rouge records) or whose photographs have not become iconic, our documents, facts, and narratives remain conspicuously silent, our histories remains markedly incomplete.

[144] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 29.

Chapter Four Illustrations

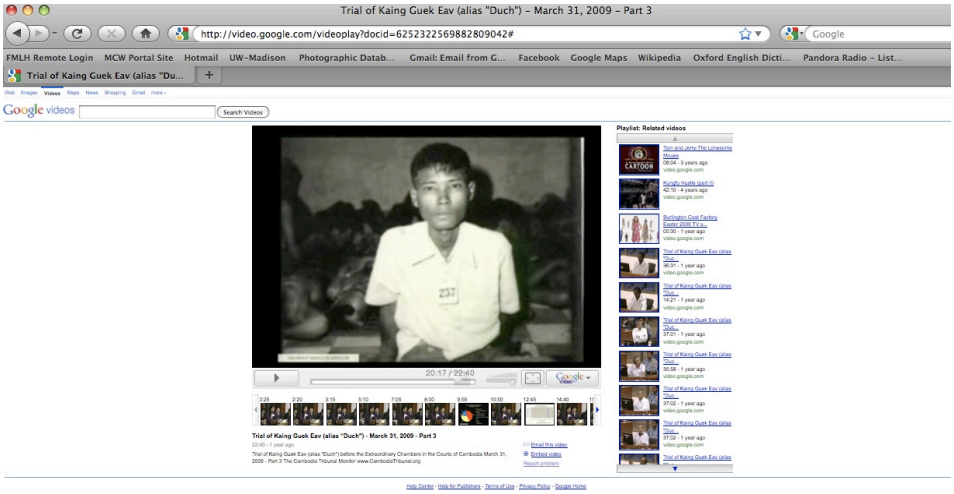


Figure 4.1: Mug Shots in Trial Footage. Cambodia Tribunal Monitor, "Trial of Kaing Guek Eav (alias "Duch") - March 31, 2009 - Part 3," from 20:00 at http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6252322569882809042#. Appears courtesy of DC-Cam.

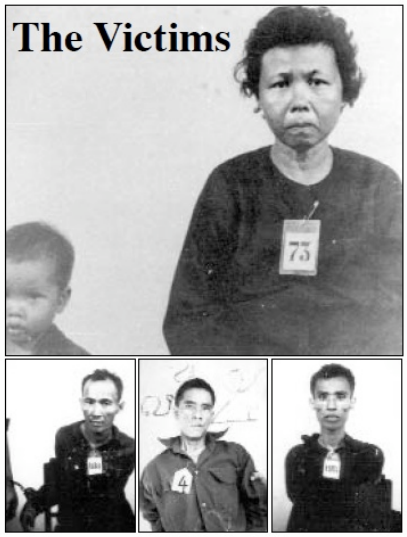


Figure 4.2: Unidentified Mug Shots. DC-Cam, *Searching for the Truth* 12 (2000): 49. Appears courtesy of DC-Cam.

Number 4, April 2000 Searching for the truth — History

Photo: Hong Hin, female combatant arrested October 1976.

Voices from S-21

Chapter One: Discovering S-21

By David Chandler

(Continued)

Guided tours of S-21 were first organized in March 1979, but for over a year, as the museum took shape, only foreigners were admitted because, as a PRK Ministry of Culture, Information, and Propaganda document from 1980 asserted, the site was intended primarily "to show...international guests the cruel torture committed by the traitors to the Khmer people." In the meantime, Mai Lam and his associates were slowly transforming the site into a museum. In July 1980 the ban on Cambodian visitors was lifted, and tens of thousands visited S-21, many of them seeking information about relatives who had disappeared. They consulted hundreds of enlarged mug shots of prisoners on view on the ground floor of the prison, which formed a major components of the museum display. As Judy Ledgerwood has written, many of the visitors were also "searching for meaning for, for some explanation of what had happened. A visit would not have been an easy task; people who went through the meseum in the first year said that the stench of the place was overwhelming." Some thirty-two thousand people visited the museum in the first week it was open to the puplic. By October, 1980, over three hundred thousand Cambodians and eleven thousand foreigners had passed through the facility.

Mai Lam always had high ambitions for S-21. He wanted to establish a museum and organize an archive that would be useful to the Cambodian people and would prevent them from forgetting what had happened under "the contemptible Pol" (a-Pol). One of his more melodramatic exhibits was a large map of Cambodia, composed of skullswith the rivers shown in blood red. In the early 1980s, after S-21's killing field at Choeung Ek, west of the capital, had been excavated under his direction., he supervised the exhumation of thousands of bodies and ordered the construction of memorial stupa at the site, fronted with grass and filled with skulls. Talking to Sara Colm in 1995, Mai Lam said:

For seven years I studied...to build up the Museum...for the Cambodian people to help them study the war and the many aspects of war crimes... For the regular people who cannot understand, the meseum can help them. Even though they suffernd from the regime, as a researcher I want them to go [to the museum]. Even though it makes them cry... The Cambodian people who suffered the war could not understand the war—and the new generation also cannot understand.

For many Cambodians, as Ledgerwood points out, there are problems of "authenticity" in a museum established by foreigners to press home fortuitous parallels between the "genocidal regime" of DK and Hitler's Germany. At the same time, for the survivors the vast and seemingly random cruelties of the DK regime easily became encapsulated in the museum's displays. Nazism seemed as good a label as any other for the horrors that the survivors of the regime had undergone. The indifference of the DK officials to their victims, exhibited in room after room, recurs in the memories of many survivors. Cambodian's

24 Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam)

Figure 4.3: Hong Hin's Mug Shot in *Searching for the Truth.* DC-Cam, *Searching for the Truth* 4 (2000): 24. Appears courtesy of DC-Cam.

Figure 4.4. Chan Kim Srun's Mug Shot, photo taken by author at Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum.

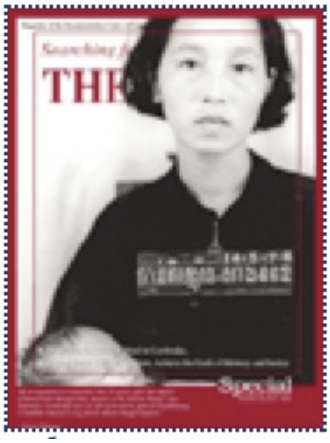


Figure 4.5: Chan Kim Srun on cover of *Searching for the Truth.* DC-Cam, *Searching for the Truth* 4 (2000): 24. Appears courtesy of DC-Cam.

Figure 4.6: Sek Say with Chan Kim Srun's Mug Shot. Sophal Ly, "30 Years Later," *Searching for the Truth* 1 (2008): 7. Appears courtesy of DC-Cam.

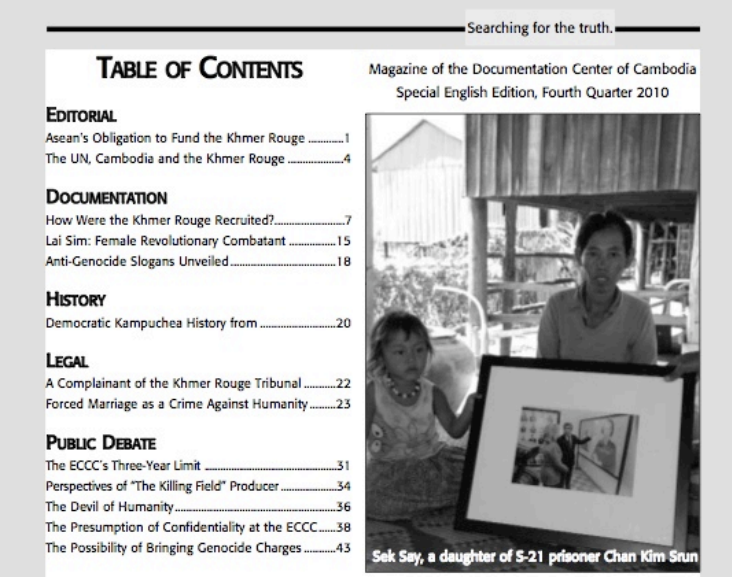
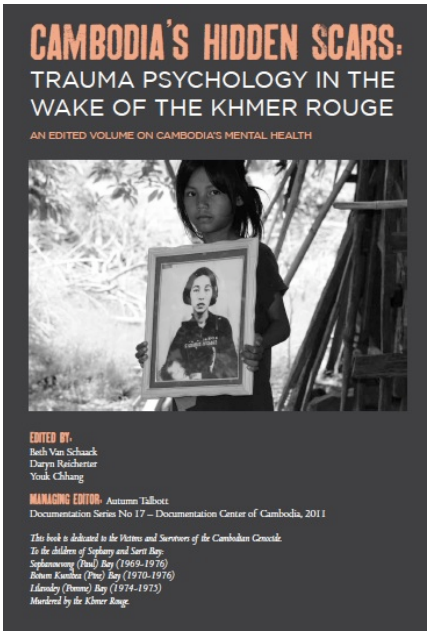

Searching for the truth.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Magazine of the Documentation Center of Cambodia
Special English Edition, Fourth Quarter 2010

Sek Say, a daughter of S-21 prisoner Chan Kim Srun

Figure 4.7: Sek Say with Photo of Clinton Looking at Chan Kim Srun's Mug Shot. Documentation Center of Cambodia, *Searching for the Truth* 4 (2010): 2. Appears courtesy of DC-Cam.


CAMBODIA'S HIDDEN SCARS:
TRAUMA PSYCHOLOGY IN THE WAKE OF THE KHMER ROUGE
AN EDITED VOLUME ON CAMBODIA'S MENTAL HEALTH

EDITED BY:
Beth Van Schaack
Daryn Reicherter
Youk Chhang

MANAGING EDITOR: Autumn Talbott
Documentation Series No 17 – Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2011

This book is dedicated to the Victims and Survivors of the Cambodian Genocide.
To the children of Sophany and Saret Bay:
Sophanneareng (Paul) Bay (1968-1976)
Botum Kunthea (Pou) Bay (1970-1976)
Idanakey (Pomme) Bay (1974-1975)
Murdered by the Khmer Rouge.

Figure 4.8: Phan Srey Leab with Chan Kim Srun's Mug Shot. Beth Van Schaack, Daryn Reicherter, and Youk Chhang, eds., *Cambodia's Hidden Scars: Trauma Psychology in the Wake of the Khmer Rouge* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2011). Appears courtesy of DC-Cam.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

> "Remembering *is* an ethical act, has ethical value in and of itself. Memory is, achingly, the only relation we can have with the dead."[1] --Susan Sontag

This concluding chapter summarizes the content and key theoretical contributions of this dissertation, addresses the ethical questions surrounding the act of looking at and commercialization of atrocity photographs like these mug shots, and posits areas for future research. In conclusion, I will return the focus of the discussion to one mug shot, that of Hout Bophana as described in the introduction, and consider why it continues to have an active social life more than thirty years after the person it depicts was murdered.

The previous chapters have traced the social life of Khmer Rouge mug shots, paying particular attention to moments of silence and acts of silencing as the photographs were created, transformed into archives, and activated by survivors and victims' family members as they craft narratives about the regime.

In Chapter One, I described some key, intertwining theoretical concepts that were explored through this dissertation: Trouillot's four moments of silence during the production of history; the social life of objects, particularly images as records; and, in archival studies, the records continuum framework and the expansion of provenance. These theoretical concepts will be reexamined in light of the Tuol Sleng mug shots later in this chapter.

In Chapter Two, I delineated the genealogy of the Tuol Sleng mug shots and examined the social function of their creation. First, I placed their origins in French colonial policing strategies that employed photography to discursively transform suspects into criminal bodies, arguing that the colonial impulse to classify foreign bodies was turned inward in the creation and

[1] Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York, Picador: 2003), 115.

adoption of the Bertillon system in France and then turned outward once again in the adaptation of the Bertillon system in French colonies throughout the world, including in Cambodia. Next, I outlined how Khmer Rouge bureaucrats mimicked their colonial predecessors in the implementation of standardized photography at Tuol Sleng in the hopes of creating a modern and efficient bureaucracy at the prison. I then used Hannah Arendt's conception of banal evil to investigate the social function of the photographs at Tuol Sleng, showing how records compartmentalized labor, alienated bureaucrats from the violent consequences of their actions, and encouraged a culture of thoughtlessness at the prison. I then discussed the creation of these mug shots in light of archival theory's recent claims of co-creatorship and imperatives to read against the grain, arguing that, despite our attempts to listen to them, the victims in the mug shots remain silent. In the conclusion of Chapter Two, I instead posited that listening to the voices of the "community of records" surrounding the mug shots is our only viable alternative.

In Chapter Three, I addressed the competing political claims made manifest in the transformation of the Tuol Sleng mug shots into archival collections, museum displays, and online databases. First, I described how the mug shots became the focal point of the Vietnamese-led Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide, and how Cambodians used this museum display to identify the dead in the aftermath of the regime's overthrow. Next, I described attempts by individual American human rights workers to deploy the mug shots to garner international attention to the crimes of the Khmer Rouge in the face of Western indifference and, in some cases, outright hostility to efforts to hold the regime accountable. I then outlined several American efforts to preserve the Tuol Sleng mug shots, including those by two photojournalists and scholars at Yale University, who set up DC-Cam as a Phnom Penh field office funded by a grant from the U.S. State Department, and an early effort to digitize the mug shots and publish them online in order

to identify the victims. As DC-Cam became its own independent nonprofit organization, the deployment of the mug shots as archival records shifted in support of Cambodian-led efforts to create an international criminal tribunal amidst significant resistance from political pressures both at home and abroad. Throughout this chapter, I argued that the creation of archives documenting violence in a transitional society is intimately linked to human rights activism and is inherently an expression of political power.

In Chapter Four, I explored how Tuol Sleng survivors and the families of victims are using the mug shots to tell narratives about the dead through legal testimonies, interviews in documentary films, and articles published by DC-Cam. I also analyzed the ways in which DC-Cam, survivors, and family members were incorporating the mug shots into new records that document the act of looking. These new images not only bear witness to the crimes of the regime, but bring the viewers into the circle of witnessing. By asserting that the violence happened, that it will be remembered, and that it should not be repeated, these records of witnessing perform the work of human rights in the face of a local and international political climate that favors forgetting. Again, as we have seen throughout the chapters, the records are agents that actively influence human lives, society, and politics.

Theoretical Contributions

Now that I've summarized the content of each chapter, I will highlight their theoretical contributions. This dissertation has been structured around the first three of Trouillot's moments of silence, with Chapter Two exploring the making of the Tuol Sleng mug shots as sources, Chapter Three exploring the making of archives such as DC-Cam and the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, and Chapter Four exploring the making of narratives as Tuol Sleng survivors and

victims' families use the Tuol Sleng mug shots to tell stories in the form of legal testimonies, documentary films, and newsletter articles. While the creation of archives and narratives can be seen as positive developments on the path to justice and reconciliation in Cambodia, each of these moments in the historical production of the Khmer Rouge period is rife with silences. During the creation of the mug shots, the silence of those mute prisoners they depict is overwhelming, despite the many attempts of survivors, scholars, and other viewers to posthumously assign a voice to the faces. Also at this moment of the making of sources, the silence of the vast majority of Khmer Rouge victims who were not photographed and who left few material traces is audible. Next, in the moment when archives are created, we have seen how as many as 15,000 Tuol Sleng victims whose mug shots did not survive the chaos of the Vietnamese invasion and its aftermath are silenced by their omission from the archives; they are notably absent from the walls of Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and DC-Cam's databases. And finally, we have seen how these silences are compounded in the making of narratives about the regime, such that the stories told about the Khmer Rouge are overwhelmingly shaped by the 5,190 mug extent mug shots and that those stories are strategically deployed by DC-Cam in favor of the conviction of Khmer Rouge leaders in a hotly contested international tribunal.

And yet, in Chapter Four we also saw how DC-Cam is breaking through these layers of silence by creating new photographs that document bearing witness to the Tuol Sleng mug shots, effectively inserting the voices of survivors and victims' family members into this complex continuum of records. Here, redemption lies, not in imposing a voice on the mute Tuol Sleng victims, or reinterpreting these victims as co-creators, but in the creation of new records that repurpose the old, transforming them from objects of mass murder to agents of witnessing. In this transformation, the Tuol Sleng mug shots are agents that perform human rights in Cambodia,

asserting both that Cambodians defiantly bear witness to the crimes of the Khmer Rouge, and that such large-scale violence should never happen again, not only in Cambodia, but across the world. Furthermore, we, the viewers of these new records that incorporate records, are brought into this circle of bearing witness, and as such, are transformed into agents of social change. After viewing these performative records, our commitment to human rights is renewed; we are no longer passive bystanders, but engaged witnesses. This argument constitutes one of the theoretical contributions of this dissertation in that it posits a direct connection between the performative qualities of records and their ability to inspire social and political change.

In this formulation, we also see fissures of incompatibility between Trouillot's framework and postmodern archival theory made manifest by the continuum model. First, while Trouillot's moments proceed in a linear fashion, through the lens of the continuum we see how records are never finished, how archives are never finalized, how narratives shift to suit contemporary needs, and how history is never written in the final instance. Records, archives, narratives, and history are all always in the process of becoming, always existing in the realm of the possible, always waiting to be deployed for new records, for new uses, for new attempts at meaning making. Records are not the static raw material for historical struggle as Trouillot sees, but key players in that struggle. Archives are not sites where neutral or objective archivists assemble facts, but always already sites of intense mediation. And finally, narratives are not just the retrieval of facts latent in the archives, but the shaping of those facts and often, the media through which the very definition of fact is construed. The photographs of witnessing addressed in Chapter Four are not the end result of a linear process, but a brief snapshot of a complexly layered, ever-expanding multi-dimensional web that includes multiple instances of creation, capture, organization, and pluralization, though not in any particular order. Here, the records

continuum provides a more accurate model than Trouillot's linear framework to envision the many contemporary and future reuses of the mug shots, reuses that incorporate not only the original images, but earlier incarnations of reuses as well. These new uses spark new epicenters for new continua, creating a layered, multidimensional overlapping of continua as records are reused, reincorporated, and recreated over and over again at different instances in time and space. The image here is not of a singular bull's eye (as the records continuum has been depicted), but a volley of fireworks, not a lone drop with a rippling effect in a pond, but a rain shower on an ocean, each drop inducing an infinitely expanding ripple of creation, capture, and pluralization as it spreads out across space and into the future.

Yet the continuum model, even in this expanded reconceptualization, is not without its limits. What is missing is Trouillot's attention to power, silencing, and marginalization as the records move through the continuum's layers. Not every act results in records creation, not every created record gets captured in a system, not every captured record in a system gets pluralized, to superimpose Trouillot's moments on the continuum. Power drives important gaps of silence for which the continuum in its present form does not account. These silences disturb the layers of the continuum, contorting the concentric circles with the warps and ruptures of the marginalized voices that are not recorded, archived, and narrativized. These silences refuse to be encapsulated in the continuum's concentric perfection, instead demanding a messy, but more accurate revision.

Herein lies another theoretical contribution of this dissertation. By overlapping two divergent models—Trouillot's moments and the records continuum—I have exposed gaps in both. In so doing, this dissertation has begun to lay the groundwork for a reconceptualization of records that incorporates both the ways in which power differentially silences or marginalizes

voices as they are recorded, archived, and used (or not), and how records are transformed as they are incorporated into new records that perform important social functions in the present. This dissertation hopes to inspire further scholarship that rests at the ruptures in the continuum and to open up new possibilities for the ways in which archival scholars conceive of the purposes, functions, and impact of records.

The social life of objects approach has been key to this examination. I hope this methodological and theoretical framework—imported from anthropology and visual and cultural studies, but explicitly and extensively employed here for the first time in archival studies—gives scholars in the field a new way in which to conceive and structure their research. By proposing this approach as a partial solution to the question of methodology in archival studies, my research contributes to the development of the field well beyond this dissertation's particular concerns about Cambodia, trauma, and records of human rights abuse. With the social life of records approach we have a new framework to trace records across time (from the historical circumstances informing their genre and format, to the social function played by their creation, to the politics of their archivization, to their plural and unpredictable reuses) and across space (as they move from their original contexts to new material and digital incarnations). Implicit in this approach is another contribution to the field, the postulation that records are actors that perform according to context. Again, there is much room for future research to unpack this assertion using other records in other environments.

Despite this dissertation's decidedly postmodern take on archival science, I have cautioned against recent scholarship in archival studies that asks us to find the voices of the dispossessed in the records created by their oppressors and acknowledge the dispossessed as co-creators of the records documenting their own oppression. As Chapter Two detailed, the Tuol

Sleng mug shots not only documented the oppression of prisoners, but served a key social function within that oppression. The records were not neutral byproducts of activity (as classical Western archival theory would posit), but an integral part of that activity; they made the incarceration, torture, and murder possible. In light of both the discursive power of the creation of these mug shots to transform those arrested into enemies of the state and the complete oppression of Tuol Sleng as a total institution within a totalitarian state, there are no whispers of the victims in these records; the photographs, like the dead they depict, remain frustratingly silent. While postcolonial theorists debate if the subaltern can speak, most of us agree that the dead cannot. While we project our own voices onto these photographs (in the vein of W.J.T. Mitchell) in the face of this silence, we must admit it conveys a false sense of agency to deem the Tuol Sleng victims co-creators of the records used to murder them.

Instead of redeeming the archival conception of creatorship through its expansion, we should complicate creatorship's direct ties to provenance. For while the Tuol Sleng victims are not co-creators of their mug shots, they are certainly part of their provenance, as are the descendants of the victims, the archivists and museum professionals who displayed, digitized, and preserved them, and the Cambodians who look at them, tell stories about them, and create new records incorporating them. In the view from the continuum, all of these activations—past, present, and future—form the never-ending provenance of these records, each adding a new layer of meaning to a constantly evolving collection of records that open out into the future. By giving contexts to these texts, archivists have an unparalleled capacity to shape the future uses of these records, contributing to their social significance and, ultimately, their agency as they support identification, adjudication, and memorialization. While we may never be able to hear the voices of the Tuol Sleng victims, DC-Cam's work has ensured that we hear the voices of

their descendents, who repurpose these records of death into legal evidence, touchstones for shaping collective memory, and above all, raw material for new records of witnessing.

Future Research

This dissertation has limited its discussion of Khmer Rouge records to a relatively small sample of photographs taken for a particular purpose at a particular prison. While focusing on Tuol Sleng mug shots, I have omitted an examination of the larger body of records—most of which are not photographic—found at Tuol Sleng, as well as other Khmer Rouge records found at scattered sites throughout Cambodia by DC-Cam. These other collection of records provoke other responses in victims, family members, Cambodians and the international community and as such, will be the subject of future research. The Tuol Sleng confession statements in particular stand out as pregnant with research possibility, particularly their relationship to authenticity and the social function of records to construct a reality that is undeniably false. Another key area for exploration is the deployment of Khmer Rouge records and the creation of new records about the Khmer Rouge period in religious rituals and healing ceremonies organized by the international nongovernmental organization Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO) at Buddhist temples throughout Cambodia.[2] Furthermore, this dissertation has only briefly touched upon the tribunal and has limited that discussion to the first trial. As the tribunal proceeds, the court has paid some very interesting attention to the admissibility of archival records and video footage from a documentary film as legal evidence in the second trial. The relationship between archival

[2] See TPO's "Justice and Relief for Survivors of the Khmer Rouge" Project for more information. Transcultural Psychosocial Organization, http://tpocambodia.org/index.php?id=justiceandreliefforsurvivors, accessed December 22, 2011.

evidence and legal evidence as manifest in the second trial will also be the subject of future work.

Another key theme for future exploration is the repeated claims by archivists, Tuol Sleng survivors, and victims' families that Tuol Sleng itself is haunted and that the mug shots themselves are the vehicles through which the ghosts of the victims appear, taunt the living, and demand justice. While we can claim that all archival records permit communication with the dead to a certain extent, the frequency with which such claims are made about the Tuol Sleng mug shots provokes further theoretical consideration.

These records must also be examined in an international comparative context. How do other societies undergoing transitional justice make meaning of the records of their former oppressors? How are photographs of the dead in particular deployed to identify and memorialize the dead, advocate for justice, and perform human rights across cultures? Is decay and forgetting ever an ethical alternative to preservation and memory? How do these culturally informed practices complicate the dominant paradigms of archival theory and practice? Again, these issues are part of a long-term research agenda I hope to explore throughout my career.

Additionally, the question of how to best activate this discussion of Tuol Sleng mug shots for responsible archival pedagogy lingers. How much context must we provide before using these records as a case study in class? And what should be the pedagogical focus of this case study: the discursive power of records; the ethics of international preservation partnerships; the unpredictable future uses of records by nontraditional users? How can we best do justice to the victims in our classroom deployments of the Tuol Sleng mug shots? These are all questions that I

am exploring as I refine my own teaching techniques and work collaboratively with colleagues to develop a social justice and pluralist framework for archival education.[3]

And finally, moving away from the specifics of Cambodia or even records documenting trauma as a whole, this dissertation has raised a host of theoretical and methodological questions within archival studies that warrant further examination. What might a new model that incorporates the continuum but leaves space for the ruptures and imperfection of Trouillot's silences look like? What are the possibilities and constraints of the social life of records approach? What are the limits of our attempts to uncover marginalized voices in records and what new potential is there for this dissertation's proposed reconceptualization of provenance? I hope not only to address this theoretical and methodological agenda in my own future research, but inspire others in archival studies to take up these issues as well.

The Ethics of Looking

In researching and writing this dissertation, I grappled considerably with the ethics of looking at and showing others these photographs. What is my ethical obligation to these victims? What responsibility do I have to the Tuol Sleng victims when I introduce these images to other spectators? Does my research contribute to the commodification of these images, as well as perpetuate their iconic status at the expense of all of the other unphotographed victims of the Khmer Rouge? How do I not perpetuate the silences encoded in these mug shots? Viewing and showing these images, do I commit an exploitative act of voyeurism or a political act of

[3] Pluralizing the Archival Curriculum Group, "Educating for the Archival Multiverse," *American Archivist* 74 (2011): 69-101. I am also currently coauthoring an article with four of my students that explores the implementation of a social justice framework in the introduction to archives classroom which includes, in part, a discussion of an ethics case study involving the Tuol Sleng mug shots.

witnessing? While answers to these questions remain elusive, it has been crucial to ask them throughout the course of my research. Ultimately, I believe these images compel us to look and that looking can be an ethical act if done respectfully.

Through this discussion, I would like to put an archival studies lens on a raging debate over the utility (and/or futility) of looking at photographs that document "the pain of others," to use Susan Sontag's phrase.[4] This section will now briefly summarize the current debates over the ethics of viewing atrocity photographs and posit that as archivists we have an ethical duty both to look and to make sure that looking is properly contextualized.

At the extreme end of this continuum, critics like Susan Sontag decry all photography as an act of violence and argue that viewing images of violence like the Tuol Sleng mug shots further exploits the victims they portray. Our inundation with so many violent images, these critics argue, creates a sense of atrocity fatigue among viewers, who are no longer mobilized into action by such images and, in the extreme, can no longer even empathize with the subjects in these photographs. Writing about Holocaust photographs, historian Susan A. Crane posits that, since such images were taken without the consent of their subjects, they should be "rendered inadmissible," barred from classroom use, and not republished in academic books.[5] "While I am not advocating the wholesale destruction of Holocaust photographs, I will suggest that removing them from view or 'repatriating' them might serve Holocaust memory better than their reduction to atrocious objects of banal attention," she writes.[6] Crane advocates that, like culturally sensitive Native American materials repatriated under NAGPRA, Holocaust photographs should be removed from circulation and entrusted to appropriately reverential Jewish institutions. In

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[4] Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2004).
[5] Susan A. Crane, "Choosing Not to Look: Representation, Repatriation, and Holocaust Atrocity Photography," *History and Theory* 47 (October, 2008), 309-330.
[6] Ibid., 92.

looking at the Tuol Sleng images, Sontag and Crane would argue, we are reenacting Nhem En's voyeuristic gaze, further objectifying these dead prisoners, and disrespectfully turning their pain into kitsch. In this vein, our scholarship about these images only worsens their ill effect; as David Chandler writes, "Anything we say or write about S-21, or about the Holocaust, has the effect of softening and cleaning what went on."[7] In researching atrocity, these scholars posit, we attempt to make sense of the nonsensical, and, in so doing, we fail miserably.

On the other hand, some critics assert we have an ethical imperative *to* look at violent images, as long as we do so in an appropriate context. Journalism scholar Susie Linfield makes a convincing argument in favor of looking at atrocity images. She notes the ways in which images of violence have mobilized the public into political action, and upholds our ability to read these images empathetically, from the points of view of the victims and not the perpetrators. Photographs taken by Nazis or Khmer Rouge members, she astutely writes, "sabotage their own intent," by making the viewer aware of the senseless cruelty of the photographer.[8] And yet she cautions against any and all acts of looking, positing that we enter into a complex and shaky ethical terrain when we begin to look. Writing about the Tuol Sleng images specifically, she argues:

> Looking at these doomed people is not a form of exploitation; forgetting them is not a form of respect. But it would be good to eschew a knowledge that is easy, an identification that is glib, and a resolution that is cheap. Neither humanism nor history will bridge the chasm between we viewers and Number 5: we cannot become him, switch places with him, or reach back into history to protect him. We are simply too late.[9]

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[7] David Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 144.
[8] Susie Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance: Photography and Political Violence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 52.
[9] Linfield, 59.

And herein lies the contradiction of looking at these Tuol Sleng images: we are both compelled to act and "too late"; compelled to speak, but rendered speechless. "Words fail us," as Chandler writes, in the midst of his wordy book on Tuol Sleng.[10]

Building on my argument that witnessing Tuol Sleng images constitutes the performance of human rights and that archivists are "co-witnesses" to this process, I wish to argue that we have an ethical imperative *to* look at these photographs, as long as such looking is properly contextualized. Too often, American scholars and critics have seen the Tuol Sleng prisoners in these photos as faceless masses—or even worse, the photos as decontextualized artistic objects—ignoring DC-Cam's important and often-successful efforts to identify the victims.[11] As archivists are in the business of context, archival work is central to the ethical viewing of these images. As Linfield aptly argues (and the relatives of the dead would concur), forgetting the Tuol Sleng victims and their images does not honor them. Instead, preserving their photographs, publishing and digitizing them so that they might be identified, and deploying them as legal evidence to hold the perpetrators accountable are the highest forms of respect, and all actions DC-Cam has undertaken. This last point, the use of the Tuol Sleng mug shots as legal evidence, is key; For the survivors of Tuol Sleng and many of the families of victims, the antonym to forgetting is not remembering, but justice, as Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi famously said.[12] By extension, archival interventions into these photographs are not just about remembering, but about justice and the

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[10] David Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 144.

[11] Both Susan Sontag and Susie Linfield fall victim to the trope of the nameless Cambodian, showing that both sides of the atrocity image debate omit important contextual information. The MoMA exhibition described in Chapter Three exemplifies the issues of seeing these records as art objects.

[12] Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 117.

performance of human rights. And as viewers of these images, we have an ethical obligation to act in support of a politics of justice.

Here, I wish to build on Ricardo Punzalan's adaptation of Ruth Behar's concept of the vulnerable observer into the archival realm. In embarking on this kind of research, I have attempted to bring "the most profound ethnographic empathy possible," as Behar describes.[13] I am not an objective, neutral scientist, but a "vulnerable archivist" (to use Punzalan's term), at once a witness to and an actor in the drama surrounding the Tuol Sleng photographs.[14] This dissertation is now part of the provenance of these images. Its readers are now brought into the web of witnessing that these images engender. As such, this research contributes in some small ways, I hope, to the performance of human rights in Cambodia and around the world.

And yet, despite this ethical obligation *to* look, we should be cautioned by the ways in which these images have begun to be decontextualized. The MoMA exhibition and its accompanying catalog, as discussed in chapter three, is a particular cause for alarm. In other less egregious examples, the popularity of these images on the covers of academic books not specifically about Tuol Sleng, for example, further decontextualizes them and does not properly memorialize the victims.[15] Ironically, Susan Sontag is most guilty of the offense of decontextualization, failing to acknowledge the names of the photographer and victims or place them in a broader historical and political milieu. As scholars, we must acknowledge the work of

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[13] Ruth Behar, *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart* (Boston: Beacon, 1996), 167.
[14] Ricardo Punzalan, "All the Things We Cannot Articulate: Colonial Leprosy Archives and Community Commemoration," in Jeannette Bastian and Ben Alexander, eds., *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory* (London: Facet, 2009), 210.
[15] For one example, see the use of Chan Kim Srun's mug shot on the cover of Frances Guerin and Roger Hallas, *The Image and the Witness: Trauma, Memory and Visual Culture* (London: Wallflower Press, 2007).

archivists and honor the victims by doing our homework and providing proper context to these images.

Conversely, there are times when it feels as if these records are given too *much* context, their authenticity rendered too close for comfort. During a December 29, 2011 visit to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, I was stunned to see both Bou Meng and Chum Mey—the two most prominent surviving adult prisoners at Tuol Sleng—in the courtyard of the museum (in the case of Bou Meng, in front of the very structure where his mug shot was taken, sitting in front of a sign with a reproduction of his dead wife's mug shot) selling DC-Cam publications that document their stories to foreign tourists (*Figure 5.1* and *Figure 5.2*). For both survivors this has become quite a lucrative business and they compete with each other over who can sell the most publications each day. Bou Meng has earned over $13,000 from selling his book at $10 a copy, an enormous improvement from his previous monthly salary of $10 earned painting Buddhist murals on pagodas.[16] He is using the money to build a new house. For Chum Mey's part, he has purchased a new tuk tuk to help him travel back and forth to his home, Tuol Sleng, and the tribunal.[17] He no longer relies on DC-Cam's press to reprint the issue of *Searching for the Truth* featuring him on the cover; he contracts directly with a publishing company to print the copies and charges $5 for the magazine (which had been distributed free of charge in Cambodia by DC-Cam). Both survivors had provoked the ire of museum administration for accosting tourists with aggressive sales pitches; they have since worked out an agreement to pay tour guides a $1

[16] Interview with Youk Chhang, January 9, 2012, Phnom Penh.
[17] Chhang told me that Mey caused a ruckus at Tuol Sleng by driving his new tuk tuk right through the museum compound's doors. When a guard told Mey not to park his tuk tuk inside the courtyard, Mey responded that he was a survivor and could do whatever he wanted, to which the guard responded that Mey survived while the guard lost nine family members. Mey moved the tuk tuk. Interview with Youk Chhang, January 9, 2012, Phnom Penh.

commission fee for each tourist who buys a publication.[18] Other stalls in the courtyard sell not only books and DVDS (many of which carry Chan Kim Srun's iconic mug shot on their covers), but also unrelated trinkets, t-shirts, and soft drinks. Clearly, the bustle of commerce trumps quiet contemplation in the Tuol Sleng courtyard,

Many scholars would bristle at this rampant commodification of suffering. Such a comparable scenario is unimaginable in the context of the Holocaust; consider the outcry if Elie Wiesel was forced to eek out his existence by selling *Night* to thano-tourists at Auschwitz. Yet my initial objection here was not with the commercialization of the mug shots or of Bou Meng and Chum Mey's stories—after all, Cambodians need the tourist dollars and authors and storytellers deserve to be paid for their labor—but with the potential for re-traumatization that I presumed would be associated with these survivors having to return day after day to the site of their own horrific torture and captivity, as well as the murder of their loved ones, just to earn a living. Here, there is a visceral imperative for *less* contextualization, the hope being that by removing these survivors from the sites of trauma, their burdens would be somehow alleviated, and with it, the collective memory of the prison would somehow rise above the contemporary economic and political reality of poverty in Cambodia. Of course, this is only wishful thinking; Tuol Sleng prison—as well as the regime that created it and the forces that have transformed it into a site of memory—are all wrapped up in the fray of power, international geopolitics, economic disparity, and materiality, as this dissertation has detailed. Here, Verne Harris's oft-quoted assertion that the archive is the very possibility of politics can be expanded; archives are the very possibility not only of politics, but of economics, culture, and society as a whole. At Tuol Sleng, as everywhere, memory is of the material world and not above it.

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[18] Interview with Youk Chhang, January 9, 2012, Phnom Penh.

Instead, the critique should be shifted, from the survivors themselves, who must support themselves within Cambodia's struggling economy, and from DC-Cam, whose publications have given them a means to do so, but towards the larger global and national climate in which hundreds of millions of dollars are spent on a tribunal[19] while previously impoverished victims are forced to hawk their wares at the site of the murders of their loved ones and their own torture. Keeping this important global economic context in mind, at the same time I see how, in the context of contemporary Cambodia, this commercialization at Tuol Sleng is a sign of revitalization. By selling their stories, Meng and Mey are actually relieving themselves of trauma rather than reliving it. Chhang echoed this interpretation. He said, "When [Bou Meng and Chum Mey] are together now, they are no longer survivors. They become authors, booksellers, and competitors. They become free from being traumatized. Like all of us [Cambodians], they compete for success. They are free people now."[20] In their new roles as memory entrepreneurs, Bou Meng and Chum Mey show that life goes on. Like Cambodia as a whole, they are using the resources at their disposal to move beyond the past in the hopes of building a prosperous future. Given the country's current economic and social climate in which everything is for sale, the Tuol Sleng survivors have forged a surprising, yet culturally appropriate response to dealing with trauma. While we should be careful against placing too much redemptive potential on capitalism, this process by which memories of trauma became marketable in a tourist economy can be seen as the ultimate defiance of the Khmer Rouge's communist ideology; in selling their stories, Bou Meng and Chum Mey become free agents on several levels.

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[19] Final figures for the cost of the ECCC are not yet known, but from 2006 until 2009 $78.4 million were spent, the budget for 2010 was $45.5 million and for 2011 was $46.8 million. Public Affairs Section of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, "An Introduction of the Khmer Rouge Trials," (Phnom Penh, undated): 21.
[20] Ibid.

And yet, this rationalization does not mask my initial shock at seeing the survivors selling their stories and posing for tourist photographs at Tuol Sleng. This was just one in a series of jarring moments during my time spent in Cambodia writing this dissertation, moments in which this research broke my heart, to use Behar's apt phrase. In these situations, we must admit our vulnerabilities as archivists, scholars, and human beings in the vein of Behar and Punzalan, and also openly reflect on our own responsibilities in shaping collective memory of the traumas our work engages. At that instant, asked to buy books from and take the photos of Bou Meng and Chum Mey in the courtyard of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, I was caught off guard, feeling simultaneously like my actions might paradoxically constitute both a crass objectification (as Susan Sontag might see it) and a deliberate act of co-witnessing between the survivors and myself. Walking within the unease of these ethical contradictions, I ultimately erred on the side of the survivors' wishes, figuring that by posing for these images, the survivors were co-creators of the subsequent photographs, and that my act of photography was a way to help the survivors record their defiant survival at the site of the initial trauma. By taking these photographs, I became actively involved in the processes described in this dissertation by creating new records that document the act of bearing witness; my snap shots document Bou Meng and Chum Mey bearing witness to their own testimonies, bringing me into the web of witnessing as a secondary witness, and transforming you, the viewers of these photographs, into tertiary witnesses. And yet I readily admit a vulnerability here as well, raising an open question about my own complicity in creating the economic and political disparity that created this situation. At Tuol Sleng, as in most contexts surrounding the shaping of collective memory, we must each decide where to place the fine line between a pointless voyeurism and a respectful remembrance and err on the side of our consciences, while continuing to interrogate our own motivations and actions within the context

of power. While answers remain elusive, it is important to ask ethical questions, even if such questions open our work up to criticism and make us vulnerable as scholars and humans.

Throughout this dissertation, we have seen how mug shots as archival records act as agents, accommodating ever new and previously unforeseen uses—from legal accountability, to identification, to commercialization—including their use in this dissertation. While the future uses of these records are unknown, we can be certain that their active social life will continue as long as we continue to try to make sense of the crimes of the Khmer Rouge. This is not history in the final instance as Trouillot would have it, but an ongoing and contested battle for meaning, which this dissertation both traces and contributes a small part.

In conclusion, I would like to return to Tuol Sleng victim Hout Bophana's story told at the beginning of this dissertation. On the website for the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center, Rithy Panh and the other founders reveals why they named the Center after her. "By choosing the name of Bophana, the Center hopes to bear witness to the message of dignity and courage exemplified by this young women during her S21 Center detention."[21] Here, Bophana, embodied by her Tuol Sleng mug shot, stands as a symbol for all of the victims of the Khmer Rouge, her mug shot a visceral and visual embodiment of all those whose lives were lost. While this equation of Bophana with all Khmer Rouge victims silences both those who were not imprisoned at Tuol Sleng and those whose Tuol Sleng photographs did not get archived (as this dissertation detailed), her mug shot continues to inspire Cambodians to tell their own varied stories and preserve and provide access to collective Cambodian narratives about the past. By focusing on one image of one person as a symbol (despite the silences encoded in this image), Cambodians

[21] Rithy Panh, et al, Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center, http://www.bophana.org/site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13&Itemid=57.

can begin to acknowledge a multiplicity of stories and struggles, and together begin the work of shaping narratives about the past. As the founders of the Bophana Center detail:

> Our objective has been to gather, image after image, snatches of life and a volley of voices. In order to try to understand, to try to give a name, a soul, a face and a voice to those whose had been deprived of them. To return to the victims of a murderous history their destiny and their memory. To recover freedom of speech by integrating reflection about the past with the construction of the present in order to escape tragedy and to begin to invent the future.[22]

The proliferation of Bophana's image, and our uses of it and others like it to identify and memorialize the dead, hold those responsible legally accountable, and bear witness to genocide, performs human rights in the present and ensures, in the words of Chum Mey, "nothing will be erased." As scholars, as archivists, as citizens of the world, it is our responsibility to respectfully activate these images in the present, acknowledge the silences encoded within them, and bring them forth from the past into the future, ensuring they will not be erased.

[22] Ibid.

Chapter Five Illustrations

Figure 5.1: Tuol Sleng Survivor Bou Meng at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, December 29, 2011. Photo by author.

Figure 5.2: Tuol Sleng Survivor Chum Mey at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, December 29, 2011. Photo by author.

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