

Documentation Center of Cambodia

Democratic Kampuchea Regime Survivors and Sites of Violence

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The Khmer Rouge Movement

- Khmer Rouge communist movement
 - 1940s- emerged as struggle against the French Colonialization
 - 1950- Formed communist-led United Issarak Front or Khmer Issarak
- Khmer People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP)
 - 1951- formed with support from Vietnamese communists
 - Lost the 1955 election to Sangkum Reastr Niyum
 - 1956 Sieu Heng defected to the Prince Sihanouk government

The Khmer Rouge Movement (Cont.)

- Workers' Party of Kampuchea
 - 1960-Secret congress was held, reorganized the party
 - Tou Samut disappeared, Pol Pot became the party's leader
 - 1965 Visit of Pol Pot to Vietnam, China and North Korea
- Communist Party of Kampuchea
 - 1966 changed the party name to CPK
 - 1966-70 headquarter in Rattanakiri

The Khmer Rouge regime, officially known as the Democratic Kampuchea (DK), ruled Cambodia from 1975 to 1979.

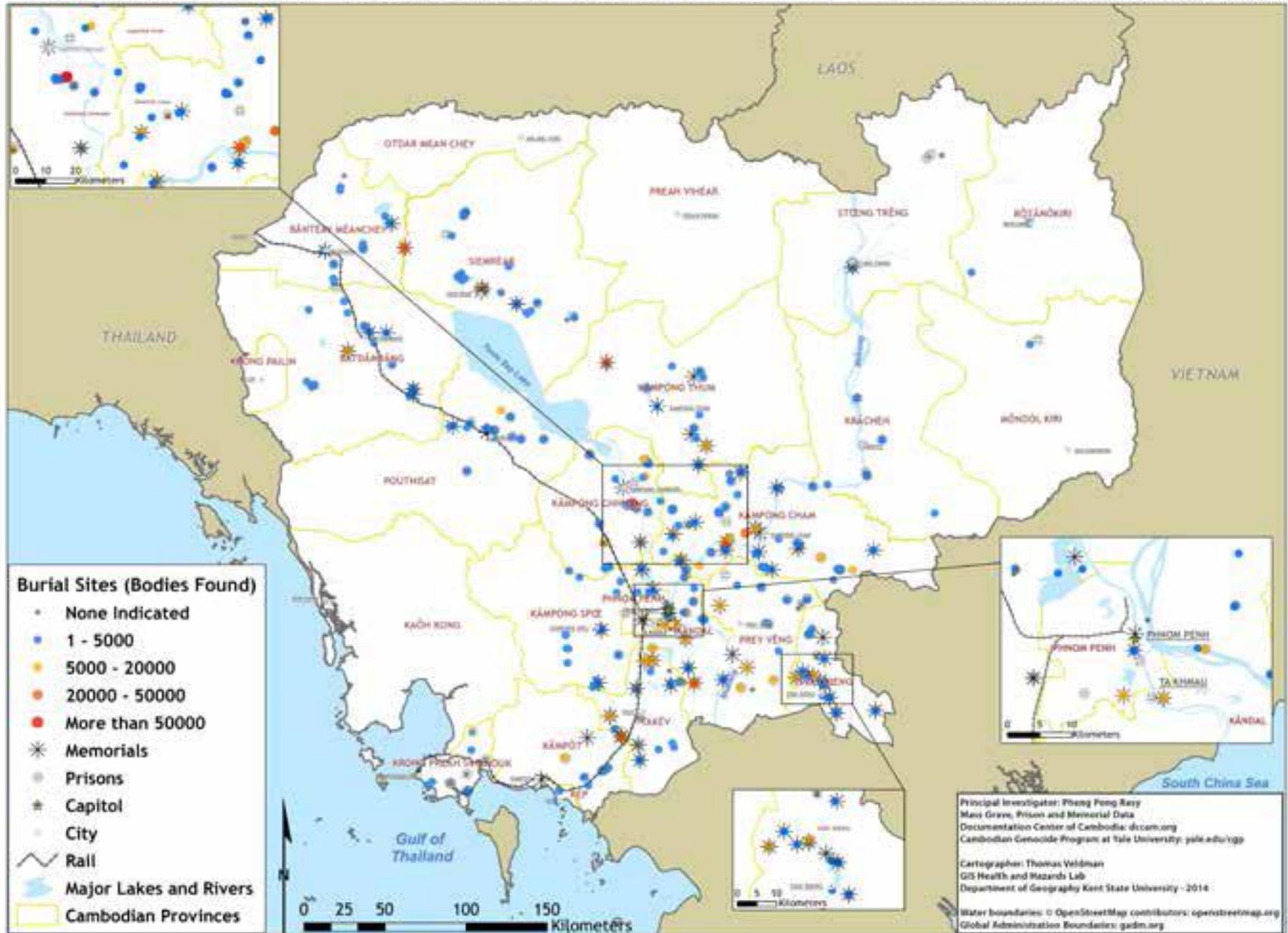


The Evacuation of Phnom Penh on April 17, 1975.



Source: Roland Neveu

PRESERVING THE LEGACY OF THE KILLING FIELDS: MAPPING KHMER ROUGE ERA ATROCITIES: BURIAL SITES, PRISONS AND MEMORIALS



Collective cooperatives and massive agricultural and irrigation projects were established throughout the country





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Democratic Kampuchea in 1976
 Source: DK Ministry of Education, 1976.

Administrative Divisions & Security System

- 6 Zones
 - 32 Regions
 - District
 - Sub-district
 - Cooperatives
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- Security system is divided in five levels with S-21 as the top level security center, followed by zonal, regional, district, and sub-district prisons.

Former Khmer Rouge security centers



Physical evidence of violence in the landscapes remains





After the Democratic Kampuchea

- Introduce to an unmarked site of mass violence and its relationship to survivors
- Consider how contemporary lives of survivors are informed by memories of the genocide

- Until today, many survivors still live and work in the same villages where they experienced starvation, forced labors, and torture during the DK.
- Few sites of mass violence have been marked and memorialized, while the majority of sites have been re-integrated into everyday landscapes.



Tuol Sleng Genocide
Museum



Choeung Ek Memorial Site





- Chamkar Siv: District level Khmer Rouge security center
- The center was converted from a villager's house



Approximately 7000 to 10000 bodies were found in the mass graves

Local memorial





Khmer Rouge commune hospital



● Khmer Rouge commune office ●

Memory construction

- Variance in memory construction- Depending on time and places
- Narratives of each violent sites are varied depending on their status during the Khmer Rouge regime.
- Experiences of new and base people differ and are not conformed to the extreme living conditions
- Personal narratives are complementary to the national narratives

Contemporary lives of survivors...

- Buddhist rituals became important in the commemoration of the victims (i.e. Pchum Ben, Khmer New Year...)
- However, some local memorials were neglected overtime due to economic and political factors
- Relationships of the living and the dead plays an important role in memorializing victims
- Family and individual practices of memorialization including religious rituals

Thank you!