

**WHAT'S LOVE
GOT TO DO
WITH IT?
FORCED
MARRIAGES
DURING THE
KHMER ROUGE
REGIME**

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LIKE GHOST CHANGES BODY

Study on the Impact



LIKE GHOST CHANGES BODY

Interviews on the Impact of Forced Marriage during the Khmer Rouge Regime

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As told to and translated by Thida KIM



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TRANSCULTURAL PSYCHOSOCIAL ORGANISATION

LIKE GHOST CHANGES BODY

Transcultural
Psychosocial
Organization
Cambodia



“Women were never more safe from rape than when under the rule of Democratic Kampuchea.”

Michael Vickery



CAH/OIA OF FORCED MARRIAGE

Mass commitment ceremonies (often strangers)

Without consent (without notice)

Without traditional rituals/family approval

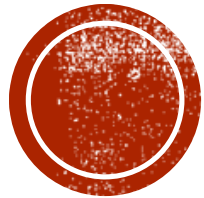
Vow to *Angkar* to remain loyal/have children

Forced consummation (with spies)

Pregnancy (in midst of mass atrocity)

Refusal could lead to punishment, rape or death





**IT WAS AN AFFRONT TO HUMAN DIGNITY.
WE WERE BRED LIKE CATS AND DOGS.**

Female forced marriage survivor.

METHOD / THEORY

Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, "Self care is a political act"
Anna Tsing, "The arts of noticing" as poetics of polyphony
Roxani Krystalli, Philipp Schulz, "Taking love & care Seriously"

What's love got to do with it?



GENDER / POWER

What's love got to do with it?



Wife: The wedding is valuable to women because everyone acknowledges a married woman as a good daughter who is obedient. . . The wedding is vital for every Cambodian woman. It's like ghost changes body.

What's love got to do with it? Case Study 3



There were 13 couples. Each cadre took turns giving a speech, and then they ordered us to repeat what they said, to promise to each other to produce children for *Angkar*.

What's love got to do with it? Case Study 5, woman



**Love or no love, we wanted to prevent being killed.
So, we lived in harmony as other couples do.**

What's love got to do with it? Case Study 4, woman



They provided us with a room in the rice hall. They built the room for us. It was made from wood and close to other rooms. . . My husband asked me, 'You have committed to me, so do you love me or not?' I said, 'Even if I don't love you and am upset with this marriage, I can't do anything about it.' He responded, 'It's *Angkar's* order, so we should follow it.'

We discussed together that night and agreed between us to sleep together because the cadres had threatened us, saying that if we didn't get along that night, they would take us to be killed.

What's love got to do with it? Case Study 8, Cham woman



At night, we only slept side-by-side for the first months, only sleeping next to each other. We both agreed to do this. Later, a cadre warned me, 'I know comrade that you do not love your wife.' . . . After the warning, we prepared a speech in case we were asked again . . . We should respond that we were sleeping together. Actually, we were not. That plan was my idea. [I was warned again to be careful because I was not having sex with my wife. So, I begged my wife quite frankly to sleep together because if we did not, we would be killed.

I did not want to have sex with her or even keep her as my wife as I did not love her at all.

What's love got to do with it? Case Study 1, man



Chhlob always inspected my husband and me every night. If I did not agree to have sex with my husband, I would be sent to be 're-educated,' thus I never refused my husband and just let him do what he wanted.

What's love got to do with it? Case Study 6, woman



Husband: We stayed together in the same house, but we slept in different mosquito nets. We did not talk. We were afraid of each other.

Wife: First, I was afraid that the cadres would know we did not sleep together. Second, I was scared that my husband would force me to have sex.

What's love got to do with it? Case Study 3, married couple



Wife: When I met him, he said, 'My mother asked me to come get you . . .' It occurred to me that I had no means of transportation and no way to escape if the Khmer Rouge returned. So, my husband put my stuff and my mother into the oxcart, and we went to live with my husband's family. Really, I went with him because I did not have a choice: my mother was sick, and my husband had an oxcart.

Husband: Later, when we were escaping into the forest, we experienced difficulties and we helped each other a lot. We started to feel good toward one another after that.

Wife: I became pregnant in 1979. We have seven children.

What's love got to do with it? Case Study 3, married couple



Wife: They were too young before, that is why we only told them recently. I think they are old enough now to understand our situation during the Khmer Rouge regime.

What's love got to do with it? Case Study 3, married couple





ផ្កាស្លាក្រោមអង្គការ

ការសម្តែងរាំ និង តាំងពិព័រណ៍
ស្តីពីការរៀបការដោយបង្ខំក្នុងរបបខ្មែរក្រហម

ទីតាំង៖ សាកលវិទ្យាល័យបាត់ដំបង
តាំងពិព័រណ៍៖ ថ្ងៃទី ៤-៦ ខែឧសភា ម៉ោង ៩ - ១២ ព្រឹក និង ៣ - ៦ រសៀល
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កិច្ចពិភាក្សាលើប្រធានបទ “ការបង្ខំឲ្យរៀបការក្នុងរបបខ្មែរក្រហម”
និងសំណួរ-ចម្លើយ៖ ម៉ោង ៦ ល្ងាច
ចូលទស្សនាមិនគិតថ្លៃ

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ខ្មែរក្រហម ក្នុងសំណុំរឿង ០០២/២

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Pka Sla Krom Angkar

