

= Toa Payoh ritual murders =

The Toa Payoh ritual murders took place in Singapore in 1981 . On 25 January , the body of a nine @-@ year @-@ old girl was found dumped next to the lift of a block of flats in the town of Toa Payoh , and two weeks later , a ten @-@ year @-@ old boy was found dead nearby . The children had been killed , purportedly as blood sacrifices to the Hindu goddess Kali . The murders were masterminded by Adrian Lim , a self @-@ styled medium , who had tricked scores of women into believing he had supernatural powers . His victims offered money and sexual services in exchange for cures , beauty , and good fortune . Two of the women became his loyal assistants ; Tan Mui Choo married him , and Hoe Kah Hong became one of his " holy wives " . When the police investigated a rape charge filed by one of Lim 's targets , he became furious and decided to kill children to derail the investigations . On each occasion , Hoe lured a child to Lim 's flat where he or she was drugged and killed by the trio . Lim also sexually assaulted the girl before her death . The trio were arrested after the police found a trail of blood that led to their flat . Although the case name suggested ritualistic murders , the defendants said they did not conduct prayers , burning of joss sticks , ringing of bells , or any other rituals during the killings .

The 41 @-@ day trial was the second longest to have been held in the courts of Singapore at the time . None of the defendants denied their guilt . Their appointed counsels tried to spare their clients the death sentence by pleading diminished responsibility , arguing that the accused were mentally ill and could not be held entirely responsible for the killings . To support their case they brought in doctors and psychologists , who analysed the defendants and concluded that they had exhibited schizophrenia , and depressions of the psychotic and manic order . The prosecution 's expert , however , refuted these testimonies and argued that they were in full control of their mental faculties when they planned and carried out the murders . The judges agreed with the prosecution 's case and sentenced the trio to death . While on death row , the women appealed to the Privy Council in London and pleaded for clemency from the President of Singapore to no avail . Lim did not seek any pardons ; instead , he accepted his fate and went smiling to the gallows . The three were hanged on 25 November 1988 .

The Toa Payoh ritual murders shocked the public in Singapore , who were surprised by such an act taking place in their society . Reports of the trio 's deeds and the court proceedings were closely followed and remained prominent in the Singaporean consciousness for several years . Twice , movie companies tried to capitalise on the sensation generated by the murders by producing motion pictures based on the killings ; however , critics panned both films for indulging in gratuitous sex and violence , and the movies performed poorly at the box office . The actions and behaviour of the three killers were studied by academics in the criminal psychology field , and the rulings set by the courts became local case studies for diminished responsibility .

= = Singaporean society in the 1980s = =

Early in the nineteenth century , immigrants flooded into Peninsular Malaysia , colonising the Straits Settlements including the island city of Singapore . Migrants and natives held differing beliefs , but over time the boundaries between those belief systems blurred . Most of the population believed in spirits that inhabit the jungles , and in gods and devils that hover around , capable of benevolence and mischief . Certain people claimed that they could communicate with these supernatural beings . Through rituals in which they danced and chanted , these spirit mediums ? tang @-@ kees and bomohs ? invited the beings to possess their bodies and dole out wisdoms , blessings , and curses to their believers . As time passed and the cities grew , the jungles gave way to concrete structures and the mediums ' practices moved deeper into the heartland of communities .

By 1980 , 75 % of the residents in Singapore were living in public housing . Government @-@ built high @-@ rise blocks of flats clustered in the population centres , of which Toa Payoh was typical . Although a high density of people lived in each block , the residents mostly kept to themselves , valuing their privacy and tending to ignore what was happening around their homes . During this time , Singapore was a relatively peaceful society ? a stark contrast to the prevalence of secret

societies , triads and gang warfare during the pre @-@ independence days . The low crime rate , brought on by strict laws and tough enforcement , gave citizens a sense of security . Nonetheless , the government warned against complacency and lectured in its local campaigns , " Low crime doesn 't mean no crime " . In 1981 , three Singaporeans committed a crime that shocked the nation .

= = Two murders , three arrests = =

For several years , a medium in Block 12 , Toa Payoh Lorong 7 , had been performing noisy rituals in the middle of the night . The residents complained several times to the authorities , but the rituals would always resume after a short time . On the afternoon of 24 January 1981 , nine @-@ year @-@ old Agnes Ng Siew Heok ( simplified Chinese : ??? ; traditional Chinese : ??? ; pinyin : Huáng Xiuyè ) disappeared after attending religious classes at her church in Toa Payoh . Hours later , her naked body was found stuffed in a bag outside a lift in Block 11 , less than a kilometre ( five @-@ eighths of a mile ) from the church . The girl had been smothered to death ; the investigation revealed injuries to her genitals and semen in her rectum . Although the police launched an intensive investigation , questioning more than 250 people around the crime scene , they failed to obtain any leads . On 7 February ten @-@ year @-@ old Ghazali bin Marzuki was found dead under a tree between Blocks 10 and 11 , naked . He had been missing since the previous day , after being seen boarding a taxi with an unknown woman . Forensic pathologists on the scene deemed the cause of death as drowning , and found on the boy suffocation marks similar to those on Ng . There were no signs of sexual assault , but burns were on the boy 's back and a puncture on his arm . Traces of a sedative were later detected in his blood .

The police found a scattered trail of blood that led to the seventh floor of Block 12 . Stepping into the common corridor from the stairwell , Inspector Pereira noticed an eclectic mix of religious symbols ( a cross , a mirror , and a knife @-@ blade ) on the entrance of the first flat ( unit number 467F ) . The owner of the flat , Adrian Lim , approached the inspector and introduced himself , informing Pereira that he was living there with his wife , Tan Mui Choo , and a girlfriend , Hoe Kah Hong . Permitted by Lim to search his flat , the police found traces of blood . Lim initially tried to pass the stains off as candle wax , but when challenged claimed they were chicken blood . After the police found slips of paper written with the dead children 's personal details , Lim tried to allay suspicions by claiming that Ghazali had come to his flat seeking treatment for a bleeding nose . He discreetly removed hair from under a carpet and tried to flush it down the toilet , but the police stopped him ; forensics later determined the hair to be Ng 's . Requesting a background check on Lim , Pereira received word from local officers that the medium was currently involved in a rape investigation . Lim overheard them and became agitated , raising his voice at the law enforcers . His ire was mimicked by Hoe as she gestured violently and shouted at the officers . Their actions further raised the investigators ' suspicions that the trio were deeply involved in the murders . The police collected the evidence , sealed the flat as a crime scene , and took Lim and the two women in for questioning .

= = Perpetrators = =

= = = Adrian Lim = = =

Born on 6 January 1942 , Adrian Lim ( simplified Chinese : ??? ; traditional Chinese : ??? ; pinyin : Lín B?ólóng ) was the eldest son of a middle @-@ class family . Described at the trial by his sister as a hot @-@ tempered boy , he dropped out of secondary school and worked a short stint as an informant for the Internal Security Department , joining the cable radio company Rediffusion Singapore in 1962 . For three years , he installed and serviced Rediffusion sets as an electrician before being promoted to bill collector . In April 1967 , Lim married his childhood sweetheart with whom he had two children . He converted to Catholicism for his marriage . Lim and his family lived in

rented rooms until his 1970 purchase of a three @-@ room flat ? a seventh floor unit ( unit number 467F ) of Block 12 , Toa Payoh .

Lim started part @-@ time practice as a spirit medium in 1973 . He rented a room where he attended to the women ? most of whom were bargirls , dance hostesses , and prostitutes ? introduced to him by his landlord . Lim 's customers also included superstitious men and elderly females , whom he cheated only of cash . He had learned the trade from a bomoh called " Uncle Willie " and prayed to gods of various religions despite his Catholic baptism . The Hindu goddess Kali and " Phragann " , which Lim described as a Siamese sex god , were among the spiritual entities he called on in his rituals . Lim deceived his clients with several confidence tricks ; his most effective gimmick , known as the " needles and egg " trick , duped many to believe that he had supernatural abilities . After blackening needles with soot from a burning candle , Lim carefully inserted them into a raw egg and sealed the hole with powder . In his rituals , he passed the egg several times over his client while chanting and asked her to crack open the egg . Unaware that the egg had been tampered with , the client would be convinced by the sight of the black needles that evil spirits were harassing her .

Lim particularly preyed on gullible girls who had deep personal problems . He promised them that he could solve their woes and increase their beauty through a ritual massage . After Lim and his client had stripped , he would knead her body ? including her genitals ? with Phragann 's idol and have sex with her . Lim 's treatments also included an electro @-@ shock therapy based on that used on mental patients . After placing his client 's feet in a tub of water and attaching wires to her temples , Lim passed electricity through her . The shocks , he assured her , would cure headaches and drive away evil spirits .

= = = Tan Mui Choo = = =

Catherine Tan Mui Choo ( simplified Chinese : 陈美珠 ; traditional Chinese : 陳美珠 ; pinyin : Chén Méizhū ) was referred to Lim by a fellow bargirl , who claimed the spirit medium could cure ailments and depression . Tan , at that time , was grieving the death of her grandmother to whom she had been devoted . Furthermore , her estrangement from her parents weighed on her mind ; having been sent away at the age of 13 to a vocational centre ( a home mostly for juvenile delinquents ) , she felt unwanted by them . Tan 's visits to Lim became regular , and their relationship grew intimate . In 1975 she moved into his flat on his insistence . To allay his wife 's suspicions that he was having an affair with Tan , Lim swore an oath of denial before a picture of Jesus Christ . However , she discovered the truth and moved out with their children a few days later , divorcing Lim in 1976 . Lim quit his Rediffusion job and became a full @-@ time medium . He enjoyed brisk business , at one point receiving S \$ 6 @,@ 000 ? 7 @,@ 000 ( US \$ 2 @,@ 838 ? 3 @,@ 311 ) a month from a single client . In June 1977 , Lim and Tan registered their marriage .

Lim dominated Tan through beatings , threats , and lies . He persuaded her to prostitute herself to supplement their income . He also convinced her that he needed to fornicate with young women to stay healthy ; thus , Tan assisted him in his business , preparing their clients for his pleasure . Lim 's influence over Tan was strong ; on his encouragement and promise that sex with a younger man would preserve her youth , Tan copulated with a Malay teenager and even with her younger brother . The boy was not her only sibling to be influenced by Lim ; the medium had earlier seduced Tan 's younger sister and tricked her into selling her body and having sex with the two youths . Despite the abuses , Tan lived with Lim , enjoying the dresses , beauty products and slimming courses bought with their income .

= = = Hoe Kah Hong = = =

Born on 10 September 1955 , Hoe Kah Hong ( simplified Chinese : 何嘉宏 ; traditional Chinese : 何嘉宏 ; pinyin : Hé Jiāhóng ) was eight years old when her father died ; she was sent to live with her grandmother until she was fifteen . When she returned to her mother and siblings she was constantly required to give way to her elder sister Lai Ho . Under the perception that her mother

favoured her sister , Hoe became disgruntled , showing her temper easily . In 1979 her mother brought Lai to Lim for treatment , and became convinced of Lim 's powers by his " needles and egg " trick . Believing that Hoe 's volatile temper could also be cured by Lim , the old woman brought her younger daughter to the medium . After witnessing the same trick , Hoe became Lim 's loyal follower . Lim desired to make Hoe one of his " holy wives " , even though she was already married to Benson Loh Ngak Hua . To achieve his goal , Lim sought to isolate Hoe from her family by feeding her lies . He claimed that her family were immoral people who practiced infidelity , and that Loh was an unfaithful man who would force her into prostitution . Hoe believed Lim 's words , and after going through a rite with him she was declared by the medium as his " holy wife " . She no longer trusted her husband and family , and became violent towards her mother . Three months after she had first met Lim , Hoe moved from her house and went to live with him .

Loh sought his wife at Lim 's flat and ended up staying to observe her treatment . He was persuaded by her to participate in the electro @-@ shock therapies . In the early hours of 7 January 1980 , Loh sat with Hoe , their arms locked together and their feet in separate tubs of water . Lim applied a large voltage to Loh , who was electrocuted , while Hoe was stunned into unconsciousness . When she woke , Lim requested her to lie to the police about Loh 's death . Hoe repeated the story Lim had given her , saying that her husband had been electrocuted in their bedroom when he tried to switch on a faulty electric fan in the dark . The coroner recorded an open verdict , and the police made no further investigations .

Despite her antipathy towards Loh , Hoe was affected by his death . Her sanity broke ; she started hearing voices and hallucinating , seeing her dead husband . At the end of May she was admitted to the Woodbridge Hospital . There , psychologists diagnosed her condition as schizophrenia and started appropriate treatments . Hoe made a remarkably quick recovery ; by the first week of July , she was discharged . She continued her treatment with the hospital ; follow @-@ up checks showed that she was in a state of remission . Hoe 's attitude towards her mother and other family members began to improve after her stay in the hospital , although she continued to live with Lim and Tan .

= = Rape and revenge = =

With Hoe and Tan as his assistants , Lim continued his trade , tricking more women into giving him money and sex . By the time of his arrest , he had 40 " holy wives " . In late 1980 he was arrested and charged with rape . His accuser was Lucy Lau , a door @-@ to @-@ door cosmetic salesgirl , who had met Lim when she was promoting beauty products to Tan . On 19 October , Lim told Lau that a ghost was haunting her , but he could exorcise it with his sex rituals . She was unconvinced , but the medium persisted . He secretly mixed two capsules of Dalmadorm , a sedative , into a glass of milk and offered it to her , claiming it had holy properties . Lau became groggy after drinking it , which allowed Lim to take advantage of her . For the next few weeks , he continued to abuse her by using drugs or threats . In November , after Lim had given her parents a loan smaller than the amount they had requested , Lau made a police report about his treatment of her . Lim was arrested on charges of rape , and Tan for abetting him . Out on bail , Lim persuaded Hoe to lie that she was present at the alleged rape but saw no crime committed . This failed to stop the police enquiries ; Lim and Tan had to extend their bail , in person , at the police station every fortnight .

Frustrated , Lim plotted to distract the police with a series of child murders . Moreover , he believed that sacrifices of children to Kali would persuade her supernaturally to draw the attention of the police away from him . Lim pretended to be possessed by Kali , and convinced Tan and Hoe that the goddess wanted them to kill children to wreak vengeance on Lau . He also told them Phragann demanded that he have sex with their female victims .

On 24 January 1981 , Hoe spotted Agnes at a nearby church and lured her to the flat . The trio plied her with food and drink that was laced with Dalmadorm . After Agnes became groggy and fell asleep , Lim sexually abused her . Near midnight , the trio smothered Agnes with a pillow and drew her blood , drinking and smearing it on a portrait of Kali . Following that , they drowned the girl by holding down her head in a pail of water . Finally , Lim used his electro @-@ shock therapy device to " make doubly sure that she was dead " . They stuffed her body in a bag and dumped it near the

lift at Block 11 .

Ghazali suffered a similar fate when he was brought by Hoe to the flat on 6 February . He , however , proved resistant to the sedatives , taking a long time to fall asleep . Lim decided to tie up the boy as a precaution ; however , the boy awoke and struggled . Panicking , the trio delivered karate chops to Ghazali 's neck and stunned him . After drawing his blood , they proceeded to drown their victim . Ghazali struggled , vomiting and losing control of his bowels as he died . Blood kept streaming from his nose after his death . While Tan stayed behind to clean the flat , Lim and Hoe disposed of the body . Lim noticed that a trail of blood led to their flat , so he and his accomplices cleaned as much as they could of these stains before sunrise . What they missed led the police to their flat and resulted in their arrest .

= = Trial = =

Two days after their arrest , Lim , Tan and Hoe were charged in the Subordinate Court for the murders of the two children . The trio were subjected to further interrogations by the police , and to medical examinations by prison doctors . On 16 ? 17 September , their case was brought to the court for a committal procedure . To prove that there was a case against the accused , Deputy Public Prosecutor Glenn Knight called on 58 witnesses and arrayed 184 pieces of evidence before the magistrate . While Tan and Hoe denied the charges of murder , Lim pleaded guilty and claimed sole responsibility for the acts . The magistrate decided that the case against the accused was sufficiently strong to be heard at the High Court . Lim , Tan , and Hoe remained in custody while investigations continued .

= = = Judiciary , prosecution , and defence = = =

The High Court was convened in the Supreme Court Building on 25 March 1983 . Presiding over the case were two judges : Justice Thirugnana Sampanthar Sinnathuray , who would deliver judgment on serial murderer John Martin Scripps 13 years later , and Justice Frederick Arthur Chua , who was at the time the longest serving judge in Singapore . Knight continued to build his case on the evidence gathered by detective work . Photographs of the crime scenes , together with witness testimonies , would help the court to visualise the events that led to the crimes . Other evidence ? the blood samples , religious objects , drugs , and the notes with Ng and Ghazali 's names ? conclusively proved the defendants ' involvement . Knight had no eyewitnesses to the murders ; his evidence was circumstantial , but he told the court in his opening statement , " What matters is that [ the accused ] did intentionally suffocate and drown these two innocent children , causing their deaths in circumstances which amount to murder . And this we will prove beyond all reasonable doubt . "

Tan , with Lim 's and the police 's permission , used \$ 10 @, @ 000 of the \$ 159 @, @ 340 ( US \$ 4 @, @ 730 of US \$ 75 @, @ 370 ) seized from the trio 's flat to engage J. B. Jeyaretnam for her defence . Hoe had to accept the court 's offer of counsel , receiving Nathan Isaac as her defender . Since his arrest , Lim had refused legal representation . He defended himself at the Subordinate Court hearings , but could not continue to do so when the case was moved to the High Court ; Singapore law requires that for capital crimes the accused must be defended by a legal professional . Thus Howard Cashin was appointed as Lim 's lawyer , although his job was complicated by his client 's refusal to cooperate . The three lawyers decided not to dispute that their clients had killed the children . Acting on a defence of diminished responsibility , they attempted to show that their clients were not sound of mind and could not be held responsible for the killings . If this defence had been successful , the defendants would have escaped the death penalty to face either life imprisonment , or up to 10 years in jail .

= = = Proceedings = = =

After Knight had presented the prosecution evidence the court heard testimonies on the

personalities and character flaws of the accused , from their relatives and acquaintances . Details of their lives were revealed by one of Lim 's " holy wives " . Private medical practitioners Dr. Yeo Peng Ngee and Dr. Ang Yiau Hua admitted that they were Lim 's sources for drugs , and had provided the trio sleeping pills and sedatives without question on each consultation . The police and forensics teams gave their accounts of their investigations ; Inspector Suppiah , the investigating officer @-@ in @-@ charge , read out the statements the defendants had made during their remand . In these statements Lim stated that he had killed for revenge , and that he had sodomised Ng . The accused had also confirmed in their statements that each was an active participant in the murders . There were many contradictions among these statements and the confessions made in court by the accused , but Judge Sinnathuray declared that despite the conflicting evidence , " the essential facts of this case are not in dispute " . Lim 's involvement in the crimes was further evidenced by a witness who vouched that just after midnight on 7 February 1981 , at the ground floor of Block 12 , he saw Lim and a woman walk past him carrying a dark @-@ skinned boy .

On 13 April , Lim took the stand . He maintained that he was the sole perpetrator of the crimes . He denied that he raped Lucy Lau or Ng , claiming that he made the earlier statements only to satisfy his interrogators . Lim was selective in answering the questions the court threw at him ; he verbosely answered those that agreed with his stance , and refused to comment on the others . When challenged on the veracity of his latest confession , he claimed that he was bound by religious and moral duty to tell the truth . Knight , however , countered that Lim was inherently a dishonest man who had no respect for oaths . Lim had lied to his wife , his clients , the police , and psychiatrists . Knight claimed Lim 's stance in court was an open admission that he willingly lied in his earlier statements . Tan and Hoe were more cooperative , answering the questions posed by the court . They denied Lim 's story , and vouched for the veracity of the statements they had given to the police . They told how they had lived in constant fear and awe of Lim ; believing he had supernatural powers , they followed his every order and had no free will of their own . Under Knight 's questioning , however , Tan admitted that Lim had been defrauding his customers , and that she had knowingly helped him to do so . Knight then got Hoe to agree that she was conscious of her actions at the time of the murders .

#### = = = Battle of the psychiatrists = = =

No one doubted that Lim , Tan , and Hoe had killed the children . Their defence was based on convincing the judges that medically , the accused were not in total control of themselves during the crimes . The bulk of the trial was therefore a battle between expert witnesses called by both sides . Dr Wong Yip Chong , a senior psychiatrist in private practice , believed that Lim was mentally ill at the time of the crimes . Claiming to be " judging by the big picture , and not fussing over contradictions " , he said that Lim 's voracious sexual appetite and deluded belief in Kali were characteristics of a mild manic depression . The doctor also said that only an unsound mind would dump the bodies close to his home when his plan was to distract the police . In rebuttal , the prosecution 's expert witness , Dr Chee Kuan Tsee , a psychiatrist at Woodbridge Hospital , said that Lim was " purposeful in his pursuits , patient in his planning and persuasive in his performance for personal power and pleasure " . In Dr Chee 's opinion , Lim had indulged in sex because through his role as a medium he obtained a supply of women who were willing to go to bed with him . Furthermore , his belief in Kali was religious in nature , not delusional . Lim 's use of religion for personal benefit indicated full self @-@ control . Lastly , Lim had consulted doctors and freely taken sedatives to alleviate his insomnia , a condition which , according to Dr Chee , sufferers from manic depression fail to recognise .

Dr R. Nagulendran , a consultant psychiatrist , testified that Tan was mentally impaired by reactive psychotic depression . According to him she was depressed before she met Lim , due to her family background . Physical abuse and threats from Lim deepened her depression ; drug abuse led her to hallucinate and believe the medium 's lies . Dr Chee disagreed ; he said that Tan had admitted to being quite happy with the material lifestyle Lim gave to her , enjoying fine clothes and beauty salon treatments . A sufferer from reactive psychotic depression would not have paid such attention to her

appearance . Also , Tan had earlier confessed to knowing Lim was a fraud , but changed her stance in court to claim she was acting completely under his influence . Although Dr Chee had neglected Lim 's physical abuse of Tan in his judgment , he was firm in his opinion that Tan was mentally sound during the crimes . Both Dr Nagulendran and Dr Chee agreed that Hoe suffered from schizophrenia long before she met Lim , and that her stay in Woodbridge Hospital had helped her recovery . However , while Dr Nagulendran was convinced that Hoe suffered a relapse during the time of the child killings , Dr Chee pointed out that none of the Woodbridge doctors saw any signs of relapse during the six months of her follow @-@ up checks ( 16 July 1980 ? 31 January 1981 ) . If Hoe had been as severely impaired by her condition as Dr Nagulendran described , she would have become an invalid . Instead , she methodically abducted and helped kill a child on two occasions . Ending his testimony , Dr Chee stated that it was incredible that three people with different mental illnesses should share a common delusion of receiving a request to kill from a god .

= = = Closing statements = = =

In their closing speeches , the defence tried to reinforce the portrayal of their clients as mentally disturbed individuals . Cashin said that Lim was a normal man until his initiation into the occult , and that he was clearly divorced from reality when he entered the " unreasonable world of atrociousness " , acting on his delusions to kill children in Kali 's name . Jeyaretnam said that due to her depression and Lim 's abuse , Tan was just " a robot " , carrying out orders without thought . Isaac simply concluded , " [ Hoe 's ] schizophrenic mind accepted that if the children were killed , they would go to heaven and not grow up evil like her mother and others . " The defence criticised Dr Chee for failing to recognise their clients ' symptoms .

The prosecution started its closing speech by drawing attention to the " cool and calculating " manner in which the children were killed . Knight also argued that the accused could not have shared the same delusion , and only brought it up during the trial . The " cunning and deliberation " displayed in the acts could not have been done by a deluded person . Tan helped Lim because " she loved [ him ] " , and Hoe was simply misled into helping the crimes . Urging the judges to consider the ramifications of their verdict , Knight said : " My Lords , to say that Lim was less than a coward who preyed on little children because they could not fight back ; killed them in the hope that he would gain power or wealth and therefore did not commit murder , is to make no sense of the law of murder . It would lend credence to the shroud of mystery and magic he has conjured up his practices and by which he managed to frighten , intimidate and persuade the superstitious , the weak and the gullible into participating in the most lewd and obscene acts . "

= = = Judgment = = =

On 25 May 1983 , crowds massed outside the building , waiting for the outcome of the trial . Due to limited seating , only a few were allowed inside to hear Justice Sinnathuray 's delivery of the verdict , which took 15 minutes . The two judges were not convinced that the accused were mentally unsound during the crimes . They found Lim to be " abominable and depraved " in carrying out his schemes . Viewing her interviews with the expert witnesses as admissions of guilt , Sinnathuray and Chua found Tan to be an " artful and wicked person " , and a " willing [ party ] to [ Lim 's ] loathsome and nefarious acts " . The judges found Hoe to be " simple " and " easily influenced " . Although she suffered from schizophrenia , they noted that she was in a state of remission during the murders ; hence she should bear full responsibility for her actions . All three defendants were found guilty of murder and sentenced to be hanged . The two women did not react to their sentences . On the other hand , Lim beamed and cried , " Thank you , my Lords ! " , as he was led out .

Lim accepted his fate ; the women did not , and appealed against their sentences . Tan hired Francis Seow to appeal for her , and the court again assigned Isaac to Hoe . The lawyers asked the appeal court to reconsider the mental states of their clients during the murders , charging that the trial judges in their deliberations had failed to consider this point . The Court of Criminal Appeal reached their decision in August 1986 . The appeal judges reaffirmed the decision of their trial

counterparts , noting that as finders of facts , judges have the right to discount medical evidence in the light of evidence from other sources . Tan and Hoe 's further appeals to London 's Privy Council and Singapore President Wee Kim Wee met with similar failures .

Having exhausted all their avenues for pardon , Tan and Hoe calmly faced their fates . While waiting on death row the trio were counselled by Catholic priests and nuns . In spite of the reputation that surrounded Lim , Father Brian Doro recalled the murderer as a " rather friendly person " . When the day of execution loomed , Lim asked Father Doro for absolution and Holy Communion . Likewise , Tan and Hoe had Sister Gerard Fernandez as their spiritual counsellor . The nun converted the two female convicts to Catholicism , and they received forgiveness and Holy Communion during their final days . On 25 November 1988 the trio were given their last meal and led to the hangman 's noose . Lim smiled throughout his last walk . After the sentences were carried out , the three murderers were given a short Catholic funeral mass by Father Doro , and cremated on the same day .

= = Legacy = =

The trial on the Toa Payoh ritual murders was closely followed by the populace of Singapore . Throngs of people constantly packed the grounds of the courts , hoping to catch a glimpse of Adrian Lim and to hear the revelations first @-@ hand . Reported by regional newspapers in detail , the gory and sexually explicit recounting of Lim 's acts offended the sensibilities of some ; Canon Frank Lomax , Vicar of St. Andrew 's Anglican Church , complained to The Straits Times that the reports could have a corrupting effect on the young . His words received support from a few readers . Others , however , welcomed the open reporting , considering it helpful in raising public awareness of the need for vigilance even in a city with low crime rates . Books , which covered the murders and the trial , were quickly bought by the public on their release .

The revelations from the trial cast Lim as evil incarnate in the minds of Singaporeans . Some citizens could not believe that anyone would willingly defend such a man . They called Cashin to voice their anger ; a few even issued death threats against him . On the other hand , Knight 's name spread among Singaporeans as the man who brought Adrian Lim to justice , boosting his career . He handled more high @-@ profile cases , and became the director of the Commercial Affairs Department in 1984 . He would maintain his good reputation until his conviction for corruption seven years later .

Even in prison , Lim was hated ; his fellow prisoners abused and treated him as an outcast . In the years that followed the crime , memories remained fresh among those who followed the case . Journalists deemed it the most sensational trial of the 80s , being " the talk of a horrified city as gruesome accounts of sexual perversion , the drinking of human blood , spirit possession , exorcism and indiscriminate cruelty unfolded during the 41 @-@ day hearing " . Fifteen years from the trial 's conclusion , a poll conducted by The New Paper reported that 30 per cent of its respondents had picked the Toa Payoh ritual murders as the most horrible crime , despite the paper 's request to vote only for crimes committed in 1998 . Lim had become a benchmark for local criminals ; in 2002 Subhas Anandan described his client , wife @-@ killer Anthony Ler , as a " cooler , more handsome version of [ the ] notorious Toa Payoh medium @-@ murderer " .

During the 1990s , the local film industry made two movies based on the murder case , the first of which was Medium Rare . The 1991 production had substantial foreign involvement ; most of the cast and crew were American or British . The script was locally written and intended to explore the " psyche of the three main characters " . The director , however , focused on sex and violence , and the resulting film was jeered by the audience at its midnight screening . Its 16 @-@ day run brought in \$ 130 @,@ 000 ( US \$ 75 @,@ 145 ) , and a reporter called it " more bizarre than the tales of unnatural sex and occult practices associated with the Adrian Lim story " . The second film , 1997 's God or Dog , also had a dismal box @-@ office performance despite a more positive critical reception . Both shows had difficulty in finding local actors for the lead role ; Zhu Houren declined on the basis that Adrian Lim was too unique a personality for an actor to portray accurately , and Xie Shaoguang rejected the role for the lack of " redeeming factors " in the murderer . On the television ,



the murder case would have been the opening episode for True Files , a crime awareness programme in 2002 . The public , however , complained that the trailers were too gruesome with the re @-@ enactments of the rituals and murders , forcing the media company MediaCorp to reshuffle the schedule . The Toa Payoh ritual murders episode was replaced by a less sensational episode as the opener and pushed back into a later timeslot for more mature viewers , marking the horrific nature of the crimes committed by Lim , Tan , and Hoe .