

**Cambodia, from then to now:
memory and plural identities in the aftermath of genocide
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Psychological Legacies of Genocide: The Ongoing Crisis of Cambodian Trauma and Social Health

Abstract: As the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) continues its juridical work trying former Khmer Rouge leaders, the social health of Cambodian society remains a key issue. For first-generation survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime, posttraumatic stress disorders, anxiety, and chronic depression are pervasive. And, as this presentation will illustrate, such mental health problems take on an intergenerational manifestation, as the children of survivors are faced with the legacy of a genocidal past. From fatalistic thinking to social isolation, from expressions of hopelessness to questions about identity, the psychological problems facing this generation makes visible the ongoing need to assess mental health within and outside the confines of the tribunal. Further, such pathologies are not limited to those living in Cambodia; such issues are present within the diaspora, which is inclusive of survivors and their children. By examining culturally specific idioms of distress, I first identify particular symptoms of a larger intergenerational mental health problem (or stressors). I then move to a discussion of how such stressors carry the potential to diagnose and treat intergenerational trauma vis-à-vis a medical sociological approach, which links individual trauma to a more systemic understanding of social health, which is linked to reconciling the genocidal past. I conclude with a consideration of how current tribunal efforts – which necessarily focus on those who were first-witnesses to the regime – address and simultaneously fail to address the specific psychological issues facing multiple generations in Cambodia and in the diaspora.