

Reading notes on “After the Cataclysm” - Cambodia

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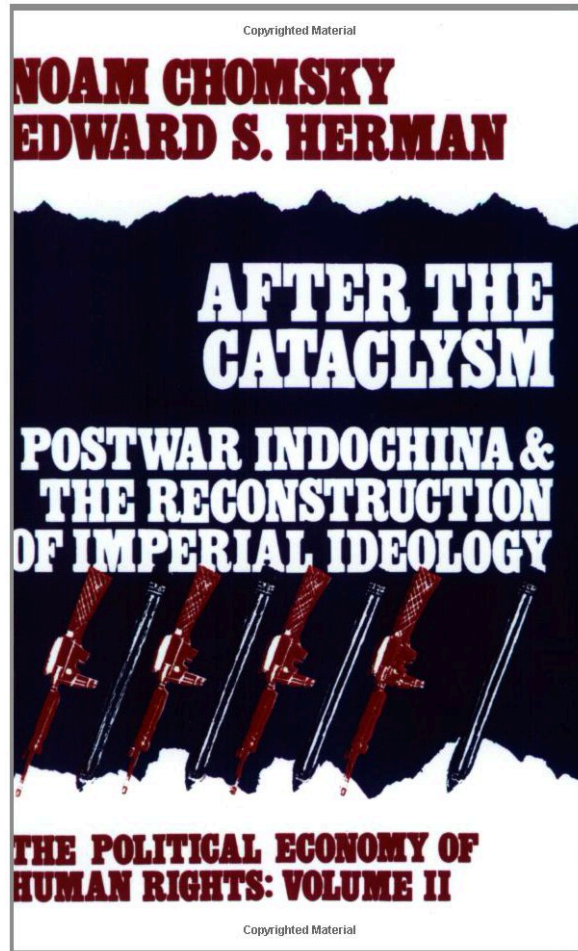
[For study by the comrades of the
Democratic Kampuchea discord server]



Source text:

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* = IMPORTANT



Page 135: *“One might imagine that in the United States, which bears a major responsibility for what Francois Ponchaud calls “the calvary of a people,”² reporting and discussion would be tinged with guilt and regret. That has rarely been the case, however. The U.S. role and responsibility have been quickly forgotten or even explicitly denied as the mills of the propaganda machine grind away.”*

Page 136: *“The record of atrocities in Cambodia is substantial and often gruesome, but it has by no means satisfied the requirements of Western propagandists, who must labor to shift the blame for the torment of Indochina to the victims of France and the United States. Consequently, there has been extensive fabrication of evidence, a tide that is not stemmed even by repeated exposure. Furthermore, more tempered and cautious assessments are given little notice, as is evidence that runs contrary to the chorus of denunciation that has dominated the Western media. The coverage of real and fabricated atrocities in Cambodia also stands in dramatic contrast to the silence with regard to atrocities comparable in scale within U.S. domains — Timor, for example.*

This coverage has conferred on that land of much suffering the distinction of being perhaps the most extensively reported Third World country in U.S. journalism. At the same time, propagandists in the press and elsewhere, recognizing a good thing when they see it, like to pretend that their lone and courageous voice of protest can barely be heard, or alternatively, that controversy is raging about events in postwar Cambodia.”

Page 137: [Note: Solarz Hearing + fake Khieu Samphan quote. Calls for military intervention in Kampuchea (post 1975)]

Page 139: [Note: George McGovern calls for military intervention in Cambodia; McGovern's source - Lon Nol (!) + hypocrisy on Cambodian killed vs US and East Timor deaths]

Page 141: [Note: Lack of validity of refugee reports as source for proof of “genocide”]

Page 142: [Note: The dubious nature of Khmer refugee testimonies as evidence for “genocide; their control under the supervision of Thai anti-communist authorities; the tendency of refugees to exaggerate]

Page 144: [Note: Lies of Khmer refugee Pin Yathai, possible CIA agent, reports of “cannibalism”]

Page 145: [Note: State Department documents indicate killings were not coordinated or genocidal]

Page 146: [Note: 1.) The differences in the accounts of refugees 2.) Media ignores refugee accounts which contradict mainstream atrocity narrative 3.) Refugees deny atrocities and genocide 4.) Michael Vickery Khmer refugees in Thai camps given “official line” to tell journalists]

Page 147: [Thai government block US Khmer speaker from interviewing refugees]

Page 148: [Again on (un reported) refugee accounts disproving official narrative (ie, state directed atrocities and “genocide” + virtual signaling against those who question credibility of refugee accounts]

* Page 149: [Note: Lacouture “what does a factor of 100 matter?”]

* Page 150: [Note: Why a factor of 1000 matters]

Page 151: [Note: MCGovern invents 2 million figure, attributes all deaths to Khmer Rouge, and calls for intervention] *“Plainly, we may divide the evidence available into two categories: (1) evidence subject to some independent verification; (2) evidence that must be taken on faith. A person who is at all serious will concentrate on category (1) in trying to determine how much trust to place in unverifiable reports of category (2). If it turns out that some source is quite untrustworthy when claims can be checked, then naturally one will view with corresponding skepticism reports from this source that are subject to no such check. But in the sources that raise the charge of genocide, the overwhelming bulk of the evidence is of category (2).”*

Page 153: [Note: Peter A PODE acknowledges rationale for Khmer Rouge evacuation and reasons behind instances of killings (not state directed) + Khmer Rouge chain of command]

Page 154: [Note: Chandler at “May Hearing”; “America is to blame” for Khmer Rouge]

Page 155: [Note: Some answers to Twinings “difficult question”: The Khmer Rouge came to power as a result of support of poor peasants whom they sympathized with as a consequence of the US bombing]

Page 157: [Note: The willingness of the people to fight for the Khmer Rouge as a fact that contradicts official atrocity narrative]

Page 158: [Note: William F Buckley’s orientalist explanation of the Khmer Rouge’s nationalism]

* Page 160: [Note: Refuting the numbers and “state directed killings / “genocide” lie”: Most deaths from starvation caused by US bombing + city evacuation saved lives]

* Page 161: [Note: Conditions in the capital Phnom Penh before liberation; mass starvation and famine]

* Page 162: [Note: The US were the real genocidal mass murderers in Cambodia! The true number of dead (mostly from starvation caused by US bombing - not state directed killings). Media silence on the country that bears greatest responsibility for deaths in Cambodia - the US!]

* Page 163: [Note: Fake Khieu Samphan quote and “boast of atrocities”]

* Page 164: [Note: US crimes / responsibility absent from discussion on Cambodia]

Page 165: [Note: Time magazine's one sided commentary on the responsibility for deaths in Cambodia + Dudman: Khmer Rouge rationale explained by US bombing campaign]

Page 166: [Note: Staged atrocity photos + western governments doubt genocide allegations]

* Page 167: [Note: US state department admits "inadequate" information in Khmer Rouge conclusion (Northwest Kampuchea) + City evacuation "averted mass starvation"]

Page 168: [Note: Western visitors to Democratic Kampuchea confirm adequate amount of food + rural development and dam construction in Democratic Kampuchea prevented famine and flood during natural disaster]

Page 169: [Note: Again on factor of 100 + hypocrisy on Khmer "xenophobia" + more on staged photos from Thailand]

* Page 171: [Note: Lying imperialist media publishes staged photos as "real" despite knowing them to be fake]

Page 172: [Note: Putting the staged photos into perspective + livestock deaths from US bombing]

Page 175: [Note: Fake Khieu Samphan interview as source for Barron-Paul's 2 million figure]

* Page 177: [Note: Imperialist media's reaction to real admission of killings by Malik (Indonesia) vs fake Khieu Samphan interview + media's reaction to US back crimes vs crimes of official enemies]

Page 179: [Note: Ponchaud's lie of Khmer Rouge "boast" of "1-2 million killed"]

* Page 181-182: [Note: The farce of Ponchaud's claim of a "boast" of "1-2 million killed" and it's insane paper trail]

* Page 185: [Note: The "quote" of a "boast of 2 million killed" - **the big lie**]
"This "boast" is Wise's version of Ponchaud's version of a variously-attributed remark that has dissolved upon inquiry. Note again that it is a central element of his review of both Barron-Paul and Ponchaud, and that he also cited it in a separate article. It

apparently never occurred to him to wonder why the "quote" he repeats is given and attributed differently in these two sources, or to inquire further into its authenticity on these grounds. In such ways as these the Western system of indoctrination spins its web of deceit. 147 Recall Lacouture's question whether it is important to decide "exactly which person uttered an inhuman phrase." The example just mentioned was one of the cases under consideration—in other cases to which we return the distortion was still more flagrant. It is also one of the examples that Lacouture did not rectify in his "Corrections," and that he continues to use long after Ponchaud had recognized that it had no basis. 148 Lacouture used the "quote" to show that men who talk of Marxism are going "beyond barbarism." In fact, it turns out that there was no quote but only a remembered "boast" of dubious import, variously presented by Ponchaud and sufficiently questionable to have been eliminated from the American (though not British) edition of his book after inquiry, and suspiciously similar to a remembered slogan of quite different import attributed to many refugees by the State Department's leading expert. The example is perhaps not particularly important in itself, but gains significance in the light of the publicity accorded it and the fact that it is one of the rare cases of a "quote" for which independent verification is even possible. It is also worth mentioning that these "quotes," which have a curious habit of disappearing on analysis, form the most substantial part of the evidence behind one crucial element in the thesis to which the propaganda machine is committed: that the Khmer Rouge leadership was committed to systematic massacre and starvation of the population it held in its grip, that is, to "autogenocide." It would be of little use to contemporary Western ideology if it were to be shown that peasant revenge, undisciplined troops and similar factors (still worse, the legacy of the U.S. attack) were responsible for deaths and killings in Cambodia. It is crucial to establish in the public consciousness, whatever the facts may be, that a centralized and carefully-planned program lay behind the atrocities."

Page 186: [Note: Western governments deny genocide accusations + Reports by foreign visitors; the importance of these reports in the light of the Vietnamese invasion and the refusal of the press to circulate any of this information]

Page 187: [Note: Swedish ambassador (Kaj Bjrok) visit to Kampuchea ("no sign of starvation") + continued US bombing of Kampuchea after liberation + evacuation stopped starvation]

* Page 189: [Note: Positive reports of Kampuchea by Swedish delegation; "blood bath" relies on assumptions that have been misunderstood]

Page 190: [Note: Swedish visitors to Kampuchea deny genocide narrative saying “no killing, atrocities, or forced labor”. Further reports by Japanese and Thai visitors contradict imperialist narrative about Kampuchea.]

Page 192-193: [Note: Yugoslav report: On life and development in Democratic Kampuchea]

Page 194: [Note Buddhism and freedom of religion in Kampuchea. Western press lies about Yugoslav report. Industrial workers of Kampuchea. Hypocrisy by western press on youth vocational schools.]

Page 196: [Note: Rigaux (French delegation) visit to Kampuchea: Reports “normal urban existence” [in] “densely settled capital” + division of work, freedoms and egalitarianism]

* Page 197-198: [Note: The difficult work, formerly relegated exclusively to the poor peasants, was being taken up by everyone for the betterment of the country and all its people]

Page 199: [Note: More positive impressions of Kampuchea by Japanese and Scandinavian visitors]

Page 200: [Note: Western (US) press bias attitude towards reports by ML visitors to Kampuchea + reports by visitors “distorted or ignored” while dubious, often inconsistent, refugee accounts used by media to paint imperialist narrative]

Page 201: [Note: On Henry Kramm (NYT) dishonest coverage of Kampuchea and of reports by visitors: Kramm claims refugee reports are the only “reliable” source”]

Page 202: [Note: More on Henry Kramm’s lies about Kampuchea; “problems familiar to propagandists” like himself. Kramm ignores the history of starvation in Kampuchea and the responsibility of the US for the conditions the country was left in after liberation.]

Page 203: [Note: On the inherent dubiousness of the Cambodian refugee accounts and the hysterical headline news stories of which they are based upon to desperately push the bogus “genocide” narrative]

* Page 204: [Note: Evidenceless stories in Western press contradicted by reports of foreign visitors to DK]

(Important point underscoring the hypocritical double standards of western press coverage of Kampuchea:) *“Note again that visitors have reported that the population seems well fed, while at least some refugees and the leading U.S. government specialists have denied that Khmer Rouge cadres receive privileged treatment. 184 But let us suppose that Park and Kamm are correct. If so, then Cambodia is similar in this respect to the other countries on their regular beat, where a minority lives in fabulous luxury while the peasants and urban slum dwellers subsist in misery. This fact, however, elicits no outrage beyond Indochina (the one region where there is reason to believe it is untrue).*

* Page 204 - 205: [Note: Shawcross’ distorts the report by the Yugoslavs from their visit to Kampuchea, and ignores both the history of starvation of Kampuchea and the role of the United States + Shawcross asserts - WITH NO SOURCE (!) - ridiculous inflated death toll (2 million), which shockingly goes unquestioned by anyone with a stronger commitment to the truth than Shawcross; for Shawcross, just like Lacouture, a factor of 1000 doesn't matter.]

(Another important point underscoring the hypocritical double standards of western press coverage of Kampuchea:) *“He also fails to explain why he is so offended by a 9 hour work day in an impoverished peasant country. If indeed the cooperatives have managed to reduce working hours to a 9 hour day with occasional extra shifts, that would seem to be a considerable accomplishment. Such a work schedule was not at all unusual, for example, in Israeli kibbutzim a few years ago, to take an example from a far richer country receiving enormous aid from abroad, where such efforts were not denounced as evidence of the extraordinary harshness of the regime. For some Western journalists, a 9 hour workday may seem a major atrocity. Peasants, or for that matter farmers and workers in advanced countries, might have a rather different view. Shawcross also states that “an estimated two million people, nearly one quarter of the population, have been killed in war and in internal purges.” Since less than a million were reportedly killed in the war, Shawcross is asserting that over a million have been killed “in internal purges” since, a figure about ten times as high as the estimates by Barron-Paul or Ponchaud. He cites no source for this “estimate”. But this is again typical of the numbers game in the case of Cambodia.”*

Page 205: [Note: Shawcross covers his eyes to the historical context of Cambodia; covering his eyes to the role and responsibility of the US / Lon Nol crimes]

* Page 205 - 206: [Note: Important point on the efforts of Shawcross and other imperial ideologues to “excise from history other major factors” in relation to Kampuchea (ie, the responsibility of US / Lon Nol’s crimes, which Shawcross neglects)]

"He has ample staff and resources, and surely knows that it was not simply "the collapse of U.S. power in Southeast Asia" that is responsible for starvation, disease, destruction, and revenge in Cambodia. But it is appropriate, in the current phase of imperial ideology, to excise from history other major factors with which he is quite familiar (as well as others that he may know nothing of, such as the realities of peasant existence), and to speak of Cambodia as a "serene little country" of "gentle people"'"

* Page 208 - 209: [Note: Richard Dudmans' report of Kampuchea visit: Positive impression, housing programs, elimination of starvation, rice exports, industrial growth plan, general improvement of life. Dudmans' report contradicts lies of forced labor and "13 hour work day".]

Page 210: [Note: Elizabeth Becker's visit to Kampuchea: Her "philosophical bias" + Evidence of Vietnam conspiring to invade (2-300 000 Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea)]

Page 211: [Note: On Malcolm Caldwell's death]

"In these conversations, "Caldwell remained sympathetic to the Cambodian revolution, without blinding himself to its faults," likening it to early stages of the industrial revolution in England. It "seems out of the question," Dudman writes, that the Cambodian government, which "had everything to lose from the incident," could have had anything to do with the assassination, contrary to speculations that have been rife. Dudman's conclusion seems well-founded. The true story will probably never be known ..."

Page 212: [Note: The diversity of experience of life under Khmer Rouge rule as told by refugee accounts; Peang Sophi's positive account (at odds with the mainstream narrative) goes unreported + discusses Khmer Rouge's goals]

Page 213: [Note: Again on the one sided media coverage of the refugee stories (almost exclusively from those disaffected - from the Northwest of the country) + important point on the French in Cambodia + rationale / reasoning behind peasant violence (revenge) and Kampuchea's desire for self-reliance (autarky)]

"Chandler makes some important and generally forgotten his- torical observations. Peasants, he writes, "have been 'outside history' for many years": we know very little, in a quantitative or political terms, about the mass of Cambodian society, many of whom, for most of their history, appear to have been slaves of one sort or another. The frequency of locally-led rebellions in the nineteenth century—against the

Thai, the Vietnamese, the French and local officials—suggests that Cambodian peasants were not as peaceable as their own mythology, reinforced by the French, would lead us to believe.”

Page 21: [Note:]