

World Heritage
Angkor and Beyond

Circumstances and
Implications of UNESCO
Listings in Cambodia

Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin (ed.)

Göttingen Studies in
Cultural Property, Volume 2



Universitätsverlag Göttingen

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The temple of Angkor Wat, the icon of Angkor Park, is photographed by thousands of tourists every day (2011).

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Published in 2011 by Universitätsverlag Göttingen
as volume 2 in the series “Göttingen Studies in Cultural Property”

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2011

Bibliographische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliographie; detaillierte bibliographische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.ddb.de> abrufbar.

Printed with funding from the DFG

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Set and layout: Friedolin Krentel, Meike Rieger
Cover: Margo Bargheer, Stefan Groth
Frontispiece: Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin
English proofreading: Philip Saunders

© 2011 Universitätsverlag Göttingen
<http://univerlag.uni-goettingen.de>
ISBN: 978-3-86395-032-3
ISSN: 2190-8672

„Göttinger Studien zu Cultural Property“ / “Göttingen Studies in Cultural Property”

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Foreword

Brigitta Hauser-Schänblin

This publication is the result of three years of research carried out as part of the Göttingen interdisciplinary DFG-research group on “The constitution of ‘cultural property’; actors, discourses, contexts, and rules” (FOR 772) in Cambodia between 2008 and 2011. The title of the project was “Processes of constituting a ‘World Heritage’ and its meanings by the example of Angkor, Cambodia”. The research took the transformation of culture that takes place when it is turned into property, and especially into “heritage”, as a starting point (see, for example, Brown 2003, 2004). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, as one of the pioneers of heritage studies, convincingly showed already in 1998 that heritage

is a new mode of cultural production in the present that takes recourse to the past. Heritage is a value-added industry. Heritage produces the local for export [...] Heritage tests the alienability of inalienable possessions.

(Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:149)

Thus, the “heritage industry” produces something new that still may be, in the material sense, the same as before, but it receives a number of new aspects and meanings – and new owners, namely – in the case of World Heritage Sites – the state and, in a metaphorical way, “humanity”. Such processes touch a delicate field when they are applied to sacred sites, such as temples with their statues, and places of worship of which local people (particularly ritual specialists) had been previously in charge. Such a site becomes transformed into a public space visited by (paying) tourists from all over the world in a similar way to a museum. Thus, the sacredness of the space which determined its former use becomes superseded by a profanity that underlines the economical dimension of such newly created “cultural products”. The same counts for living cultural practices if they are reproduced by state parties in the process of making them intangible heritage – a concept that is afflicted with Western standards and principles – to make them ready for tourist consumption on the basis of the state’s norms and ideals.

The relationship between local people, the new owners (the state) and the international tourism business and their corresponding practices and goals becomes a hierarchical relationship which puts the local population at the bottom of this power relationship (see, for example, Miura 2004; Hitchcock, King and Parnwell 2010; Winter 2010; Starr 2010).

As is well known, Angkor, which has been listed as a World Heritage Site since 1992, was the capital of the legendary Khmer empire (9th – 15th centuries), and many sites throughout Cambodia and Thailand are related (though probably to different degrees and during different periods) to this one. One of these faraway temples related to Angkor in style and also socially and politically during a particular period is Preah Vihear, situated on the Cambodian/Thai border. Preah Vihear was listed as a World Heritage Site in 2008.

Angkor has been a symbol of national identity for a long time and the temple of Angkor Wat is the emblem of the Kingdom of Cambodia. The inscription of Angkor – today called Angkor Park – on UNESCO’s prestigious list of World Heritage has highlighted and consolidated the association of today’s nation state with the glorious past of the Khmer 1000 years ago. Thus, the importance of the issue of national unity – though based on a rather mono-ethnic notion of the “ancient Khmer” – cannot be underestimated in a state that was shattered by the terror regime of the Khmer Rouge only a few decades ago.

Angkor had suffered from Cambodia’s indirect involvement in the Vietnam War and subsequently from the Khmer Rouge civil war. Cambodia’s restoration project was much more than just conserving the material aspects, that is, the monuments. It also became an encompassing project of national restoration. The listing of Angkor as World Heritage in Danger in 1992 was accompanied by UNESCO’s appeal to the world community to save Angkor. This appeal stirred a worldwide sympathy and aid for these monuments.

Since then, the situation of Angkor as an ensemble of monuments has substantially improved and this World Heritage Site is no longer listed as in danger.

We – a whole team of researchers consisting of Aditya Eggert (Göttingen), Keiko Miura (Tokyo), Baromey Neth (Phnom Penh) and myself – were interested to learn in what ways a monument or an ensemble of monuments, such as Angkor or the temple of Preah Vihear, and with it their particular geographic and socio-cultural setting, are subject to change when they become inscribed as World Heritage on UNESCO's famous list. We wanted to know what happens when the regulations set up by UNESCO are implemented: For example, the whole area of a site which becomes inscribed as World Heritage needs to be organized according to zones in order to protect the archaeological and architectural locations. A World Heritage Site becomes very quickly attractive for international tourism. Hotels and restaurants usually spring up immediately and, if there are no regulations, everywhere, and they are preferably built as close to the monuments as possible. Thus the zoning regulates the protection and use of the monuments for the sake of sustainability. As a consequence, Angkor became transformed into Angkor Park.

Another set of questions we had were related not only to the people who had been living in the area for generations, but also to those who had recently moved in. What implications has the zoning on their everyday life which previously was not organized according to the newly established “zones”, but according to practices they had been carrying out probably for a long time? Furthermore, a World Heritage Site is incompatible with private ownership since it becomes a “heritage of humanity”. The state in which it is located acts as trustee – and as its formal owner; a World Heritage Site becomes state property. What happens in this respect to the local inhabitants of Angkor Park, which covers 400km², to their “property” and their claims of ownership of land, trees, sacred sites, and statues? What rights – human rights – are left to them and how do they cope with the new situation? Moreover, the establishment of World Heritage Sites by UNESCO was also conceived as a means to stimulate economic development and prosperity. UNESCO's ideals are rooted in notions of democracy, equality of a state's citizens and also equal economic chances for all, including education and the improvement of the situation of the poor. A further question, therefore, related to the issue of development, especially tourism, which is generally seen as a motor and means of development. What chances does tourism, the setting up of its infrastructure, its supply and its maintenance offer to those who are in desperate need of development? Siem Reap Province was (and still is) one of the poorest provinces in the country. How does this correspond to the fact that the income from tourism is one of the most important sources of state income?

Another part of the project touched the further development of living cultural practices that are believed to originate in the Angkor Period and have received the status of Intangible Heritage from UNESCO. What hierarchies and dynamics arise from the listing with which the state becomes the custodian of the cultural practices in question? What are the agencies of actors involved and the possibilities of the artists to further shape their art forms? The issue that arises is what happens with a living art form if it is appropriated and politicised by state actors on the basis of its elitist norms and values? (These questions will be dealt with in more detail in a later publication.)

These were the major research questions. Nevertheless, we were aware that our study did not begin “from scratch”, that is, from an Angkor and Preah Vihear “untouched” by an “outside world” or the monuments after the Khmer Rouge regime.

The story of Angkor’s and also Preah Vihear’s transformation as induced by actors from far away started much earlier.

The transformation began at the onset of colonial times in the mid-19th century. The history of “saving” Angkor, first and foremost the architectural aspects of the temple complex of Angkor Wat and the former Khmer capital, Angkor Thom, started in the 1860s when Mouhot’s travelogue (1864) of his journey to Cambodia and his “discovery” of Angkor made this site famous. Western efforts to free the ruins from the overgrowth began immediately and French scholars began to document and investigate these impressive traces of Khmer civilization (in which Preah Vihear became a cornerstone for territorial reasons). However, this project went far beyond academic endeavours and became a French colonial enterprise for its own goals (Singaravélou 1999; Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin 2001; Edwards 2007; Winter 2007).

To investigate the results of the developments after Angkor and Preah Vihear had become World Heritage Sites, therefore, implied considering their history, too; we limited the depth of our time perspective to the epoch of “French Indochina”, though we were predominantly interested in the past 20 years.

The book contains three parts corresponding to our major research questions. The first section, “Nominations”, deals with the historical and political circumstances under which Angkor and Preah Vihear were nominated as World Heritage Sites and finally became inscribed on UNESCO’s prestigious list (chapters by Keiko Miura and Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin). Political considerations played an important role in both cases. The circumstances of the Angkor nomination have already been briefly mentioned: The damage Angkor had suffered and the all-encompassing project of restoration that started immediately afterwards have to be set against the background of the Vietnam War and its aftermath, the Khmer Rouge regime. The circumstances of the nomination of Preah Vihear are different, though politics were certainly one of the motives for its nomination. The temple of Preah Vihear has been a bone of contention between Cambodia and Siam/Thailand for almost one hundred years. The old border conflict broke out again immediately after Preah Vihear’s listing. The listing, therefore, needs to be set against this old struggle, and the International Court of Justice’s (ICJ) decree in 1962 and the re-appeal to the ICJ in 2011 (chapter by Sven Mißling).

Behind a nomination stands a process during which powerful national actors, those who are in charge of nominations – be it tangible or intangible heritage –, select cultural elements out of a shifting and difficult to define cultural continuum. The selection process is guided by a specific concept of “culture” the major actors have. The final chapter of “Nominations” consists of a contribution by Aditya Eggert. She explores the cultural concepts of the actors who intend to nominate an intangible heritage – fine arts – to UNESCO.

In the second part, “Implementation and Implications”, Keiko Miura discusses the issue of competing notions of ownership and heritage as applied by different actors on a local, national and international level, and how they interact with each other and with what consequences.

The policy of the implementation of Angkor as World Heritage Site and its management has changed over time according to the experiences made, to changes in the administration of the national management agency (APSARA) and to new ideas and visions of decision makers (chapter by Keiko Miura).

The third part, “Development”, raises the issue of development as an anticipated outcome of a World Heritage nomination. Baromey Neth explores the structure and the accommodation sector and its investors, the employment policies and the opportunities local people have to make a living out of it. Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin examines development projects, particularly of the GIZ/GTZ, explicitly addressed to the poor and their economic empowerment in the rural areas of Siem Reap province.

The study is indebted to many institutions and people, first and foremost the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, which sponsored our project, and to the members of the research team: Aditya Eggert, Keiko Miura and Baromey Neth. I am also grateful to the members of the research group for the many lively and fruitful discussions we had on the topics presented in this book, and especially to Regina Bendix, speaker of the research group who supported the project in many ways. We are grateful to all the institutions in Cambodia, especially to the Royal University of Phnom Penh with which we were able to establish a Memorandum of Understanding for the duration of this project. We are thankful to many more institutions in Cambodia and beyond, the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, APSARA Authority (in charge of the management of Angkor Park), the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA), UNESCO in Phnom Penh and Paris, the Centre for Khmer Studies in Phnom Penh/Siem Reap, the GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, and all other institutions and individuals for their assistance and to those who at least did not bar our investigations.

Last but not least, we are indebted to all the many different people, especially the inhabitants of Angkor Park, who were ready to share their experiences with us and to discuss the issues raised in this book.

Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin

I. Nominations and their Histories

World Heritage Making in Angkor.

Global, Regional, National and Local Actors, Interplays and Implications

Keiko Miura

Introduction

The study of World Heritage making is highly important today for World Heritage has become a global language, a world of its own, recreating and representing particular cultures, ethnic groups, and/or national icons to be shared universally. This trend has been accelerated through modern media, especially visual media such as TV, films, DVDs and the internet with highly developed technologies and its world-wide distributions and flows. It provides us with a variety of ways to reconstruct, present and represent the past and heritage with particular meanings, especially as World Heritage Sites. The media-production of World Heritage Sites has no doubt contributed to the increase in the interest and the number of tourists to visit and “gaze” real and reconstructed World Heritage Sites simultaneously. These global phenomena have consequently affected the countries possessing them in their ways of producing and displaying the sites. Waterton and Watson (2010) also stress the

visuality of heritage based on a vivid materiality and its representations as dominant discourses in heritage studies, but that it is now moving towards more heterogeneous discourses to be debated.

Because of the need for tourism revenue for conservation and at times conservation being required to tackle with negative consequences followed from excessive tourism development, the nexus of conservation and tourism development has become a highly important issue for heritage managers, which received much academic attention in the last two decades (e.g. Boniface and Fowler 1993; Robinson, et al. 2000; Harrison and Hitchcock 2005; Winter 2007; Timothy 2007; Prideaux, Timothy and Chon 2008; Timothy and Nyaupane 2009; Hitchcock, King and Parnwell 2010).

The heritage making also involves recontextualizing, selecting, renaming, reframing, reorganizing and representing the existing space as heritage where we see an emergence of global, regional, national and local actors – both institutional and individual – who may interplay and mediate the process of heritage making. The process often entails negotiation, competition, compromise, coercion, actual fighting over, or giving away, whereby questions may rise such as whose heritage it is, how World Heritage status affects local communities and regional cultural politics, how tourism develops and how it affects socio-economic development of the country, how to balance between conservation, development and local ways of life, and what approaches of heritage management may be most appropriate (cf. White and Carman 2007). The influence of World Heritage making is multi-faceted, ranging from economic, social, cultural, or institutional dimension to the political, therefore, heritage studies are no longer adequate to be handled by archaeologists, architects, historians, conservators and legal experts alone, but to incorporate sociologists, anthropologists, and economists in a multi-disciplinary approach.

Today there are 936 World Heritage Sites (UNESCO 2011a), out of which a number of the sites with living populations have increased. This may owe to the adoption of “cultural landscapes” for the nomination criteria in 1992. While the manifestations of particular problems in such “living” World Heritage Sites differ from one site to another, there is a recognizable commonality in the problems, i.e. those emanated from imbalance between conservation and development and the lack of local involvement in heritage management and development. Out of many such sites, exemplary cases have been reported such as Garajonay National Park in La Gomera, Canary Islands (Bianchi et al. 2000:47-62), the Elephanta Island in Mumbai, India (Chakravarty 2000:77-92; Walters 2005:176-180), Kakadu in Australia (Moffatt 2000:301-313), Vat Phou and Champasak in Laos (Nishimura 2005:15-24), Kathmandu Valley in Nepal (Thapa 2007:23-27; Wood 2007:55-61), Xidi and Hongcun in Anhui, China (Lu 2007:87-94), Abu Rawash in Egypt (Fushimi 2010) to name but a few. Because some of the above-mentioned papers were written more than ten years ago, situations might have changed from then on. The theme is however likely to continue to be relevant today and for the future as the conditions of

World Heritage Sites dictate on-going conservation in parallel with development or making use of the sites.

Angkor World Heritage Site in Cambodia was and still is considered as one of the largest archaeological working sites (cf. Lemaistre and Cavalier 2002:125), which also has had serious problems of balancing conservation and development as well as the ownership and presentation. The study of World Heritage making in Angkor therefore may provide useful reference for the management of other World Heritage Sites, or the future direction of World Heritage making.

This paper first illustrates the outline of Angkor World Heritage Site and key issues. Secondly, it examines the nomination process of Angkor as a World Heritage Site and its particular socio-political background and objectives as well as the main actors emerged in the process. Thirdly, it studies the initial implementation stage of the World Heritage making in Angkor, with a particular focus on the emergence of new legal and institutional frameworks, regulations, actors and its implications and consequences. The section also explores what problems appeared in this period. Fourthly, it considers the second implementation stage with a policy change accompanied by institutional changes, other sets of new regulations, shifting actors and power balances within the national authorities. The section also examines what new issues appeared and its implications. The conclusion will accompany the lessons learnt from the case of Angkor.

World Heritage Making in Angkor: Outline and Key Issues

Angkor, a designation of Angkor civilization (802-1431) and the monuments constructed during this period, was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1992. In the process of the World Heritage making in Angkor global, regional, national and local actors emerged who have actively interplayed and influenced over power politics between the state and the international community, among individuals within the state, between the states in the region, and increasingly between the state and local actors. Interactions between these actors have influenced not only on politics, but more on cultural representations and economics over heritage. Through such interactions what has been revealed are different heritage notions and interests held by different actors, which resulted in making or modifying heritage policies and regulating heritage management. The important point in this process is the reorganization of space as public for representing the glorious past for visitors rather than the space for domestic use. The whole process has enhanced traditional top-down approach of management and created tensions all around.

Concern over Angkor after the World Heritage nomination has clearly shifted from the salvage mission of monuments in danger of decay and destruction, to the cultural representation of the selected pasts of the nation and the commodification of heritage for visitors to induce economic benefits, mostly for the rich and powerful Cambodians and foreigners. While the salvage mission is considered as a success, there emerged new actors, contestations among them and with old actors, and the

issues of ownership, the use of heritage space for tourism and the local communities' everyday living, and continued need for conservation.

The issue of conservation also moved or rather developed from emergency conservation of monuments to sustainable development, along with the conservation of the old "villagescape", i.e. to conserve traditional village landscape as a fixed landscape. The "traditional" ways of living are "rediscovered" as another asset for promoting cultural tourism and its diversifications, thus modernization is fairly restricted, and "traditional" houses and landscapes containing them are to be maintained for the visual consumption of the others. This issue will be discussed in my chapter "Sustainable Development in Angkor" in this volume.

Initial Stage: Nomination Process

Background and Actors

In 1989 when the national reconciliation of warring parties of Cambodia was in sight, an appeal was made to the international community to assist Cambodia to protect Angkor monuments, but was not directly intended to have Angkor inscribed on the World Heritage List. The appeal was made by then-Prince Norodom Sihanouk as the chairman of the UN-recognized Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (C.G.D.K.)¹ to Federico Mayor, the then-Director-General of UNESCO at its HQs in Paris (UNESCO 1993:18; APSARA 1998). The substantial care and the protection of Angkor monuments had largely been absent since 1973 because of war and instability. Angkor monuments received some damage directly from war, but more so from a long neglect in management that had been conducive to the illicit traffic of artefacts mostly beyond national borders and also tropical vegetation encroaching on built structures and bats droppings eroding the sandstone.

What allowed the appeal of Sihanouk was the initiation of peace negotiations through the Jakarta informal meetings in May 1989 which led UNESCO to dispatch a fact-finding mission to Angkor. In November Chatchai Choonhavan, then-Prime Minister of Thailand, also had a meeting with the Director-General of UNESCO and declared Thailand's unconditional support for UNESCO's efforts for Angkor. Other ASEAN² member states followed Thailand to agree to depoliticise the issue of Angkor and adopted an oral resolution tabled by Australia, backed by Japan and France among others, for UNESCO to initiate preparatory activities for Angkor (UNESCO 1993:18-19). From this period on France (former colonial power) and Japan (new regional power) have become key players in the reconstruction of Cambodia as well as the preservation efforts of Angkor.

¹ A unified anti-Vietnamese resistance or a shadow cabinet formed in 1982, consisting of three groups led by Sihanouk, Son Sann (KPNLF) and Khieu Samphan (PDK) (Gottesman 2004:139-141).

² Association of South-East Asian Nations established in 1967.

The political settlement of war-devastated Cambodia and the national reconciliation was one of the most important UN missions as well as for ASEAN countries at that time in order to achieve peace and establish a Cambodian state which is accountable. During the 1990-91 periods, UNESCO also took part in a number of assessment missions organized by various governmental and non-governmental agencies, which enabled to further knowledge of the conditions of Angkor heritage. Two international round tables of experts on Angkor were organized; one in Bangkok in June 1990 and the other in Paris in September 1991 to prioritize field-based activities in Cambodia. Japan funded the Bangkok meeting from a Funds-in-Trust with UNESCO as well as UNESCO to commission to Sophia University of Japan a survey of the Angkor monuments and the development of a computerized site inventory form. In addition, Japan financed the École Française d'Extrême Orient (EFEO) to computerize and microfilm the major reports and graphic documents recording EFEO's restoration and research work at Angkor from 1909 to 1972 (UNESCO 1993:18-19).

The Paris meeting was attended by Sihanouk as the chairman of the Supreme National Council (SNC) of Cambodia. There Sihanouk reiterated his request for UNESCO co-ordination of all international assistance to Angkor. In this meeting one of the recommendations specifically mentions

[f]or UNESCO to assist, in co-operation with ICOMOS and the World Heritage Committee, the Cambodian authorities to prepare the necessary formalities to ratify the World Heritage Convention and submit an application for the inscription of Angkor on the World Heritage List.
(UNESCO 1993:19)

It was one month before the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement on Cambodia. As the Agreement followed the lifting of the embargo on international assistance to Cambodia, the path was paved for peace and the World Heritage nomination process for Angkor hand in hand (UNESCO 1993:20).

In November 1991 Federico Mayor made an official visit to Cambodia, at the request of Sihanouk, when they jointly

launched, from Angkor Wat, an appeal to the international community to support Cambodian people in their efforts to save Angkor – symbol of national unity for the Cambodian people and the heritage of Humanity as a whole.

(UNESCO 1993:19-21)

At this moment “save Angkor” became one of the most important UNESCO missions in the culture sector, which became at the same time its moral obligation to save “the heritage of Humanity”. In the same month SNC ratified the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1993:22). It led Cambodia to actually head towards the preparation for the inscription of “Angkor Archaeological Park” on the World

Heritage List. A financial grant from the World Heritage Committee enabled UNESCO to commission French experts from EFEO and the École Pratique des Hautes Études as well as a UNESCO legal consultant to assist the Cambodian authorities in this endeavour. At the World Heritage Committee held in Santa Fe, U.S.A. in 14 December 1992 Angkor was nominated as a World Heritage Site (UNESCO 1993:22-23).

The nominated site covers approximately 401km², consisting of three separate groups, namely Angkor, Roluos and Banteay Srei. At that time the population of Siem Reap province was noted as 555,000 (ZEMP Expert Team 1993: Chap. IV. p. 1), out of which 22,000 people were reported as living in the site according to the source of the United Nations Transitional Authority of Cambodia (UNTAC) (Khuon 2005:14). The criteria used for the nomination are as follows:

- i) Angkor represents a unique artistic achievement, a masterpiece of creative genius;
- ii) it has exerted great influence over a span of time, within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts, and landscaping;
- iii) it bears a unique exceptional testimony to a civilization which has disappeared; and
- iv) it is an outstanding example of an architectural ensemble which illustrates a significant stage in history.

(UNESCO 1993:22)

The decision was made with an exception of waiving a number of conditions required under the Operational Guidelines “in response to a unique situation” in Cambodia, i.e. the urgency of protecting the monuments while needing time to fulfil all the necessary conditions. It was warned that “[t]his action is not to be taken as setting a precedent for inscription but as a response to a unique situation” (UNESCO 1993:22). Cambodia was then in the preparatory stage of the national elections of 1993, the first to be held in three decades and the socio-political situation was tense and unstable. Angkor was therefore further declared a World Heritage Site in Danger. Cambodia was given three years (1993-95) for a special in-depth study of the Angkor site and to establish an authority to take charge of the protection and conservation of the sites. The authorities concerned were also to take the necessary measures to satisfy the following conditions:

- a) Enact adequate protective legislation;
- b) Establish an adequately staffed national protection agency;
- c) Establish permanent boundaries based on the UNDP project³;

³ UNDP project means Zoning and Environmental Management Plan (ZEMP).

- d) Define meaningful buffer zones
- e) Establish monitoring and coordination of the international conservation effort.⁴

(UNESCO 1993:22)

In sum, the World Heritage nomination process of Angkor depended very much on political settlement and peace-building in Cambodia. The advanced political settlement in the early 1990s facilitated UNESCO to assist Cambodia as well as Angkor monuments in response to Sihanouk's appeal. The signing of the Paris Peace Accord was the concrete first step towards the nomination process. The main actors emerged at this stage were Sihanouk, UNESCO represented by Federico Mayor, Japan and France. "Save Angkor" became one of UNESCO's important international campaigns at that time, which had both moral and practical dimensions. For Cambodians "save Angkor" was to become the symbol of national reconciliation, peace, recovered past glory, and national prestige and hope.

Implementation Stage I (1993-2003): Establishing Legal and Institutional Frameworks; Emerging New Actors and Issues

In much of the 1990s the Cambodian authorities had been very busy reconstructing the war-devastated country, trying to deal with the problem of prevalent land mines and insecurity among other things. Logically, the safeguarding operation of Angkor had to go hand in hand with the government's overall scheme of the country's rehabilitation and rebuilding.

The initial implementation stage necessitated Cambodia to establish the legal and the institutional framework of protecting Angkor monuments and site and where and how to develop. It also meant to fulfil the five conditions put forward by the World Heritage Committee. In the process new actors, mostly institutional and academic, emerged.

Framework for Monitoring and Coordination of International Conservation Effort

The first condition met was e) through the formation of the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Site of Angkor (ICC) in Tokyo Conference in October 1993 (UNESCO 1993; Chau Sun 2006:148). ICC has two co-chairs, i.e. France and Japan, and UNESCO acting as a standing secretariat. Since then on it has served for the Cambodian government as an international body of assistance on Angkor and Siem Reap as well as offering advice and critiques at times. UNESCO assisted the Cambodian authorities to take the necessary measures requested by the World Heritage Committee.

⁴ See also APSARA 1998:xvii; Chau Sun 2006:148; Lemaistre and Cavalier 2002.

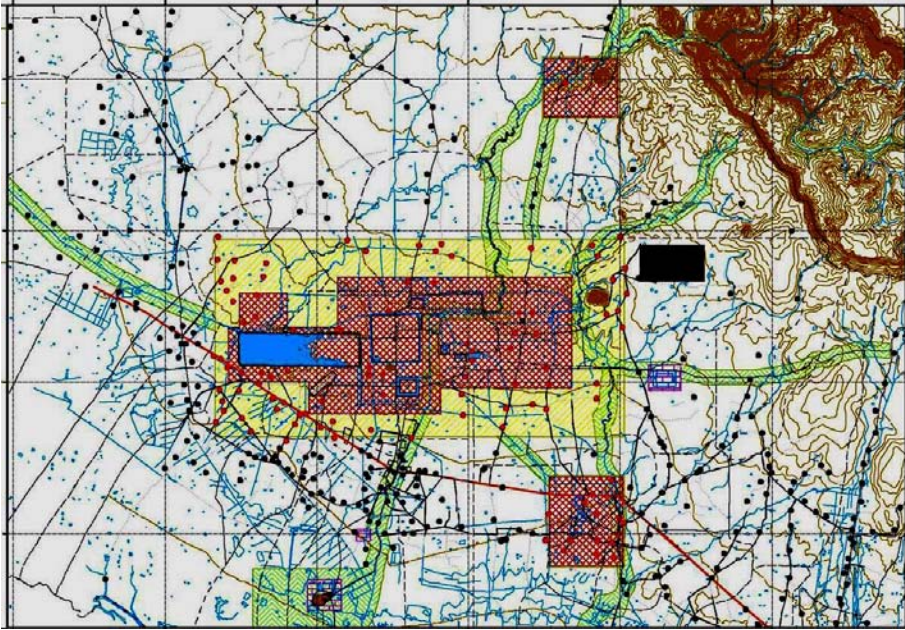


Fig. 1: Zoning and Environmental Management Plan for Angkor: Zone 1: red; Zone 2: yellow; Zone 3: green; Zone 4: blue; Zone 5: entire Siem Reap Province (map: courtesy of APSARA).

Zoning Law

The second and third conditions met were c) and d) in May 1994 through the promulgation of the Royal Decree establishing Protected Cultural Zones in the Siem Reap/Angkor Region and Guidelines for their Management (001/NS) (the so-called Zoning Law) (cf. Chau Sun 2006:148-149). The Zoning Law was based on the findings by the Zoning and Environmental Management Plan for Angkor (ZEMP) which offered the framework of protection and development of Siem Reap/Angkor region. In 1993 UNDP and Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) financed the ZEMP project with in-kind contributions of technical assistance and equipment from the Angkor Foundation of Hungary, the World Conservation Union (IUCN), EFEEO, United States National Park Service, and the Thai Fine Arts Department. UNESCO executed the project, organizing a multi-disciplinary group of 25 experts from 11 different countries led by Jonathan Wager (UK). Fields of experts ranged from resource mapping, Geographic Integrated System (GIS) and data management, prehistoric and Khmer history and archaeology, architectural conservation, hydrology, ecology and wildlife conservation, agronomy, forestry and rural development, social anthropology, tourism development, urban and transport planning, park planning and administration, and legal and regulatory frameworks (ZEMP Expert Team 1993).

The Zoning Law established five zones, namely Zone 1: Monumental Sites (core zone), Zone 2: Protected Archaeological Reserves (buffer zone), Zone 3: Protected Cultural Landscapes (along rivers), Zone 4: Sites of Archaeological, Anthropological or Historic Interest (sites not included in Zone 1 or 2), Zone 5: The Socio-Economic and Cultural Development Zone of Siem Reap Region.

The main purpose of zoning is to clarify the boundaries of areas to protect while intending to prevent rampant development ventures or urbanization where monuments are concentrated. The natural environment surrounding the monuments and “riverscapes” are also designated to be protected. The Zoning Law also specifies the methodologies of management of land, water, landscapes, local residents, pagodas, training, development, et al (APSARA Authority 2008:212-220; Chau Sun 2006:148-149). In addition, the Hotel Zone (79/ANKR/PK) was established in the city of Siem Reap in 1995 (APSARA Authority 2008:230-232).

Managing Authority

The fourth condition met was b) the establishment of a National Authority for the Protection and Management of Angkor and the Region of Siem Reap, shortly APSARA Authority (hereinafter called APSARA) (NS/RKT/0295/12) in 1995. It was accompanied by the establishment of Special Police Corps for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, the so-called Heritage Police (60/ANKR/PK) in 1997 (APSARA Authority 2008:224-229, 246-249; Chau Sun 2006:149). The French-trained Heritage Police under the authority of the Ministry of Interior was to co-operate with APSARA to protect the monuments and sites from illicit excavation and destruction, theft of artefacts or any other activities considered harmful for the heritage.

Legal Framework

The fifth and final condition to be met was a), through the enactment of Law of the Protection of Cultural Heritage (NS/RKM/0196/26) in 1996. As with other conditions met, UNESCO provided assistance; in this case a legal advice in collaboration with UNTAC to draft legislation (APSARA Authority 2008:233-245; Chau Sun 2006:149).

In four years after the World Heritage nomination all the conditions were satisfied with basic frameworks, laws, zoning and the managing authority established, with which new institutional frameworks and actors emerged. The following section will study the implication of all the new management set-up and partitioning of existing spaces.

Conservation Work and Institutional Actors

Even before the Paris Peace Agreement was signed, some international teams, notably Indian, had begun to assist Cambodia to restore Angkor monuments, but after the nomination, the number of teams offered assistance rose rapidly through the



Fig. 2: Ad hoc expert visit, Angkor Wat (ICC 2010a:94).

framework of ICC. Up to 2003 more than ten international conservation/restoration teams⁵ participated, and had research teams included, the number would exceed far more (cf. ICC 2010a:41-58). Angkor became a great testing ground on restoration/conservation skills as well as an open-air pavilion to showcase archaeological excavations, discoveries and restoration/conservation techniques. UNESCO nonetheless had shepherded these teams well to invigorate international solidarity to assist Cambodia in this domain, carefully avoiding negative rivalries and conflicts to rise. In order to deal with technical problems, UNESCO assisted ICC to establish the Ad Hoc Group of Experts in 1997 consisting of four experts; two recommended by the co-chairs, thus, a French and a Japanese and one each from ICCROM and ICOMOS. The Group was to investigate technical issues, offer technical advice as well as to study project proposals from scientific and technical viewpoints. The contribution of the Group is much appreciated, especially when ICC and the Cambodian authorities had to take decisions in difficult cases (cf. Lemaître

⁵ Main conservation/restoration teams were EFEO, Japanese Government Team for Safeguarding Angkor (JSA), Sophia University (Japan), Royal Angkor Foundation (Hungary) sponsored by the German government, Italian Structural Engineers, German APSARA Conservation Project (GACP), Indonesian Technical Assistance for Safeguarding Angkor (ITASA), Chinese Government Team for Safeguarding Angkor (CSA), World Monuments Fund (American NGO), Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), and Swiss Agency for Research and Co-operation (SDC). See ICC (2010a:24-26) for the entire restoration, conservation and research projects conducted or still on-going till 2010. ITASA's restoration project of the gates of the Royal Palace and Royal Angkor Foundation's restoration project of Preah Ko temple are not included as completed projects in this document.

and Cavalier 2002:120-121; Chau Sun 2006:149; ICC 2010a:38-39, 132-133). Conservation work has also brought about employment opportunities to the local inhabitants as restoration/conservation labourers, maintenance workers, and temple guards.

Implication of Zoning Law

The primary problem with the Zoning Law was that the publicity on the zoning was not sufficiently made so that the boundaries were unclear to many. During the 1990s no boundary stone or a sufficient number of signboards had been set up to publicize the respective zones and their boundaries. This caused some confusion, and at times feigned ignorance was employed as a tactics on the part of some Cambodian authorities other than APSARA to issue permits to build hotels or other structures in protected zones.

In Zone 2 along the main road from Siem Reap to Puok, an Angkorian canal was also narrowed by the owner of a hotel because a car park was made above. Some high-ranking military officers also ignored the Zoning Law to build private houses or karaoke establishments in Zones 1 and 2. Illegal land transactions in those zones have also taken place to a considerable degree, often with government personnel involved.

In 2000, selective articles in the Zoning Law as well as the past laws were used by the Heritage Police to impose restrictions on the local inhabitants on the access to their former socio-economic resources and traditional practices such as harvesting forest products, cultivating rice, grazing cattle, and releasing water buffaloes in the moat of Angkor Wat (Miura 2004). Moreover, building restrictions imposed on the houses of inhabitants of Zones 1 and 2 began to create enormous problems, which will be discussed in my chapter “Sustainable Development in Angkor” in this volume.

The Zoning Law is either completely ignored or arbitrarily interpreted by the relevant authorities and powerful individuals for their own conveniences. While the purpose of the law to protect cultural heritage and surrounding natural environment is widely accepted, it still causes great many problems because Angkor has long been the space used by human populations for living and the area coverage is extensive. The zones have become invisible barbed wires for them to restrict their practices and access to their former socio-cultural and economic resources in Angkor, because it was designated as a World Heritage Site.

Up to the end of the 1990s, the protection of monuments and sites had been the issue of utmost importance on Angkor for both the international community concerned and the Cambodian authorities in general. Because ICC was fairly strict on any attempt of development in the protection zones, it had often been taken place behind the scene, involving military personnel and business sectors closely associated with government officials.

In the case of the Hotel Zone it turned out to be unpopular with hotel developers despite the fact that it is close to Angkor Wat. The construction of hotels was most popular along the main road from the city of Siem Reap to Angkor Wat and National Road No. 6 connecting the airport to the city, and along the Siem Reap River. In

addition, many local people claimed the legal ownership of the land in this zone. The amount of compensation demanded was far exceeding what was expected. With financial and legal quagmire APSARA could not take action immediately, and the zone is still fairly underdeveloped.

Implications of Creating New Institutions: Competition among Institutions and Actors

Under normal circumstances a body of managing a World Heritage Site exists prior to the nomination. In the case of Angkor as explained above, it did not follow this path. It was the Angkor Conservation Office (hereinafter referred to as ACO) under the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts that used to manage all the national heritage sites in Cambodia. For specific reasons not known publically, this ministry was not entrusted of the task to safeguard and develop Angkor World Heritage Site, but was a newly created national body – APSARA.

APSARA started off with a few Cambodian professionals returned from Europe, mainly France, and a few foreign experts as consultants. In the early years APSARA experienced growing pains, “resulting from an overall lack of means – human, technical, and financial” (Chau Sun 2006:149). A small body of APSARA was headed as the chairman by a powerful senior minister who was also a confidant of the former king Sihanouk. This APSARA chairman was a well-known architect who designed prominent national buildings.

There also emerged competition between APSARA and ACO formerly under the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts. ACO was placed under APSARA, which caused quite a commotion among ACO staff. In addition, there soon emerged competitions between the chairman of APSARA and the representative of UNESCO Office in Cambodia over matters on Angkor, resulting in the change of UNESCO team on Angkor, both in Phnom Penh and Paris.

Siem Reap provincial authorities and the Ministry of Public Works and Transport tended to ignore the authority of APSARA,⁶ issuing building permits of hotels or other buildings within the protected zones against the Zoning Law. The Ministry of Tourism was also overshadowed by APSARA on the management of tourism in Angkor. It however was partially responsible for organizing theatrical performances in Angkor Wat, together with the provincial authorities and the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, practically not involving APSARA. The provincial authorities, however, co-operated well with APSARA,

especially with regard to the very sensitive issues involving the abandonment and acquisition of illegally occupied land for the development needs of tourist facility infrastructure.

(Chau Sun 2006:150)

⁶ For the relationship between APSARA and provincial authorities, see Chau Sun (2006:150).



Fig. 3: Local women and children selling souvenirs and postcards to tourists in Angkor Park (2011).

The military that used to control the space of Angkor was replaced by the Heritage Police, so there emerged silent competitions between both parties. The military and the Heritage Police also came into competition on the illicit traffic of artefacts from Angkor because the former had been involved with a number of large scale operations, which were cut short by the latter. Soon within APSARA, there emerged rivalries at the top management level, which finally came to an end with the removal of the said chairman in 2001.

There had also been a competition between the Heritage Police and APSARA, with the former imposing bans of many of the traditional practices of local inhabitants in 2000 without prior consultation with APSARA (Miura 2004:149). The Heritage Police also organized and charged stall owners and vendors of souvenirs, food and drinks, rice-field owners in large heritage areas as well as care-takers of statues in Angkor World Heritage Site (Miura 2004:150). The relationships between the Heritage Police and local inhabitants grew tense during this period.

The competitions within different authorities of the Cambodian government and individual players have the implication of party politics as well as the discrepancy in priority, i.e. protection or development among them. Ultimately, the one who controls Angkor is considered as the most powerful who would be able to receive the highest honour and prestige. After all, Angkor has historically been regarded as the seat of “legitimate” power in Cambodia.

During the coalition period (June 1993-July 1997) of the Cambodian government between the present ruling party – Cambodian People’s Party (hereinafter referred to as CPP) – and FUNCINPEC Party⁷ headed by Prince Ranariddh, the Minister of Culture and Fine Arts, the Minister of Tourism, the chairman of APSARA and the mayor of Siem Reap were the supporters or members of parties other than CPP; many were of FUNCINPEC Party. The armed events between CPP and FUNCINPEC in July 1997 resulted in the loss of power of the latter, and the former’s victory of the national elections one year later strengthened its power and authority. CPP thenceforth was adamant in speeding up with tourism development in the area of Siem Reap-Angkor despite strong reservations expressed by the international community of ICC.

The collection of entrance fees by a private company, Sokha Hotel Corporation, brought about controversies to ICC, especially with the international community that tended to consider the method inappropriate. For the latter, especially the Japanese government, all the entrance fees, together with all state revenue and expenditure should be administered only through the National Treasury, from which APSARA should receive its share (ICC 1999:12) in order to finance the restoration and conservation of monuments and sites as well as the rehabilitation of infrastructures in Angkor-Siem Reap City.

Competition over Heritage Ownership

In the 1990s because APSARA was busy dealing with enormous tasks of protecting the monuments and sites with a few human, financial, material and technical resources, the local communities were not overtly challenged on the issue of heritage ownership. It was first made in the most influential way in 2000 by the Heritage Police when many of the traditional socio-economic practices conducted by the local inhabitants in the space of Angkor were denied. The then-chief of the Heritage Police claimed that Angkor belonged to the nation and the world, not just for a few people who had lived there, categorically denying the local inhabitants’ cultural rights (Miura 2004:153-185; Lloyd 2009:147-292). This issue will be discussed more in my chapter “From Property to Heritage” in this volume.

The competition over heritage ownership of Angkor was also expressed in a drastic way between Thailand and Cambodia. In January 2003 a Cambodian paper reported that a Thai actress had allegedly said that Cambodia had stolen Angkor Wat, so that unless it would be returned to Thailand, she would not come to Cambodia. This incited a Cambodian mob to destroy and burn down a newly constructed Thai embassy in Phnom Penh as well as attack other prominent Thai business establishments. The Thai government responded to this event by sending a military aircraft to evacuate Thai nationals from Cambodia and closed temporarily the borders

⁷ FUNCINPEC stands for the United National Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Co-operative Cambodia.

with Cambodia for Thai and Cambodian nationals, while the Thais demonstrated in front of the Cambodian embassy in Bangkok (cf. Guardian January 31, 2003; Phnom Penh Post January 31–February 13, 2003:1-2).

Transitional Stage (1998-2003): A Shift from Conservation to Development

The strengthening of CPP as the sole ruling party since 1998 has influenced the way how Angkor World Heritage Site would be developed and managed. Formerly FUNCINPEC or other party members had assumed the top offices related to culture, tourism and Siem Reap provincial authorities as mentioned before. CPP's target was economic development, for that Angkor was going to be fully utilized. Probably in relation to the political stability enhanced since 1998 and economic development enjoyed by urban populations Angkor saw more domestic visitors than international tourists whose number had rapidly increased since 2000 with an annual growth rate of 36 per cent (Hing and Tuot 2007:33).

As for the transition from conservation to development, a crucial year was 2001 when the cabinet openly expressed its frustrations over the slow process of tourism-related development in Angkor in a number of international venues in Cambodia. As mentioned before, the protectionist Director-General cum chairman of APSARA was then removed from his positions that year: both positions were transferred to his deputy. APSARA's restructuring and strengthening with human resources and equipment is stated as to undertake a new stage in its agenda, i.e. sustainable development (cf. ICC 2001:8-9). The Cambodian government declared that

the period 2002-12 was 'Angkor Development Decade' with three challenges to be met: the first focusing on combating poverty, the second on stable economic growth, and the third on quality of life.

(Lemaistre and Cavalier 2002:123)

The official phase shift from ten years of emergency conservation to sustainable development was declared in Paris Conference, marking the tenth anniversary of ICC in November 2003. The Cambodian government still had to wait for the World Heritage Committee to remove Angkor officially off the List of World Heritage Sites in Danger in 2004.

Summary of Implementation Stage I

The first implementation stage of heritage making in Angkor caused confusions and competitions among all the actors because of the introduction of new institutions and regulations, the emergence of new actors, partitioning of spaces, and somewhat contradictory laws and arrangement. Implementing laws and regulations was also irregular and arbitrary, which caused to influence negatively the effectiveness of Angkor management. The restoration and conservation work proceeded steadily, and the number of tourists increased. The clash between the local communities and the



Fig. 4: Phnom Bakheng temple full of tourists (2011).

Heritage Police revealed the different understanding of heritage and its ownership and the problem of conservation and development. While the activities of the Heritage Police often exceeded their stipulated duties, the number of illicit excavations and traffic of artefacts decreased because of their presence. The political change between 1997 and 1998 also had affected the Cambodian government to move from emergency conservation to economic development through the institutional change of APSARA's management team.

Implementation Stage II (2004–present): Strengthening the Authority and Emerging Problems of Development

Outline of the Situation: 2004–2007

2004 marked the year of a great change in Angkor management for it was officially declared the year before that the policy would shift from emergency conservation to sustainable development. Incidentally, this year saw a great leap from the previous year in the number of international tourists to Siem Reap-Angkor, i.e. over a million. The top nationality of international visitors in terms of the number also shifted from Japanese to Korean in 2004. From this period on Korean developmental aids and

investment has become prominent in Siem Reap/Angkor region. The total revenue from tourism in 2005 was some US\$1,078 million, or over 10 per cent of the GDP, and generated some 200,000 jobs (ICC 2006a:106). In 2007 tourism receipts amounted nationally to US\$1.4 billion, which accounted for 16% of GDP. By 2007 the number of international arrivals to Siem Reap-Angkor reached 2 million (Esposito and Nam 2008:40-41). While tourism development obviously brought about enormous wealth to Cambodia, Siem Reap is the third poorest province in Cambodia in 2007 with about 52 per cent of its population living below the poverty line, i.e. less than 50 US cent a day (Hing and Tuot 2007:27, 39; De Lopez et al. 2006:6; Esposito and Nam 2008:III-36). It means that benefits from tourism development have not adequately been channelled through to the local communities at large or linked to community development. In order to deal with the new phase of sustainable development, another Ad Hoc group consisting of three experts was set up in 2006, which began to work in 2007. Two were designated by co-chairs, hence a French and a Japanese, and the other selected by APSARA. Together they were to cover sustainable development from the view-points of environment, economy and tourism (ICC 2010a:38-39, 86, 132). It is notable that the Group lacks an expert on community development.

Strengthening the Structure and the Authority of APSARA

In order to achieve this new management policy, APSARA had an increase of three departments with professional Cambodians, two returning from Europe. In September Sok An, the top of ten vice-prime ministers, assumed the office of APSARA chairman (cf. ICC 2004:11). In 2003 the Cambodian government passed the Instruction on the Prevention of Anarchic Activities on the Angkor Site (BB 02) and the Decision on the Definition of Standards for Land Use in Zones 1 and 2 of the Angkor Site (SSR 70), both of which were integrated in 2004 as Royal Decree on the Zoning and Management of the Siem Reap/Angkor region. By the decree the government strictly prohibits any other authorities to intervene with the sphere of the authority of APSARA and warns against any act of illegality vis-à-vis land use or heritage (APSARA Authority 2005). While heritage protection was still considered as an on-going obligation, Sok An emphasised at the plenary session of ICC in 2004 that UNESCO, all partners and decision-makers in the area of economics were in agreement to make cultural heritage as the engine of development (ICC 2004:13). In the same session the Director-General of APSARA said, “Due to the constant concern shown by its chairman, HE Mr SOK An, the APSARA National Authority is becoming increasingly solid” (ICC 2004:25). This shows how APSARA finally came to be fully in control of the management of Angkor, and that the Cambodian government’s determination to deal with any form of “illegality” more strictly than ever, targeting both civil servants and ordinary citizens.

New Departments to Deal with Developmental Issues

In order to deal with developmental issues three new departments were established in APSARA, namely the Department of Monuments and Archaeology II (DMA-II), Department of Water and Forest (DWF) and Department of Demography and Development (DDD). DMA-II took over the former Department of Cultural Heritage and became responsible for establishing a land use plan to control construction in the ancient villages inside Angkor Park (ICC 2004:24-25, 2006b:33). In addition, Mixed Intervention Unit (MIU) was newly created, comprising representatives from Military Police, Provincial Police, Heritage Police, Provincial Department of Land Registration and Provincial Department of Forest. This unit was to deal with “land grabbing, illicit constructions and anarchic activities in the Angkor Park”. Communication Unit (CU) was also established in the Administrative Department (Khuon 2006b:3).

CU’s primary role is to improve communications between the local communities, monks and APSARA which organized campaigns concerning heritage and sustainable development and coach training on the same theme among APSARA staffs, Heritage Police, provincial police, tourist police, MIU, Buddhist monks and students. At the same time CU established zone-markers, sign boards of zoning and description of rights of residential population and prohibitions, 11 mail boxes in all five districts in Angkor World Heritage Site and two mobile phones as hot lines for communications between APSARA and the local villagers. In addition, mass media such as radio, television and newspapers were fully utilized to propagate APSARA’s policies and progress made. Moreover, monthly magazines have been published and distributed to the local authorities and communities on the directions taken by APSARA since September 2006 (Khuon 2005, 2006b; ICC 2006b:33-34).

All the new departments and units deal with local communities to a certain extent, among which DMA-II has come to play the key role in the lives of the local residents. Upon designation, the director of DMA-II, an architect, vigorously began to deal with local communities and often represents APSARA in international venues. At Phnom Bakheng Workshop on Public Interpretation held in June 2006 he expressed the determination of APSARA as expanding “its focus to embrace sustainable development, which includes working with the local population” and

[t]o ensure that these populations can continue to live in accordance with their religious practise and customs, it is necessary to solicit the input of locals in making decisions for sustainable development and tourism in this region and to consider their values in plans for managing the social and natural environment.

(Khuon 2006a:116)

At the international conference on Angkor held at the University of Sydney in the following month, he expressed his concern about the rapid growth in population around the temples with the growth of existing villages, and the setting up of new



Fig. 5: Boundary post of the Angkor World Heritage Site (2011).

temporary settlements causing additional stress to the ecosystem and the cultural environment as well as impacting on the lifestyle of the original villagers' (Khuon 2006b:2).

His determination to conserve the ecosystem, the cultural environment and the lifestyle of the “original” villagers was to be realised in two ways; first to move “voluntarily” local villagers to Run Ta Ek, an area of 1,012 hectares provided by the Cambodian government outside the World Heritage Site (cf. APSARA Authority 2008) to reduce population pressure within the park and second, to restrict the building of new, “untraditional” or unauthorized houses, while maintaining the lifestyles of the original villagers and landscapes. This department’s partner in sustainable development is New Zealand’s International Aid (NZAID). It also

launched “The Living with Heritage Project” in association with the University of Sydney, EFEO and UNESCO to consult the local communities about the values and issues of the places they live at in order to establish a cultural map of the Angkor Park (Khuon 2006b:7; Mackay and Sullivan 2008).

DWF manages water networks and the forest resources for the needs of the temples as well as those of some local villagers living in the Angkor Site. Knowing the impossibility of complete banning the local inhabitants to use trees for fuel and fruits, the department provided some areas as Temporary Zone within Zone 2 with plantations of fruit trees and trees for fuel, situated between the village and forest zone, for domestic consumption. Local inhabitants were also employed for reforestation, cleaning forest and canals, composting, the botanical garden, the nursery and water management (APSARA Authority 2004; Hang 2006).

As regards water, it collaborated with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) that had completed a Master Plan Study from 1996 to 2000, in which sources for the Siem Reap town’s water supply system had been evaluated. In the Master Plan JICA points out the current tourism and urban development will not be sustainable in the future because of excessive pumping of underground water, causing land subsidence and recommends the policy-makers to shift the direction from quantity-oriented (or mass) tourism to the quality-oriented and make compatible with conditions of natural environment (JICA 2006a).

DDD has mainly two activities, the first dealing with the population census and its updating, the information of which will be used for the second one for improving socio-economic situation of the inhabitants of Angkor Park. DDD dispatched an agronomist to each of the five districts to train the inhabitants to adopt new techniques using biological fertilizer for rice cultivation. It is reported that the rice harvest of 2005 was excellent. DDD also established an experimental farm to develop techniques to produce western vegetables to cater for international hotels and restaurants (cf. Khuon 2006a:115, 2006b:4). Siem Reap is seriously short of such vegetables and fruits, many of which are imported from neighbouring countries.

Continuing Problems

The problems of zoning and restrictions on every-day living were felt by the local inhabitants even after 2005 when sign boards and boundary posts began to be set up with the zoning map and the description of regulations. Many local villagers were unaware in which zones their villages were located and “these signs did not indicate in which zone the individual signboards stand” (cf. De Lopez et al. 2006:26-27). This created a serious problem because some local inhabitants were accused of having done something “illegal” without knowing the restrictions clearly. The clear partitioning of the ancient space with multiple long-standing activities and interests beyond the zone boundaries is something that needs to be carefully reconsidered, discussed and rearranged.

Further Strengthening of APSARA and Stated Objective of Sustainable Development

In 2008 APSARA was again reorganized with sub-decree No. 50 ANK/BK. With this APSARA's number of departments increased from eight to fourteen. DMA-II was renamed, reflecting its mandate more precisely as the Department of Land and Housing Management in the Angkor Park (DLHMAP), DDD to Dept. of Agriculture and Community Development (DACD), and DWF split into two, i.e. Dept. of Water Management (DWM) and Dept. of Forest Management, Cultural Landscapes and Environment (DFMCLE). MIU became Department of Public Order and Co-operation (DPOC). CU was also upgraded to Department of Communication (DC) (Royal Government 2008). Further increase of departments means the expansion of the organization and the increase of politically appointed staffs rather than professionals of specific fields. APSARA since this time on has become a huge bureaucratic body staffed with far more financial, human and technical resources than ever before.

In the same sub-decree, APSARA missions and tasks are listed. It includes sustainable management of natural resources, development and implementation of sustainable tourism as well as economic and social development projects for the park's population and co-operation with relevant institutions (Royal Government 2008:2-3). APSARA also rearranged stalls to sell food or souvenirs in the site in 2010, removing finally the Heritage Police's practice of illegal collection of "fees" from sellers or shop owners.

Implication of New Management Structure and Issues

DACD and DFMCLE that deal with agriculture and forestry have provided positive inputs to the local communities, in terms of bringing the increase in agricultural productivities and employment opportunities such as forest guards introduced in 2008. Their projects have been helping the local inhabitants to improve their livelihood without causing serious contestations. The development work however needs time to bear fruits, and the employment opportunities are limited as compared to the number of population increased to more than 120,000 people (APSARA Authority 2008:4).

APSARA today with so many departments and layers of ranks became divisive and the communications among departments have become more complicated and difficult. APSARA furthermore overshadowed traditional local authorities at all the levels from the village to the province. The intensified enforcement of building restrictions since this period on created enormous grievances among the local inhabitants because DPOC is much more powerful than the Heritage Police alone. DPOC appears in the local villages as a demolition team in a large number; some with guns to forcefully destroy houses constructed "illegally". The local inhabitants at large are feeling stress and fear of APSARA's "absolute power", which we shall see in more details in my chapter "Sustainable Development in Angkor" in this volume.

Summary of Implementation Stage II

The second implementation stage is from the viewpoints of APSARA that it finally came to consolidate its authority to take full charge of managing Angkor World Heritage Site, reducing the residue of other authorities' attempts of sabotage. It however appears no longer an independent authority staffed with professionals, but was converted to a miniature version of Cambodian government itself.

Conservation experts and ICC on the whole are however, highly satisfied with restoration and conservation work done in Angkor so far. Giorgio Croci, one member of Ad Hoc Group, is happy to express in "ICC-Angkor: 15 Years of International Cooperation for Conservation and Sustainable Development" (ICC 2010a:98) that

Angkor can be considered as the most important World Heritage Site in terms of a general coherent methodology, flexibility applied in relation to different local situations, also with regards to the scope of projects and operations.

Azedine Beschaouch, Scientific Secretary of ICC-Angkor, who has been involved with the issue of Angkor nearly two decades through UNESCO, affirmed in the same document, "My first – and last – word, unhesitatingly and determinedly, is: Angkor has been saved!" (ICC 2010a:19). Indeed the conservation of monuments and sites is considered as one of the most successful cases of World Heritage Sites. Yet, a sustainable development of economic, social, and environmental fields seems to require different kinds of expertise, methodology and consideration, for people's lives are entangled within all these fields and are not fixed in certain locations like monuments.

Conclusion and Lessons Learnt from Angkor

The World Heritage making in Angkor from the process of World Heritage nomination to that of formulating and implementing regulations, indeed has brought about new actors, meanings, perspectives, and challenges. In the process global, regional, national and local actors have come to actively interplay and compete as have been old and new meanings, perspectives and methodologies of implementation and management.

Attention paid to the process of World Heritage making in Angkor shows us how it has significant influence on power politics and open an arena for competition all around, rather than it is just about preserving heritage. While there is also a danger of turning Angkor into an icon for economic development, there is a renewed concern over what to preserve, to which extent the heritage can be used, and by whom it can be decided.

What lessons we can learn from the World Heritage making in Angkor is that for a successful nomination and management of a World Heritage Site, before placing a site

on a candidate list, it is important to identify main stakeholders, collect sufficient data as to how the local people make use of space, what kind of knowledge they may have on their cultural and natural environment. ZEMP was used to serve for this objective, however, the research findings were not necessarily fully incorporated into the Zoning Law in a coherent manner. After all, Angkor World Heritage Site is not just a collection of ancient buildings and forests, but the local knowledge and the way the local inhabitants have lived in and associated with the environment and Angkor temples may also be considered as valuable “intangible” heritage. It is therefore important to integrate their concerns and wishes into policy-making and the mechanism of heritage protection and development. In a sense Angkor’s management policy shifted at the right timing from emergency conservation to sustainable development, however, development requires more time, consultation and sensitive approaches for effective implementation.

Managing authorities and personnel may also benefit from appropriate training from the onset concerning the concepts of heritage, heritage management and dealing with local communities. Representatives of the local communities may be part of the bodies such as ICC and any committees concerning heritage policy-making and management. The third-party monitoring of management may help improve the situation, and the contents of the evaluation be discussed with all the members at those committees and international forums concerning heritage protection and development.

Open dialogues among all the stakeholders and active participation of the local communities in the management are crucial for successful heritage making from the nomination process to management, monitoring and evaluation.⁸ The influence of World Heritage making as I have discussed so far is not just confined to its own heritage space, institutions and actors, but can be stretched to reconsider heritage policies and methods of management elsewhere (Miura 2010) as well as the country’s socio-economic life and the relationship with neighbouring countries.

⁸ See Luco (2006:128-129) and Lloyd (2009:302-306) for similar recommendations, focusing on community participation in heritage “making”.

Preah Vihear.

From Object of Colonial Desire to a Contested World Heritage Site

Brigitta Hauser-Schänblin

Introduction

The border between Cambodia and Thailand along the Dangrek Mountains, as set up in 1907 after negotiations between France and Siam by the French colonial power more than one hundred years ago, has been disputed since the 1930s. The temple of Preah Vihear¹, the monumental remains of a huge Khmer temple complex, situated right on the border, has been an extremely sensitive issue since that time. Its listing by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 2008 fiercely revived the old border conflict, the monumental “heritage” and the question to whom it really “belongs”. The temple complex was built at the beginning of the 11th century (during the reign of King Suryavarman I, who ruled over Angkor) and is located on the tip of the southern precipice of the Dangrek Mountains which overlooks the Cambodian plain. Preah

¹ The Thai name for the temple site is Phra Wiharn. Preah Vihear is the Cambodian denotation; both terms derive from Sanskrit.

Vihear has become a bone of contention between Cambodia and Thailand, and the armed conflict that arose immediately after the UNESCO listing shows the political dimension such a certification may have. For both countries, the official recognition of the ruins by one of the most important international organizations that actually stands not only for education and culture, but also for promoting co-operation and peace, touched national feelings and sensitivities. For Thailand, the temple of Preah Vihear symbolizes “lost territories” (Denes 2006:35-43), that is, the territories Siam was persuaded to cede to France in the early-20th century. The international recognition of Preah Vihear as the property of Cambodia was interpreted by Thailand as a further validation of a wrong that the International Court of Justice in The Hague (ICJ) had legitimated nine years after Cambodia had gained independence in its decree of 1962. The ICJ adjudicated in this decree that the temple of Preah Vihear was located on Cambodian territory. Although the demarcation of the border between the two countries was based, as we can state today, on data incorrectly represented in the map of 1907, the ICJ declared the border as definitive since Thailand had not filed their protest in time. The Thai government decided to comply with the ICJ decision. However, the Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs wrote in a letter to the UN Acting Secretary General (dated July 6, 1962) that this agreement was made “under protest and with reservation of her intrinsic rights”, that is, “whatever rights Thailand has, or may have in the future, to recover the Temple of Phra Viharn by having recourse to any existing or subsequently applicable legal process” (Cuasay 1998:881). The subsequent border incidents or clashes over decades show that the sores have never healed. Moreover, as a consequence of the new clashes in February 2011, Cambodia appealed to the ICJ again in July 2011 and requested an interpretation of the 1962 decree (ICJ 2011).

But apart from these colonial constructions which lie at the basis of today’s ethno-nationalistic discourse, the more recent political history needs to be considered as well. For Cambodia today, both Angkor (a World Heritage Site since 1992) and Preah Vihear represent symbols of national unity and national pride based on the glory of the ancient Khmer empire perceived as the ancestral cradle from which today’s Cambodians all originated.² The discourse on a homogenous “Khmer nation” and the recognition of Angkor as a UNESCO World Heritage Site contributed to the social consolidation, reconciliation and nation-building after the cataclysmic impact of war and genocide (Khmer Rouge Regime) (Winter 2007: 63, 142). In the meantime, Preah Vihear has become a further cornerstone in the construction of national history and identity discourse, a production which is always a political act (Keyes 1991:261-292). Most of the present-day Cambodian elite, and probably also a large part of the population, see themselves as being the direct descendants of those “original Cambodians” who erected the buildings of Angkor and Preah Vihear (among others). The panel displayed alongside the World Heritage Site of Preah Vihear in 2008

² The day after the UNESCO listing (July 7, 2008), the Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen said, according to an article with the title “Temple triumph” that the listing “is another new pride for the Cambodian people and the Kingdom of Cambodia” (Phnom Penh Post July 8, 2008).

showed the phrase “I have pride to be born as Khmer”, and documents the conception of national identity rooted in ethnic Khmer ancestry. The term “Khmerness” is today often used in political contexts and implies the organic or grown nature of a clearly demarcated community, a “Khmer nation” (see also Edwards 2007:218). Conversely, discourses and images pertaining to “Khmerness” have served to construct the “Other” – in this case: the Thai – and thus a concept of the enemy (Hinton 2006).

In this article³, I want to illuminate some aspects of the backdrop of the border conflict by analysing the colonial history of Preah Vihear. More specifically, I shall focus on the way in which Western scholars of different disciplines have unintentionally contributed to this recent tragedy, not only at the time when Cambodia was a French colony⁴, but also at the beginning of the 21st century. The case of Preah Vihear represents from the perspective of colonial history a legacy, the results of what Edward Said (2003) called “Orientalism”.

I am going to address three issues that were and are fundamental for the understanding of why Preah Vihear has become such a sensitive political factor between the two nations: firstly, France’s quest for territory and the search for ancient cultures in Southeast Asia; secondly, the specific, museumizing way in which explorers and colonial scholars looked at Khmer monuments and reconstructed an ancient Khmer empire. I suggest that the Orientalist way of viewing “monuments” continues in the way such buildings undergo routinized evaluation today, such as that required for the UNESCO nomination process. Preah Vihear is a point in case; and thirdly, the mapping of monuments as landmarks of territory and the consequences these activities and their results have had on Thai/Cambodian relations with regard to Preah Vihear.

The Nomination of Preah Vihear as a UNESCO World Heritage Site

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee put the temple complex of Preah Vihear on the World Heritage list as the property of Cambodia in July 2008. The Preah Vihear temple dates back to the 11th century and displays historical relationships and

³ This article is based on research the author carried out as a member of the interdisciplinary Research Group “The Constituting of Cultural Property: Actors, Discourses, Contexts, and Rules” at Goettingen University. The first version of this paper was presented at the conference of the Research Group held in Nov. 2009 in Goettingen. I am especially grateful for the co-operation and the comments relating to Preah Vihear given by my colleagues Peter-Tobias Stoll and Sven Mißling from the Department of International Law, as well as by Christoph Brumann, from the Max-Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale.

⁴ For an appreciation of the merits of the renowned scholars who worked as researchers in Indochina see Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin (2001).

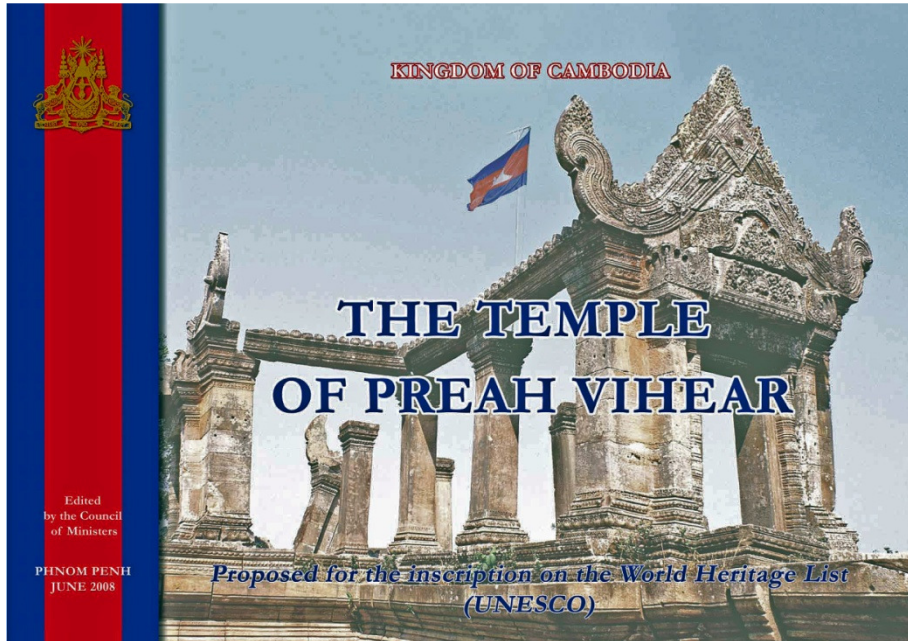


Fig. 1: The nomination of Preah Vihear as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (Council of Ministers 2008).

architectural and religious similarities with many other temples in Cambodia, such as Angkor, but also with those on Thai territory.⁵ The nomination included only the actual buildings and their immediate surroundings, but not the whole area of this sacred site which is much larger and extends into Thailand. The main avenue, in fact, originates in the north, that is from today's Thai side of the border.

Based on the evaluation established by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and other preservation/conservation organizations, the UNESCO inscription document states:

The Temple of Preah Vihear, a unique architectural complex of a series of sanctuaries linked by a system of pavements and staircases on an 800 metre long axis, is an outstanding masterpiece of Khmer architecture, in terms of plan, decoration and relationship to the spectacular landscape environment. [...]. Preah Vihear is an outstanding masterpiece of Khmer architecture. It is very “pure” both in plan and in the detail of its decoration.

(UNESCO World Heritage Committee 2009a:221)

⁵ For an overview of Khmer temples in Thailand, see Maneenetr (2007:5 fig.1).

Authenticity, in terms of the way the buildings and their materials express well the values of the property, has been established. The attributes of the property comprise the temple complex; the integrity of the property has to a degree been compromised by the absence of part of the promontory from the perimeter of the property. The protective measures for the Temple, in terms of legal protection are adequate.

(UNESCO World Heritage Committee 2009a:221)

The decision process at the UNESCO meeting in Quebec in 2008 was accompanied by protests from the Thai side, although the Thai Foreign Minister had previously signed an agreement with Cambodia in which he had consented on behalf of Thailand to the nomination of Preah Vihear by Cambodia. However, this consent was without authorization from the Thai parliament. The Foreign Minister had to step down from his office immediately after Preah Vihear was nominated as a World Heritage Site of Cambodia by UNESCO. The decision took place in spite of Thailand's protests and the imminent conflict that could be anticipated, as a glimpse into the historical entanglements of Preah Vihear would have easily revealed (see also Silverman 2011).⁶

As a consequence of the UNESCO nomination, the border conflict, which had been smouldering for decades, broke out again leaving several soldiers on both sides wounded and others even killed. The local border crossing was closed.⁷

The temple itself was repeatedly affected by the skirmish, although its protection and safeguarding should have been reinforced as a consequence of the nomination. In 2008, Cambodia had to delay its touristic aspirations due to the precarious situation and could not launch economic development in the region. However, after the nomination, Chinese companies advanced their plans of building a concrete runway atop the steep cliffs of the Dangrek Mountains where Preah Vihear is located (Winter 2010). These plans constituted the first step towards providing tourists with access to an area of Cambodia that was otherwise very difficult to reach. Thailand, however, claimed a major area near the monument as her own territory. This area is exactly the one on which the runway, the main route to the World Heritage Site, is located. Up to

⁶ The World Heritage Committee in its decision document requested Cambodia to co-operate with Thailand with regard to the safeguarding of the "Outstanding Universal Value of the property" (WHC.08/32.COM/24:221 and WHC-09/33.COM/7B:88).

⁷ UNESCO's Director-General informed Cambodia on 30 Dec. 2008 that he had launched a "reinforced monitoring mechanism" as a reaction to the escalating bad relations between Thailand and Cambodia (WHC-10/34.COM/7.2.:1). Shortly thereafter, a mission whose aim was to clarify the current state of the World Heritage Site and at the same time to get an idea of how UNESCO's recommendations were being implemented was sent to Preah Vihear (UNESCO World Heritage Committee 2009b:89).

At the thirty-third session in Seville (Spain) in July 2009, the World Heritage Committee paid attention to the military assisted conflict that has escalated between the two countries since the nomination. Given that the report prepared by Cambodia did not fulfil all of UNESCO's expectations, the World Heritage Committee has decided to extend Cambodia's deadline until Feb. 1, 2010 to do so. At that point, Cambodia should provide a report as to what extent it has implemented the WHC's recommendations. This report should be presented at the thirty-fourth session in 2010 (UNESCO World Heritage Committee 2009c:110). But the matter was postponed to 2011.

the moment when the conflict broke out, many tourists preferred to travel to Preah Vihear via Thailand simply because access to the site is less demanding due to the nature of the terrain. Many western countries issued travel warnings intended to deter tourists – even those arriving from Cambodia – from visiting the new World Heritage Site. The World Heritage Committee during its meeting in Brasilia in the summer of 2010 decided to postpone the matter until 2011. However, an agreement seems to have moved again into a distant future since new border clashes broke out once more in February 2011. After three years of conflict, the International Court of Justice ruled in July 2011 that both states had to withdraw their armies from the area (ICJ 2011).⁸

If one looks back at the 1972 UNESCO Heritage Convention, with its thoughts and charitable goals promoted by its educational, humanistic and democratic ideals, one realizes how the notion of culture had been coined by the time the convention was established. The academic perspective on the relationship between culture, society and nation has changed considerably since that time. During the late-1960s, “culture” was often regarded as something authentic, as something confining and static which had been developed and maintained by certain societies and indigenous groups over a long time and, as such, was now threatened. This thus gave rise to the then current “urgent anthropology” which, fearing the “disappearance” or “extinction” of such cultures, stressed the need of providing protection against transformation and change.⁹ The guiding principles of the (European) institution of museums can be recognized at this point: museums saw themselves as cultural banks in which material evidence of outstanding human artistic creativity could be (and should be) placed in storage and set aside for the benefit of humanity, thereby separating the objects from their original producers and their descendants (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998). Over the past few years, it has been illustrated how easily cultural phenomena, classified by UNESCO as Intangible Heritage, have transcended borders. The latter also applies to the cultural settings in which monumental heritage is located. They cannot be separated from the network of social relations in which such constructions are usually embedded. Accordingly, different groups may simultaneously claim the rights to cultural goods.¹⁰ Whom does culture “belong” to, and are monopolistic rights to

⁸ During the thirty-fifth session of the Intergovernmental Commission in 2011, the issue of Preah Vihear ended with an éclat and Thailand left the session under protest. For the limited possibilities UNESCO has to react to this conflict, see Mißling and Watermann (2009); see also Mißling this volume.

⁹ See for example “Smithsonian Institution Urgent Anthropology Program”, *Anthropology News*, 10, 8 (1969):10.

¹⁰ One such controversial example of this phenomenon has been observed in Malaysia and Indonesia: both countries have made claims to the ornamental textile technique of batik and the *Wayang* shadow play, as well as a certain form of singing (Knobloch and Reni 2009).

In the meantime, Indonesia has successfully undertaken the certification by UNESCO of *Wayang* and batik as forms of intangible heritage. Another recent example involves the *La Diablada* carnival costume: Bolivia and Peru have been fighting over which country it “belongs” to, and thus which country has the right to make and use it. It is also interesting to note in this context that it is not the cultural practice in itself which is of prime importance, but rather the tourist-related income it embodies. As Bolivia’s minister of culture confirms, it is a “true patrimony and source of tourist development” (Moffett and Kozak 2009).

culture possible at all?¹¹ It seems such questions become particularly pressing if the exclusive rights and economic incentives or rewards are linked to culture, including monuments.

In Search of Ancient Civilizations

The territorial colonial expansion of European countries in the 18th and 19th centuries (notably France and Britain) was accompanied by ideologies which, as is well known, Said called “Orientalism” (2003). Part of the specific kind of knowledge Orientalism produced was the aspiration to “reviving the glory that was”, that is, the search for traces of ancient civilizations (Seneviratne 2008:178). Said characterized Orientalism as follows:

Orientalism [...] is also an influential academic tradition [...], as well as an area of concern defined by travellers, commercial enterprises, governments, military expeditions, readers of novels and accounts of exotic adventure, natural historians, and pilgrims to whom the Orient is a specific kind of knowledge about specific places, peoples, and civilizations.

(Said: 2003:203)¹²

In short, Orientalism can be called the “cultural” side of imperialism, of which racism and Eurocentrism are constitutive; academic Orientalism is, therefore, located in a larger political context (Said 2003:14).

The enthusiasm for ancient cultures in Asia was fuelled by the European discovery of ancient circum-Mediterranean cultures, the Greeks and the Romans. For the French, this ideological background of colonial expansion began with Napoleon Bonaparte’s expedition to Egypt and the discovery of the treasures of Ancient Egypt, most prominently among them the pyramids, the Rosetta Stone and, consequently, the deciphering of the hieroglyphs (Klein 2009:93). This politically motivated search for ancient civilizations continued in South and mainland Southeast Asia with India and, subsequently, ended in the kingdoms of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. These enterprises took place in a competitive situation between France and Britain, not only to gain territories in Asia, but also to discover and acquire ancient civilizations: Burma was appropriated by the British; Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia by France; and Siam had the function as a kind of buffer state between the two colonial powers (see also Said 2003:41, 218; Chandler 2003). Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia were perceived as encircled by China and India, two of the most developed ancient civilizations. This is mirrored in the expression “Indochina” (Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin 2001:19).

¹¹ A large body of literature has recently come to surround these questions; see for example Michael F. Brown (2003) and Melanie G. Wiber (2006).

¹² But see also Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin (2001:29).

Angkor was – as Edwards (2007), Klein (2009), Singaravélou (1999) and Winter (2007) among others have shown in detail – the starting point for France’s colonial endeavour to investigate, reconstruct and take possession of the realm of the ancient Khmer. The description of Angkor – then still located on Siamese territory – by Henry Mouhot (2005) laid the foundation in Europe for the popularization of Angkor and a spreading fascination in the grandeur of its vanished civilization.¹³ Angkor, with its architectural masterpieces (such as the huge temple complex of Angkor Wat, the numerous traces of other temples, especially the Bayon temple with its many faces, the royal city of Angkor Thom, the reliefs and sculptures, all testimonies of Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as the inscriptions, some of them in Sanskrit, with the names of innovative and powerful kings such as Jayavarman and Suryavarman I among others) proved that Cambodia had an outstanding past. Mouhot wrote in his travel report:

Nokhor, or Ongcor, was the capital of the ancient kingdom of Cambodia, or Khmer, formerly so famous among the great states of Indo-China, that almost the only tradition preserved in the country mentions that empire as having had twenty kings who paid tribute to it, as having kept up an army of five or six million soldiers, and that the buildings of the royal treasury occupied a space of more than 300 miles.

In the province still bearing the name of Ongcor [...] there are [...] ruins of such grandeur, remains of structures which must have been raised at such an immense cost of labour, that, at the first view, one is filled with profound admiration, and cannot but ask what has become of this powerful race, so civilized, so enlightened, the authors of these gigantic works?

One of these temples – a rival to that of Solomon and erected by some ancient Michael Angelo – might take an honourable place beside our most beautiful buildings. It is grander than anything left to us by Greece or Rome, and presents a sad contrast to the state of barbarism in which the nation is now plunged.

(Mouhot 2005:278-279)

Travelogues and adventure stories played a decisive role in shaping the European imagination and romanticizing of this vanished grand civilization (Letourneux 2008). Thus, the ruins stimulated imagination and certainly also nostalgia. Among a politically influential readership, such accounts aroused the desire to acquire as much knowledge and as many material testimonies of these ancient cultures as possible (see also Herbelin 2009). The attention of the French, therefore, turned first and foremost to these ruins.

¹³ As Herbelin (2009:128) points out, the first European (French) writer who gave a description of Angkor was a missionary, Charles Émile Bouillevaux, who published in 1858 and 1883. However, it was the publication of Mouhot’s travelogue which achieved the popularization of Angkor in Europe; see also Letourneux (2008).

This orientation towards the ancient times dominated the perspective of the explorers and the leaders of military expeditions on behalf of France. It was a gaze that focused on traces of a glorious past of a civilization that had vanished centuries before the Europeans came to these countries. The actual situation, the people and their way of living were perceived as being in a lamentable decline. The search for material traces of Khmer civilization also included the search for its roots, which were assumed to have grown outside of Southeast Asia. These “roots” were found predominantly in immigrants from India. They were seen as having carried out the first colonizing mission in Southeast Asia out of which the “Hindu” Khmer empire arose (see also Edwards 2007). Auguste Pavie, for example, starts his report on Cambodia as follows:

Les traditions Khmères placent au V^e siècle avant notre ère, l'arrivée dans l'Indo-Chine orientale des Indous fondateurs de l'Empire cambodgien, et, qui y substituèrent le Brahmanisme au Fétichisme et au culte du serpent.

(Pavie 1903:4)

The Archaeological Gaze

The ruins of Angkor (and other temples) were perceived as, for example, George Groslier described it, “sleeping in the forests” (1921-1923:2) and it was the task of the colonial scholars to wrest them from their apparent fate, to revive them and to give them back their deserved place in world history, as arranged by the colonial power. This primarily historical, or rather archaeological, perspective ignored the question of how these ruins were used by the people the visitors met when travelling through their territory, what meaning these constructions had for them and who had a right to them.

The monumental remains were read in a particular way. The approach which was applied by travellers, leaders of military expeditions, colonial administrators, and, of course, scholars who collaborated with the former to describe the monuments was always the same. At the beginning, this similarity was perhaps the result of a special kind of apodemics all travellers and explorers used. However, the Mission Archéologique d'Indochine and, later, L'École Française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO) taught a special model of description to be followed by the officials charged with investigation. The EFEO was, in fact, “a school of archaeology” but one that “disciplined archaeology by subordinating it to the technical rules of architecture” (Singaravélou 1999:115, my translation; see also Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin 2001:100). Consequently, the EFEO exclusively hired architects, the first of whom was Henri Parmentier (Singaravélou 1999:115). The descriptions and analyses of

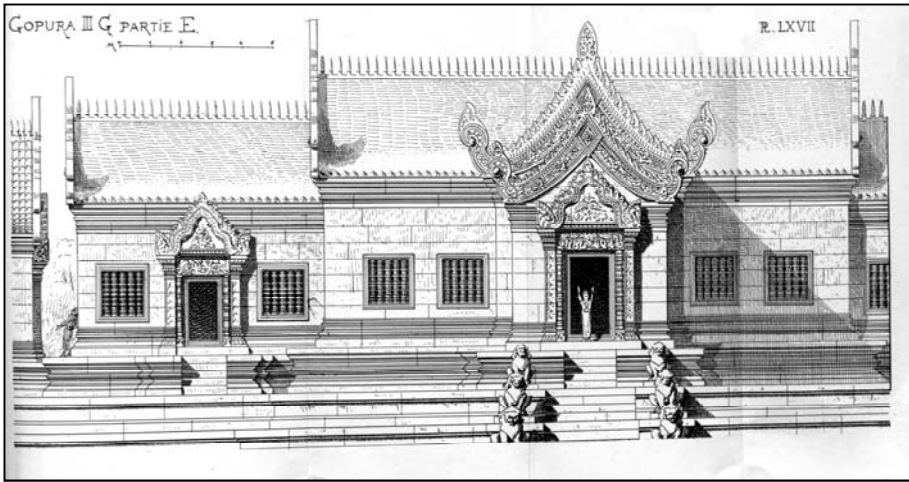


Fig. 2: Parmentier's drawing of Gopura III, showing the building in an idealized and pristine condition (Parmentier 1939: Table 67).

Khmer temples were gradually systematized over time. In his two volumes on *“Inventaire descriptif des monuments çams de l’Annam”* from 1909 and 1918, Parmentier spelt out in detail the systematic and meticulous methodology he applied in setting up this archaeological inventory¹⁴ in Annam (Vietnam) between 1900 and 1915.

Geography – the natural setting – and chronology – the attempts to organize the monuments in temporal order – constituted the conceptual framework of these works: The descriptions given by most of the scholarly explorers started with an overview of the region mainly in terms of geography, and continued with the orientation of the monument and the way it was situated in the landscape. The reports proceeded with an account of the shape of the monument, its outside characteristics and the apparent similarities it displayed with other already known monuments, the form and the construction, the materials used, and the modes and forms of its decoration. Then followed a systematic analysis and an in-depth depiction (often accompanied by drawings and photographs) of the individual parts of the monuments, mostly temple complexes, starting with the entrance and ending with the innermost part. The last section consisted of a description and translation of the inscriptions found and a discussion of the dating of the monument and its integration into an encompassing chronology (see for example Aymonier 1901; Groslier 1916, 1921-23; Lunet de Lajonquière 1907). An acknowledgment of recent traces of human use the investigators certainly must have come across is almost completely lacking in their scholarly reports. In the case of Preah Vihear, Groslier simply mentions “Siamese

¹⁴ It is clear that his focus – and this applies to all other scholars before and after him who shared his perspective – deals exclusively with the remains of an extinct art, “*les ‘restes d’un art éteint’*” (Parmentier 1918:1), detached from any current cultural or social context it still may have had at the time of his visits. For his methodology and the role of drawings, see Parmentier (1939).

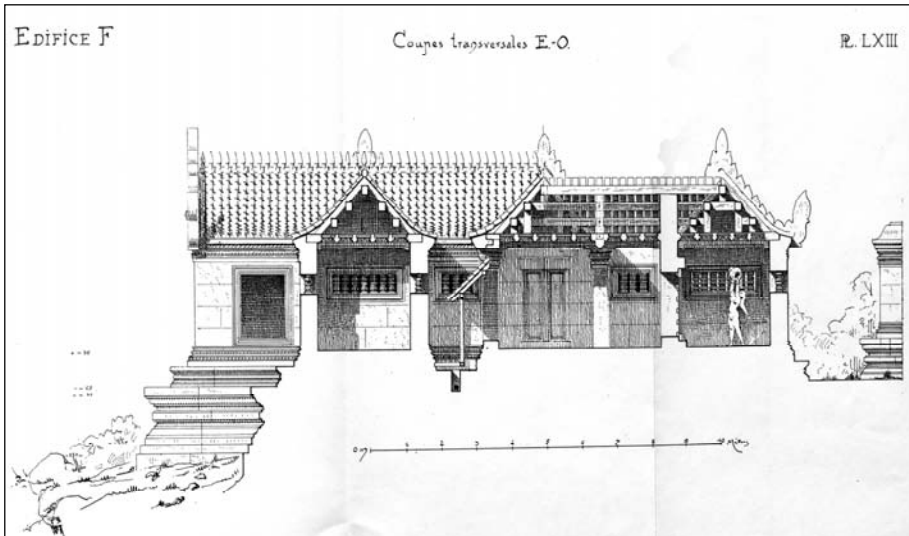


Fig. 3: Human beings served only as extras for the purpose of scale in Parmentier's analytical drawings (Parmentier 1939: Table 63).

rebels” (1916:40) who might meet somewhere there. Aymonier (1901:207) briefly states that the temple was regularly visited during a pilgrimage by “the Lord of Koukhan” (today’s Khukan is a district of the province of Siseket, Thailand) and his people.¹⁵

The characteristics of the perspective which focuses on technical matters, as, for example the drawings of Lunet de Lajonquière (1902 and 1907) and more explicitly in Parmentier’s work (1909/1918) show, can be summarized as follows:

- (1) The archaeological gaze overlooked the present and focussed on a distant past. The drawings do not depict the actual condition of the monuments the scholars saw. They show rather the buildings in idealized perfection, in such a way as European architects design the construction on paper before it is built. The drawings, therefore, mirror spotlessness, perfection and, at the same time, sterility the buildings certainly never had. The complex of buildings (temples) appears lifeless. The architectural construction and dimensions (to scale) are rendered in all their details and the decorations are meticulously drawn.
- (2) The features of the landscape that surrounded the monuments were ignored. Instead, the drawings show only trees or shrubs in so far as they furnish the monument with a kind of artificial scenery rather

¹⁵ In his poetic diary Groslier renders an empathic description of elaborate ceremonies that took place during his stay in Angkor in 1913 (1916:68, 76-81).

than a natural environment. The monuments are represented as standing in well kept gardens or parks.

- (3) The social landscape, that is, the cultural context of the ethnographic reality, traces of use by worshippers and ephemeral elements of decoration were ignored.¹⁶ Human silhouettes in the drawings serve only as a means of style, as chimeras and extras arranged on a stage to complement the architectural ensemble. They do not depict the people who used these sites as sacred places of worship.

In summing up this paragraph, we can conclude that these drawings were less an inventory-taking, but more a blueprint of how the ruins should be restored and the setting refurbished in order to revive the idealized monumental past. It was this project that finally led to the successful nomination of Preah Vihear as a World Heritage Site.

The Contempt for the People Living in and around the Khmer Monuments

As the quotation above from Mouhot shows (and similar statements by other authors could be easily added), the local people living in Angkor (as well as in other places where Khmer monuments stood) were perceived as primitives who were not able to uphold the imposing architectural masterpieces of their ancestors and did not seem to bother about their material decay. In the course of the attempts of French scholars to rescue Angkor from further decay and to protect it, the local inhabitants were considered a disturbance. Attempts were made to move them out of the area in order to safeguard the site.¹⁷

The peasants living there, and even the monks in the monasteries built next to the stone walls of Angkor monuments, were identified as being ignorant of the “real” creators of the architectural structures, “the Khmer”. Instead they claimed that “the king of angels” had built Angkor Wat, or that it was “the work of giants” or the “leprous king” (Mohout 2005:279-280). From a European (Orientalist) perspective, it was clear that the people living near and with these temples did not even possess knowledge about their own ancestors and the monuments they had created. It was the French who assessed that their knowledge, understood as history and opposed to “folk and religious tales” (Peleggi 2004:135), was “real” and truthful, and therefore superior to the local one; the scholarly knowledge legitimized the French role as rescuers, preservers and owners of these monuments.

¹⁶ Even today one can discover traces of worship there: flowers, incense sticks and textiles placed around parts of the sacred architecture.

¹⁷ Such efforts still continue today and people living in Angkor (and nowadays also near the temple of Preah Vihear) have been repeatedly subjected to plans of relocation (Miura 2005:9 and Miura's chapter “From Property to Heritage” in this volume).

From this hegemonic position, the inhabitants of Cambodia were seen as “degenerate” and, therefore, needed to be civilized in the course of the colonial enterprise. The French understood their operation in what they called Indochina as a *mission civilisatrice*.¹⁸ They considered the state of Cambodia in the 1860s as “deplorable”, especially if compared with its past

when it was a powerful and populous country, as is testified by the splendid ruins [...]. European conquest, abolition of slavery, wise and protecting laws, and experience, fidelity and scrupulous rectitude in those who administer them, would alone effect the regeneration of the state.

(Mouhot 2005:274-275)

As Klein pointed out, this *mission civilisatrice* was conceived to be achieved in two ways: firstly, civilized (and led into “modernity”) by the French according to their own ideals, and secondly, by investigating the glorious past of the ancestral Khmer empire through the scholars in the service of the colonial power (Klein 2009:95). History, epigraphy and archaeology were the apt disciplines to fulfil this task. Colonial schemes and research institutions were closely interlinked, and it was during military expeditions, as has already been mentioned, that archaeological inventories and historical documentation were established. Research institutions were developed from such missions. The Mission Archéologique d’Indochine, for example, founded in 1898, became the l’École d’Extrême-Orient located in Saigon in 1900, which was for decades in the service of the colonial regime (Herbelin 2009; Klein 2009; Singaravelou 1999; Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin 2001:182-183).¹⁹ In fact, the colonial discourse on power and the scientific discourse complemented each other and each mutually profited. This co-operation and its fusion are best highlighted by the fact that France represented itself at world fairs and at colonial exhibitions by displaying replicas (reconstructions as well as moulds)²⁰ and original artefacts from Angkor. These colonial representations of Angkor started as early as 1878 (Delaporte 1880:245 plate) or 1885 in Amsterdam when a Khmer temple represented the French colonies (Herbelin 2009:147). The use of Angkor in such colonial exhibitions was continuously repeated in 1886, 1889 and 1900; the staging of Angkor at the Exposition Nationale Coloniale in Marseille in 1906 and 1922; and in the Bois de Vincennes in 1931 (Edwards 2007:46-50, 130; Herbelin 2009). Khmer art and architecture were used to construct an image of a colonial nation with a heritage or *patrimoine* that was owned by France. Angkor Wat stylized as a symbol became a brand for the French-Cambodian relationship. This relationship between colonial power and colonized nation’s

¹⁸ For a discussion of the term *mission civilisatrice*, see Sophie Dulucq et al. (2008:74-75).

¹⁹ For an emphasis of other aspects in the relationship between the colonial government and EFEO, see Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin (2001:34-36).

²⁰ Moulds of Khmer art made during Doudart de Lagrèe’s mission to explore the upper Mekong (1823-1868) had already been displayed in Saigon and Paris in 1867 (Herbelin 2009:128; Winter 2007:36, 38).

patrimoine is mirrored also in the political term, in fact a euphemism, “protectorate”. Colonization was also legitimated through France’s self-elected role as “*protectrice de ce patrimoine*” (Herbelin 2009:146).

Even the (colonial) research institutions did not regard, let alone treat, the local population, the living Cambodians, as partners but as a *quantité négligeable*, or as inferiors. Singaravélou writes: “The indigenous is the great absence in the correspondence of the members of EFEO” (1999:211, my translation). And if ever they were talked about, it was with paternalism and condescension. Thus, the Europeans felt free to do what they liked with the “antiquities” for which no legitimate owners were anticipated to exist. This is especially true of removing reliefs and statues or parts of them in their thousands, either by sending them to museums or selling them on the art market (Singaravélou 1999:247-267), apparently without the slightest remorse, as the Malraux affair showed (Singaravélou 1999:233-240).

Nevertheless, the local population did not passively endure their domination, the appropriation of their sacred sites and the hauling away of their consecrated heirlooms, as the killing of members of the EFEO showed (Singaravélou 1999:147-150, 209-211). The inhabitants of Siem Reap wrote a letter to their king in 1949, only a couple of years before Cambodia reached independence. In this letter, they deplored the fact that over the past 50 or 60 years Angkor had been depleted of all its treasures: statues made of precious stones, wood, stone, or silver. The French had told them lengthy stories about Siamese invasions and how the Thais had destroyed Cambodia. The most cruel story, the letter continues, was that of the conservation of Angkor and the EFEO. The proper name of this French organisation in Cambodia would be “the destruction of Angkor”. What the EFEO conserves are the huge stones too difficult to remove. All the precious and important things to the Khmer people, however, have been carried off and are now kept in the Louvre or were sold to other places (Singaravélou 1999:265-266).

Unfortunately, there seems to be no evidence of what effect, if any, this letter had.

Reconstructing a Homogenous Khmer Empire

Angkor, especially Angkor Wat, was a symbolic site for the Cambodian monarchy and for the French colony.²¹ Angkor was a prime mover in regaining the province of Siem Reap. Siam was compelled by the French to cede, among other provinces, Siem Reap to the French colonial government in 1907; soon afterwards, the big restoration project of Angkor began (Chandler 2003:150). Taking Angkor as a starting point, Preah Vihear and other temples were construed as “radiations” from Angkor (Evans 2007:42).²² The comparative research on Khmer art and architecture, as carried out by

²¹ Angkor Wat as a national emblem of Cambodia was first introduced in 1948. This emblem was replaced by other symbols between 1970 and 1993, after which Cambodia reintroduced the original emblem.

²² In fact, as Evans (2007:42) has shown, there were no direct roads between Angkor and Preah Vihear at the time of Angkor; instead, one of the main roads led to Phimai, located in today’s Thailand.



Fig. 4: Memorial of the 1907 treaty between French Cambodia and Thailand in Phnom Penh (2011).

the colonial research institutions, and its result, the proof of an encompassing “Khmer style”, constituted the ideological background for the expansionist territorial goals of the colonial government. The investigations thus contributed to the colonizing process (Liebmann 2008). The knowledge the explorers and scholars had gathered served as a roadmap for colonial strategies: it was what Maurizio Peleggi called “politics of ruins” (2002).

The first explorations had already shown how widespread the material traces of the ancient Khmer were. Louis Delaporte stated in 1880 that the most important and the best preserved temples were all on Siamese territory. He suggested that France could probably persuade Bangkok to give concessions with probably the same result as in the case of the Cambodian king, who had readily complied with the French expectations (Delaporte 1880:255). Aymonier (1901:202-203), who gave the first extensive description of Preah Vihear, underlined that the temple of Preah Vihear,

located in the Siamese province of Koukhan, was the most important among the monuments he had seen in this area. Groslier reminded his readers that “Angkor is only a small part of the monumental Cambodia; Angkor is but a temple, a city, but the country contains more than eight hundred temples and chapels” (1921-23:2, my translation). With regard to Preah Vihear, “a region infested by elephants and wild buffaloes whose cries can be heard every night and whose tracks lead up to the temple” (1921-23:2, my translation), he noted that this temple was especially important for establishing a chronology of the Khmer empire and its most important architectural achievements (1921-23:294). This chronology however conflated the history of art with political history, as Peleggi (2004) noted. In this chronology, which was also adopted by the Siamese prince Damrong in collaboration with the French scholar George Coedès (who worked for the Bangkok Library from 1917 to 1929), the Thais were identified as latecomers, even as savages who were subjugated by the civilized Khmer and only rose to power in the 13th century (Pellegi 2004:135-136, 152). Thus, the hundreds of temples spread over a huge area were taken as an indicator of a primordial, seamless Khmer empire that once existed.

The Khmer empire was conceived as being a culturally (and not only architecturally) homogenous area inhabited by one single – also homogenous – ethnic group, or rather civilization, “the Khmer”, who shared the same language and the same culture, “Khmerness” (French 2002:445).²³ These homogenizations emphasized continuity, stability and, therefore, authenticity, integrity, and originality. The Khmer empire they had reconstructed was equated with “Cambodge” and vice-versa. The idea of “retrocession” was born.

The Mapping of Cambodia and its Consequences

France decided to claim parts of Siam that covered the heartland of “ancient Cambodia” (Chandler 2003:150), and mapping played a crucial role in this context. Cambodia was a tiny state between Siam and Vietnam. When the French tried to establish the first maps of the different countries they subsumed them under Indochina. The map established by Delaporte (1880:plate 381), head of the “mission d’explorations des monuments Khmers” in 1873, shows how small Cambodia was in contrast to the impressive dimensions of the kingdom of Siam and the empire of Annam, complemented by Cochinchine Française (southern Vietnam).

²³ As Peter Vail (2007:115) has pointed out, the ethnic homogenization existed only in the European interpretation or – at that time – due to lack of knowledge. The elite of the Siamese city of Ayuthaya – after the Siamese overran the Khmer royal city in the 15th century, Ayuthaya became the centre of power and the Khmer vassals of the Siamese court – for example, was bilingual, speaking both Khmer and Thai. Later on, the Siamese rulers traced their genealogy back to Angkor, which formed a part of their Ayuthaya identity (Ayuthaya was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1991). In the meantime, Thailand has certified Khmer temples in its northeastern provinces with a seal of “national heritage”, an action which constitutes a political manifesto, particularly towards Cambodia (see Denes 2006:77; Peleggi 2002:48-54).

However, as a consequence of the increasing knowledge about the extent of the ancient Khmer empire, most of the later maps established by explorers and scholars display a slightly altered but significantly new labelling of the territories. A substantial part of the maps was overwritten with “ancien Cambodge”, which covered a large area that was still part of Siam at that time (see for example Pavie 1903: plate 1 and IX). In most of these colonial scholarly descriptions, “Cambodge”, or rather the French “protectorate”, was represented as the legitimate political and cultural successor of the ancient Khmer empire also from a territorial perspective. Consequently, France argued on behalf of her colony for “retrocession”.

The military exploration of vast areas, especially in the Mekong region, had identified possible economic resources and explored the drawing of boundaries favourable for colonial possession.²⁴ In a letter to the Governor of Indochina in Hanoi (dated March 6, 1907), Lieutenant Colonel Fernand Bernard, the president of the Border Commission, shows to what extent the idea of an ancient Khmer empire had shaped his ideas of how big the French protectorate could or even should be. He wrote about the suggestions concerning “a more complete project” he had already made to officials in Paris, namely “to see whether we could acquire the total of all the ancient Cambodian provinces” (ICJ 1962a:709-712, my translation). He continued to raise also the question whether it would be better to stop the current negotiations concerning the boundary in favour of a more complete solution. In fact, it was Bernard who later produced the map with the deviant borderline that located Preah Vihear on the territory of the colony (see below).

The idea of a state as, first and foremost, a territorial unit with definite geographic boundaries was so far unknown in Southeast Asia. It was rather a European understanding that is intrinsically linked to specific techniques of determining and fixing boundaries. Thongchai (1988) was among the first to show what consequences cartography had in Thailand (and other countries as well). As is well known, the mapping follows the principles of the Mercator map, which is based on a cylindrical map projection and allows the representation of the material world in a two-dimensional scheme. Moreover, the consequences of the mapping of sites, watercourses and boundaries on a piece of paper are, according to the convention of mapping, binding; the dots and lines on a map are understood to depict the three-dimensional reality. As Anderson (elaborating on Thongchai’s conclusions) explained, the measuring and noting of the material “real” world on paper was a powerful colonizing instrument in the hands of those who knew how to use it (Anderson 1991: chapter 10; see also Said 2003:215-218).²⁵

²⁴ Philippe Boulanger called this type of geography a *géographie militaire des colonies* (2008:135-146). “Britain and France mapped Burma and Indochina on their own terms, since they were usurpers in those regions – they simply introduced Western mapmaking as part of the prerogatives of conquest” (Suarez 1999:262).

²⁵ Anderson actually speaks of three instruments that were used in combination with each other: the census, the map and the museum: “[...] together, they profoundly shaped the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion – the nature of human beings is ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry” (Anderson 1991:164-164). The connection between the material remains of the ancient Khmer culture and mapping are exemplary in the case of Cambodia (see also Peleggi 2004:134).

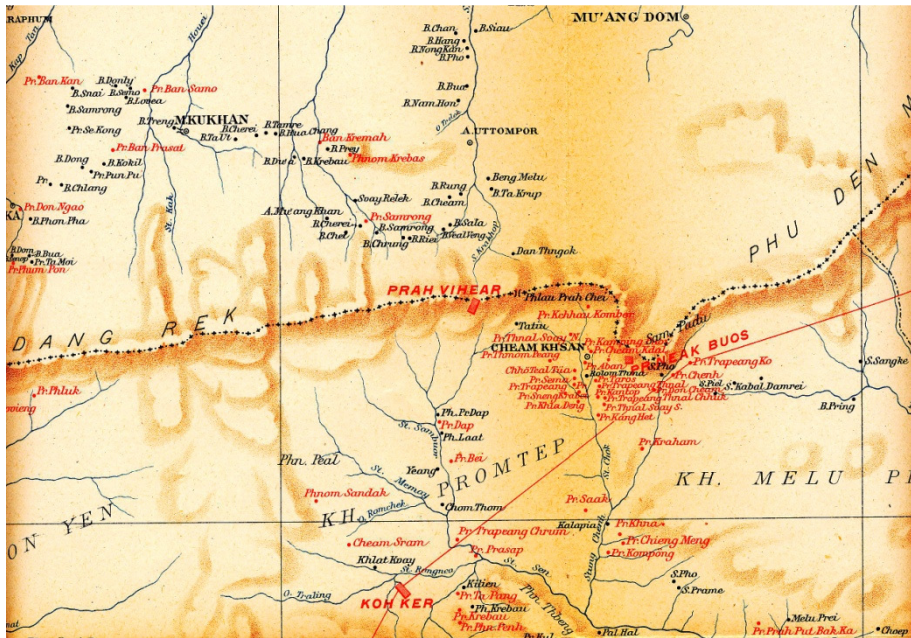


Fig. 5: Lunet de Lajonquière's map showing the temple of Preah Vihear as located right on the border between Siam and Cambodia (1911).

The application of this kind of knowledge was a means to define nations as bound entities with fixed boundaries, produced a new kind of political space and displaced Buddhist cosmography (Thongchai 1988:134, 309-313). Southeast Asian states were instead often overlapping realms with multiple sovereignties (Thongchai 1988:200).²⁶

In the negotiations with Siam, France suggested the selection of a “natural” boundary, namely the watershed along the Dangrek Mountains. The boundary was supposed to run along the ridge of the mountain chain according to the French-Siamese treaty of 1904. As a consequence, the temple of Preah Vihear would have fallen into Siam territory. However, when the French cartographers carried out the mapping in 1906-07, they mapped the alleged line of the watershed in such a way that the temple of Preah Vihear was located on Cambodian territory.²⁷ In fact, the map,

²⁶ According to Briggs (1946:442-443), there were, for example, two kings ruling over 19th century Cambodia; one was oriented toward Bangkok and the other toward Vietnam. Adolf Bastian, who traveled from Bangkok to Angkor (and further on) in 1863, noted that he met two governors who ruled over the same area. Each of them sent tributes (such as cardamom, ivory, pepper, and lacquer) to his king (in Bangkok or in Vietnam) on whose behalf he was ruling there (Bastian 1868:5).

For an overview over the different concepts or terms used to characterize the non-territorial organization of Southeast Asian polities see Day (2002:1-37); or even “segmentary state” used by Southall (1988:52-82).

²⁷ In 1947, a French-Siamese Conciliation Commission already had to deal with the disputed border. The commission noted that the French deputy had declared the Dangrek Mountains as the only possible natural frontier between the two countries (United Nations 2007:446).

produced only by French cartographers with lettering simply in Roman (and not Thai) characters and given to the Siamese Government in 1908, suggests that the Dangrek Mountains slope towards the south exactly at the site of the temple complex, implying that the watershed runs north of it (Cuasay 1998:863).²⁸ Here, the power of maps – Peter Cuasay speaks of a “fantasy of exact visualization”, or “mimesis” (1998:869) – becomes evident, since this ominous map served to determine the reality in the landscape (see also Boulanger 2008:135-146; Suarez 1999:262). Through mapping Siam and Cambodia became transformed into territorial states. However, Khmer-speaking people lived on both sides of this “natural” border and the temple of Preah Vihear was an important sanctuary for all of them.²⁹

It would be too lengthy to reiterate here the various facets of the long and complex history of this border dispute which had already begun when Cambodia was still a French protectorate. The attitude Siam (later Thailand) displayed toward Cambodia owning the temple of Preah Vihear was inconsistent over time. At the beginning, Thailand even used and distributed the French map without disagreeing with what was represented. Whether the Siamese king and his ministers were fully aware of the consequences this map had for territorial claims for the (unlimited) future would need further investigation.³⁰ A consistent opposition against the border near Preah Vihear as fixed on the map only started decades later.

A landmark in the dispute was represented by the decree of the International Court of Justice in 1962. In this court case, the potency of the authority of the old colonial sources was mobilized. In the hearings, Cambodia argued precisely with the colonial sources discussed above to convince the judges in The Hague that Preah Vihear was part of Khmer heritage and, therefore, was rightly included in Cambodia’s territory. Groslier, in his function as the head of the archaeological service, was quoted in the lines of the argument since he wrote that Preah Vihear was one of the most complete and best preserved sites of Cambodia (1921-23:275). Furthermore, Parmentier (1939:272) was also cited as having assessed Preah Vihear as one of the monuments of the classical ancient art of Cambodia (ICJ 1960:117). In her response, Thailand challenged these conclusions based on “authentically Khmer” by arguing: “There are several Khmer buildings outside Cambodia just as there are many Roman buildings outside Italy” (ICJ 1961b:172).

²⁸ There were long discussions during the ICJ trial about the watershed and the factual watercourse. One expert pointed out that over the past 50 years, the watershed may possibly have changed in such a way that the water at the location of the temple complex formerly ran to the north while, when he investigated the watershed, the water ran to the south. Three possible alternative watersheds were even discussed at the ICJ (see Cuasay 1998:872).

²⁹ Denes (2006:80) notes that 1.4 million ethnic Khmer lived in Thailand. The Khmer in Thailand turned away from their (former) Cambodian brothers, especially since the Khmer Rouge regime (French 2002:446). The political propaganda and the rise of ethno-nationalism in both countries over the past 30 years have assisted in this estrangement.

³⁰ “For the Siamese court, it was hard to imagine how the question of boundary could be so important. The mountains and the many-mile-wide forests were a matter for the local people, not those in Bangkok” (Thongchai 1988:139).

The ICJ, as has already been mentioned, concentrated on the attitude and way Thailand had reacted to the map since its creation. The court ruled – according to Western judicial notions of procedures and norms – that Thailand had failed to file their protest in time and, therefore, adjudged the temple of Preah Vihear to be the property of Cambodia. The decision was, therefore, based on matters of procedures and formalities and not essentially on the question of the territory, the correctness of the boundary on the map and the way (and the circumstances under which) the border was drawn up (see Sven Mißling's chapter “A Legal View of the Case of the Temple Preah Vihear” in this volume).

As it stands, the 850 kilometre border separating the two countries has never been jointly investigated, nor has there ever been a mutual agreement as to its dimensions. The Joint Boundary Commission between Cambodia and Thailand is still at work and there does not appear to be a successful end to its work anytime soon (cf. *The Nation* August 27, 2009). However, Cambodia apparently expects a solution from a higher authority: Cambodia has recently requested the ICJ to provide an interpretation of the 1962 decree (ICJ 2011).

Colonial Continuities and the Temple as “Public Good”

In the course of time, Preah Vihear has undergone a series of transformations of function and meaning. These transformations were achieved by changing groups of actors who modelled the significance of the monumental remains according to their own goals. These groups of actors were art-loving European travellers, colonial administrators and politicians on behalf of the changing governments of Cambodia and Thailand, the national elite, and the local population.

The last step in this transformation process was achieved when Cambodia suggested that Preah Vihear be listed as a World Heritage Site of Humanity by UNESCO. In accordance with what Kirshenblatt-Gimblett labels “metacultural practices” (2006:161), the distinction of a sacred site as a “World Heritage Site” involves disembedding it from certain social contexts of culture and re-embedding it in new, global contexts, those of a global tourist economy. Instead of serving primarily as a space where pilgrims venerate ancestors and deities, such a site like Preah Vihear is turned into a profane “global cultural commons” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2006:161).

In the process, a religious site becomes a secular one and a locality is transformed into a tourist destination with new owners (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:151; see also Winter 2007). This transformation can be understood as the result of a decision to add a new site to the global tourist economy³¹, where this emerging “hot spot” in the tourism landscape has to compete with other such sites and seek to assert itself.

³¹ In the Operational Directives on Raising Awareness about Intangible Culture Heritage, an act that was passed in 2009 by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Abu Dhabi, state parties were prompted to avert any actions that could “lead to over-commercialization or to unsustainable tourism that may put at risk the intangible cultural heritage concerned” (UNESCO 2010a:§102.e). Yet in the convention of 2003, the certification of intangible

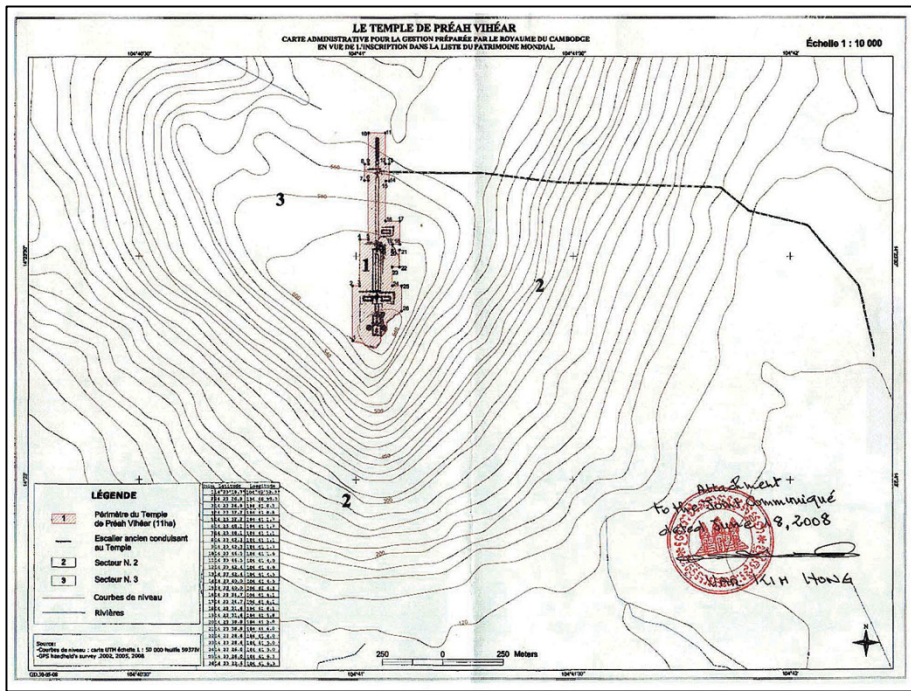


Fig. 6: The official map of Preah Vihear as submitted to UNESCO in the nomination file (Ministère de la Culture et des Beaux Arts 2008).

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee's decision to put Preah Vihear as the property only of Cambodia on the World Heritage List was based on the Hague decree of 1962. Once again, a map played a crucial role. The official map that accompanied the nomination application was composed in such a way as to give the impression that the main access to the temple is to be found facing east, towards the Cambodian lowlands, and not facing north towards Thailand. The cartographic representation of the monument was modified so that the main entrance and the temple as a comprehensive and extensive site reaching into Thailand could no longer be recognized in their complexity. And, once again, all settlements – even the monastery – were mislaid.

Here, colonial continuities become apparent in different regards. The focus exclusively on Preah Vihear as an outstanding “monument” allowed the neglect and consideration of social and political questions, such as the incidents and discussions that took place after the ICJ decree of 1962. The evaluation of the temple complex for the UNESCO nomination as mirrored in the decision report displays continuity in the way of looking at “monuments” – the archaeological gaze – and describing them

heritage is explicitly intended to be “a guarantee of sustainable development” (UNESCO 2003:article 2.1.). However, given that no guidelines or measures were put into place and hence no indicators of over-commercialization or unsustainable tourism exist, such attempted restrictions are merely lip service.

according to criteria given (see above). In the application documents, for example, Parmentier's idealized drawings (analyzed above) constitute the core illustrations of the reconstructed temple buildings and their layout. Moreover, the temple of Preah Vihear is presented as a Hindu "temple"; subsequently the temple was listed as a sanctuary dedicated to the Hindu god *Çiva* (Ministère de la Culture et des Beaux Arts 2008:13), in spite of the fact that Preah Vihear had already been turned into a Buddhist monastery in the 12th century (see Grabowski 2009). The listing as a Hindu temple implies a recourse to a past – a process one might call "re-hinduizing" (Edwards 2007:132) – that had in fact been turned over by history a long time ago.

The old argument for explaining why the temple of Preah Vihear is a legitimate property of today's Cambodia was also revived in the proposal documents: Preah Vihear was explained as being directly linked to Angkor. This argument is substantiated in the application document by maps with arrows between Angkor, Preah Vihear and Phnom Penh (Ministère de la Culture et des Beaux Arts 2008:2), and the depiction of a "triangle 'patrimonial'" (Ministère de la Culture et des Beaux Arts 2008:272) which forms a kind of *ur*-Khmer territory only located in Cambodia. Winter already noted "strong continuities [...]" between a contemporary discourse of world heritage and an Angkorian historiography constructed by scholars during an era of European colonialism [...]. He identified two main reasons for these continuities: (1) the dramatic loss of the Cambodian intelligentsia during the Khmer Rouge era who made a recourse to foreign (mainly French) expertise inevitable; and (2) the home of UNESCO (as well as ICOMOS) is Paris and the return of France as the co-chair of the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of Angkor (ICC) "enable[d] France to consolidate its position as an unrivalled authority on Angkorean and Khmer history" (Winter 2007:63-64).

The continuity of colonial knowledge and its premises can also easily be identified in several of the international technical experts' assessments (in the chapter "Conservation and Management Report"). One report, written by an Indian expert, Divay Gupta, represents an impressive exception to the more or less unison of voices of mostly Western experts. He suggests community participation (Gupta 2008:26) "recognizing that the true custodians of the site are the local communities" (Gupta 2008:14). He points to the importance the temple has for pilgrims and monks. He proposes that the economic development of the site should consider and respect the religious function of the temple. However, this voice remained unconsidered in the summary of the recommendations.

The colonial continuities are in fact striking. They can be summed up as follows:

- (1) The perspective gives precedence to past cultural conditions ("ancient Hindu Khmer temple") over the present. The conservation of the monumental ruins as material constructions, but at the same time the way in which they can be made accessible for mass tourism, receive the utmost attention. The plans for establishing an airport, a bus terminal/parking lot and the main entrance gate with an information

centre and a restaurant – in short, an elaborate tourist infrastructure – where the monastery is located, proves the hierarchization inherent in this gaze and the hierarchization this gaze creates in reality.

- (2) Restructuring of the “natural” and social environment is recommended according to the requirements of conservation and tourism development. The conservation of the site is indeed a major issue. However, there is a goal behind it: to establish an additional international tourist attraction for the consumption of a solvent global public. The fact that the temple is part of a “sacred topography” (Thongchai 1988:46) is neglected in most assessments. Relocation of one of the villages that has developed nearby over recent years and offered logistic support to tourists, workmen and members of the army is suggested so that it does not compromise the panoramic scenery.

But how will these people survive in another place if they are prevented through relocation from selling services and goods to customers? Another expert suggested that the whole plan should be kept free of any building development. Instead, he proposed building a “traditional Khmer village” there, hence reinventing tradition. It becomes clear, also from the summing up of the propositions at the end of the 650 page volume, that the local population, if present at all, should play the natives who are happy with the mode of subsistence practices of a long time ago. Additionally, they are supposed to contribute through the revitalization of handicrafts to satisfying the needs of tourists.

The listing of the temple complex of Preah Vihear, therefore, implies a whole series of transformations that can all be classified under idealization, secularization, economization, and disempowerment of the former “users”.

By now, many disciplines formerly involved in colonialism by eagerly contributing their knowledge to those in power have started to reconsider their own academic history. The archaeologist Sandra Scham pleads for reflexivity when she raises the question: who are the persons for whom the archaeologists are retrieving the past? In answering this question, she suggests:

Once the recipients were empires and governments. Now it is that rather nebulous ‘public’ that is the target of heritage studies and public archaeology [...].

(Scham 2008:168)

As the case of Preah Vihear demonstrates, the alliance between knowledge and power has not come to an end but has arrived in a new guise – with consequences for the future.



Fig. 7: Cambodian soldiers walking up and down the main staircase leading to the temple of Preah Vihear (2008).

A Legal View of the Case of the Temple Preah Vihear

Sven Mißling

The newly heated conflict between Cambodia and Thailand about the Temple of Preah Vihear does not only have a political dimension and directly causes effects on the local infrastructural, touristic, economic and cultural situation in the area.¹ It also has a severe impact on regional stability. The skirmishes in the area which took place after the inscription of the Temple of Preah Vihear as a contested World Heritage Site in 2008 have ignited the old boundary dispute between Cambodia and Thailand to a larger extent. In the meantime, both states built up troops on the border² and the hostile incidents can even justifiably be qualified as a local armed conflict.³ Therefore,

¹ See the description and evaluation of the conflict, including its historical and cultural background, as well as its impacts on the present conditions of life for the local population in the area by Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin in this volume.

² See: Statement by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Doc. SG/SM/11710, of 21 July 2011, to be found at: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/sgsm11710.doc.htm> <July 28, 2011>.

³ In its application filed in the Registry of the ICJ on 28 April 2011 submitting a Request for interpretation of the Judgment of 15 June 1962 in the Case concerning the Temple of Preah Vihear (Cambodia v. Thailand), the Kingdom of Cambodia, inter alia, states that “[2.] [s]ince 22 April 2011, serious incidents have occurred in the area of the Temple of Preah Vihear [...], as well as at several

the conflict is to be considered as being of potential effect on the international peace in the region.

The potential threat to international peace brings in the dimension of international law. The source of the present conflict is the continuing boundary dispute between Cambodia and Thailand, which historically results from a boundary treaty which was concluded between France, being the former protecting power in Cambodia, and the former Kingdom of Siam (today: Thailand) in 1904⁴ in a typical colonial context.⁵ The temple area of Preah Vihear and the surrounding promontory were posited on Cambodian territory according to the maps which were elaborated by French geographers in order to delimit the frontier from 1905 to 1907. In 1954, Thailand occupied the Temple of Preah Vihear and installed a military presence (Wagner 2009: paragraph 1). After Cambodia gained its independence, the question whether the Temple of Preah Vihear is situated on territory under the sovereignty of Cambodia or Thailand has been a controversial issue between the two states.

The Judgment of the International Court of Justice of June 15, 1962

Being a classical boundary dispute between two states, the conflict about the Temple of Preah Vihear was brought to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) by Cambodia in 1959 for the first time. While having upheld its jurisdiction to adjudicate upon the dispute submitted by a first judgment of 26 May 1961 (ICJ 1961a:17), in its further decision on the merits of 15 June 1962, the ICJ finally decided – by a vote of nine to three – in favour of Cambodia.⁶ It ruled that the Temple of Preah Vihear was located on territory under the sovereignty of Cambodia and that Thailand, therefore, was

under obligation to withdraw any military or police forces or other guards or keepers, stationed by her at the Temple, or in its vicinity on Cambodian territory.

(ICJ 1962b:37)

locations along that boundary between the two States, causing fatalities, injuries and the evacuation of local inhabitants“ and that “ [4.] [s]erious armed incidents are continuing [...]” See: <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?p1=3&p2=1&k=89&case=151&code=ct2&p3=0> <July 28, 2011>.

⁴ Treaty of 3 October 1893, regarding Territorial Boundaries and other Arrangements, signed at Paris, 13 February 1904 / *Traité du 3 Octobre 1893 entre le Siam et la France concernant les territoires et les autres Arrangements, signée a Paris, le 13 février 1904.*

⁵ Cf. Hauser-Schäublin’s chapter “Preah Vihear” in this volume.

⁶ For a deeper analysis of the conflict and the 1962 ICJ judgment, inter alia, see also Wagner (2009).



Fig. 1: “Annex I map” of Preah Vihear (source: ICJ 1962a).

Furthermore, by a vote of seven to five, the Court obliged Thailand

to restore to Cambodia any objects of the kind specified [...] which may, since the date of the occupation of the Temple by Thailand in 1954, have been removed from the Temple or the Temple area by the Thai authorities.

(ICJ 1962b:37)

The Court based its decision on the interpretation of the Franco-Siamese boundary treaty of 1904 and a related map, the so-called “Annex I map” (see Fig. 1), which was published, together with a set of ten other maps, by French geographers in Paris in 1907 and communicated to the Siamese Government (ICJ 1962b:20-21).

Generally speaking, Article 1 of the 1904 boundary treaty stated that in the area in question where the Temple of Preah Vihear is located, the frontier follows “the watershed line”.⁷ In addition to that, Article 3 of the same boundary treaty provided that there should be

⁷ Article 1 one of the treaty reads in English (Translation by the Registry of the ICJ): “The frontier between Siam and Cambodia starts, on the left shore of the Great Lake, from the mouth of the river Stung Roluos, it follows the parallel from that point easterly direction until it meets the river Prek Kompong Tiam, then, turning northwards, it merges with the meridian from that meeting-point as far as

a delimitation of the frontiers between the Kingdom of Siam and the territories making up French Indo-China [the later Cambodia]. This delimitation will be carried out by Mixed Commissions composed of officers appointed by the two contracting countries. The work will relate to the frontier determined by Articles 1 and 2, and the region lying between the great Lake and the sea.

(ICJ 1962b:16)

In its judgment, the Court found that a Mixed Commission, as referred to in Article 3 of the treaty, was indeed set up in 1905, in due course started its work and fully intended to delimit the frontier according to the treaty's provision. The Court also came to the conclusion that the frontier between the two territories was surveyed and fixed by that Mixed Commission. However, due to a lack of minutes or any other written testimony of the results of the Commission's work, the ICJ could find no answer to the question of what that frontier was (ICJ 1962b:18).

In contrast, Cambodia drew up its claim upon the so-called "Annex I map", a map which was elaborated by French geographers at the request of the Siamese Government in 1907 and on which was traced a frontier line purporting to be the outcome of the work of delimitation. It showed the whole Preah Vihear promontory, including the temple area, as being on the Cambodian side (ICJ 1962b:21). Thailand put into question that this map was consistent with the written provisions of the 1904 boundary treaty and denied that it had any legal binding character because of different reasons (ICJ 1962b:21-22). The bottom line of this debate was that the ICJ also came to the conclusion that the map was not a work of the Article 3 Mixed Commission and that, therefore, "in its inception and at the moment of its production, it had no binding character" (ICJ 1962b:21).

However, the Court in its judgment, furthermore underlined that it was the essential question of the case whether the parties did *adopt* the "Annex I map" and the line indicated on it as representing the outcome of the work of delimitation of the frontier in the region of Preah Vihear, thereby conferring on it a binding character (ICJ 1962b:22).

The Court found that Thailand was bound by the "Annex I map" because the Siamese Government, which had asked for its elaboration, never disagreed or objected to the outcome of the work of the French geographers. In 1907, the "Annex I map" and the ten other maps associated were "printed and published by a well known French cartographical firm" and "in due course communicated to the Siamese Government, as being the maps requested by the latter" (ICJ 1962b:20). The ICJ argued that the behaviour of the Siamese Government, which, in the view of the

the Phnom Dang Rek mountain chain. From there it follows the watershed between the basins of Nam Sen and the Mekong, on the one hand, and the Nam Moun, on the other hand, and joins the Phnom Padang chain the crest of which it follows eastwards as far as the Mekong. Upstream from that point, the Mekong remains the frontier of the Kingdom of Siam, in accordance with Article 1 of the Treaty of 3 October 1893" (ICJ 1962b:6, 16).

Court, said nothing at all “to suggest that the map did not represent the outcome of the work of delimitation or that it was in any way inaccurate” (ICJ 1962b:24) had undoubtedly to be considered as being “acknowledgement by conduct” and, thereby, must be held to be acquiesced (ICJ 1962b:23).

According to the legal principle “*Qui tacet consentire videtur si loqui debuisset ac potuisset*”⁸, the ICJ ruled that Thailand was bound by the delimitation of the frontier as fixed in the “Annex I map” because it had kept silent although it knew very well that this map was not consistent with Articles 1 and 3 of the 1904 boundary treaty, and also had the opportunity to disagree and object to it. It is a principle of international law that a State is held to be bound to the expectations it arouses by its own behaviour and on which other States can, according to the principle of *bona fide*, rely (so-called “estoppel”).

As to the plea of error, which was also brought forward by the Thai side as far as it concerns the disputed area of Preah Vihear and the discrepancy between the watershed line and the frontier line in the “Annex I map”, the ICJ also argued that it was

an established rule of law that the plea of error cannot be allowed as an element vitiating consent if the party advancing it contributed by its own conduct to the error, or could have avoided it, or if the circumstances were such as to put that party on notice of a possible error.

(ICJ 1962b:26)

To sum up, one can say that although in its judgment the Court accepted, in general, Thailand’s view that the temple area would have belonged to Thailand if the border line had been drawn in strict accordance with the wording of Article 1 of the 1904 boundary treaty and, therefore, had followed the geographical watershed line in the area (see Kahn 1996:98), the majority based its decision on the principles of “estoppel” and “acquiescence” to “resolve the dispute in an equitable manner” (Wagner 2009: paragraph 4). On the other hand, it also has to be said that the application of the “estoppel” principle according to a very broad notion of the term, as it was proposed by Cambodia and accepted by the majority in the present case (see Rustemeyer 1981:274)⁹, has often been criticized on the basis of a well-founded judicial argumentation, not only by the separate and dissenting opinions,¹⁰ but also by a number of scholars.¹¹

⁸ “He who keeps silent is held to consent if he must and can speak.”

⁹ As to the critique on the application of the principle in the present case, also see Wagner (2009: paragraph 4-7).

¹⁰ See separate opinions of vice-president Alfaro (ICJ 1962b:39) and Sir Gerald Fitzmaurice (ICJ 1962b:52) as well as dissenting opinions of judge Moreno Quintana (ICJ 1962b:67), judge Wellington Koo (ICJ 1962b:75) and Sir Percy Spencer (ICJ 1962b:101).

¹¹ For an in-depth overview and further critique, see Wagner (2009: paragraph 4-7). Also see Kahn (1996:98-100).

However, from a legal point of view, it has to be put forward that only the interpretation given by the ICJ, which understands the “Annex I map” of 1907 as being an integral part of the boundary settlements the Parties agreed upon in 1904, allowed the Court to come to a legal interpretation of the delimitation of the frontier and the discrepancy between the provisions of Article 1 of the 1904 boundary treaty (“watershed line”), on the one hand, and the frontier line as it is marked on the 1907 “Annex I map” on the other, applying the established rules of interpretation, as they are, for example, codified in Article 31 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (VCLT) (Kahn 1996:99). Otherwise, it would not have been possible to argue, as the ICJ did in its 1962 decision on the Temple of Preah Vihear, that a post-contractual map could delimit a frontier in a way which obviously differs from or even stands against the explicit wording of the substantive provision of the underlying boundary treaty, if it had not become integral part of the substantive provisions agreed (Kahn 1996:99).

Although the ICJ judgment of 15 June 1962 gave a clear answer to the question whether the Temple of Preah Vihear was situated on territory under the sovereignty of Cambodia or Thailand, and that it was Cambodia which had sovereign rights on the temple, it has to be said that the judgment did not lead to a stable solution of the underlying political conflict at all (see Hauser-Schäublin’s chapter “Preah Vihear” in this volume).

The Ambiguity of the 2008 UNESCO World Heritage Inscription: Towards a New Escalation of the Conflict and UNESCO’s Twofold Responsibility

As already been mentioned above, the inscription of the Temple of Preah Vihear by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee (WHC), which took place in 2008, led to a new escalation of the conflict.¹² The decision process of the WHC had been accompanied by protests from the Thai side and, as a direct consequence of the inscription of the temple as an “authentic and unique masterpiece of Khmer architecture” (UNESCO 2008:221), new skirmishes arose in the temple area with several people killed on both sides. Since this time, the conflict has kept on smouldering and recently escalated to a real local armed conflict in the spring of 2011.

Having in mind the effects caused, the act of inscription of the Temple of Preah Vihear as a World Heritage Site in 2008 is quite ambiguous from a purely legal point of view: On the one hand, according to the provisions of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, UNESCO has an explicit responsibility for the safeguarding and the preservation of cultural heritage sites which have an outstanding universal value for humanity (Francioni 2008:3-7; Yusuf 2008:28-31). Sections III to VII of The World Heritage Convention provide a range of different measures to be taken on the

¹² See above. Furthermore, see Mißling and Watermann (2009:251).

international level by UNESCO and its organs together with the States Parties to the convention to assure the preservation of the World Heritage Sites once inscribed on the World Heritage List (Article 11 paragraph 1–3 of the convention) (see Francioni 2008). On the other hand, Article 1 paragraph 1 of the 1945 UNESCO Constitution stating that

[t]he purpose of the Organization is to contribute *to peace and security* by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.

(emphasis added)

This also obliges UNESCO and its organs, in taking political and/or judicial measures according to the international instruments, i.e. the UNESCO conventions and other instruments adopted by UNESCO, to contribute to a maximal extent to international peace and security (Mißling and Watermann 2009:252). In the case of the inscription of the Temple of Preah Vihear as a World Heritage Site, the “twofold responsibility of UNESCO” has become, to a certain extent, a sort of political dilemma (see Mißling and Watermann 2009).

With regard to the effects caused by the inscription, it can be said that UNESCO today seems to be somewhat helpless in de-escalating the situation in the area. As in February 2011, it was reported to the public that troops on both sides had exchanged fire resulting in the loss of life and also some damage to the temple building itself, the UNESCO Director-General expressed her deep concern at the escalation and called

upon both sides to exercise restraint for the sake of the preservation of the Temple of Preah Vihear and open direct channels of communication at the highest levels to defuse the tension.

(UNESCO 2011c)

Furthermore, she sent a “Special Envoy on the Preah Vihear Temple” who travelled to Bangkok and Phnom Penh between 25 February and 1 March to discuss the safeguarding of the World Heritage Site with the Thai and Cambodian Prime Ministers in order to examine with both sides ways of reducing tension and promoting dialogue around the preservation of the temple (UNESCO 2011d).

However, besides these political efforts, the purely legal measures UNESCO can undertake to de-escalate the conflict in the present situation are very few and quite limited (see Mißling and Watermann 2009:253-255). The sharpest measure possible in the ongoing armed conflict is to take the option of Article 11 paragraph 4 of the World Heritage Convention and to put the temple on the “List of World Heritage in Danger”, if the conflicting Parties continue to cause damage to the substance of the

temple building and other monuments in the temple area. Such an act would indeed oblige Thailand and Cambodia, both still being States Parties to the Convention at the moment,¹³ even more than today and in addition to the already existing obligations by Articles 4 and 5 to abstain from any further act which could endanger the status of the preservation of the temple building.¹⁴

A measure of last resort could finally consist of the deletion of the Temple of Preah Vihear from the World Heritage List. However, the deletion of the temple by UNESCO would mean doing a disservice to the purpose of the preservation of the site, as well as to contributing to the de-escalation of the ongoing conflict between Thailand and Cambodia, because UNESCO would thus miss the chance of keeping further influence on the preservation of the heritage site, as well as on a possible solution of the conflict by negotiation.

Recent Developments: Cambodia's Request for Interpretation of the 1962 ICJ Judgment 2011

The conflict between Thailand and Cambodia has not yet come to an end. As the armed hostilities at the temple area exploded again in the very early spring of 2011, Cambodia finally submitted a request to the ICJ on 28 April 2011 for interpretation of the judgment rendered by the Court on 15 June 1962.¹⁵

In this document, Cambodia asked for an interpretation on the merits of the 1962 judgment according to Article 60 of the "Rules of the Court". Furthermore, it requested the court to indicate, as provisional measures and due to the gravity of the situation, as a matter of urgency,

- an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Thai forces from those parts of Cambodian territory situated in the area of the Temple of Preah Vihear;
- a ban on all military activity by Thailand in the area of the Temple of Preah Vihear;

and finally,

¹³ Taking into account that during the 35th Session of the World Heritage Committee in June 2011, the Thai Minister Suwitt Kunkhiti expressed the intention of Thailand to denounce the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the Thai delegation left the WHC session, it has nonetheless to be held that Thailand is still a State Party to the convention up to the present.

¹⁴ As to the states parties' obligations concerning the measures to preserve listed World Heritage Sites and listed World Heritage Sites in Danger according to the convention, inter alia, see Carducci (2008:103-145); Buzzini and Condorelli (2008:175-199).

¹⁵ Request for Interpretation of the Judgment of 15 June 1962 in the Case Concerning the Temple of Preah Vihear (Cambodia v. Thailand), Request by the Kingdom of Cambodia for the Indication of Provisional Measures, to be found at <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?p1=3&p2=1&k=89&case=151&code=ct2&p3=1> <September 11, 2011>. Also see Press Release – Unofficial – No. 2011/14 of 2 May 2011 (UNESCO 2011e).

- that Thailand refrain from any act or action which could interfere with the rights of Cambodia or aggravate the dispute in the principal proceedings.
(Request by the Kingdom of Cambodia April 28, 2011: paragraph 8)

Article 60 of the “Rules of the Court” is a procedural rule of international law which can apply when difficulties arise in the process of complying with a decision of the ICJ (Rosenne 2006:1611). Article 60 says that

[t]he judgment [of the ICJ] is final and without appeal. In the event of dispute as to the meaning or scope of the judgment, the Court shall construe it upon the request of any party.

The proceeding of interpretation has to be distinguished from the revision of a judgment according to Article 61 of the “Rules of the Court”, because they concern different constellations and different requirements have to be fulfilled. The distinction between interpretation and revision is subtle and sometimes even perplexing (Zimmermann and Thienel 2006:1282).

In brief, the proceeding of interpretation aims at an act of clarification of a judgment given, respecting the decision on the merits, while the proceeding of revision aims at the correction of substantive errors by reopening proceedings under special circumstances (see Geiss 2002:167, 172, 174; Zimmermann and Thienel 2006:1282-1284; Zimmermann and Geiss 2006:1305-1308). In the proceeding of interpretation, according to Article 60 of the “Rules of the Court”, the Court cannot go beyond the previous *res judicata*, which means that it cannot go beyond the limits of the judgment given (Rosenne 2006:1612; Zimmermann and Thienel 2006:1284). Contrary to that, the concept of revision (Article 61) adversely affects the principle of *res judicata* (Geiss 2002:167, 172). Thereby, being capable of impairing the stability of jural relations (Rosenne 2006:1671), the proceeding of revision requires the fulfilment of very strict preconditions. In particular, it necessitates the discovery of new facts (see Geiss 2002:167, 174-181).¹⁶ To sum up, one could say that, on the one hand, interpretation cannot consider new facts which already existed at the time of the judgment, but which were unknown to the Court and the respective party, and, on the other hand, revision can only be based on new facts of a decisive nature (Zimmermann and Thienel 2006:1284).

As to the case of the Temple of Preah Vihear, a proceeding of revision according to Article 61 of the “Rules of the Court” would have had no success at all, because none of the Parties could state that new facts concerning the frontier and its delimitation in 1907 had been found in the meantime.

Conversely, the recent Cambodian request for interpretation of the judgment of 15 June 1962 concerning the Thai obligations resulting from it could be more successful.

¹⁶ For an in-depth analysis, see also Kaufmann (2005) and Reisman (1971).

In the current proceeding of interpretation of the 1962 judgment, Cambodia seems to want the ICJ to clarify that, complying with the decision on the merits given by the Court in 1962, which was based on the interpretation of the 1904 boundary treaty, as well as of the “Annex I map” of 1907, (1) Thailand is even today still under obligation to withdraw all its forces from the territory under the sovereignty of Cambodia, which especially includes the Temple of Preah Vihear and its area; (2) that Thailand is also under obligation to refrain from any military action in the temple area; and finally (3), as a matter of urgency, that Thailand is under obligation to refrain from any act or action which could interfere with the rights of Cambodia or aggravate the dispute in the principal proceedings.

In this regard, the current request of Cambodia for interpretation of the 1962 judgment is to be understood as a sort of “enforcement measure” concerning the 1962 judgment which was undoubtedly in favour of the Cambodian position in the boundary conflict.

The ICJ recently unanimously rejected Thailand’s request to remove the case from the General List of the Court in its order of 18 July 2011, and furthermore indicated the following provisional measures:

[...]

(1) By eleven votes to five,

Both Parties shall immediately withdraw their military personnel currently present in the provisional demilitarized zone, as defined in paragraph 62 of the present Order, and refrain from any military presence within that zone and from any armed activity directed at that zone¹⁷;

(2) By fifteen votes to one,

Thailand shall not obstruct Cambodia’s free access to the Temple of Preah Vihear or Cambodia’s provision of fresh supplies to its non-military personnel in the Temple¹⁸;

(3) By fifteen votes to one,

Both Parties shall continue the co-operation which they have entered into within ASEAN and, in particular, allow the observers appointed by that organization to have access to the provisional demilitarized zone¹⁹;

(4) By fifteen votes to one,

¹⁷ In favour: Vice-President Tomka; Judges Koroma, Simma, Abraham, Keith, Bennouna, Skotnikov, Cançado Trindade, Yusuf, Greenwood; Judge ad hoc Guillaume; against: President Owada; Judges Al-Khasawneh, Xue, Donoghue; Judge ad hoc Cot.

¹⁸ In favour: President Owada; Vice-President Tomka; Judges Koroma, Al-Khasawneh, Simma, Abraham, Keith, Bennouna, Skotnikov, Cançado Trindade, Yusuf, Greenwood, Xue; Judges ad hoc Guillaume, Cot; against: Judge Donoghue.

¹⁹ In favour: President Owada; Vice-President Tomka; Judges Koroma, Al-Khasawneh, Simma, Abraham, Keith, Bennouna, Skotnikov, Cançado Trindade, Yusuf, Greenwood, Xue; Judges ad hoc Guillaume, Cot; against: Judge Donoghue.

Both Parties shall refrain from any action which might aggravate or extend the dispute before the Court or make it more difficult to resolve²⁰.

(ICJ Order of July 18, 2011:19)

Outlook: Could the Conflict be Solved by International Law?

The case of the Temple of Preah Vihear remains on the General List of the ICJ until the Court renders its judgment of interpretation after the principal proceedings. Therefore, the conflict will also remain on the agenda of international politics for a while.

But even if the ICJ comes to an interpretative judgement in due course, it is not at all understood that this judicial decision of the Court will pacify the conflict between the two States. It seems that, in the present case, the potency of international law to resolve a long-existing conflict between two States is quite limited, and that a definite and sustainable solution which could be accepted by both of the parties and, therefore, lead to real peace instead of appeasement, necessitates a political solution more than a judicial one.

Therefore, hopes should be placed on the resumption of political negotiations between Thailand and Cambodia after elections, which recently took place in Thailand, even more than in the ruling of the ICJ. In this context, it is also the question whether the status of the Temple of Preah Vihear as a contested World Heritage Site under the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the efforts of UNESCO will be again successful in bringing the two States into a peaceful and constructive political dialogue.

²⁰ In favour: President Owada; Vice-President Tomka; Judges Koroma, Al-Khasawneh, Simma, Abraham, Keith, Bennouna, Skotnikov, Cançado Trindade, Yusuf, Greenwood, Xue; Judges ad hoc Guillaume, Cot; against: Judge Donoghue.

A Cambodian “Leitkultur”?

Cambodian Concepts of Art and Culture

Aditya Eggert

Introduction

During my field research in Cambodia from May to September 2010, I took part in the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”¹ that was realised by the Cambodian government in preparation for the annual “National Arts Festival”² in

¹ The “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”, which was also called the “Advanced Training Course on Public Arts Writing and Directing”, was organised by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts (MCFA) between July 28 and 30, 2010, in Phnom Penh. Its aim was to provide amateur artists with “up-to-date knowledge” on play writing, theatre directing and classical dance choreography (MCFA 2010a). The workshop comprised speeches by high government officials and representatives from the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFAs). Final “discussions” allowed the participants to ask questions that were subsequently answered by the speakers. The conference hall was organised in such a way that the invited speakers and the moderating chairs were placed on the elevated podium at the front of the hall, while the participants were seated on a lower level in the audience space. The workshop was filmed by representatives of the MCFA.

² The “National Arts Festival” was held in February 2011 for the second time in association with the annual “National Cultural Day” (March 3). According to the Prime Minister (Hun 2010), the goal of this

2011. Discussions were held during this workshop between governmental actors, university scholars and artists on the current challenges and norms in writing and directing theatre plays. I realised in the course of these discussions – and throughout my whole research in Cambodia – that the terms “art”³ and “culture” are strategically applied in the framework of the national cultural politics and are charged with corresponding meanings and values. This triggered several questions which I consider fundamental to understanding the processes and structures of how Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)⁴ is constituted in the Cambodian context. These questions are the following:

1. What concepts of “art” and “culture” are used on the level of the Cambodian government?
2. What is its role in the framework of Cambodian politics?
3. Which values, norms and codes are attached to these concepts and who defines them?
4. What are the consequences of this environment for artists and the artistic landscape in Cambodia?

I propose that the negotiation, control and development of what is understood by art and culture in Cambodia influences essentially the way the concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage is understood, implemented and actively used by different actors. The reflections here are, therefore, fundamental for looking at and understanding the constitution of ICH on its different levels and in its various dimensions. I will take observations from the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop” as a

festival was to celebrate and to promote the variety of existing art forms in Cambodia and to give an opportunity to artists to exchange and develop their artistic expertise in new creations of performing arts. A representative from the Cambodian-American NGO Cambodian Living Arts (CLA) added to this that it served “to evaluate the quality of the various art forms at this point – over 30 years after the fall of the Khmer Rouge – and determine ‘how many forms are still alive’” (Phnom Penh Post March 1, 2010). Further names of this festival are, among others, the “Khmer Performing Arts Festival”, the “Cambodian National Theatre Festival”, the “National Khmer Dance Festival” or the “National Drama Arts Festival”.³ “Art” forms are discussed in this paper as creative and “living” forms of human expression, such as dance, music or theatre, that the government of Cambodia considers as potential elements for nomination as Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO. I will concentrate in this essay on these living art forms and will treat only secondarily material artistic expressions that belong to the tangible cultural heritage of Cambodia, for example, the temple of Angkor Wat, which was inscribed by UNESCO on the World Heritage List in 1992, the Preah Vihear Temple, which was listed in 2008, or other forms of mobile and immobile material expressions, for example, handicrafts, etc.

⁴ ICH is a concept that was created by UNESCO within the framework of its 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. It is defined as “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (UNESCO 2003). The objectives of the convention are to safeguard, ensure respect, raise awareness, and provide international cooperation and assistance for this kind of heritage. The UNESCO 2003 Convention was ratified by Cambodia in 2006.

basis for the treatment of the questions above.⁵ For my analysis, I will, firstly, introduce the theoretical approach, which I apply subsequently to analyse current perspectives and notions of art and culture in Cambodia. I will then put these perspectives into the framework of the politico-cultural environment in which the UNESCO 2003 Convention is implemented.

Culture and Concepts of Culture

As the aim of this paper is to investigate the political use of the concept of art and culture in Cambodia, I consider it meaningful at this point to introduce the view of culture from which I emanate in this context as a cultural anthropologist. Throughout the historical development of cultural anthropology, scholars have extensively discussed the meaning, the purpose and the use of the culture concept within and beyond the discipline (see, for example, Kroeber/Kluckhohn 1952; Wagner 1981; Geertz 1983; Abu-Lughod 1991; Kuper 1999; Brumann 1999; Sahlins 1999; Müller 2003; also Lentz 2009, who discusses the suitability of the culture concept as a bridge between the disciplines of sociology and ethnology).⁶ These discussions have gone so far as to plead for the total renunciation of this concept (see, for example, Abu-Lughod 1991) because of the boundedness, homogeneity, coherence, stability, and structure which this concept allegedly implies. These attributes conflict with the constructivist approach that is held by many anthropologists today, which underlines the principal openness, dynamism, and the manifold breaks, conflicts and discrepancies that are inherent to such a system (Appadurai 2003).⁷ Other scholars, such as Brumann (1999) or Sahlins (1999), consider these criticisms a bit of a stretch. In their opinion, it would be better if anthropologists developed an approach to the culture concept that made allowance for current developments in its use on the international platform.

Marshall Sahlins, in his article “Two or three things that I know about culture” (1999), stresses the enduring significance of the culture concept as an object of anthropological inquiry. He points out that the concept of culture is still of relevance, just because of the explicit use of this concept – in the sense of a closed, bounded and well defined, stable entity as it was once suggested by some anthropologists – by local and national actors around the globe in order to pursue their own political, social or other interests (Sahlins 1999:401-403). According to him, culture is increasingly being instrumentalised by different groups of actors for the means of cultural distinction,

⁵ I was admitted to the workshop as an observer and was assisted by a simultaneous interpreter, who translated the conversations from Khmer to English. Interviews with the organiser and speakers of the workshop as well as documents that were either distributed during the workshop or given to me by interview partners complemented the data from the workshop.

⁶ As a detailed description of the historical development of the concept of culture and its various positions in the discipline of cultural anthropology would go beyond the scope of this paper, I refer to Kuper (1999) for further reading.

⁷ For a more extensive treatment of this issue, see Brumann (1999) or Sahlins (1999).

assertion or empowerment to gain autonomy in a world of rapid change and transition.⁸ Precisely because of this instrumentalisation, which he calls “modern culturalism” (1999:401, 415), he stresses the need to investigate the manifold use and interpretations of this concept around the globe. The aim is to understand the strategies, interpretations and positions that are at stake from the perspective of the respective groups who develop them. Lentz points out that culture comes to function as a short formula for a whole bundle of different phenomena, as a beneficial argumentative “Joker” (Lentz 2009:315, 20), which, according to the context, can embrace a wide range of different meanings or terms, such as “nation”, “ethnicity” or “race”. In this sense, the character of culture becomes “politically fractured and contested” (Sahlins 1999:406) and often disguises the “quest for power, material gain, resistance or a need of identity” (Sahlins 1999:407). Culture is used by different groups of people for various purposes and in various contexts according to individual interests, motivations and objectives:

What is called culture or tradition is strategically adaptable to the pragmatic situation, especially to the class interests of acculturated elites, even as it leaves individuals free to change their identity when it serves them. This is perhaps the main criticism of contemporary culture-talk: it is really instrumental, an ideological smokescreen of more fundamental interests, principally power and greed.

(Sahlins 1999:403)

I consider it worthwhile to take over the position of Sahlins in this paper to examine the case of Cambodia, where “culture” is actively used by governmental actors to strengthen and legitimate their political ideologies. This counts especially as Cambodia emerges from decades of political upheavals – first and foremost the Khmer Rouge Regime (1975-1979), in which most of the Cambodian artists perished and many of the artistic testimonies were destroyed⁹ – and seeks to reformulate its national and cultural identity, as well as to gain political autonomy in an increasingly globalising world. In my opinion, investigating the use of the concept of culture is essential to understand these current processes of empowerment and identity building.

⁸ Errington and Gewertz, who refer to the example of Papua New Guinea in late-20th century postcolonial “modernity” (1996:114, cited by Sahlins 1999:415), see this development as a consequence of “dealing with a fluidity of identity and a shift in the locus of important resources” in a time that is “progressively affected by transnational capitalism and by state power”. For a detailed actual account on the capitalistic transformation of cultural systems and on questions of economisation and juridification of cultural identities, as well as cultural heritage, see Comaroff and Comaroff (2009).

⁹ Between 1975 and 1979, in the attempt by the Khmer Rouge to create a communist agrarian state, it is estimated that more than two million people were killed or died from forced labour and hunger – among them around 90% of Cambodian artists, dancers, musicians, actors, playwrights, and poets. The Khmer Rouge period brought an almost complete halt to most artistic and performing activities within the country and many cultural expressions were lost forever (UNESCO 2009; Pich 1995:33).

It is then a question, as Lentz (2009:321) points out, of how we can investigate the strategic essentialisations of culture that take place across political reality, where culture becomes a discursive weapon and is incorporated into the language of social actors. Barth (2002:32), as a central representative of the constructivist approach to culture, expresses the need to “build accounts of cultural facts without prejudging pattern, eliding variation, or stereotyping ideas”, and to look at studies that “show how cultural images, knowledge, and representations are deployed, and sometimes created, by situated persons with purposes, acting in complex life situations” (Barth 2002:32). It is, therefore, useful to take this variety of strategic interpretations into account and explore how “culture” is understood and used by actors on the local and national level by those who will be the major players in the constitution of ICH in Cambodia. Like Schiffauer (1999; cf. Lentz 2009:319), I consider culture as a discursive arena of central values and institutions that are negotiated over and over again in the encounters of different groups of actors. In this study, I will investigate some of these central values that are attached to the concept of culture as it is used by governmental actors in Cambodia according to specific motivations and interests.

A Cambodian “Leitkultur”

In the course of my field research in Cambodia, I realised that the concept of art and culture is influenced by the objectives of a small political and social elite. Cambodia’s society is characterized by a strong hierarchical organization, which has a tremendous effect on how people’s lives are structured and experienced. Most parts of Cambodian life are oriented according to a specific political and social classification system of which the king takes the highest rank, followed by a powerful political elite and the rest of the population on the lowest rank.¹⁰ Even if formally the king is the head of the state and is highly respected and venerated amongst the Cambodian people his authority to act is restricted by the constitution and he has, in fact, more representative functions (cf. Karbaum 2008:149). A constitutional monarchy on paper, the actual political system has heavy authoritarian traits, which appear, among others, in a lack of judiciary independence, in constricted freedom of opinion, freedom of press and freedom of assembly, and in corruption, as well as in political violence (LICADHO¹¹ 2007; cf. Karbaum 2008). A relatively small, but very strong, political elite, which is associated with different administrative bodies of the government, takes the major part of the political power and influences effectively economic, social and cultural development. I suggest in this paper that part of this political and social elite defines and codifies the concepts of art and culture, prescribes the norms and values that are attached to such concepts and controls its abidance. What is seen as the

¹⁰ For details on Cambodia’s social system and its broad political implications and instrumentalisation see Karbaum (2008).

¹¹ Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights.



Fig. 1: National Workshop on “Cambodian Performing Arts: 30 years of Revival and Development” (2009).

“right” culture and what is not, who practices the “right” culture and who does not, and how culture is to be preserved and developed is, therefore, widely determined and decided by a small and privileged group of people.

This idea of a dominant or leading culture that is meant to serve as an orientation or standard for Cambodian society reminds one of Bassam Tibi’s term “Leitkultur”. However, while the political scientist Tibi introduced this term in 1998 to postulate a social consensus on values in Europe, his concept of culture was based on Western political ideals that have their source in cultural modernism.¹² The term was later reproduced in the political debate in Germany for a claim of the integration of immigrants in Germany and, therefore, has a negative political connotation. In this context, Lammert, President of the German Bundestag at that time, said in an interview that the development of a collective identity in Europe needed political guiding principles which are understood as a joint fundament of values and convictions that is connected to joint cultural roots, to a joint history and joint religious traditions (Die Welt December 13, 2005).¹³ While in this context, the term “Leitkultur” is used to clearly distinguish German culture from other European cultures to preserve its national identity, I would like to apply this term in a slightly different context. Even if in Cambodia, the concept of a “Leitkultur” is also used as a

¹² He refers to values such as democracy, laicism, enlightenment, human rights, and civil society (Tibi 2000:154).

¹³ Original German quotation: „Wenn ein Europa der Vielfalt nationale Identitäten bewahren und dennoch eine kollektive Identität entwickeln soll, braucht es eine politische Leitidee, ein gemeinsames Fundament von Werten und Überzeugungen. Eine solche europäische Leitidee bezieht sich notwendigerweise auf gemeinsame kulturelle Wurzeln, auf die gemeinsame Geschichte, auf gemeinsame religiöse Traditionen.”

strategy to differentiate and shield a dominant Cambodian culture from foreign influences, I will look in this paper primarily at the perception of a “Leitkultur” that is used to distinguish a dominant and elitist culture from other cultures *within* Cambodian society that are perceived as having minor value. What I would like to show in the following sections is that in the Cambodian case, an elitist Khmer¹⁴ “Leitkultur” is produced on the level of the state as a political strategy to build a national (cultural) identity that refers to a distant Cambodian past and has a considerable influence on the artistic landscape in the country.

The Glorious Period of Angkor as a Point of Reference

In the imagination of the Khmer people, most artistic expressions, historic buildings and architectural wealth in Cambodia date back to the Angkor period, which is situated between the 9th and 15th centuries (Chandler 2008:35-89; Pich 1995:2; UNESCO 2002:3; Sam-Ang 2003b:217). This time is commonly described as a “glorious” and “prosperous” period, in which the life of the Khmer people flourished and in which Cambodia’s greatest historical creations and innovations have their origins. A governmental report (MCFA¹⁵ 2010c) that was distributed during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop” says in this regard:

Since the announcement of the Devaraja¹⁶ (God-King) religious belief to the 14th century, thousands of prestigious temples had been built continuously all over the Kingdom, which constituted the glorious Angkorean civilization.

It is broadly believed that living artistic expressions from the Angkorian Period have not changed a great deal in almost 1000 years – much like the Cambodian proverb says, “Don’t choose a straight path. And don’t reject a winding one. Choose the path your ancestors have trod” (Chandler 2008:14). Nevertheless, it is important to be aware that these artistic expressions have undergone constant modifications since the Angkor period, due to political and religious changes in Khmer culture.¹⁷ However, these modifications have been broadly faded out by many Cambodians, first and foremost on the level of the government. Ancestors are seen as the guiding force in

¹⁴ The term “Khmer” refers in this paper, on the one hand, to the ethnic group of the Khmer people, which constitutes the biggest ethnic group in Cambodia, and on the other hand, to the adjective that is used for its culture. “Cambodian” refers to the adjective that expresses the belonging to the state of Cambodia, in which – beside the ethnic group of the Khmer – live other minorities and indigenous groups, who are all “Cambodian”.

¹⁵ Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts.

¹⁶ The “devaraja”, in Sanskrit “king of the gods”, was a cult that linked the monarch with the god Shiva. It was established in the early-9th century AD by Jayavarman II (Chandler 2008:35).

¹⁷ One important process of rehabilitating Khmer art forms started in 1979 when all surviving masters and art practitioners came together to revive what was left after the Khmer Rouge period.

the preservation of Cambodian art forms¹⁸ and serve political actors as a legitimation to conserve and make use of ancient codes and traditions. Edwards (2007), Winter (2007) and Abbe (2008) have shown that the Angkorian Empire, with its creations and testimonies, was first glorified by the French protectorate in order to strengthen the latter's political power in Indochina. The French created the image of an idealized and stereotyped Khmer civilization based on the assumption that "those who had lived in the Angkorean period had been the 'true' Khmers with the 'authentic' Khmer culture" (Sasagawa 2005:432). Khmer art, conserved in its pure and "traditional" form, was seen to go back to the ancient Angkorian Empire.

The image of a glorious past was handed down to the Cambodian elite, and it still serves as a resource to reaffirm a Cambodian "cultural identity". Thus, the Prime Minister in his opening speech to the "National Arts Festival" in 2010, referred to the Angkorian past and its potential to consolidate Cambodia's power in the international world:

The royal government, in general, considers Khmer culture and civilization as Cambodian soul and identity because we believe that this illustrious culture and civilization has been created and developed under a creative and skilful mind of our ancestor genius and effort since the very early stage during the creation of our Cambodian people on this golden land, Cambodia. This great culture and civilization is a valuable treasure and an endless resource that we can use to develop and improve on any aspects and in any period of time. With the richness of our culture and civilization that has been handed down from the past, we manage to create and establish plenty of new things that help to raise and promote Cambodia's fame to the rest of the world.

(Hun 2010)

Later in his speech, he referred to ancient material and immaterial expressions of the Khmer people, such as the temples of Angkor Wat and Preah Vihear, the Royal Ballet or the big shadow puppet theatre *Sbek Thom*, that are all believed to have been created during the time of Angkor. Significantly, all these historic buildings and artistic expressions have been promoted by the government to be nominated as World or Intangible Heritage by UNESCO.¹⁹ Khmer art forms, such as the Royal Ballet or the *Sbek Thom*, are understood by Hun Sen as expressions of the "creative and skilful mind" of the Khmer ancestors during the Angkor period. In another governmental

¹⁸ For the role and meaning of ancestors and ancient teachers of artists in their artistic practice see Sam-Ang (2003a), cf. Heywood (2008:16).

¹⁹ The Royal Ballet (2003) and the shadow puppet theatre *Sbek Thom* (2005) each were first proclaimed a "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" before being integrated into the "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" in 2008. The temples of Angkor Wat and Preah Vihear were listed as World Heritage in 1992 and 2008, respectively (UNESCO 2010b, 2011a).

report, “civilization” is defined as the “root of a nation” (MCFA, 2010c). The Prime Minister considers this “Khmer culture and civilization” as the “Cambodian soul and identity”.

I suggest, therefore, that the Khmer artistic expressions and inventions of the Angkorian Empire are regarded by the government as the core of a Cambodian “Leitkultur”, which was introduced above. Culture in Cambodia is defined on the basis of this image of a “glorious” Angkorian past, which lays the ground for an elitist Khmer culture. The Cambodian government finds its legitimation for such a “Leitkultur” in the “genius and effort” of the Angkorian past. It is the fear of losing national pride in an increasingly globalising world that brings dominant foreign influences to the country (MCFA 2010c). The Cambodian “Leitkultur” serves, on the one hand, to promote a national cultural identity by reconnecting the country and its people to its “glorious” past, especially after the socially disruptive period of the Khmer Rouge, and, on the other hand, it should strengthen Cambodia’s position in an international arena of increasing competition. A report from the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop” (MCFA 2010c) says in this regard:

Saying that “I love my nation” does not yet suffice to mean that “I have a national spirit”. The real national spirit exists only when we know clearly about our national civilization and use it to develop the country. When we have it, we can be called real nationalists [nation lovers]. So the recognition and cultivation of national civilization is a major factor at these present and future stages.

With the listing of Angkor Wat, Preah Vihear, the Royal Ballet and the big shadow puppet theatre *Sbek Thom* as UNESCO cultural heritage of Cambodia, this national identity based on the Angkorian past is acknowledged by the international community and Cambodia’s cultural policy actively promoted. That the Royal Ballet takes a primordial role in this produced Cambodian “Leitkultur” and considerably influences the artistic landscape in Cambodia, I will show in the following section.

The Royal Ballet as a Role Model for a Cambodian “Leitkultur”

The first Cambodian element that was nominated a “Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity” by UNESCO in 2003 was the Royal Ballet. Since that time, and even before, the Royal Ballet and, in particular, the Apsara dance (one of the most popular dances within the Royal Ballet),²⁰ have been promoted by the government as identity symbols of Cambodia, together with the temple of Angkor Wat (cf. Sam-Ang 2003b:223). This becomes evident as receptions for high ranking

²⁰ According to Burrige (2010:xx), the Apsara dance was part of the royal dance “reconstruction and revival programme” by the Cambodian government. In 1962, Queen Sisowath Kossamak created this dance on the basis of temple engravings for her granddaughter Princess Norodom Buppha Devi.

officials and political meetings are many times accompanied by performances of the Royal Ballet (often in front of Angkor Wat). According to a governmental actor (pers. com. with a representative of the General Department of Administration and Finance, MCFA, August 18, 2009), all rights to the Royal Ballet have been reserved by the Cambodian government, more precisely the MCFA, since the Khmer Rouge period. This means that all commercial activity and economic use of the dance and its name is controlled by this institution. In this way, seeing its central national symbol from the Angkorian Empire being jeopardised with commercialisation and devaluation, the Cambodian government has put a control system for over 100 dancing groups in Siem Reap in place that consists of personal IDs and group licences (pers. com. with a representative of the Siem Reap Department of Culture and Fine Arts, June 11, 2010).

What made the Royal Ballet so prominent as a political symbol and what are the interests of the government with regard to this dance form from the Angkorian Period? I would like to illustrate these questions with observations that I made during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”.

It was conspicuous that in the course of this workshop, dance was at the centre of discussions on Cambodian performing arts, while other art forms were treated only secondarily. The Royal Ballet, which is also called “classical dance”, was described by governmental actors as follows:

What makes the classical dance so special is the use of body and hand movement to express feelings. Classical dance is supernatural. As a heavenly dance, or god/king dance, as a god property, it has spiritual beauty. The dancer is the god messenger, who is so pure and refined.

(Secretary of State, MCFA, July 29, 2010)

Classical dance wins people’s hearts and wins against nature also. It is a dance which is against nature, as hands and feet are excessively bent, the back curved and extended extra with classical dance. And even walking is different in a very artistic way. Classical dance is different from nature and more beautiful. Dance is very gentle, refined and slow in Cambodia. It is different from Western dance.

(Representative of the Department of Performing Arts, MCFA,
July 29, 2010)

Several notions are of interest in these statements. Classical dance is considered by these governmental actors as “special” because of its artistic refinement and its spiritual connection to the venerated god-kings during the time of Angkor. As god messengers, these dancers are regarded as “supernatural” – and even “against nature”, “pure and refined” and their movements are valued as “artistic”.



Fig. 2: Apsara dance, Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor, Siem Reap (2009).

There are many stories told about “classical dance”. “Classical dance” was originally called the Royal Ballet, *robam preah reachea trop*, which means “dances of royal wealth” (Fletcher 2001:306). It is believed to have originated in the Angkorian Period between the 9th and 15th centuries,²¹ when it is said to have been performed exclusively for the Royal Family. Accordingly, its audience was a highly distinguished one, excluding the general population from this kind of entertainment. Moreover, as it apparently served religious ceremonies and was connected to the gods, it is still considered sacred today. Classical dance is imagined as a performance of celestial dancers (female servants of deities) or temple dancers who were dedicated to deities as offerings. Their role was to perform for the gods or sacred kings who were seen as messengers of peace from earth to heaven (MCFA 2010c). Hence, they are seen by the government as “dancers of peace and messengers of moral education and virtue for the sake of happiness and peace for the Khmer people” (MCFA 2010c). A report on “Dance in Cambodia” (MCFA 2010c) that was distributed by the government during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop” says:

Khmer dance is an art for both religious beliefs and an ideal society. The dance performance improves the understanding of nature and human society and indirectly reflects education, morals, virtuous behaviour, virtue, mentality, and knowledge in order to purify the inner mind of people and remove the immoral behaviour so that society will be in good order in accordance with a defined ideal.

What is this educational, moral and virtuous behaviour that an artist should reflect in the perspective of the state? What is this immoral behaviour that should be removed? This subject was highly debated during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”. A governmental report (MCFA 2010d) says that the main criteria for a good artist are:

Honour and dignity revealed through the righteous moral implementation of each artist. It can be shown also through the honesty, truth and justice that happen within any action and circumstance, such as in writing, composing, choreographing, directing, moving, language using, behaviour, costume, and make-up. Artists' misbehaviour and inappropriate attitude give a bad effect to themselves as well as to their society. As we know, art is a two faces weapon, so we artists have to pay a lot of attention to all of our output/work. If we love art, we must respect and follow the artist morality strictly.

²¹ Evidence from archaeological and literary sources suggests that Khmer classical dance originates from between the 1st and 8th centuries (Pich 2001:12). However, Sasagawa (2005) pointed out that, with the systematic promotion of classical dance as Angkorian “tradition”, political and artistic actors from the French protectorate (Groslier 1913; Thiounn 1930) vitally influenced the imagination of its origin.

According to a representative of the Royal University of Fine Arts (July 28, 2010), a playwright can be a “poisoner”, who says something that gives a “bad effect to society”. A great author, however, is somebody who teaches and educates society and reveals social problems, such as corruption, domestic violence, insecurity, drug abuse, or human trafficking. To illustrate the role of an artist, he cited the German physicist and writer Lichtenberg: “The main mission of a writer was bringing truthfulness to the human, teaching the human and educating the human.”

In the perspective of a Secretary of State of the MCFA (July 28, 2011), however, the truth has to be revealed “in the right way”, which means only the truth that does not harm society (e.g. with fighting or arguments), the truth “that educates the people not to do something bad”. In this context, another governmental actor pointed out:

Public performance is dangerous, because all art forms have their good and bad side. Art is a two faces weapon. You cannot use bad words. I have the concern that during shows on TV, art sometimes has no qualified standard: sometimes actors say something bad about politics or the Prime Minister. How can one stop that, because everybody watches?

(Secretary of State, MCFA, July 28, 2010)

Art works in the eyes of the government should “educate and promote solidarity, nationalism and the art loving sense to our Cambodian audience in order to preserve our valuable cultural heritage” (MCFA 2010d). And human resources in the art field have to agree with the Cambodian governmental policy (MCFA 2010d). From this perspective, the moral behaviour is to educate society to conform to the national ideals, which is considered by the state as the “truth”, to promote nationalist behaviour in reflecting honour and dignity as a Cambodian and to support the government and its actors in word and action. Moral standards are politically tinged.

In this regard, classical dance is connected to all three elements of Cambodia’s official policy and slogan: “nation – religion – king”. As celestial dancers to the gods, classical dancers are strongly attached to religion;²² as a court dance from the Angkor period, classical dance reflects “royal wealth”; and by providing moral education and virtues that correspond to the national ideals of the government, it is considered powerful enough as a political instrument to promote a nation in happiness, peace and unity. Additionally, with its origins in and its symbolical connection to the Angkor period, it is deeply rooted in the “glorious” past of the Khmer people and revitalises with its performance the power and “genius” of that time. I suggest, therefore, that the Cambodian government uses classical dance as an artistic and moral role model to educate Cambodian artists and society according to its national ideals. It represents the core of a constructed Cambodian “Leitkultur” that goes back to Angkor, and defines

²² It is believed on the level of the government (MCFA 2010c) that the Royal Ballet was originally influenced by Indian Brahmanical dances, was then performed for the Hindu gods during the reign of Jayavarman I (655-681) and Suryavarman II (1113-1152), and was eventually incorporated into the Buddhist religion under Jayavarman VII (1181-1218).

the norms and values that are attached to it. These norms and values are religious faith, loyalty to the kingdom and to the nation, moral behaviour – in the way the government defines it – as well as artistic purity and “refinement”. Accordingly, Sam-Ang, a Cambodian musicologist and adviser to the government, said in his publication “Cultural Policies of Cambodia” (2003b:222):

Cambodia endows a rich culture. There are royal dance or court dance, peasant dance or folk dance, and dances of the ethnic minorities. Although each of the aforementioned forms is significant in its own right among the relevant groups, only the royal dance or court dance is considered the national culture of Cambodia.

This privileged status of classical dance is also reflected in its name. During the Lon Nol regime, when Cambodia abolished the monarchy (it was re-institutionalised in 1993), the government of Cambodia changed the name of the Royal Ballet to *robam kbach boran khmer*, literally meaning “Khmer dance of the ancient style”, or simply “classical dance” (Fletcher 2001:306). The name “classical dance” is still actively used by the Cambodian government today. With this linguistic change, according to Fletcher (2001:306), the Lon Nol regime intended to remove any reference of the dance with a royal past. But in my opinion, the term “classical” is also consciously chosen with regard to the high identification of classical dance as a living representation, or the way it is now being reproduced, from the Angkorian Period. As explained above, classical dance is perceived by governmental actors as of high rank due to its spiritual value, moral character and artistic refinement, and it is seen as a living representation with lasting significance of the time of Angkor. The artistic expression of classical dance is considered to be harmonious, elegant, “refined”, and typical for Khmer art. As such, it has been revived and preserved by the government as a classical model or standard for Cambodian art forms in general. Accordingly, a Secretary of State of the MCFA (July 29, 2010) pointed out, “The word ‘classic’ means perfect, nothing needs to be changed. We better help to preserve this tradition”. With the proclamation as a “Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity” by UNESCO in 2003, and the following integration into the “Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity” in 2008, its outstanding value and image as a role model and identity symbol within Cambodian cultural policy was consolidated and internationally acknowledged.

In the following section, I would like to demonstrate the importance of this role model and its international recognition for the Cambodian government within its national policy, and the consequences this has for the artistic landscape of Cambodia.

Artistic Elite versus “Amateurs”

Burridge and Frumberg show in their recent publication (2010; cf. Heywood 2008:122-123) that national classical dancers were and still are thoroughly selected at an early age according to their outstanding talent. They are individually trained by “master” teachers, originally at the dancing school of the Royal Palace. As they are part of a privileged artistic group, they are promoted, according to the high standard and quality of the state, first and foremost in the complex dance movements that in artistic language are called “basic dance movements”.²³ According to Heywood (2008:76), it was Queen Sisowath Kossamak and Princess Norodom Buppha Devi who brought classical dance to “ordinary Cambodian people” and “to the world”. In 1981, as part of a governmental “policy of revival and reconstruction” (Norodom 2010:3), it was integrated into the teaching program of the national School of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh.²⁴ When Princess Buppha Devi was Minister of Culture and Fine Arts (1998-2003), she promoted it to be proclaimed a “Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity” by UNESCO.²⁵ The national classical dance troupe, the “Cambodian Royal Ballet”, now performs primarily for high ranking officials and represents Cambodia on the international platform. The Secondary School of Fine Arts (SSFA) and the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA) in Phnom Penh are the two national institutions for the training of classical dance for the public. These state institutions are considered “professional” and “with high esteem” (Sam-Ang 2003b:221).

It is notable that classical dance and its basic dance movements have had a significant influence on other art forms that were or are practiced at the RUFA and SSFA, for example, folk dancing, the mask dance *Lakhon Kbol* or the big shadow puppet theatre *Sbek Thom*. Interviews with members from different *Sbek Thom* groups in Cambodia during the 2010 Cambodian Youth Arts Festival²⁶ have shown that the performance of *Sbek Thom* by dancers of the national Department of Performing Arts

²³ A representative of the Department of Performing Arts refers during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop” (July 29, 2010) to 4,500 basic classical dance movements (cf. Norodom 2010:10).

²⁴ The School of Fine Arts was founded in 1918 and was formally established as the Royal University of Fine Arts in 1965. Since then, its name and status have changed several times and it was closed down completely during the Pol Pot Regime (1975-1979). It was finally split into the Secondary School of Fine Arts and the Royal University of Fine Arts in 2006 (Norodom 2010:3; Chey 2010:31-35).

²⁵ According to Sam-Ang (2003b:222), after the overthrow of the monarchy in 1970 and the upheaval of the Khmer Rouge, classical dance changed its image and status. It was transferred from the palace to the School of Fine Arts and leaked out with artists to the different refugee camps along the Thai border, where artists taught their knowledge to others and distributed it to Khmer communities in foreign countries.

²⁶ The Cambodian Youth Arts Festival was organised in August 2010 by Cambodian Living Arts in cooperation with 24 art associations and organisations in Cambodia. During the “big shadow puppet workshop”, four of the active *Sbek Thom* groups in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh came together to discuss and exchange their expertise and perspectives on the development of *Sbek Thom*.



Fig. 3: Classical Dance Performance, National Workshop on Cambodian Performing Arts (2009).

or the RUFA is strongly influenced by the basic movements of classical dance. A representative of the Department of Performing Arts said in his speech during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop” (July 29, 2010), that to make the choreography of a folk dance “unique”, dancers have to initially study the “real” habits of Cambodian people in the provinces and, as a second step, the “true movement” is then combined with the basic (classical) dance movement of the RUFA.

I conclude that in national institutions such as the RUFA and SSFA, Cambodia educates and trains an artistic elite based on the codes of classical dance. These codes of classical dance are constitutive for the standard model and national ideal of a Cambodian “Leitkultur”. With the shift of classical dance from the palace to the people, I suggest that the government pursues the goal to educate the Cambodian citizens according to the moral standards and ideals of the state. Hence, the RUFA and SSFA take on the role of transmitting these national codes and standards to the artistic community and, with their performances, to the whole population and “to the world”. Classical dance movements are regarded as elements of “refinement” and sophistication, as elements to bring Cambodian art forms and Cambodia’s “civilisation” to perfection. Other art forms are evaluated and rated on the basis of these elitist norms and values and are graded on a scale. As a result, in Cambodia, there is no democracy and plurality in the artistic landscape in which all art forms would have the same quality and are regarded as equal. Art forms are judged in relation to classical dance and its values – religious virtue, purity and refinement.

Reproducing Social Stratification

During the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”, a differentiation was made by a governmental actor (a representative from the Department of Performing Arts, MCFA, July 29, 2010) between dances from the “palace people” and dances from the “ordinary people”. The statement on classical dance from the “palace people” has already been given above; folk dance – a dance form that in the classification system of the government originates from “ordinary people” – was characterised by the same actor as follows:

People who make dance in the provinces have no knowledge about dance basics; they interpret movements from nature. [...] If you make choreography of folk dance, find the roots of a dance: nature, people, belief of the people, [...] in folk dance, mostly the movements come from reality and the people. [...] It is a very real and very raw movement in the provinces. [...] [with folk dance] reveal the truth of the community where the dance comes from; don't put too artistic.

(Representative from MCFA, July 29, 2010)

According to this statement, folk dance is seen as connected to nature, to belief and to the “reality” of the people in the provinces. From the perspective of this governmental actor, the people who make dance “in the provinces” have “no knowledge” about classical dance basics and their movements are described as “very raw” and not “too artistic”. According to Sam-Ang (1987:1), folk dances are “solely of peasant origin and use” and are performed in religious ceremonies and rituals in the provinces; they accompany social events like birth, marriage and death and are an integral part of agricultural activities. He describes the role of folk dance as follows:

[Folk dances] serve to increase the communal sense of security. They give emotional release. They satisfy the desire to communicate [with] ancestors and other spirits. They provide spiritual satisfaction. They bring good luck and prevent disaster.

(Sam-Ang 1987:1)

While the Royal Ballet is perceived by the government to be connected to the “palace people” and their spiritual needs, folk dance is believed to have originally served the spiritual and social needs of the rural population. It accompanies daily life and the life circle of the people, and serves as spiritual support and guidance during work time and crises (Sam-Ang 1987:1). According to Sam-Ang (1987:1-2), for the people in the provinces, who are broadly dependent on their agricultural activities, it serves as a source of energy and force and promotes social cohesion. While classical dance was originally learnt in royal and national institutions, folk dance was transmitted and learned within the boundaries of family and rural society. This is partly linked to the

fact that on the rural level, no practical artistic education is available in public schools.²⁷ To receive a qualified education at a national school or university, artists have to travel to and live in Phnom Penh, which most people in the rural area cannot afford. According to Sam-Ang (1987:12), as folk dance in the provinces is seen first and foremost as an activity for religious devotion, recreation and social entertainment, people do not necessarily strive for professionalism and elaboration of their artistic skills. In the educational institutions of the government on the other hand, scholars aspire to develop and formalise their artistic abilities and the aesthetics of their art in order to create a national “educational standard” (Sam-Ang 1987:10).

The governmental statement on folk dance (above) shows that, in the perspective of the government, the high ranking and royal classical dance that epitomises the moral guidelines, religious virtues and artistic refinement of a Cambodian political and artistic elite and, as such, represents Cambodia in the international arena, is opposed to the lower ranking folk dance that represents the art of the “ordinary people”, performed predominantly in the rural areas. Folk dance as an art of the “ordinary people” is regarded by the government as artistically less elaborate than the “professional art” (*selepak atchip*) that is practiced within the national and royal institutions in Phnom Penh. It represents the art of the “peasant”. According to a Secretary of State from the MCFA (pers. com. July 23, 2010), art that is produced outside the control of the government – that means in NGOs, associations and in the provinces – is called “amateur art” or “non-professional art”, in Khmer *selepak mobatchun*. He said about the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”:

There is the retraining on writing and staging drama of the mass art. You know mass art? Mass art, it means the art of the people, the art of the amateur. We ask the provinces, the offices of the provinces, cultures, various cultures of the provinces, to ask, each province, three people, three people from the grassroots level, from the people, from the mass!

This statement makes explicit, that the art of the “amateur”, of the “ordinary people”, of the “provinces” or of the “grassroots level” is seen as of minor value to the elitist art of the court and the national institutions. It is regarded as “mass art” as opposed to the “refined” elitist art. According to Sam-Ang (1987:15), performances from the University of Fine Arts are “much more complicated” than the ones performed by non-professionals. He associates this “simplification” with “a lack of knowledge and understanding of the dance” (Sam-Ang 1987:15) on the one hand, and “that those steps, movements and gestures are too difficult for them to learn” (Sam-Ang

²⁷ In 2009, however, two programs were initiated by Cambodian Living Arts (CLA) and UNESCO in the provinces of Kampong Thom and Ratanakiri. They have the goal to train public school teachers in giving classical dance lessons. Since 2010, the Elastic Arts Foundation, an American NGO, is running a peer teaching program at a public school in Phnom Penh jointly with CLA and CVCD, Cambodian Volunteers for Community Development.

1987:15.), on the other. “Non-professional”, in the eyes of the government, carries a touch of subordination and “non-professional art” is systematically devaluated. The label “governmental”, however, “provides a higher esteem to individuals who wear it” (Sam-Ang 2003b:221).

Additionally, folk dance is associated with the belief in nature and spirits and subscribed to by the people in the provinces. In its report, “Dance in Cambodia” (MCFA 2010c), the government described “traditional dance” (which is used in this case synonymously with folk dance) as follows:

The traditional dance refers to all dances performed in the traditional ceremonies of Khmer or tribal minorities living in different regions in the Kingdom of Cambodia since a long time ago, whether they have the same practice or not. Traditional dances always originate from where nature influences people and makes them believe that there are spirits, ghosts, devils and soil, forest, valley, mountain owners/possessors, etc.

As such, the belief in nature and the spirits by “Khmer or tribal minorities” is opposed to the country’s main religion, Buddhism, that is practiced by the majority of the Khmer people in Cambodia and is represented by the high ranking and elitist classical dance.

We can conclude that the “art of the ordinary people” is considered by state actors to be the counterpart of a dominant, elitist and ideal Cambodian “Leitkultur”. The national institutions for the administration of art, culture and religion in Phnom Penh ultimately appear in this process as the artistic and spiritual centre that emanates to its margins, which are the provinces, NGOs, associations, and other actors that operate independently from the government.

As a consequence, several identity categories have been created that reproduce existing social stratification on the artistic level: The art of an artistic elite in the Royal Palace and national institutions, such as the RUFA and SSFA, is opposed to the art of the “ordinary people”; professional artists to non-professional artists; city to province; Khmer people to ethnic or “tribal” minorities; and Buddhism to the belief in nature spirits. Art forms, social status, artistic skills, origins, regions, and religious beliefs are ranked on a scale that determines the status of the art and the artists. A strong political and artistic elite controls the artistic landscape of the country and decides who is included or excluded from the leading artistic community. The gap which already exists between the rural and urban population due to lower living standards and restricted access to information, education and economic benefits in the provinces is reproduced and reinforced by this artistic hierarchization and rural communities become even more marginalised. “Amateur artists” with their “mass art” – those who are numerically the majority of artists in Cambodia and are, hence, hard to control – are considered as a potential danger to the national ideal of a standard model “Leitkultur”. They are, therefore, “re-educated” to follow the course of the government. Workshops, such as the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing

Workshop”, serve to train these non-elitist artists with respect to elitist values, norms and codes of the state. Society is trained to think in terms of an artistic elite and a stratified artistic landscape. This national quality rating system finds its point of culmination and public representation during the “National Arts Festival”. In the course of this festival, artists are judged and rated with scores by a governmental jury in their correspondence to the national codes of art. Performances are accompanied with governmental advice and instructions. A Secretary of State from the MCFA pointed out in an interview (pers. com. July 23, 2010):

Because we would like to correct those people, you know, the amateur, who always entertain or perform comic scenes on television, everywhere with the people, we would like to educate those people to do good. [...] You can say that critics... les critics d’art, critics of arts, because we believe that the festival is a school or a class.

The festival ends with the celebration of the “National Cultural Day”, in which the most outstanding theatre works of the festival are awarded with medals²⁸ by the government in front of the public and government officials, most notably the Prime Minister Hun Sen. Criteria for the award are similar to the “civil servant honourable awarding” system (MCFA 2010d): responsible and moral working behaviour, creativity, management, national and legal loyalty, and cooperation with the government. As such, the accumulation of social and political merits in order to serve the national ideal, which exists for civil servants, is reproduced on the artistic level. Artists are educated to think in hierarchical terms and to serve the state for its political goals.

In which way artists themselves respond to this system in the end, whether they play the game or have the opportunity to oppose to it, is still an object of inquiry and has to be further investigated in the ongoing research. It can, however, already be said that the majority of national artists depends on the government for their employment. They are, therefore, generally obliged to follow this system if they do not want to compromise their careers or livelihoods (cf. Shapiro 2010:114). Additionally, this system gives them the rare opportunity to be trained by highly respected artists and for exchanges with other artists. Only a few artists in independent associations and organisations have support from external donors and opt to distance themselves from the governmental system in order to engage in more social and artistic projects that are detached from national politics – insofar as this is possible (cf. Shapiro 2010:114).

²⁸ A report (MCFA 2010d) that was distributed by the government in the course of the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop” listed the types of awards and medals that are available for artists. These were explained in detail during the workshop.

Art as a Professional Trade

Sam-Ang (1987:7) stated that in the late-1950s or early-1960s, a group of teachers created a (folk) dance department in the National Conservatory of Fine Arts (today’s Department of Performing Arts in the MCFA) and in the University of Fine Arts (today’s RUFA). According to him, the majority of folk dances that can be seen today is the result of reproduction by members of these institutions. Scholars had set out to the different provinces of Cambodia during that time to research existing folk dances and other performing art forms and had subsequently modified them “to bring these traditions up to the universal standard” (Sam-Ang 1987:8) of the university. Sam-Ang (1987:10) writes:

Once the Khmer agreed upon and valued the movement, they worked day and night to promote their traditional art forms, namely folk dance, mask dance, shadow play, yike [...], bassac [...] and so on, to increase quality of the traditional values. For example, they worked to correct the improper wording in the songs and narrations to suit the educational standards of the country. They have improved music, song, movement, gesture, costume, decor, lighting, and sound systems. They have elevated the aesthetic of the art to a high standard.

Traditional folk dances, as well as other performing art forms, were appropriated and reworked to correspond to the “high standard” of the artistic, normative and educational codes of the National Conservatory of Fine Arts and University of Fine Arts, respectively. They were reproduced as “refined”, standardized and “professional” versions to bring a newly constructed “traditional art to people of every class, occupation, and region across the country” (Sam-Ang 1987:10). Additionally, “folklore troupes” were sent abroad “representing Cambodia to participate in world festivals and conferences” (Sam-Ang 1987:8). “Old themes” that were considered inappropriate were changed to “suit either the purely artistic or the didactic and political contexts that were necessary at the time” (Sam-Ang 1987:14). In his more recent work, “Cultural policies of Cambodia”, Sam-Ang (2003b:217) called “Khmerization” the historical process of adapting a new religion to the existing one and making it suitable for the “Khmer taste”. This term is also suitable in the context of appropriating “peasant” art forms to the national ideals that draw on “ancient Khmer” traditions and values from the Angkor Period. In this case, folk dances that had once been performed in a religious and social framework in the provinces were taken out of their original context and were charged with new meanings and values – first and foremost technical excellence, attractiveness to the audience and political correctness – to make them suitable for stage presentation, concert halls and the professional artistic “trade” inside and outside the country:

Dances that depict centuries of the Khmer's struggle and other folklore have been studied and performed as a refined art. People find dances interesting primarily because of their good presentation, decor, pleasing musical accompaniment and the new original work.

(Sam-Ang 1987:8)

It is seen, then, that here [in the University of Fine Arts] the casual practice of peasants is conducted intensively at a professional level, and a career in folk dance is accepted as a professional trade.

(Sam-Ang 1987:8)

I suggest that the government produces a high standard Cambodian "Leitkultur" in its national institutions to sell it as a marketing strategy to the international community and to promote it as a professional artistic trade. The fundament is the "traditional values" of the Angkor period that are enriched with current political goals. Artistic expressions, such as the Royal Ballet or the big shadow puppet theatre *Sbek Thom*, are now being transformed and adapted to the current political strategy. According to the "Action Plan for Culture and Fine Arts in 2010" (MCFA 2010b), the national policy foresees:

In order to take part in implementing the Rectangular Strategy²⁹ of the 4th term Royal Government and to contribute to the development of the national economy in this globalization age, the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts has decided to use the potential of the Cambodian Culture as a power to encourage Cambodians to make use of their intelligence to transform national cultural properties to become a base for economic industry through developing new products of the cultural industry for society according to the policy, goal and cultural goal [of the MCFA].

This cultural and political goal is, following the Prime Minister in his speech during the closing ceremony of the "National Arts Festival" in 2010 (Hun 2010), to create a "Khmer Culture Promoting Centre" and to

Use the best out of tangible and intangible heritage in developing an economy that agrees with the tourism promoting policy "Cambodia Kingdom of Wonder" and introduce a new vision of "Cambodia Kingdom of Culture".

²⁹ The "Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency in Cambodia" (Hun 2004) is considered the "Economic Policy Agenda" of the Royal Government of Cambodia. It was announced during the first cabinet meeting of the third legislature of the National Assembly in July 2004 in Phnom Penh.

By standardising Cambodian art forms to a high “universal” level, the aim of the government is apparently to create new cultural industries and to compete in artistic and economic terms with the international community, first and foremost the (Southeast) Asian region. In this regard, a representative from the government (Secretary of State, Council of Ministers, July 28, 2010) said during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”:

This workshop is not only for the festival in 2011, but it is also about competition between Asian countries. We need qualified people to do it. We have to improve our knowledge, search for more information, learn more things, and develop our abilities.

The Cambodian “Leitkultur” is produced to promote economic development through commercialisation in a tourism context and is used as propaganda for the current national policy. Art, therefore, becomes instrumentalised in order to realise the vision of a “Kingdom of Culture” and “Kingdom of Wonder” and to consolidate Cambodia’s power on an international scale.

The consequences for those artists who operate under the control of the state are restricted artistic freedom and creativity, as they are required to correspond to the national codes and standards. Art forms are reworked, standardized and fixed on the basis of a national ideal that – in the imagination of the government – goes back to Angkor. Personal inspiration from the artists and further development are largely omitted; the artistic development is stagnating. Artists who do not correspond to such a system are dismissed from it and are penalised in terms of administrative and financial support, as I have shown in the example of the big shadow puppet theatre *Sbek Thom* (Eggert 2010). Those who correspond to it are rewarded with an upgrade of their social and political prestige. It must be pointed out, however, that the majority of Cambodian artists will hardly ever receive a status that can enable them to enter into the artistic elite and contribute to shaping the artistic policy of the country, as this position is reserved for a small group of well connected governmental actors (cf. Karbaum 2008).

Artists, associations and organisations who work independently from the government have more freedom to use their expertise for artistic development, but they face criticism, admonishments, denunciation, and penalties (Shapiro 2010:113; pers. com. with representatives from independent art associations, May 25, 2009, July 2, 2010 and August 5, 2010). In addition, they are not supported by the government either administratively, financially or prestigiously. Financial resources from and support by the government are generally scarce for projects in the field of living art and culture. Most of the budget within the MCFA is still dedicated to tangible cultural heritage, such as temples or other historic buildings. Moreover, according to Sam-Ang (2003b:229), the performance of private institutions is tagged with a “less prestigious label”. The lack of governmental support can be a disadvantage for independent groups and individuals, especially if they are excluded from governmental promotion

projects such as the ones within the 2003 Convention. Even when performing tours within or outside the country, the government might refuse to provide the necessary authorisation for travelling and performing (cf. Eggert 2010:12). However, considering artistic freedom and remuneration, if independent artists, associations or organisations have the necessary international support in finance and management, they are certainly in an advantageous position compared to national artists, who have to obey and act according to the governmental system while receiving only insufficient financial remuneration and support.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have covered concepts of art and culture on the level of the Cambodian government in order to investigate the politico-cultural environment in which the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is implemented. Using the example of the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”, I have shown that concepts of art and culture are systematically created, defined and controlled through a discursive field of a political and artistic elite that is powerful enough to manipulate the Cambodian artistic community and society. By looking at governmental actors and analysing their motivations and interests in the local, national and international arena, I came to the following conclusions.

The concept of art and culture in Cambodia is attached to the notion of a political and social elite which defines and codifies this concept, prescribes the norms and values that are attached to it and controls its abidance. The Cambodian government promotes a Khmer “Leitkultur”, a dominant or leading culture, as a moral standard for the Cambodian society that is rooted in alleged traditional values and convictions of a distant Khmer past. Governmental actors find their legitimation for such a Khmer “Leitkultur” in the Angkorian Period, and the glorification of its creations and innovations serves to celebrate and revive the “genius and effort” of the Khmer people from that time.

The Royal Ballet or classical dance, which reflects the moral, artistic and religious standards of the state, is regarded by the government as a role model for this Cambodian “Leitkultur” and defines the norms and values that are attached to it: religious faith, loyalty to the kingdom and to the nation, moral behaviour, artistic purity, and “refinement”. In its national artistic laboratories, such as the RUFA, the SSFA and the Department of Performing Arts, the government trains an artistic and “professional” elite who transmits these elitist norms and values to the artistic community, to the people and to the world. Other art forms are evaluated and rated on the basis of these codes and are graded on a scale. As a result, different art forms in Cambodia are not regarded or treated as equal. Art forms are judged in relation to classical dance and its elitist values.

The art of the “ordinary people”, as opposed to the elitist, royal and urban “Leitkultur”, is considered as artistically less elaborate and performed by “non-

professional” artists or in the provinces. It is associated with the daily life of the rural people or of Khmer or ethnic minorities and with their belief in nature and nature spirits. Using this classification system, the government creates social, political and artistic identity categories that reproduce the social stratification on the artistic level. Artists are ranked according to their professional skills, origin, national loyalty, and religious beliefs. A strong political elite decides on inclusion or exclusion of artists to the elitist group. Artists who correspond to the political system are rewarded, others are underprivileged or dismissed from the governmental system.

The image of a collective Khmer past, that is reflected in the leading Khmer “Leitkultur”, is consciously promoted by the state to create a national (cultural) identity, a national pride, to equip Cambodia and its people for the artistic, economic and political competition in an increasingly globalised world. In its national institutions and during national workshops and festivals, the government re-educates and fixes art forms according to an “elevated” national standard that represents the educational, artistic and political ideals of the state – first and foremost, technical excellence, attractiveness to the audience and conformity with political goals. As a consequence, artistic development through artistic freedom, personal inspiration and creativity is largely inhibited and restricted to artists who manage to operate outside the influence of the government. Their performance, however, is regarded by the government as of lower rank and prestige.

This political concept of an elitist Khmer “Leitkultur” is confirmed, reproduced and promoted with an international certification by UNESCO's heritage nomination program. Cambodia aspires to create an international reputation on the basis of its Angkorian past and to consolidate its autonomy and power in an international (and especially Asian) arena of political and artistic competition. In which way this cultural policy is used to distract from the inconvenient Khmer Rouge Tribunal, which actually brings to justice crimes of the Khmer Rouge terror regime, and in which way it should serve as a means of reconciliation to this historical past, still has to be examined. The investigation of further heritage nominations to UNESCO – for example, the art of improvised story telling *chapei*, which is said to have been used for political propaganda during the Khmer Rouge – might shine more light on this issue.

II. Implementation and Management

From Property to Heritage.

Different Notions, Rules of Ownership and Practices of New and Old Actors in the Angkor World Heritage Site

Keiko Miura

Introduction

Notions of property in recent years have become more restricted in use in legal and financial terms. The main focus considering properties is now increasingly being shifted from viewing them just as “goods” or “objects” bequeathed from ancestors, former rulers, dignitaries, communities, or states to be safeguarded, to associations and relationships of individual actors, communities and the environment with properties. It is, therefore, no longer adequate that we consider properties in isolation, but viewing them as important parts of heritage which contain such associations, relationships and socio-cultural values is required.

This wider view of properties is no doubt indebted to the popularization of UNESCO’s World Heritage Program and advanced democratization of countries in many parts of the world. The promotion of universalising heritage since the adoption of the World Heritage Convention in 1972 has, however, come to challenge old

traditional notions of property, rules of ownership and practices in a number of heritage sites. A heritage site, once nominated as a World Heritage Site, is considered as public goods, even though it might contain private properties. Several new actors, some collective and others individual, also emerge who may impose their claims on old actors. In this way, we have seen conflicts in a number of World Heritage Sites over what is heritage, who is the rightful owner, what can be practised and what not, what rules of ownership should be adopted, how much access to heritage various actors be allowed, who is to manage heritage, and how to do it. Some conflicts may occur based on different notions of heritage held by various actors, who may pursue different agendas of cultural, social, economic, legal, or political nature or some of these compounded.

This chapter begins briefly with how the French dealt with Angkor firstly as a reservoir of cultural property consisting of buildings and monuments, and the successive formation of Angkor Park as an open-air museum to be conserved and visited as the model set for the legal and practical framework of managing the Angkor World Heritage Site nearly 70 years later. Secondly, it explores different notions of heritage and rules of ownership held by collective or individual actors and their shifting practices through different stages of historical development in Cambodia. Thirdly, it studies spiritual heritage, practices and the sense of belonging. The final section shows how the nomination of Angkor as a World Heritage Site has come to change the notions of heritage, property rights, practices and restrictions, dominant actors, various actors' associations with heritage, and the local sense of belonging to the heritage site. Out of three groups in the site, the case study focuses on the central group, the so-called Angkor Group. The main actors concerned are UNESCO, the local inhabitants who have been dwelling in the area for generations,¹ monks, Cambodian officials of different ranks or professional fields, and the national managing authority of APSARA.

French Model Dealing with Cultural Property and Angkor

After the famed “discovery” of Angkor by Henri Mohout, a French naturalist explorer, in 1860, the French and other Europeans had seen Angkor in a romantic way as a lost civilization. The French Vice-Admiral Bonard, the first of the admirals to “reign” over Indochina in the second half of the 19th century, on his part saw “Angkor, and in particular Angkor Wat, as a symbol of colonial rule restoring a nation

¹ There are newly migrated people in the area, especially since the 1990s, however, this paper only deals with older established inhabitants. When Angkor villagers are mentioned, I also refer to native villagers or those who married into the native community and have been living in the site for a long time. De Lopez et al. who studied sustainable development in Angkor and obtained the total sample of 2,514 households in 59 villages for the household survey, write that “[s]ome 87% of households believed that they could trace their ancestry back to Angkorian times. Thus, the settlements of Angkor remain largely inhabited by descendants of the original builders” (De Lopez et al. 2006:13, 19).

to its past grandeur” (Dagens 1989:47).² The French of this period, nonetheless, considered Angkor as a reservoir of monuments and artefacts or cultural property in the classical sense, some of which were removed from the site to be displayed in expositions or museums in France, for her own people as much as her western rivals (cf. Dagens 1989:60-111). In 1900, the French established a way to deal with the cultural property of Indochina through the decree of the Conservation of Monuments in Indochina of Artistic and Historic Significance³: they were “to be restored, repaired, sold, gifted or exchanged with permission from the Governor General” according to Article 13 of the Decree of 9 May 1900 (Lloyd 2009:149-150). In 1907, after Angkor was returned by Siam to Cambodia, the French, represented by EFEO, tried to convert it as a site of archaeological and architectural studies and conservation, through which they would turn it into an archaeological park or an open-air museum for visitors (cf. Dagens 1989:83-111). In 1925, Angkor was officially designated as Parc d’Angkor (Angkor Park).

The legal status as a state property and the boundaries of the Angkor World Heritage Site 67 years later were modelled after those of Angkor Park (cf. Lloyd 2009:147-155). The Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage (NS/RKM/0196/26) promulgated in 1996 also stipulates that “APSARA, is responsible for the protection, the preservation and the enhancement of the national cultural heritage” in Chapter 2 – Special Provisions, Article 5 (APSARA 1996:5). With more than two decades of time lag, APSARA inherited EFEO as the authority in charge of conserving and managing Angkor Park. Moreover, Article 15 of the Land Law, issued in 2001, lists the public property of the state and public legal entities, including archaeological, cultural and historical patrimonies (APSARA Authority 2005). Thus, the legal state of Angkor Park has always been state property from the French colonial period to the present. The legal status is one thing, but the actual sense of belonging, the notion and the ownership of heritage, and the use of heritage space by the local inhabitants are another.

Under the French management of Angkor during the colonial period, most people, both lay and secular, who used to live in the Angkor temple or city grounds were expelled to live outside. According to the accounts of some local informants, the monks of Angkor Wat were allowed to live in the compound, but had to build temples further away from the ancient building mass, while villages located outside large monument sites, such as Angkor Thom, Angkor Wat, Banteay Kdei, and Ta Prohm, were allowed to remain there (cf. Miura 2004:121-127; Arahi 2001:168). Some practices of the local inhabitants were banned, including hunting, allowing animals to stray on the pavements and terraces of Angkor, extending agriculture beyond the existing areas, clearing forests, constructing/modifying roads, building new houses, tapping resin, and felling trees, while others, such as fishing, cattle-grazing or the land

² See also Edwards (2007) and Winter (2007) for a detailed historical account of French “discoveries” of Angkor and its symbolic meaning for the French colonial rule of Cambodia.

³ In the French original, “Arrêté du 9 mars à la conservation en Indochine des monuments et objets ayant un intérêt historique ou artistique” (Lloyd 2009:149).

usage, were allowed. The enforcement of those bans and restrictions was, however, not very strict under the French reign. Rice farming in the West and East Barays (water reservoirs) and the moat of Angkor Thom was even encouraged by the French (Miura 2004:148; Luco 2006:121; Lloyd 2009:153). French restrictions on the traditional practices of the local inhabitants of Angkor were later emulated by the Cambodian authorities in the Angkor World Heritage Site restricting many of the local practices, but more restrictions and heavier enforcement were exercised, as we shall see later.

The shift in attention from property (land, monuments, artefacts, forests, and others) to heritage has become salient worldwide, especially after the ratification of the World Heritage Convention of 1972. The majority of the Cambodian authorities and, to some extent, the international community represented by the ICC since 1993, however, have tended to hold on to the monument-heavy and conservation-centred views of Angkor and cultural heritage. The gap became salient between their approach and the changing notions of heritage. The Cambodian sub-decree of 1998 (No. 98), entitled “Respecting Implementation of Cultural Heritage Protection”, defines cultural heritage in Article 2 of Chapter II as “the body of tangible cultural property with the exclusion of intangible cultural property” (ICC 2010b:2). This definition does not take into consideration the traditional local notion of heritage or the sense of belonging to the particular places in the Angkor Site. The heritage management approach based on this older concept, with cultural property as the object to identify, number, restore, and display, is showing its limitations and causing enormous difficulties all around and contestation among various actors.

Here, it is considered necessary to review what notions of heritage and rules of ownership held by which actors and when in order to locate the Angkor situation in the international debates and shifting notions and rules.

Differing Notions of Heritage and Rules of Ownership: Time and Actors

There is no generally agreed definition of heritage, nor a unified heritage category of objects and places, or even people (cf. Meethan 2001:106). Almost every cultural agency and specialist dealing with heritage has invented his or her own definition. Professional notions of heritage have become “new traditions” or trends. Definitions vary because of differences in the perception of and importance placed on the aspects or kinds of heritage that are concerned. How the term is conceived reflects the corresponding approaches to and policies on heritage. Nonetheless, all the notions highlight the fact that heritage is something that has been transmitted from ancestors to descendants, or from predecessors to successors.⁴ While there is a tendency to

⁴ See Hitchcock and King (2003a), which introduces a broader concept of heritage.

focus more on tangible property among European societies and international organizations, intangible heritage has been receiving attention in recent years, and the definitions are broadening (cf. Miura 2004:25).

UNESCO Definition

The UNESCO definition is “equated with the term patrimony as used in France, i.e. those things that are inherited and provide cultural identity and continuity, or a link with the past” (cf. Brisbane and Wood 1996:15 in Parsons 2000:351). Based on the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO defines cultural heritage as referring to monuments, groups of buildings and sites with historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological, or anthropological value (UNESCO 1983; UNESCO World Heritage Centre 2000a).

By designating certain locations of national heritage as World Heritage, it is intended that it becomes “the duty of the international community as a whole to co-operate” in protection, and not just leaving it to the national authority. This is because “some sites with recognised cultural or natural value would deteriorate or, worse, disappear, often through lack of funding to preserve them” (UNESCO World Heritage Centre 2000b).

The basic criterion for UNESCO’s World Heritage Site is understood as “outstanding universal value”. This term is, however, problematic; it connotes competition, comparison, grading, branding, and, most of all, universalising values. “Universal” is now considered by many a higher value than “local” or “personal”, even though it is not intended so by UNESCO. Universalisation is in part the globalisation of values that is seriously challenging the preservation of local specificity and cultural diversity that UNESCO also aspires to promote. In addition, UNESCO’s branding of sites as of “outstanding universal value” is increasingly leading to their conversion into popular tourist destinations, going beyond conservation and scientific research (cf. Du Cros and McKercher 2000:148; Cleere 1996:227-233). Compared with the universalizing and categorical tendencies of UNESCO’s notion of heritage, emphasising protection and preservation, the Khmer notion of heritage is more inclusive and overlapping of values, as well as being linked to their everyday life (cf. Miura 2004:25-27).

Khmer Notion

An old Khmer term for heritage is *kermorodâk* or *kerdâmmael* that can mean both personal and collective inheritance passed down from forefathers to generations of posterity.⁵ A term for property is *troap* or *troapsâmbat* without the meaning of inheritance and may also include money. The term *kammasat* refers to ownership, while the term for the owner –

⁵ In Headley Jr. et al. (1977:44), *ker* is derived from a Sanskrit term *kîrti* meaning “fame, renown, speech, and report”. It can also mean heritage and inheritance, such as in *kerdâmmael*. *Morodâk* means heritage, legacy and inheritance, which is also derived from a Sanskrit word *mtaka* that means a dead person (Headley et al. 1977:722). According to Antelme – a French linguist of the Khmer language – *dâmmael* is derived from a Khmer word *dael* and *daelkee* – something used by someone else first, leftovers (personal communications).

mchas – is more commonly used. The concept of having both immortal and mortal owners of heritage and property is fairly strong among the Khmer. The use of *mchas* covers individual owners of *kermorodák* or *kerdámnael* and *troap* or *troapsámbat*, but not for the modern concept of *petekaphoan*, which has restrictedly being used since the 1970s to refer to national or public heritage, such as ancient monuments, in place of *kermorodák* or *kerdámnael* (Miura 2004:32).

The term *kermorodák* or *kerdámnael* covers a wide range of materials and is used exclusively for tangible nature, including houses, land, trees, furniture, gold and silverware, lacquer ware, clothes, jewellery, equipment, implements, tools, and other household necessities, as well as Angkor temples and buildings. In the modern context, motorbikes, bicycles, and a variety of electrical appliances and audio-visual equipment may be included. Rural peasants, by and large, however, possess little gold or jewellery, let alone cars; instead, their family inheritance most often includes cattle, ox-carts and agricultural equipment. The term does not refer to intangible heritage such as folktales or legends, which are called collectively *ruoeng*, with various sub-classifications or theatre such as *lakhaon* (cf. Miura 2004:27).

The sense of ownership is strong among the Khmer: even Angkor monuments and monasteries have *mchas* who are their founders; both human and spiritual owners. In addition, the ownership of property is strictly individual in nature, so that one can find owners of even the smallest items (cf. Ebihara 1968:343-344), and even rice fields are named after their owners – either ancient or present. Among peasants, land is the most valuable property and family heritage is passed through individual members. Land was traditionally the property of the king, who was in fact the ultimate owner of virtually everything within his domain. In 1884, private property holdings were introduced to Cambodia by the French administration (cf. Ebihara 1968:346).

The *Ker morodák* for Angkor villagers is not only confined to the space of their villages, but stretches into the compounds of the Angkor monuments. In reference to Angkor villages, I consider spirits, open-air rest houses and Buddhist monasteries within the village as “communal” heritage in the sense being used by community members. Villages around Angkor Thom (meaning a “large city”), the Angkorian Capital of the 13th century, traditionally had a large amount of family and “communal” heritage inside the city walls and the moat. Angkor Krau (Nokor Krau) village, located along the north-eastern wall of Angkor Thom, in particular, traditionally had more *kermorodák* in Angkor Thom and the Preah Khan temple than any other villages around, including “communal” forests with individual family owners of trees in certain lots within. *Ker morodák* within the Angkor site consisted of fruit or resin-yielding trees called *yeang* and *trach*,⁶ and rice fields in

⁶ *Yeang* (*Dipterocarpus alatus*) is also known as *chheu teal*. According to Dy Phon (2000:243), “[w]ood much valued in construction and in cabinetwork, when not exploited for its oily resin. Generally, resin is collected for different uses: wood lacquering, boat’s draft proofing, and traditional medicine. Mixed with wax of bee, it is used in bandages ulcerated wounds. Barks of the young trees, provided with 2-4 leaves, are believed to have medicinal virtues: against rheumatism, diseases of the liver...They would also stimulate the appetite of cattle.” They are the most common resin-producing trees in and around Angkor Thom and Angkor Wat. *Trach* trees (*Dipterocarpus intricatus*) (cf. Dy Phon 2000:245) can more commonly be found in the north around Phnom Kulen.

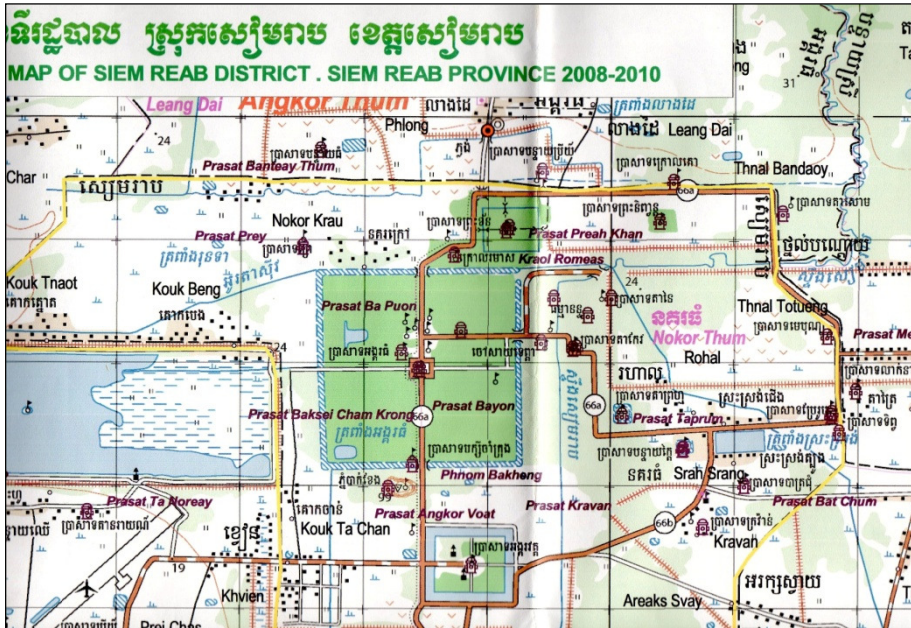


Fig. 1: Map of the central Angkor area (part of “Administrative Map of Siem Reab District. Siem Reab Province 2008-2010”).

shallow ponds, lakes and moats (Miura 2004:27-28). Villagers of Rohal and North and South SrahSrang also owned *yeang* trees inside and around nearby Angkorian temples, such as Ta Keo, Ta Prohm and Banteay Kdei, and their rice fields inside Banteay Kdei and Ta Prohm. Villages south of Angkor Thom owned trees in the southern half of Angkor Thom and the area around the Angkor Wat temple (Miura 2004:28).

Economists’ Notion

Economists’ notion of heritage is more inclusive than UNESCO’s, though specifically for cultural heritage, and seems to incorporate some of the Khmer notion of heritage in particular individuals. At the conference investigating the economic issues relating to the conservation of heritage organised by the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) in Los Angeles in 1998, the economists’ panel noted that the term cultural heritage

includes objects, structures, and other products of cultures and individuals that have been passed from previous generations to the present and are valued because they are representative of a particular culture and are, at least partly, valued because of their age.

(GCI 1998:25)

It is also recognised that “[c]ultural heritage is a public good in that no one can be excluded from enjoying it, and everyone can enjoy it at the same time” (GCI 1998:24). Cultural economists’ understanding of cultural heritage is all-inclusive in terms of categorised items and the people. In reality, however, it is difficult for this notion of heritage to be accepted by all: heritage with its high cultural and economic values is contested in most renowned sites (cf. Miura 2004:28).

The recent involvement of economists in the cultural field is interesting, for it had been considered that there was a limitation on economic thinking in so far as it could not discern important cultural and social values in a manner that maintained the integrity, potential and rich meaning of these values (GCI 1998:10). As Klammer (1997:76) notes, a number of prominent economists⁷ have tried to revive the moral dimension of economics. They are also increasingly paying attention to the intangible value of heritage (Hutter 1997). Culturalists, such as archaeologists, anthropologists, art historians, and conservationists, on the one hand, and economists, on the other, accept the usefulness of the other’s definition of heritage, which leads to the realization that some collective, institutional solution has to be sought in order to provide society with heritage goods (GCI 1998:12).

The new tendency of inter-disciplinary approaches in heritage studies and site management is enriching the discussion of issues related to heritage, as well as providing new dimensions on the controversy. The definitions and notions of heritage are changing their focuses and meaning through human experience, which, in turn, affects policy formulations and shifts in direction within the cultural agencies themselves (Miura 2004:29).

Shifting Focus and Meaning

Lowenthal (1998:3-4) notes that fifty years ago, heritage dwelt mainly on heredity, probate law and taxation; it now features antiquities, roots, identity, and belonging. As France has affected the cultural policies of both UNESCO and Cambodia, it may be useful to briefly study how the French notion of heritage might have changed over time.

The French notion of *patrimoine* has also been progressively broadened in the last forty years (cf. Samuel 1994:210-211). As argued by Hoyau in Giscard d’Estang’s France,

the contemporary emphasis on the national past derives less from a will to preserve and value a “monumental” and academic past than from the promotion of new values articulated on a largely transformed conception of inheritance and tradition.

(Wright 1985:251)

⁷ See Hutter (1997); GCI (1998) for representative economists.

Today, heritage includes both natural and artificial things and features, place, landscapes, trees, agricultural land, houses, temples, physical features, establishment, and others. The other, intangible heritage may include forms of knowledge, skills, technologies, genes, language, literature, history, music, songs, dance, ritual, magic formulae, religious beliefs, sports, and art (Miura 2004:29).

Heritage is becoming all-embracing, incorporating more “living” intangible cultural heritage (cf. Prentice 1993:21-35) and even living persons. This makes sense because master artists are the bearers of expert knowledge and skilled performers (cf. Marchand 2001:3).

The broader the notions of heritage become, the more questions are raised and the more intensively critical the debates on heritage become. The heritage industry has always been seen by critics as having a whiff of elitism about it (cf. Watson 2000:451), and an approach to cultural heritage in terms of sites nominated as World Heritage is certainly seen in this light (Smith 2000:404). At the same time, Wright (1985:48) argues that “[t]he impulse to preserve landscapes and buildings is an insistent cultural tendency with western modernity”.

The impulse to preserve cultural heritage is, however, not only confined to western modernity. Almost every country with heritage has tried to conserve it at one point in time or another in order to pay homage to the achievement of ancestors or their cherished goods, places or space, leave heritage for future generations, and perpetuate the symbolic meaning associated with it. According to two inscriptions from Angkor Wat, for instance, the temple was restored under royal patronage in 1577-1578 (Chandler 1992:84). A certain Queen Mother, whose son undertook the restoration of the temple, left inscriptions praising her son’s devotion to restoring Preah Pisnulok (Angkor Wat) to its authentic ancient form (APSARA 1998:xvi).

What Western modernity left to the world today is the institutionalisation of heritage conservation, maintaining its dominance in the ideologies and setting a standard for the legal framework of cultural heritage protection. It has been channelled through UNESCO and other cultural agencies concerned (Miura 2004:30).

After more than three decades of conservation efforts of the World Heritage Sites since 1972, UNESCO admits some limitations on the criteria, and juridical and political dimensions of the Convention’s application (Miura 2004:30).

For one, the criterion of the integrity in natural sites poses serious problems because many such sites have living populations who have traditionally interacted with nature, which has often resulted in the landscapes we now find. Where can we draw the line between environmental protection and the human use of nature? The local population in many World Heritage Sites has primarily been seen as a threat to the integrity of natural rather than cultural sites, but many sites, such as those designated as cultural landscapes, have both natural and cultural elements and their interactions are deemed fairly important. Along with environmental change, people modify their practices. UNESCO acknowledges that this criterion refuses all anthropisation of nature, which could only apply in vast natural parks strictly and scientifically managed by a large team of specialists, such as those in the United States or Canada (Pressouyre 1996:14).

That said, UNESCO has begun to vocalise its concern over the local ways of life and the residents who are often marginalised in their heritage sites and affected by the negative consequences of their transformation into parks and adaptation for tourist consumption:

Regulations intended to protect and preserve cultural monuments and sites, historic centres and cultural landscapes have often – if inadvertently – dispossessed local inhabitants of their ancestral homes. Their homes, neighbourhoods and land, imbued with the legends and legacies of the past, have been transformed into parks and tourist attractions.

(Khouri-Dagher 1999:10)

UNESCO's World Heritage Centre (WHC) referred to heritage in 2000 as “our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations”. For them, “cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. They are our touchstones, our points of reference, our identity” (UNESCO World Heritage Centre 2000b). In 2002, the Director-General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, emphasised a new role for cultural heritage as “not only an instrument for peace and reconciliation but also a factor of development.”⁸

New Khmer Term for National Heritage – *petekapboan*

A new term for heritage, *petekapboan*, has come to be used in Cambodia since the 1970s in reference to national heritage. Family or personal heritage was excluded, hence the idea of individual *mchas* was no longer applicable (Miura 2004:32).

While UNESCO's definition and those used by academics and people in general are broadening, reflecting changing social values, perceptions of life and the principles of how heritage can serve common human purposes, the official usage of the term in Cambodia is narrowing, distinguishing official heritage from personal or family inheritance. Nowadays, Cambodian authorities use a newer term – *petekapboan* – to describe Angkor heritage in official speeches, documents and signs. The term refers to collective and often national heritage and does not include family inheritance. The word was translated straight from the French word “patrimoine”. This account was given by the then-director of the Cultural Heritage Department of APSARA, who is a Khmer anthropologist trained in France. He emphasized that he would still use the term *kermorodak* and *kerdammael* to refer to Angkor heritage, but would be obliged to use the term *petekapboan* in official speeches and writings (Miura 2004:32).

The Cambodian authorities have shifted not only the language, but also the usage and the meaning of the word, whereas local people hardly ever use this term. The discrepancy in understanding heritage by the locals and the state has become more evident when translated into action by the latter for the management of the Angkor

⁸ Cited from http://portal.unesco.org/culture/ev.php?URL_ID=1549&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1023453010 <accessed July 31, 2003>.

Heritage Site since the 2000s. The Cambodian authorities often emphasise the public nature of Angkor heritage as *petekaphoan* with specific mention of monuments, land, forests, water (lakes and ponds), and air (space), which they consider as national and world treasures to be protected from all adversaries, including the use of natural resources or space by the local population. Thus, Angkor heritage, including monuments, forests, lakes, ponds, and land, is now very much divorced from heritage for local villagers, who have been restricted in their access to and association with it. In short, family ownership is mostly denied in the name of *petekaphoan*. The head of the Heritage Police argued that the local ownership of trees and rice fields as family inheritance and the customary rights of resin tapping and rice cultivation were against national and world interests. The discrepancy in the conceptualisation of heritage and the application of differing notions held by the Cambodian authorities demonstrate a huge distance from the philosophy and desire of UNESCO to “use” heritage for the culture of peace and reconciliation (Miura 2004:32).

Practices and Rules of Ownership among the Local Inhabitants

Traditional Ownership of Property in Angkor Thom and the Vicinity

The Angkor villages around Angkor Thom and Preah Khan are considered as fairly old among villages in the region. They, in addition to other smaller Angkor monuments and temples around these villages, are familiar lived landscapes of the local inhabitants. The old inhabitants of other villages around the Angkor monuments all share the sense of belonging to the space with its forests and certain places where their family inherited properties, socio-cultural activities take place and memories of the past are embedded. Family inheritance passed through individual members, which is the social reality of the people living today, and has some of its origins in the domain of oral history related to both remembered and unknown ancestors. Thus, it inevitably links the life stories of the living with those of the dead. In a society in which the past is consecrated, and the ancestors exert almost unquestionable authority over the living posterity, heritage – both tangible and intangible – including family inheritance, becomes sacred property that cannot be touched or altered by anybody within the relevant group or community. Oral stories, in this sense, constitute an important part of the customary law in explaining one’s position and rights within the relevant community in terms of the ownership of certain property (cf. Miura 2004:107).

Forests and Ownership of Trees

Nobody knows the origin of the ownership of trees in Angkor, except that, prior to the French management of Angkor, the king was the ultimate owner of all the land, everything that grew and stood on it, the water, the people, etc. The forests of Angkor Thom and Preah Khan temple were considered communal in the sense that villagers had been engaged in maintaining the space collectively, which had, however, not been

the collective property of the village. The ownership of individual trees had been clear to the villagers in the respective territories of certain families, which had been mostly respected by the local population. *Yeang* trees in the northern half of Angkor Thom were predominantly owned by the villagers of Angkor Krau, located just north of Angkor Thom. In the southern half of Angkor Thom, however, the ownership of *yeang* trees was stretched to the villagers of Baray, Kôk Beng, Kôk Ta Chan, Kôk Doung, Bakheng, Trâpeang Seh, and North Teaksen, which are located either west or south of Angkor Thom. Nobody knows how and when certain families came to own those trees, but the ownership had been passed down through generations. Individual members of those families who had cared for young trees had thus maintained the forests, and the tapping of resin had been regularly conducted in a controlled manner. Some families owned more than three hundred trees through individual members, while others owned fewer than fifty.⁹ The villagers of Trâpeang Seh also owned *yeang* trees east of Angkor Thom near the Siem Reap River. The ownership of resin-yielding trees could be transferred from one family to another in lieu of debts, and could be sold or purchased (Miura 2004:107-108).

Many of those trees, especially *yeang*, were cut down illegally by both Cambodian and Vietnamese soldiers in the late-1980s. Local villagers witnessed the military conducting a large-scale operation of logging and transportation of logs from Angkor Thom during the night until about 4 a.m. In the same period, logging was also conducted outside Angkor Thom and Preah Khan, in the villages and around the farmland. Not only did the local villagers lose their family properties to the military, but they were also later blamed by the Heritage Police Chief for the destruction of *petekaphoan* – the national property (Miura 2004:144-145).

Rice Fields in Angkor Thom and Histories of Ownership

Rice fields inside Angkor Thom, in the form of ponds and lakes, were used for rice cultivation until 2000, when many traditional practices of local villagers were banned or restricted. The reasons for ownership were three-fold; (1) their ancestors used to live in Angkor Thom; (2) some people began to cultivate with the permission of the French; and (3) a few people cleared forests to begin cultivation, which nobody stopped. It is said that civil servants, including Angkor restoration workers, were allowed to own land in the past if they cleared the forest, cultivated it and paid taxes (Miura 2004:108).

Today, senior villagers of Angkor Krau remember the owners of rice fields and trees in Angkor Thom and its vicinity, most notably the direct descendants of Ta Nak (Grandfather Nak) and his siblings, who were known to have lived at Srah Srei (Women's Pond) in the royal palace compound of Angkor Thom. The best remembered people were Ta Nak and his two sisters – Yiey Suong (Grandmother Suong) and Yiey Kom (Grandmother Kom). They are said to have been expelled from Angkor Thom by the French.

⁹ See Martin (1993) for her finding of the ownership of *yeang* trees by local villagers in the environs of Angkor.

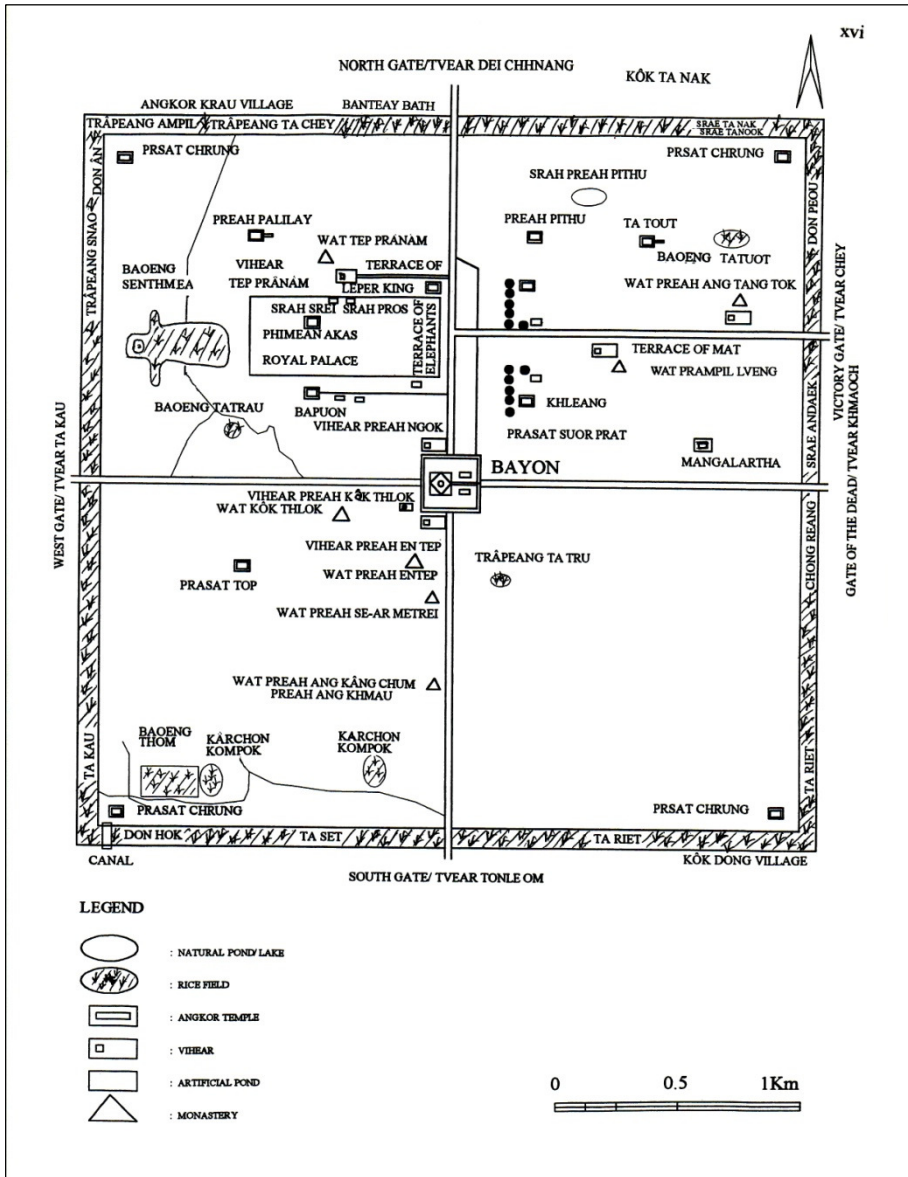


Fig. 2: Angkor Thom and rice fields in the enclosure and moat (Miura 2004).

Ta Nak is a familiar eponym for landmarks in and outside Angkor Thom because of his forced removal from his residence. The clan of Ta Nak is said to have had exclusive rights to pick mangoes, sugar palm, coconuts, *phnou* (a kind of wild fruit), and tamarind from the area around Srah Srei. These mango trees, from which his children and grandchildren picked in their childhood, are called Svay Ta Nak (Ta Nak’s mangoes). In

addition, *yeang* trees near the Preah Palilay temple belonged to Ta Nak. He also inherited land in Srae Ta Tuot (Grandfather Tuot's ricefield), east of Prasat Ta Tuot (Ta Tuot Temple), and part of Baoeng Senthmea (Senthmea Lake), west of the royal palace inside Angkor Thom. There are also rice fields near Kôk Ta Nak (Grandfather Nak's Hill), called Srae Ta Nak, within the moat of Angkor Thom, which have been cultivated by his descendants until today. Some rice fields have, for one reason or another, been passed to villagers who are not directly related to Ta Nak or his siblings (Miura 2004:108-109).

Ta Nak's relatives live in Kôk Beng and Kôk Ta Chan villages west of Angkor Thom. According to some of these relatives, Yiey Chap (Grandmother Chap) was either Ta Nak's real sister or first cousin, and her husband was Ta Meas. They were also said to have lived at Srah Srei, and their descendants had likewise cultivated part of the land in lakes such as Baoeng Ta Trau and Baoeng Senthmea in Angkor Thom until 1999. Two other families of Kôk Ta Chan cultivated Srae Ta Tuot until the late-1990s. Ta Nak's family and two families of Kôk Ta Chan were said to have cultivated large fields in front of the Royal Terrace and the Terrace of the Leper King in "the old days", but nobody alive now remembers having seen anybody cultivating them or knows the exact period of cultivation. Ta Nak's rice field, called Srae Ta Nak, is located in the north-eastern moat of Angkor Thom. A villager heard from old people that this section of the moat had been a royal rice field that was given to people by the king in exchange for 2 kg of gold. The other parts of the moat of Angkor Thom have also been cultivated by the people of local villages, including Angkor Krau, Kôk Ta Chan, Leang Dai, Kôk Doung, and Bakheng. Some villagers of Trâpeang Seh claim that Ta Riet – the south-eastern part of the moat of Angkor Thom – belonged to the monasteries of Angkor Wat (Miura 2004:109).

Concerning Ta Nak's family inheritance, some senior villagers link him to the Cambodian royal family, while others attribute it to the excellent work of Ta Nak's ancestors who had been rewarded with privilege, property and status by the rulers in the past. In Angkor Krau, there is a legend of a prince who was expelled from Angkor Thom, because of a forbidden love, to live where a small Angkorian temple lies in the village (cf. Miura 2004:113-118). Another legend with various versions tells us of Ton Chey, a famous advisor of the king, known throughout Cambodia, who was so clever that he mocked the stupidity of the king and was expelled from Angkor to the area where Angkor Krau lies today. These legends have been transmitted to the generations of Angkor Krau villagers. Nobody knows whether the prince or Ton Chey is related to Ta Nak's ancestors, but it is intriguing that there are repeated connections between the ancestors of Angkor Krau and the royal palace and Angkor Thom through oral stories and family inheritance of certain properties. It overlaps in one's mind the rise and fall of Angkor (9th to mid-15th century CE) and the flourishing and disintegration of her socio-political systems with the turbulent history of Angkor Krau villagers (cf. Miura 2004:119-120).

Spiritual Heritage, Practices and Sense of Belonging

Buddhism and Spirit Cult with Appropriation of Hindu Statues

Spiritual heritage contains “cultural properties”, such as Hindu or Buddhist statues, in Angkor. The understanding of heritage here requires more than just what is visible, since the invisible has the power over the spiritual lives of the people. The spiritual and cultural importance of religious beliefs is the very reason why such countless statues, carvings and temples were created in the first place. The religious and cultural dimensions of Angkor heritage might be the only shared values among various levels of social actors, local, national, regional, and global. Even though most Cambodians consider a strong sense of belonging to Angkor, this sense is no doubt the strongest among the local population.

Angkor heritage has spiritual, economic and socio-cultural dimensions for the local inhabitants. Their practices are inter-related and difficult to separate from one another. In the first place, Angkor as a whole is considered sacred because of *neak ta* (tutelary spirits related to ancestors and nature), the Buddha and *bâng bat* (benign spirits of the forest). Hindu icons have often been appropriated as powerful *neak ta*. The grander the temple is, the more numerous the *neak ta*. Logically, Angkor Wat, as the largest temple in Angkor, contains more *neak ta* than any other temple, and thus is the most powerful. It also contains the royal *neak ta* called Ta Reach in the form of a Viṣṇu that guards the main west gate from intruders. Ta Reach is the most powerful *neak ta* in the region, whose power radiates from Angkor Wat to the periphery. The world of *neak ta* in Angkor is hierarchical; a mirror image of Khmer society (cf. Miura 2004:93-94).

A powerful *neak ta* tends to supervise and order minor *neak ta* under its command. In addition, pyramidal temples contain *neak ta* in the top central shrine, whereas more expansive temples (like Angkor Wat) tend to contain *neak ta* at the gates. Villagers not only pray to the Buddha, but also the *neak ta*. All the *neak ta* receive annual celebrations with offerings; the major *neak ta*, such as Ta Reach, may also receive music. Certain incidents in Angkor are considered as the workings of the *neak ta*, the Buddha or the *bâng bat*. In almost every village in Angkor there is at least one spirit medium who can be possessed by powerful *neak ta* to cure people who have become ill or find the property they have lost. Illnesses of both people and animals are often believed to have been caused by various spirits, which require consultation and propitiation through offerings.

Neak ta can also be consulted for information about rainfall, good harvests and the general welfare of people. These spirit mediums inherit powerful *kru* (teacher) spirits from their ancestors. The *neak ta* Ta Reach of Angkor Wat is often invoked by local spirit mediums for their clients to determine the cause of troubles. In the past, it was the role of the king to mediate between the nature-ancestor world and that of human beings to maintain order in his kingdom (cf. Miura 2004:76-77, 93-94).



Fig. 3: The statue of Vishnu-Neak Ta Ta Reach, which is located in one of the main gateways of Angkor Wat, is a sacred site especially for the inhabitants of Angkor Park. The statue is regularly decorated and worshipped, in spite of tourists passing by (2011).

Former Conservation Labourers Conserving Spirituality and Morality

Many local villagers worked with French conservators for the Angkor Conservation Office and are skilled conservation labourers. Generations of conservators are proud of their family tradition. Many of the senior local monks and abbots used to be conservation labourers. Some villagers also began voluntarily to clean Angkor temples and *vibears* (*vibara* or temple hall) in the 1980s, prior to the reorganization of maintenance work in the site by the Cambodian authorities (cf. Miura 2004:98-99).

The Angkor site is, therefore, closely linked to the everyday life of local villagers, together with their memories and ancestors' practices. It is their homeland and an integral whole; religious and socioeconomic life is inseparable. The continued relevance of the site for local villagers, as well as the symbolic and inspirational importance for the nation, makes the site "a living heritage site" rather than relevant only because people continue to worship in Angkor. It has long been safeguarded by the local inhabitants as their personal and communal heritage which is now classified as a World Heritage Site.

Changed Notions and Practices of Property, Heritage and Belonging

Changed Notions of Heritage

The nomination of Angkor as a World Heritage Site in 1992 brought about the new notions of heritage, spatial realignment, legal frameworks, rule changes, modified or new practices, and bans or restrictions of many former practices of the local inhabitants, as discussed in my chapter "World Heritage Making in Angkor" in this volume.

The Parc d'Angkor, established by the French colonial administration in the 1920s, had been defunct for nearly two decades because of war and communist-socialist periods. Since 1992, it has been resuscitated and called a World Heritage Site. The familiar spatial arrangement was reorganized with zones and sets of old rules and regulations more strictly enforced, while new restrictions were introduced. Various notions of contested heritage soon emerged, i.e. local, provincial, national, regional, and international, whereby Cambodian government officials began to use this as a hierarchical ordering of importance and justifications to deny the private property of the local inhabitants.

The Heritage Police, which was created to protect heritage in 1997, emerged as one of the dominant power players in heritage management. The Heritage Police Chief considered that the local heritage was unimportant, and should have been subordinate to a higher cause and to parties with wider concerns. In a meeting organized by APSARA in August 2000 with representatives of local villages, various levels of government officials, NGO workers, and researchers, he even quoted laws and regulations promulgating the protection of national cultural heritage prior to Angkor's World Heritage nomination. These are based on an old conservation philosophy and policies of freezing the past as it was found, almost completely eradicating human interactions in the core zone. While most recent laws are not respected, with the exception of limited religious practices, the old philosophy and approaches which deny any human interaction with the heritage site are followed (Miura 2004).

Property Rights and Living Rights

As for the property rights of the local inhabitants, not only Article 15 of the Land Law stipulates archaeological, cultural and historical patrimonies as the public property of the State and public legal entities, but so also does the Decision of the Royal Government of Cambodia (No. 70/SSR) of 2004. The latter states that the land in Zones 1 and 2 is “State public property, which APSARA Authority has to manage, preserve, and develop in a sustainable manner” (APSARA Authority 2005). The residential rights of the old inhabitants in the zones are, at the same time, permitted, according to Article 2 which states that “the citizens who have been dwelling in the Zones may continue to live there without being subject to any evacuation”.

Restrictions on Traditional Local Socioeconomic Practices

As mentioned briefly in my first chapter “World Heritage Making in Angkor” in this volume, the Heritage Police banned many practices of the local inhabitants in Zone 1 in 2000. Some of the restrictions were based on the model set for Parc d’Angkor, but new bans were imposed on the local inhabitants by the Heritage Police beyond the stipulated sphere of authority (cf. Miura 2004:153-185).

The situation in the 1920s and that of the 1990s have a certain similarity in the sense that both periods marked the “saving” of the national integrity and unity from its disintegration or loss. In this kind of social context, the restoration of Angkor monuments and temples has become the essential symbolic and practical task of the government. Personal and private rights and the ownership of property there were to be sacrificed for a greater cause because at least their rights to live there were legally safeguarded. Being allowed to live is one thing, being enabled to survive is another. The strict enforcement of restrictions on traditional practices makes it highly difficult for many local inhabitants to make ends meet in the Angkor area.

The old bans reintroduced since 2000 include hunting, clearing forests, felling trees, tapping resin, cultivating rice inside large monuments and Angkor Thom, extending cultivation beyond the existing areas, allowing animals to stray on the pavements and terraces of Angkor, and building new houses. During the French period, fishing, the land usage and cattle-grazing in the space of Angkor, except certain places as specified above, were permitted (Luco 2006:121). Newly added bans since 2000 include catching fish, cultivating rice in ponds and lakes in Angkor Thom, collecting all the other forest products, such as firewood, vines, insects, and beeswax, bringing cutting instruments or firearms into the forests, grazing cattle inside monumental sites such as Angkor Thom, Banteay Kdei or Ta Prohm temple, and releasing water buffaloes in the moat of Angkor Wat. The enforcement of bans has become much more severe and more systematic than during the French period.



Fig. 4: Caretaker of the Buddha at Bayon (2006).



Fig. 5: After the removal of the caretaker (2011).

Some of the bans, however, contradict some articles in the zoning decree, which does not prohibit all the traditional activities, instead they even mention “[m]aintain[ing] traditional land use in the form of rice paddies and pasture” (APSARA 1998:218). The practices of the Heritage Police – the intimidation of and extorting money from the local villagers – have continued behind the scenes up to 2010.

Some of the Heritage Police collaborated with several local villagers in illegal logging, and other times intimidated them in various ways to demand inducements. The Heritage Police collected money from caretakers of religious icons, sellers of souvenirs or drinks, collectors of edible ants’ nests or firewood, and rice cultivators in the lakes and ponds of Angkor Thom and so forth. Even prior to the ban of 2000, when some cultivators of rice fields in Angkor Thom protested or refused to pay inducements to the Heritage Police, they were prohibited from cultivating rice. The rice fields were then cultivated by the Heritage Police to help supplement their meagre salary. Grazing cattle was banned for local villagers, but cows that belonged to the Heritage Police were seen grazing in Banteay Kdei by a foreign researcher (Tashiro 2001:238).

In the Bayon temple, caretakers of religious statues used to be forced to give away a large portion of their donations to the Heritage Police stationed there, but these caretakers were removed by APSARA in 2008 on the grounds that they were making profits in a spiritual place. However, in recent years, a group of models in theatrical costumes await visitors in Bayon every day for joint photo-taking priced at US\$ 10. In addition, some hotels organize a package of outdoor dinner and dance show for group tourists beside the temple on some evenings during the dry season. Later, another set of caretakers of Bayon were reappointed by APSARA; some submit all the visitors’ donations to the abbot of the nearby monastery, while others share it with the Heritage Police or keep all themselves, which is apparently permitted by APSARA because of their poverty. APSARA’s directions tend to be arbitrary and contradictory, which often causes mistrust and anger among the local population.

Compared with the number of restrictions imposed on the local inhabitants, their economic activities which had been permitted in the Angkor Site without the harassment of the Heritage Police were limited in number, the amount of profit and scope. Their employment by APSARA as conservation and restoration labourers, temple guards, toilet cleaners, and forest guards in the Angkor Park seems to be the only official and definitely protected jobs open to the local inhabitants (cf. Miura 2004:149-151).

In Angkor Wat, the New Year’s games no longer take place; they were forbidden by APSARA. Instead, there were staged performances of dance and music, mainly for invited dignitaries and foreign visitors who paid for the tickets on these occasions. The local villagers were allowed to enter the compound, but only to sit on the grass well below the stage with a poor view (Miura 2004:101-102).



Fig. 6: Dinner show in preparation beside Bayon (2009).

Restrictions on Religious Practices and Monks' Activities

Some religious practices were banned by APSARA in the two monasteries of Angkor Wat. A senior official of APSARA considers that some ceremonies disturb tourists (Baillie 2005:68). Monks were disallowed from organizing ceremonies or meditation within the central tower of Angkor Wat as before, and the rights of monasteries to organize ordination ceremonies were suspended (Baillie 2005:67-69; 2006:127), though monks can be ordained in other monasteries and serve in Angkor Wat. The organization of other religious ceremonies has been restricted in the Angkor Wat monasteries for several years, when local villagers were discouraged from entering the compound on motorbikes. Pilgrims had formerly been allowed to stay free of charge in Angkor Wat monasteries overnight, which was also forbidden by APSARA, even though Article 18 in the "Zoning Decree" makes exceptions for the monasteries of Angkor Wat, Lolei and Bakong.

In another dimension, the increasing number of tourists visiting Angkor has caused controversies over the discipline of monks vis-à-vis tourists. Some monks allegedly demanded donations for their own ends from tourists, while others were said to have touched young female tourists, an act totally forbidden by the religious law. APSARA also complained about some monks having built new buildings without its permission. The supreme monk of the Mahanikay sect which is followed by the majority of Khmer living in Cambodia, proposed destroying the monasteries in Angkor, except the two in Angkor Wat, and relocating monks elsewhere, claiming that



Fig. 7: Photographic models with a tourist in Bayon (2011).

the monasteries in question lacked discipline, provoking disorder on the site, and that they would reorganize religion in order “not to lose face” in front of tourists.¹⁰ Subsequently, the monks of the targeted monasteries collectively demanded that the government donate land for their relocation. The government then cancelled their eviction (Miura 2004:193).

Reorganization of Angkor Heritage Space and Sense of Belonging

APSARA reorganized the stalls in the Angkor Site in 2010, and this was finally accompanied by cutting off the collection of dues from stall owners or itinerant sellers by the Heritage Police. Construction restrictions have been imposed on the local villages within Zones 1 and 2 in the most severe way since 2008, which has caused controversies and severe contestations between APSARA and the local inhabitants, as well as the former and the local authorities, from the village level to the provincial one.

As discussed heretofore, the World Heritage nomination of Angkor has changed the notions of heritage held by almost all the actors involved. Many of the Cambodian authorities and individuals have begun to see the Angkor Site increasingly as the space of control, domination and economic opportunity, which is fundamentally the same as

¹⁰ The avoidance of direct confrontation and concerns about loss of face are widespread cultural norms in South East Asia (cf. Hitchcock and King 2003b:162).

what the French colonial administration envisaged. On the part of the local inhabitants, while they mostly welcome the nomination, the prestige and tourists' visits, they realize that it also means their being forced away from their socioeconomic and cultural heritage, rights they use in association with the site. The restrictions on traditional practices and secular intervention in religious matters have naturally created antagonism among the parties concerned. All these measures taken by the Cambodian authorities are causing the spiritual decay of the heritage and the local and religious communities' sense of belonging to the heritage, coupled with considerable economic burdens landing on their shoulders. This is certainly not what UNESCO has aimed at on nominating a site as a World Heritage Site.

Conclusion

The advanced modernization and popularization of UNESCO's World Heritage program requires us to study notions of property as associations, relationships and social values using interdisciplinary approaches, and not in isolation as "goods" or "objects" only from legal or economic viewpoints. Universalizing values of heritage is challenging in many World Heritage Sites where local specificity or traditional management systems are inadequate. The case of the Angkor World Heritage Site has shown discrepancies in the notions of heritage held by different actors in distinct historical times. The authorities managing the Angkor site tend to dwell on the old European approach of "freezing the past", laying a great burden on the practices of the local inhabitants. Rule changes are often imposed rather than persuaded on or negotiated with the local communities. The sense of ownership and the belonging of local inhabitants to heritage tend to be disregarded or restricted. The higher the social and global values of the "properties", the more actors appear in the heritage space. Because the space and the number of "properties" are limited, more conflicts occur. Notions of heritage and rules of ownership, and what practices are allowed, what not, who should manage them, and how to do them are all important issues concerning the old and new actors in Angkor. In order to reduce conflicts and have harmonious relationships among the social actors, it is considered necessary for the managing authorities to adopt a wider notion of heritage, flexibility in management and a respect of the local sense of belonging to and traditional local ownership of the heritage with their active participation in heritage discourses and management.

Sustainable Development in Angkor.

Conservation Regime of the Old Villagescape and Development

Keiko Miura

Introduction

The second phase of the Angkor management policy has its emphasis on promoting sustainable development of both tourism and local communities. What we found in Angkor is, however, the conservation of the old villagescape vigorously exercised by APSARA, rather than the fruits of development appreciated.

The term “villagescape” is my own invention, following Appadurai’s neologism – “ethnoscape”. Appadurai defines ethnoscape as

the landscape of persons who make up the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, and other moving groups and persons constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of and between nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree.

(Appadurai 1991:192)

Taking the essence of the modern political implication of ethnoscape beyond national borders, by *villagescape* I mean the combination of villages and landscape as the contested representation of a bounded landscape which no longer just belongs to traditional villagers in the globally recontextualized space, i.e. the World Heritage Site. The conservation of the old *villagescape* is based on UNESCO's old conservation philosophy recaptured and reintroduced in Cambodia and which has recently become a highly contested discourse in relation to that of the community development. The main actors of the discourses are the local villagers and APSARA, while other groups of actors are involved to a certain extent.

Winter (2007), who studied the issue of heritage and tourism in Angkor, also uses the term "touristscape" as a dominant discourse there, together with that of monumental conservation and landscape zoning. He argues that these discourses frame Angkor as a static, singular and geographically bounded *touristscape*. The landscape of villages in the Angkor World Heritage Site is indeed treated by APSARA in the same way. In other words, the tendency in the management of Angkor is to transform or reconstruct the space into a frozen landscape considered ideal for a World Heritage Site. It contradicts lived-in landscapes if landscapes mean "created by people – through their experience and engagement with the world around them" (cf. Bender 1993:1). As Bender argues, "There is never *a* landscape, always many landscapes" (1998:25, original emphasis). It shows that constructing a landscape is a political process, not just cultural or economic.

This chapter firstly studies the concept of landscape as the basis of the *villagescape* and its application, especially in the context of World Heritage Sites. It then illustrates the background as to why this conservation regime has become prominent in the phase of sustainable development. Thirdly, it discusses the parallel development of the alternative residential site of Run Ta-Ek for the local population, which is framed as an ideal "eco-village" with a traditional façade according to a modern concept, and what this site actually means in relation to the management of local villagers. Fourthly, it investigates in which ways APSARA has been implementing the conservation of the old *villagescape*. Next, it will explore how the local inhabitants are responding to APSARA's new regime. Local inhabitants referred to in this section are mostly those who have been living in the Angkor area for generations, though there is a number of migrated people who have been living in front of (west) or south of Angkor Wat since

the 1990s.¹ Finally, it will conclude with an assessment of the current management situation and issues and demonstrate an alternative prospect.

Concept of Landscape and Application

Concept of Landscape

The idea of beautiful, splendid or bizarre scenery exists throughout the world. Memories of familiar or recognizable landscapes must exist in the minds of all men. The two terms – scenery and landscape – can mean both natural and artificial. Thus, the concept of landscape may not originate in one area, but the English term “landscape” connotes that the land in question is in a temperate climate. Gow (1995:43) argues, “[I]t is hard to see Amazonia as landscape, in the sense this term has for people from temperate climates.” Not surprisingly, therefore, the way in which the term is used in academia and agencies dealing with heritage today is based on the European concept.

According to Hirsch (1995:2), the term “landscape” was first introduced into the English language from the Dutch word *landschap* in the 16th century as a technical term used by painters. It was

linked to the perception of countryside scenery and its subsequent improvement (through landscape gardening, estate management, etc.): The goal was to achieve a correspondence between the pictorial ideal and the countryside itself.

(Hirsch 1995:2)

This tendency is reflected in the way the landscape concept is applied to broader domains of social and cultural life (cf. Hirsch 1995:2). Considering the etymological root in European painting and the later associations with the landscape gardens of the landed gentry and early financial bourgeoisie, it connotes a particular version of “high” or elite Western culture (cf. Green 1995:38). In addition, landscape is objectified as a framed, thus fixed, picture (cf. Pinny 1995) to gaze at and is often devoid of people. To a certain extent, this framing of landscape has caused policy-makers to consider rural landscape management as primarily orientated towards “gaze” and admiration. This earlier European concept of landscape as static and an object of viewing, like a park, however, stands in stark opposition to that of the practice of everyday life and social dynamism which entails change.

¹ In Village-E, moved by the government in 1991 from a location close to Angkor Wat to an area adjacent to Siem Reap, for instance, 70% of the villagers in 2010 came from other provinces according to a vice-chief. Villages north of Angkor Thom, however, consist of mostly old inhabitants who have been living there for generations, while some ancient villages along the main tourist roads in the east may have more new migrants. According to De Lopez et al. (2006:13), out of 59 villages in Angkor, some 87% of households are believed to trace their ancestry back to Angkorian times.

Application of Concept

When the term “landscape” is applied to a “non-Western” and “non-temperate” climate zone where a large population resides, tensions emerge between the managers of the “landscape” and those who live and work on the land. The managers try to maintain the fixed “picture” of the landscape, considering that the people create unwanted changes, despite the fact that the landscape has often been the outcome of people’s continued work on the land.

The phenomenon of freezing an idealized landscape can be observed in many World Heritage Sites. The managers of the sites try to frame and cut out the landscapes in a manner which fits the “pictures” that they consider presentable to others. The landscaping in the context of World Heritage Sites entails the zoning of protection and development according to their own criteria, which may cause the alienation of local inhabitants from their familiar lived-in “landscapes”. The landscape is then transformed into a desirable one for a World Heritage Site, principally for the visual consumption of tourists and simultaneously enhancing the prestige of the nation. In a number of regional World Heritage Sites, local inhabitants were completely or partially moved outside the immediate area in order for the managing authorities to create archaeological parks, resulting in the separation of inhabitants from their spiritual, emotional, historical, and economic connections with the landscapes. Borobudur and Prambanan in Indonesia, Ayuthaya and Sukhothai in Thailand (Black and Wall 2001; Tashiro 2001:219), and Vat Phou and Champasak in Laos (Nishimura 2005:19) are cases in point.

Heritage and landscape as social constructs are becoming accepted norms even among archaeologists. The shift in archaeological disciplines is bringing anthropologists into heritage studies, while archaeologists have incorporated anthropological approaches into their understanding of heritage discourse. Bender, one of the leading scholars in this endeavour, argues that

[I]n the context of a contemporary obsession with preserving and commodifying the past, it becomes particularly urgent that we take the measure of landscape, both theoretically and in practice. More often than not, those involved in the conservation, preservation and mummification of landscape create normative landscapes, as though there was only one way of telling or experiencing. They attempt to ‘freeze’ the landscape as a palimpsest of past activity. But, of course, the very act of freezing is itself a way of reappropriating the land. For the Heritage people freezing time and space allows the landscape or monuments in it to be packaged, presented, and turned into museum exhibits. We need to recognise that this is just one way of handling the past. We need to work against the grain of this passive, nostalgic, *heavy*-with-history notion of landscape.

(Bender 1998:26, original emphasis)

Hirsch (1995) also insists that landscape emerges out of a cultural process. For him, there are two kinds of landscape: The one we initially see and the second that is produced through local practice and which we come to recognise and understand through fieldwork and through ethnographic description and interpretation. In other words, “landscape” entails a relationship between the “foreground” of the imagined or ideal world and the “background” of ordinary, workaday life or social life. While the foreground is to be seen by outsiders and visitors, the background becomes contentious and sometimes conflicts with those who wish to show only “foreground” to the outsiders, hiding the “background”. Hirsch’s notion of “foreground” and “background” landscape suggests a landscape to be viewed with relations of power and as political space conducive of conflicts. It is also true that what can be “foreground” and what “background” may change through the passage of time.

In 1991, the “background” landscape in Angkor constituted poor local housing and their ways of life in general, so that the people who used to live around Angkor Wat – the most magnificent “foreground” – were forced out of their villages by the government to erase the sight of the “background”. After the World Heritage nomination and increasingly after 2000, the same methodology was not encouraged, but the conservation of an “old” landscape in Zones 1 and 2 was emphasized as the “foreground”, while modern or urban landscapes as the “background” were strictly prohibited from developing. In fact, the purpose was to convert the entire Angkor Park as a monolithic “old” landscape studded with ancient monuments and traditional houses. Terms such as “old”, “ancient”, “traditional”, or “original” are often used as the category for protection, whereas the category considered as “new” or “modern” contains objects of restrictions.

As discussed so far when a reference is made to a heritage site, the landscape is not just natural or static, but is something that emerges out of a cultural process and bears the trace of people’s lives and struggles, their embedded memories, kinship relations and identity which they have developed, and the rituals performed, connecting people living in the present with the past, and forging ties among them that will endure into the future (cf. Gow 1995; Morphy 1995). While another more appropriate term than landscape is sought to describe the environment of a living heritage site, the importance of visibility in landscape is clearly recognizable in sites designated as World Heritage and has been vigorously promoted by the tourism industry.

In 1992 the term “cultural landscape” was adopted as a new criterion for the nomination of World Heritage Sites.² To embrace a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humankind and its natural environment and describe a mixed site

² Tongariro National Park in New Zealand, originally nominated as a World Heritage Site in 1990, became the first property to be inscribed on the World Heritage List under the revised criteria describing cultural landscapes in 1993 (cf. UNESCO 2011b).

(cf. Adams 2003:91-92)³, the 1998 Operational Guidelines (UNESCO World Heritage Centre 1999)⁴ state that cultural landscapes are

illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal [...]. Cultural landscapes often reflect specific techniques of sustainable land-use, considering the characteristics and limits of the natural environment they are established in, and a specific spiritual relation to nature.

(UNESCO World Heritage Centre 1999:10)

UNESCO's criterion of cultural landscape clearly recognizes the dynamic relationship between man and nature. However, the application of cultural landscape is rather limited or, even though it may be applied, the managing authorities tend to adhere to old conservation philosophy, ignoring the human-nature interactions. In Angkor, only mostly the areas along the rivers in Zone 4 were designated as cultural landscapes, thus the category was not applied to Zones 1 and 2. We shall see next why the strict conservation regime of the old villagescape began to be implemented in Angkor.

Background of Conservation Regime in Phase II

The activities of sustainable development practically started in 2004 (ICC 2004; Khuon 2006a, 2006b). This, however, has not been met by the reality, and the transition of the emphasis from conservation to development is not at all sharply marked. It may be said that the main reason for this is based on the fundamental concerns of the Cambodian government remaining the same as before, i.e. the promotion of tourism development and the conservation of "traditional" landscape with monuments for national prestige and tourist revenues. The restoration and conservation of monuments are on-going with a number of international teams in partnership with APSARA throughout the 2000s to the present. The major difference from the past is that APSARA has now exclusive authority to manage the Angkor site and needs to show on the diplomatic stage that it really concerns the local communities and their development too. In this connection, I will show below the implication of the conservation regime of the old villagescape.

Major concerns of APSARA in the second phase respond to those of the Cambodian Government, which are clearly manifest in Order No. 02-BB issued by the government in 2004. The Order defines the standard for land use in Zones 1 and 2 (APSARA Authority 2008). The government endowed APSARA with full authority

³ See also Pressouyre (1996:28-30) in which the relationships between mixed properties and cultural landscapes are discussed.

⁴ This was the most updated version of operational guidelines until 2003.

to urgently tackle illegal land transactions and migration followed by population increase, which are declared problems in the Angkor World Heritage Site (ICC 2004). Because of this new mandate, APSARA was strengthened with more funds, facilities, staff, and authority, as discussed in my chapter “World Heritage Making in Angkor” in this volume.

The main department determining the framework of and controlling the villagescape is firstly DMA-II, which was later renamed as DLHMAP. The director of this department was determined to conserve the ecosystem, the cultural environment and the lifestyle of the “original” villagers that has been expressed in proceeding conservation and development in parallel. It was expressed clearly in his slogan “*Conserve for better development and develop for better conservation*” (his emphasis) in the 15th Technical Committee of the ICC held in June 2006 (ICC 2006a:122). Half a year later at the Plenary Session, he emphasized again that APSARA would dovetail sustainable development activities with its conservation operations (ICC 2006b:33). At the said University of Sydney Conference, he also elaborated APSARA’s approach as to what to conserve and what to develop, and why:

[...] while the policy of “*preserving old villages*” was kept in mind it was decided that it was necessary to re-locate the inhabitants of a small minority of these villages, which were too close to the temples, to other available places. New lands were given to these villagers for housing construction. There were also a ban placed on rice cultivation within Angkor Thom and a ban on the traditional villager practice of resin collecting. These changes were considered necessary to allow restoration of the monuments and to conserve the important and depleted forests [...].

(Khuon 2006b:2, original emphasis)

In another place, he mentions that APSARA is “charged with the responsibility to preserve the cultural landscape and authenticity of this marvellous site” (APSARA Authority 2008:6). The implication is that the conservation of “authentic” cultural landscape as a park necessitates the containment of the numbers of population and houses, i.e. the conservation of the old villagescape, while an excessive number of people will be transferred to the new area for living and “development”. In short, both conservation and development will be implemented under the name of “the conservation of the living standards and sustainability of the population”. The emphasis is clear that the Angkor heritage site is primarily to be conserved as a park for the visual consumption of non-residents/outside, and development can be conducted outside Zones 1 and 2 with only a minimum controlled development allowed inside those zones.

The reorganization of APSARA through expansion and strengthening her authority was soon to be felt as overpowering by the local communities. It was more to do with the conservation of the old villagescape through the imposition of building

restrictions than development. Development was, in any case, to be implemented in a significant way outside the Angkor World Heritage Site as we shall see next.

Run Ta-Ek – Eco-Village for Sustainable Development

In 2008, the local population in Zones 1 and 2 was reported as exceeding 120,000 people in 112 villages (APSARA Authority 2008:4). All the old villages, however, need to be preserved, based on Article 17: Local Residents, c-zone 2 of the Royal Decree (Kret) 001NS of 1994, and “[t]he citizens who have long been dwelling in the Zones may continue living there without being subject to any evacuation” according to the Decision of the Royal Government, No. 70/SSR (APSARA Authority 2005). In order to curtail further increases in the population in the two zones, the Cambodian government allocated APSARA 1,012 hectares of land at the Run Ta-Ek commune in the area near Banteay Srei temple as an alternative residential and development site. The land is mostly targeted for young married couples living in Zones 1 and 2. To develop the site, a Canadian architect-urban planner was called on to lead a team of young professionals from APSARA. His theme was to design Run Ta-Ek as an eco-village in a traditional Khmer environment as his report title suggests. It is aimed at a semi-urban type of development with socio-cultural and administrative facilities, including school, health centre, monastery, market, rural credit and office buildings, as well as land for organic farming, handicraft activities,

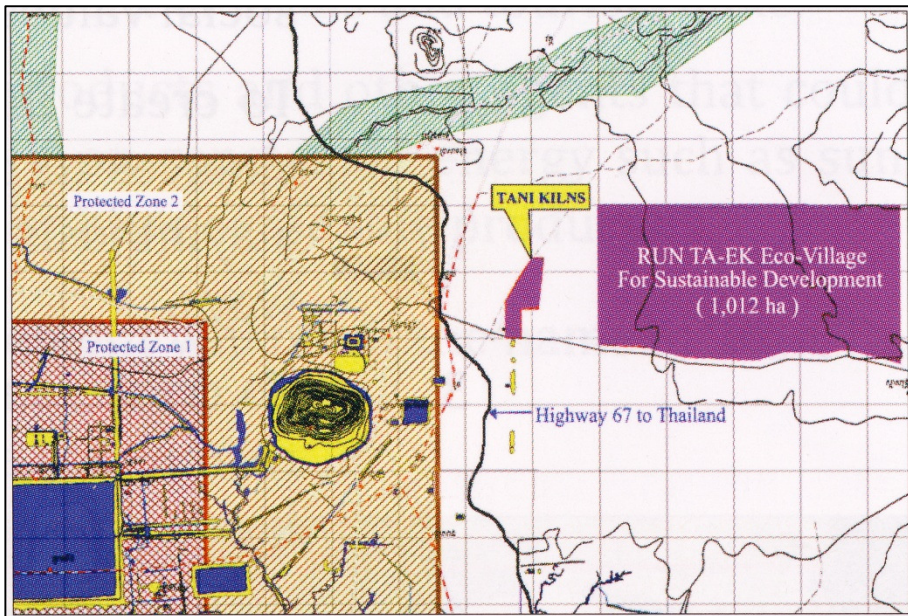


Fig. 1: Location of Run Ta-Ek in relation to Angkor Park (left) (APSARA Authority 2008:7).

and tourist infrastructures and facilities. The concept of developing an eco-village is described as to prevent brutal negative impact on the livelihood of the inhabitants because of a modern urban space. When

giving villagers the possibility to evolve favourably through space and time, at their own pace of life, a lifestyle based on their traditional ways and identity and incorporating their human potential would be a better approach.
(ICC 2006b:34; APSARA Authority 2008:7-8)

In the fancy booklet in Khmer and English, “Eco-village for Sustainable Development, Run Ta-Ek” (APSARA Authority 2008), it sounds like a promised land for both the local population and the international community which has the responsibility of overseeing the development. There, 852 hectares of land is allocated for housing and farming and, considering that the average family comprises 5.5 people and occupies one hectare of land, 850 families or approximately 5,000 people can be housed. The area is outside the protected zones, thus it should in theory be free from restrictions related to the World Heritage Site. APSARA, however, insists that

the new building must reflect some of the traditional specifications such as stilts, flight of stairs, sloping roof, shutters, living space underneath the residence, etc.
(APSARA Authority 2008:13-14)

In addition,

it is recommended *that the land may never be sold*, and that the Government of Cambodia remains the sole owner ad-in-finitum based on the example of the land property laws presently in use in Zones 1 and 2.
(APSARA Authority 2008:14, original emphasis)

The justification for this is that “the freezing of land property should foster Run Ta-Ek’s stability and sense of permanence” (APSARA Authority 2008:14, original emphasis).⁵ Even though the above statements were on the concept note, here again, one can detect that living at Run Ta-Ek may be constrained as a satellite site of Zones 1 and 2. APSARA is also to provide only the land free to new residents, not building materials, except for the first 100 families who move in. This, however, contradicts one clause in Article 17: Local Residents, b-zone 1 of the aforementioned Royal Decree 001 NS of 1994, which stipulates that “[a]ssistance should be given to residents for their relocation, in particular by providing them with land and building materials for their houses and community facilities” (APSARA 1998:218). In Run Ta-Ek there stands a model

⁵ See also (ICC 2006b:34). According to the APSARA staff working at the site and the people who moved into the site, the land in Run Ta-Ek would be given free to the people after they have been living there for six years and can be sold to fellow-villagers, but not people who live outside.

traditional house using solar energy with modern technology, which of course the future villagers do not need to copy. The cost of building was nonetheless USD 30,000, according to the Cambodian architect who designed it. This suggests that the site is a showcase created as an ideal eco-village of western conception with the façade of “tradition” to entertain outsiders’ gaze, in particular that of foreigners, as well as to lure out more villagers from the Angkor World Heritage Site.

The area is quite isolated at the moment, even though the new national road No.67 was constructed nearby. This road is linked to another national road (No.6) that stretches from Phnom Penh to the Thai border, via Siem Reap. Road No.67 is also connected to the Thai border through Anglong Veng – the last stronghold of the Khmer Rouge. There is potentiality of development, perhaps in ten years time, but at the moment, the viability of making a living there is uncertain. Many inhabitants in Zones 1 and 2 are hesitant to move to this site, not only because of the reason mentioned above, but also because they neither wish to be separated from their family members nor live under the control of the government.

Another reason is that it is far from the markets of Siem Reap or other areas and that the construction cost needs to be borne by the inhabitants. A further point of hesitation is that the local inhabitants suspect the government of not yet having paid the original land owners of Run Ta-Ek for the land purchased, so that the newcomers may be attacked or the payment of money may be demanded by the original owners once they have moved in or, in any case, many foresee troubles between the old and new land owners. Some of the first 100 families have begun to build houses there to live since the latter half of 2010. Many more people showed interest in moving in, however, APSARA’s demands for their attending numerous meetings made some give up the idea in the end. The majority of villagers in Zones 1 and 2 are waiting to see what might happen to the first families who have moved there.

Apart from the local people’s sense of uncertainty about the prospect of life in Run Ta-Ek, APSARA is said to have discovered that the soil there is unsuitable for agriculture. The Authority, therefore, has a plan to bring mud from Tonle Sap Lake, which will be a costly operation.

Sustainable development is a cliché of policy-makers and practitioners of development throughout the world, suggesting a positive and ideal developmental goal. One wonders, however, how this site could realistically become a site for “sustainable development” and how much local communities have been consulted on the project design.



Fig. 2: Houses under construction in Run Ta-Ek (2011).

How to Conserve “Old Villages” and the Consequences

The Royal Decree of November 2004 stipulates that “the citizens who have been residing in those areas (Protected Zones 1 and 2) for a long time are entitled to abide in their homes and do not have to leave their residences”. APSARA is, therefore, unable to forcibly expel “old” inhabitants from the protected zones, and considered that the old villages, with the number of houses, designs and life styles, would need to be frozen, and it launched the strict conservation regime of constructions in “old villages”. Old inhabitants are allowed to renovate their homes if they have been damaged, or build a new house to replace the old one with APSARA’s authorization. Building entirely new houses is not permitted (APSARA Authority 2008:6).

Unauthorized activities which have taken place in the Angkor Archaeological Park are listed in the Order of the Royal Government of Cambodia, No. 02/BB of June 2004. These are “burning and destroying forest, digging, taking and filling earth, fencing in land borders, constructing residences in concrete, public buildings, religious buildings, souvenir shops, restaurants, drink shops, petrol stations and parking lots, the confusing policy of tourist transportation”, as well as “ox, buffalo and pigs in the wild and roving constantly in the Angkor Park, are increasing.” The Cambodian government also considers that

[t]hese anarchical acts highly affect the governmental policy for sustainable development and if the measures for stopping and repealing them are not strong and steady, there is no efficiency.

(APSARA Authority 2005)

The government's determination to use strict measures to stop acts listed as illegal is clear here, but not why or how all these activities are affecting sustainable development.

The same Order also stipulates that the government exclusively assigns APSARA to take all the measures against any construction with building permits issued by other authorities. If such construction has been made without building permits from APSARA, the owners, without conditions, would have to dismantle the constructions already built within 45 days of the warning letter. Any offenders of the anarchical activities listed above would also have their files brought up and sent to the law court for trial and sentence. In addition, it stipulates that

[t]he timberyards, the fencing and appropriating land in the Angkor site shall be seized and transformed into national properties following the procedures in force, reforested and strongly protected.

(APSARA Authority 2005)

Moreover,

[a]ll measures and authorisations delivered by national or all local authorities, opposite to international obligations in force in the Angkor site that the Kingdom of Cambodia must respect, are invalid.

(APSARA Authority 2005)

APSARA, in a way, has followed faithfully what the government ordered it to do since 2004, but has carried out even more than what was stipulated, as we shall see below, with negative consequences in terms of the relationship with the local inhabitants and traditional authorities. The Authority began sending a monitoring unit of illegal constructions into every village in Zones 1 and 2. The beginning of monitoring varies from village to village, starting with easily accessible areas near Siem Reap and along the main roads. The frequency of monitoring varies from twice a day to once a week, but on average once a day. The monitoring unit is believed to belong to the DLHMAP, and information on illegal construction is passed to the DPOC which dispatches demolition units with firearms. The monitoring unit takes photographs of houses where reconstruction has been requested. According to many informants, the monitoring and demolitions began escalating from the latter half of 2008, after the national elections, apart from the villages near Siem Reap. A vice-chief of a commune said, "During the national election years, restrictions became loose and afterwards stricter". It suggests that the level of restrictions is affected by national elections when the government needs

people's votes. Measures taken up by APSARA in order to implement its new regime of conserving the old villagescape were reported to have been accompanied by some acts of illegality and mercilessness according to many local informants.

Methodologies of Research on Individual Cases

As the methodologies to learn the contents and processes of conserving the old villagescape, I employed informal semi-structured interviews as the normative anthropological mode of enquiry with a Cambodian assistant. The local villages visited include more than 20 villages in Zones 1 and 2 in the Angkor and Roluos groups. In addition, three commune offices were visited and several members of the commune staff were interviewed in their offices or at home. Cambodian or foreign members of NGOs who have been working in conservation and/or development projects were also interviewed, as were some members of the APSARA staff. The period when intensive interviews were conducted ranged from August 2009 to March 2011 for over two months in total.

Confusion on Policies, Miscommunication and Misunderstanding

The deliveries of the Order of 2004 by APSARA to the local communities were apparently not quite adequate, nor were communications between the two. Some local authorities and villagers have clearly not understood the contents of the Order. In addition, APSARA's various departments and staff members have delivered different messages at different periods of time, confusing the local inhabitants and authorities to the extent that they mistrust each other.

In one commune, a vice-chief said that APSARA had organized meetings in each village twice a year, but only some villagers attended, while others did not. Thus, there are always some people in each community who are unaware of the new rules and regulations. T-shirts with the APSARA logo were given to all the participants at APSARA meetings as customary gesture of donation to the needy during 2009 and 2010, but the authority started to destroy houses afterwards: approximately 40 houses in this commune had been destroyed every year. This commune covers the area closest to Siem Reap and the central area of the Angkor group and, therefore, has more newcomers living in some of the villages, notably those in front and south of Angkor Wat. The demolition of their houses, however, has nothing to do with whether they are new-comers or old inhabitants. In some villages, APSARA is said to have told the villagers that the houses constructed after 2000, or in other cases after 2004, are subject to demolition, as well as those constructed without the approval of APSARA. The year 2000 or 2004 is also used to divide the "old" and "new" inhabitants.

In Village-A, APSARA was said to have changed its words as to what would be possible and what not vis-à-vis the construction of buildings. According to the village chief, in the first meeting organized by APSARA in 2006, villagers were told to build houses in traditional styles, otherwise it would affect the quality of the World Heritage

Site. In 2007, he said that APSARA had changed its wording, saying that villagers would not be allowed to build anything without asking APSARA.

In Village-B, different members of staff said different things in the course of four years. In a meeting in 2007, an APSARA staff member from Phnom Penh had reportedly said that it would be all right to build houses lower than six metres, chicken houses or cow sheds for families, without asking for permits from APSARA. In 2008, another APSARA staff member came to say that if people were living in tourist areas, building hotels, guest houses or large villas would not be permissible. In 2010, an APSARA staff member was said to have changed its words, saying that nothing could be built in the village without the authorization of APSARA.

People in many villages complained that APSARA has many departments and each applied different rules, and APSARA's overall strategies and policies were unclear. A member of a commune, for example, explained that after people went to ask for building permits at the APSARA office, another department (DPOC) came to demolish buildings. Consequently, people get very angry. Not only is the construction of new houses for young people, houses of modern design, and larger houses than the original disallowed, but also the construction of animal pens, toilets or fences without adequate explanations provided, even though requests for construction might have already been submitted.

Some chiefs of villages and communes considered that the building of small palm-leaf huts (*ktoum*) might be permissible without asking APSARA and gave the house owners their approval for construction, including houses for young couples. APSARA refuted the validity of the local authorities' signatures in accordance with the article of the Order and therefore demolished such houses, unless the house owners agreed to demolish them by themselves. The number of houses demolished on the order of APSARA in the entire World Heritage Site of Angkor is unavailable, however, one of the villages closest to Siem Reap town has had more than 50 houses demolished according to the local authorities. In some villages, one can observe only concrete pillars or incomplete houses standing without signs of further construction.

Delayed Issuance of Building Permits and Negative Consequences

Even where the local authorities and villagers might have understood the contents of the Order clearly, because APSARA's issuance of building permits takes longer than promised, i.e. within 45 working days, some villagers could not wait any longer and began construction because wood had already been purchased, which might become rotten or be eaten by termites, and/or they might miss the auspicious day to commence the construction – an important consideration for the local people. In other cases, some villagers began construction even before 2004, but could not complete it due to shortages of money and because of the new Order.

Confusion in dealing with what is permissible and what is not in terms of building, coupled with delays in the issuance of the permit, is manifest in another way. A senior man with twelve members of a family in Village-C submitted a request for a permit to build a new house for him and his wife in 2006, but did not receive a permit from

APSARA for a long while. Then, in 2008, an APSARA staff member told him to start building the house or the wood might become rotten. Meanwhile, this man's wife died. APSARA had apparently asked around the neighbours to find out for whom the house was being constructed. A neighbour replied that it was for his children. APSARA, believing the neighbours' claim, issued a letter forbidding the construction of the new house, even though the family insisted that it was for the original owner, i.e. the father of the children. APSARA's letter warned the man not to submit more letters or it would be considered as a violation of APSARA's rules and regulations. The house was standing with about 80% finished, but the family was scared of completing the construction in March 2010. A year later, however, the family was somehow allowed to complete the construction.

In another case, a deception was reportedly employed by some members of APSARA's staff. A senior man of Village-D in the periphery of Zone 2 had submitted a request for a building permit to APSARA but, because of APSARA's delay in responding, began the construction of a traditional house before receiving the permit. When APSARA's monitoring unit turned up in his village, he and his wife had already been living in this new house for two months. Later an APSARA staff member came to tell him to go to the APSARA office because a permit was ready for collection. When he did, he was asked to sign a document without being shown the content. It turned out that in the document he blindly signed that he agreed to demolish the new house by himself. It cost him USD 8,000 for building materials, without taking into consideration the cost of his son's construction labour. He was obliged to remove the roof tiles and wood and only the brick walls remained when I visited him. APSARA staff members apparently kept coming back to tell him to demolish it all.

Deception was also employed by APSARA in another context according to a vice-chief of a commune. APSARA staff members told a villager to demolish his house and that both the village and commune chiefs had agreed to the demolition. Later, the villager went to ask both chiefs about this matter to discover it unfounded.

Impairment of Local Authorities and Village Unity

Traditionally, village and commune authorities have acted as the fathers of the commune members, to advise individuals in trouble and arbitrate between parties in conflicts to solve problems. APSARA, however, seems to have attempted to use the local authorities to achieve her objective of demolishing "illegal constructions". Villagers, therefore, began to suspect the ability, authority and stance of the village and commune authorities. Some chiefs refused to put their signatures on the document to co-operate with APSARA, but others were compelled to do so. A vice-chief of a commune said that both commune chiefs and vice-chiefs had been elected by the people, but cannot serve them. Several people in the local authorities said, "The villagers began to hate me". A vice-chief of a village said,

I am very sorry I cannot help villagers in trouble. I have not gone to the commune office to collect my salary for three months for I stopped

working as a vice-chief. All the commune and village chiefs want to resign from the posts.

Traditional local authorities and trust among the members of the respective communities have, therefore, been seriously impaired. In some cases, villagers began to suspect each other because they felt there were some APSARA spies among them in the village. This is supported by the unfair treatment of villagers in being issuing construction permits by APSARA. In some villages, communal harmony and unity are being impaired by recent APSARA approaches to the local villagers, but in a few villages, local communities began to help each other to deal with excesses and intimidation exercised by APSARA. According to a vice-chief of a commune, even provincial authorities nowadays are becoming powerless over issues of local communities in Angkor and try to ignore problems. A vice-chief of a village in this commune also said that the Siem Reap authority, as well as Sieng Nam – Siem Reap M.P. close to the Prime Minister – no longer had power over the policies concerning Angkor.

Intimidation, Corruption and Unfairness

APSARA's frequent monitoring and apparent authority overarching traditional authorities have increasingly made the local villagers detest and fear APSARA. Some villagers frightened by APSARA, signed their names on the letters to agree to demolish their houses by themselves. Some village chiefs were equally coerced to sign their names on such letters, or APSARA threatened it would take this matter to court.

Corruption and unfairness have been experienced by many villagers concerning building restrictions. According to a Cambodian architect, one of his acquaintances is said to have paid USD 3,000 to APSARA to build a house in the protected zone. Many villagers said that the rich have escaped the demolition of their illegal constructions by paying huge bribes to APSARA staff members, whereas small amounts of money offered by poorer people have largely been ignored. As a result, the people subject to the demolition of houses tend to be the most vulnerable in the villages, such as the poor, widows, pregnant women with absent husbands, Aids patients, and the inhabitants of peripheral villages in Angkor, though villages closest to Siem Reap had been subjected to more demolition at an earlier stage. Some villages considered as co-operative with APSARA have had more lenient treatment than those which resisted. The local villagers consider the above discrepancies in APSARA's law enforcement unfair.

In Village-E, one of the closest to Siem Reap, a poor pregnant woman who had built a *ketoum*, borrowing money from somebody, had her house demolished by APSARA some years ago. She cried herself to death. The vice-chief of a village felt terribly sorry for her and about his inability to help her.

Human Rights Violation and Robberies

In the process of enforcing APSARA's rules and regulations related to "illegal construction" in the villages in Zones 1 and 2, APSARA, in particular DPOC staff members, often appeared to have resorted to violence and, at times, even robberies of valuables from the families targeted.

In Village-F peripheral to the Angkor group, a man rebuilt a *ktoum* because his old house became dilapidated. He had approval for its reconstruction from the village and commune chiefs, but not from APSARA. Upon discovering this, APSARA's monitoring unit visited him twice to complain that it had not approved the construction. At APSARA's third visit, the monitoring unit was accompanied by four pickup trucks with a crane and about 30 motorbikes carrying approximately 60 members of staff. An APSARA staff member carrying a pistol shot into the air several times to warn villagers not to protest or disturb the demolition. The house owner had his hands tied behind his back and was given electric shocks. His wife begged the DPOC staff members not to demolish her house, but they ignored her plea and pulled down the house. Prior to that, ten female staff members wearing masks covering their faces went into the house and removed everything inside. In the process, the family lost money, a small amount of gold, a mobile phone, a machete, and a knife. After the event, the house owner fell ill and his family had to live in a makeshift house with flooring made of bamboo laid directly on the ground. APSARA staff members later went to tell him that he had to live in that way, but it would be impossible to live like this during the rainy season. Unable to live there any longer, the family left to Thailand to lead a life of wandering around in search of work.

In Village-G, a widow who had been suffering from Aids (contracted from her soldier husband stationed in Poi Pet) stayed in the provincial hospital for treatment for a long time. Meanwhile, her six children were looked after in an orphanage. After she had recovered, she was released from the hospital to find her *ktoum* had become too old and needed a replacement. She therefore asked the village and commune chiefs for permission for its reconstruction and received the authorization. She took three older children out of the orphanage to live with her. Then APSARA came to demand the *ktoum's* demolition. Later, about 60 DPOC staff members came with three trucks and many motorbikes and closed down the road. They stopped anybody from coming to help her by a DPOC police officer pointing a pistol at them. The house owner was lifted in the air by ten men who stopped her from disturbing the demolition. The woman not only lost the building materials of her house, but also tools, such as a hammer, axe, knife, and hoe.

In Village-C, there is a Japanese NGO called the Cambodia Village Support Group (CVSG) and it built a centre for the physically-handicapped (many landmine victims) and Aids patients in 2000. The organization is said to have had an agreement from the Cambodian government and APSARA for its establishment with chicken farms and vegetable gardens. Some of the Aids patients built 16 chicken huts which were, however, destroyed by the DPOC early in February 2010. The lower parts of two chicken huts were reconstructed later, and they were again subject to demolition that

same month. On this occasion, the section chief, both a land mine victim and an Aids patient, tried to take photographs as evidence upon consulting the Cambodian manager. He was kicked hard on the leg. Three other people who tried to help him were also beaten up by the DPOC police. One of the men incurred a head injury from the police who hit him hard with the handle of a pistol. The wife of the section chief was also treated roughly by the police who threw her away, grabbing her hair. They reported the incident to the village and commune authorities, as well as the representative of CVSG in Japan. The Cambodian representative of CVSG later met the staff member of APSARA in charge of the matter, but this has not led to a solution.

The following case was widely publicized through the Phnom Penh Post (Phnom Penh Post March 12, 2010; March 23, 2010), the Voice of America and other media. A pregnant woman living in Village-H was away from home to have a medical check-up at the provincial hospital. When she came back to her village, she found her *ketoum* totally demolished by the DPOC. Her husband was away from home, working in Poi Pet.

Upon demolition, she lost USD 300 and a water jar, together with some building materials. When DPOC staff members arrived at her home, more than 100 villagers gathered to protest to them not to destroy her house. The DPOC police, however, were said to have shot six times near the feet of the protestors, and the police also beat up a villager. Six bullets shot by the police were shown to me at the interview. The woman made a complaint to the village and commune authorities, and contacted some media, as mentioned above, that covered the case. Two human rights organizations also went to interview her. APSARA staff members apparently complained to the commune authorities for suggesting that she contacted human rights organizations. Because APSARA filed the complaints to the law court, her mother, uncle and two other relatives went to attend the court hearing. APSARA told the court that the villagers had attempted to kill its staff members, so the court warned her party not to go against the rules and regulations of APSARA, to which her people agreed. Neither side apologised, nor were compensation paid or fines charged.



Fig. 3: Village-C, a chicken hut later demolished by APSARA (2010).



Fig. 4: Village-H, after APSARA demolition (2010).

Local Responses and Strategies

As mentioned above, because APSARA's rules and regulations are not clear to the local population in general, and their communications are inadequate, people make mistakes. At the same time, the ways in which APSARA deals with each case and respective communities are arbitrary and are considered unfair by many local villagers. There are obvious cases of intimidation, corruption and human rights violations on the part of APSARA, as pointed out by the local population at large. In some cases, where the present house stands is not a particularly good location because the area can be badly flooded during the rainy season, but APSARA would not allow people to move the residence even though a family may have a better plot elsewhere within the village. APSARA's rigidity and mercilessness, especially against the poor and vulnerable, and its apparent absolute rule over the Angkor World Heritage Site make the local people detest and fear it. There are numerous critiques on APSARA among people and members of the local authorities.

One member of a commune said, "APSARA is like the Pol Pot regime, even though it does not kill people. It does not want people to have comfortable lives, while its staff members live in grand houses". A vice-chief of the same commune tried to defend the actions of people, saying, "People only try to protect their homes, because they do not live on trees, but APSARA never tries to listen to what people say". Accompanying APSARA, a staff member of another commune has supposedly said, "Prime Minister Hun Sen issued a law for the people not to become developed". Even though this account may be unfounded, what has been said has a certain truth manifest in the conditions under which local people are obliged to live. The actions taken by APSARA as the conservation regime, virtually do not allow people to develop in the Angkor World Heritage Site despite being in the phase of sustainable development and the officially declared statement by APSARA that "these communities can share in the sustainable development efforts" (ICC 2004:25).

Having said that, the level of antagonism which has developed among the local villages of Angkor varies. There are times when houses considered as having been built illegally have escaped demolition, apart from the cases involving bribery. These include when APSARA considers some villages co-operative, when powerful people, such as high-ranking military personnel, intervene, or when family members or a crowd of local villagers challenge APSARA by gathering and blocking its forceful demolition of houses, or where an able village chief has an effective strategy to counter it.

When some villages are considered as co-operative by APSARA, there are fewer troubles with traditional authorities and local residents, even though ordinary villagers still confess the difficulties encountered in everyday living because of restrictions on rice cultivation, collection of natural resources and building. In one commune also considered as co-operative by APSARA, the commune authority has managed successfully to persuade the DPOC not to demolish some buildings. Some villagers, however, were said to have not complied with the warning from APSARA to stop construction and were subject to demolition.

In a remote village (Village-I) west of Angkor Thom, a soldier stationed at Anglong Veng submitted a request to the village chief to rebuild an old house for his mother-in-law and, upon obtaining the authorization from the village authority, the house was rebuilt. In January 2010, however, APSARA's monitoring unit went to the village three or four times, and the last time he was asked to dismantle the house. A son of this old lady is a four-star general who phoned APSARA to ask for the house not to be demolished and also phoned his superior in the army for help. Commune staff, local police and the village chief also went to discuss this case with APSARA staff members. With such pressures, APSARA staff could not force the house owner to demolish the house or do it by themselves. The incident is well known in the neighbouring communities as successful resistance against APSARA.

A man of Village-G, along the new road which stretches from Kôk Ta Chan village to the northern villages, was accused by APSARA of stealing somebody's land, but he claimed the land had been inherited from his ancestors with the land title. APSARA took it to court, but he won the case in 2001, which is rather unusual as Cambodian legislature is notorious for corruption and partiality (ADB 2000:27), often siding with the government. He then built a house there with the construction permit obtained from village and commune chiefs. In 2006, APSARA asked him to pay some money and submit a request for a building permit, despite the fact that the construction had been completed in 2001. The DPOC then arrived with a large truck with a crane, followed by other trucks. The family members got together and the wife defied APSARA staff members, saying that if any material was taken from the house or got broken, she would demand compensation from them and told them that she would burn their trucks with petrol. The APSARA team consequently went back without taking any action and complained to the court again: APSARA suffered its second defeat. It is interesting to note that in this case the court gave a verdict in favour of the civilian, which may be related to the local power politics when the authority of APSARA was weak vis-à-vis the local authorities.

In Village-J north of Preah Khan, the construction of some houses was stopped and one house demolished by APSARA. The village chief came to realize in conversation with APSARA police when the DPOC would come to demolish another house, then called villagers to gather at this house on that day. When APSARA arrived with four trucks, about 50 people, a mixture of fellow villagers and those from other villages, were waiting drunkenly for their arrival. The number of villagers exceeded that of the APSARA staff. Prior to that, the house owner had already submitted a request for a building permit to APSARA and had gone to the APSARA office seven times, each time being told to come back the next day and more than four months passed. He was worried that the wood purchased might get damaged by termites or the auspicious day be missed (after that day, bad luck will follow according to the local belief) and, therefore, began the construction. APSARA's monitoring unit had come several times to tell him to dismantle the house, but he did not comply.

On the day of demolition, only two DPOC policemen on a motorbike came into the house compound and took photos while other staff with trucks was waiting

outside. There were disputes between the policemen and the village chief. The policemen asked the village chief why the house owner had been building a large house before APSARA issued a permit. The chief replied that the house owner had respected APSARA laws, but APSARA had never respected his requests or needs. Then the APSARA policemen told him that if he would not stop the landlord's construction, APSARA would take away the building materials. The village chief replied to the police, "If your trucks come in, you will never be able to go back to Siem Reap!" The policemen went back to Siem Reap with their trucks following. The house owner said that APSARA staff members had come back later to talk to him nicely, taken photos of the house and asked him not to make walls before receiving the permit.

In Village-B, a man said that his daughter's house was getting old, so he first asked for permission from the village and commune chiefs to build a rice barn to replace this, asking his daughter to stay there to look after the rice. APSARA staff then came to take photos of the old house. After the house construction started, he was told by APSARA staff members to stop the construction. Later on the same day, and many times afterwards, APSARA staff members returned to demand that he dismantle the house and also put pressure on the village chief to destroy it. When one truck and two cars full of APSARA staff arrived, the house owner went to ring the village bell to ask the villagers for help. More than 100 villagers gathered, but the village chief did not want to come. This was because APSARA had warned him that if he went against APSARA rules, he would be taken to court and put on trial. The number of villagers was overwhelming, so APSARA could not demolish the house, and one more truck on the way to the village was contacted by radio to return to Siem Reap. The house owner told APSARA staff, "Why does APSARA have power over commune authorities?", "I just voted for the government and commune chief, not for APSARA", and "If we are not allowed to live in our houses, what will happen to our children? Will they be unable to marry?".

This was the third house which escaped demolition in this village. Each time, many villagers gathered, so that APSARA could not dismantle the buildings. More than 300 villagers were said to have gathered concerning the second house. They feel that it is impossible to defeat APSARA and are so scared of this institution that they decided to help each other. The old tradition of using the village bell to alert the inhabitants for mutual assistance had served well in this case. Nowadays, many villagers have mobile phones, which are also effectively used for fast communication.

Villagers north of Angkor Thom tend to defy APSARA, and even supra-village cooperation can be found regarding the matter. The tense situation is well described by a vice-chief of a commune: "If this situation continues, it will become another Pol Pot regime, and people may have a war against APSARA". In early April 2010, four representatives of six villages in the north sent a delegation to the Prime Minister Hun Sen with a letter of protest against APSARA's actions of demolition. Nearly half a year later, they received a letter from the Prime Minister who apparently wrote that the land around the area did not belong to APSARA or anybody else, but to the villagers,

and that he would come to make a deal with the villagers. When I visited Village-J in March 2011, the Prime Minister had not yet come.

Despite APSARA's building restrictions, at least two new monasteries have been constructed in the last five years. One monastery built in Village-K in 2005 houses monks of the Thommayut sect moved from Wat Banteay Kdei; this is a sect mostly followed by the royal family. The chief monk there has had severe confrontations with APSARA regarding the building regulations, and the inhabitants of surrounding villages do not support the frequent changes of monks there and their activities, which have apparently been considered as just serving themselves. Some monks of the Mahanikay sect – the most popular in Cambodia – then moved from Wat Banteay Kdei to live in this new monastery.

Another new monastery has been under construction in Village-C for several years with permission from the commune and provincial authorities. Because a part of the village is quite far from the nearest monastery in Angkor Thom, and because of the many restrictions imposed by APSARA, villagers wanted to build a new monastery near the new road connecting Siem Reap with the northern villages west of Angkor Thom. There must have been some trouble with APSARA, however, the latter seems to have accepted the construction.

Moreover, in Villages-G and H, *sala chan* or Buddhist prayer buildings in the “traditional style” were constructed a few years ago without problems from APSARA. This may show some compromises and changes in strategies in the Authority, not to interfere with the religious initiatives of the local inhabitants if it has implications on fewer activities in Angkor Thom where the Angkor monuments are concentrated.

After the much publicized incident of Village-H, APSARA became more accommodating or softened the dealings with some villagers on the issue of constructing houses. Issuing building permits became faster, often within 45 working days, and some families who had formerly been refused permission to build houses or continue building were apparently permitted in Village-C, but not the section of CVSG. One family apparently paid bribes to APSARA, but in the other cases it is unknown whether bribery has been involved or not regarding issuing the permits.

As discussed so far, the local residents of Zones 1 and 2 have not just allowed themselves to be punished by APSARA without mercy regarding “illegal” constructions, but some individuals and communities have resorted to various ways to challenge, discuss, negotiate, and, in some cases, block APSARA from demolishing newly constructed houses when they considered it unreasonable. Because sustainable development of local communities is not yet seen in a significant way in the Angkor World Heritage Site, the local villagers feel their livelihood has increasingly been pushed to the limit. The Cambodian government has been trying very hard to delete the negative images of the barbaric past represented by the Pol Pot regime, while promoting the image of peace, modernization and sophistication, making use of Angkor as a foreground landscape. What is taking place there, however, cynically reminds us of the return or the residues of the past barbarity under the name of “protecting sustainable development” through the conservation regime of the old villagescape.

Conclusion and Alternative Prospect

The phase change of managing the Angkor World Heritage Site from emergency conservation to sustainable development has so far appeared not to reflect the reality. The new phase may be more accurately called the phase of the conservation regime of the old villagescape, with sustainable development chiefly planned outside Angkor. Admitting that development and its sustainability need time to bear fruit, it needs to be recognized that APSARA has so far failed to establish genuine co-operation with the local authorities and inhabitants. The reorganization and expansion of APSARA has certainly enhanced the image and actual authority over other traditional authorities, so much so that it has caused it to become the object of fear and long-term mistrust.

As discussed above, the main issue of the controversy in Angkor is not the idea of conserving the old villagescape, but the methodologies employed by APSARA to enforce it. APSARA is seen as unfair, intimidating and merciless. The victims are often the most vulnerable members of the local communities, whereas those with high-ranking connections or wealth, or who are APSARA employees tend to get away with no punishment. In addition, many local inhabitants consider some of the activities of the APSARA staff members illegal, notably the members of the demolition team. APSARA, on the whole, is also regarded as being as cruel as the Pol Pot regime. This situation puts managing the site at high risk.

In consideration of such a situation, it is high time to balance conservation and development in a realistic way, not just as propaganda. Another important consideration may be to ensure that the local inhabitants are able to make a living in the site and benefit from it, while tourists enjoy their visits. Natural and cultural resources need both protection and wise ways of utilization. Conserving the static landscape as an ancient archaeological park may not be the only thing that tourists want to see, but more interactive and participatory tourism. As we can now see in Siem Reap, some local NGOs are organizing eco- and cultural tours in and around Angkor and the Tonle Sap Lake, actively involving the local villagers who benefit from them directly. There is also a similar plan of village-based tourism with oxcarts started in 2010 by APSARA in partnership with New Zealand Aid. In this way, the Siem Reap/Angkor region is today becoming the destination of alternative tourism, offering tours to orphanages, handicraft-making, and the sites of development projects or the restoration of monuments. There are also numerous social business or NGOs-turned enterprises, such as Artisan d'Angkor, or business-oriented NGOs, such as the Butterfly Farm of the Angkor Participatory Development Organization (APDO), or other kinds of organizations with unique backgrounds and interests, such as the Institute of Khmer Traditional Textiles (IKTT) or the Joint Support Team for Angkor Preservation and Community Development (JST). All these are, nonetheless, quite active in assisting the poor and the vulnerable in the region. It is hoped, therefore, that APSARA relegates its developmental work more to such NGOs to collaborate with the local populations of the region, while reconsidering building restrictions in a humane way to have sustainable trusting relationships with local communities and authorities in order to make its phase of sustainable development plausible, if not genuinely successful.

III. Heritage and Development

Angkor as World Heritage Site and the Development of Tourism.

A Study of Tourist Revenue in the Accommodation Sector in Siem Reap-Angkor

Baromey Neth

Introduction

The economy of Siem Reap (SR) has been transformed from agriculture as the primary sector to secondary (labour-intensive) and tertiary (service) industries over the past 20 years, since the listing of Angkor as a World Heritage Site in 1992. The pattern of such economic restoration has produced a change in employment creation as the local economy grows and develops at a steady rate. This has caused an emerging trend among tourism developers and planners aiming to move beyond conservation issues of conventional management mechanisms for the Angkor World Heritage Site and heading towards sustainable development and poverty reduction. Despite strong optimism to gain spin-off outcomes of tourism as a main factor of development to benefit SR and its locals, this province clings on to its rank as the third poorest province

in Cambodia in terms of human development (World Bank 2007; UNDP 2007, cited in Esposito and Nam 2008).

The discussion on tourism employment in the Siem Reap-Angkor Region (SRAR) is a hot issue and usually focuses on formal employment sectors, especially accommodation, which provides formal jobs alongside other local business activities of the formal economy. The growth of tourist demand, Riley, Ladkin and Szivas (2006) argue, essentially influences the rate of tourism employment in the host destination. However, it is doubtful that a constantly increasing amount of tourists visiting SRAR denotes increased work opportunities for the local residents, especially the poor and vulnerable. This would raise the question of where in the economy do the people who take up work or jobs in the SRAR's tourism industry come from, as the context of its development is clearly entwined with the influx of migrants (local and international) who are also an active tourism workforce in the province. The establishment of the Angkor World Heritage Site, which prevails over the conservation status, economic interests or expense of the region, especially through top-down management (i.e. the zoning system), should abound with fair and adequate advantages for the local population. This paper, based on research carried out mostly in 2009, investigates to what extent the establishment and roles of the Angkor World Heritage Site, especially through tourism as a core of development, contributes to the local economic stimulation, poverty reduction and livelihood improvement. It underlies the mutual impacts of tourism and the top-down management of UNESCO and the Cambodian government, represented by the APSARA Authority, over the Angkor World Heritage Site concerning the livelihood improvement of the local inhabitants.

However, it is time-consuming and thorny to investigate the entire contribution of the Angkor World Heritage Site management in facilitating benefits for promoting the local economy and living conditions through different sectors and three major types¹ of tourism-related employment. Lockwood and Guerrier (1990) suggest that a tourism-related employment study stresses the amount of jobs provided by the accommodation sector, which shows an obvious and easily determined measurement of tourism's ability to create direct job opportunities for the host community. Therefore, based on these reasons, this study only explores how big the in-destination revenue gained through tourism with respect to the accommodation sector in the SRAR is, and how much it contributes to the economic development and the living conditions of the locals.

Three approaches were applied to collect relevant data for a comprehensive and systematic analysis of tourism accommodation as a sector for employment in the SRAR. Firstly, an extensive documentary review and analysis were conducted on a wide range of secondary data. These included documents, plans, strategy and policy papers,

¹ Cited in Kontogeorgopoulos (1998), Lea (1988) mentioned that there are three types of tourism employment: (1) direct employment, which refers to direct occupations in the tourism sector including employment in tourism accommodation, shops, restaurants, night clubs, bars, state tourism administration, transport and tour firms; (2) indirect employment, which refers to other sectors of the tourism economy providing products, goods and other items or materials dependent upon increased tourism demand; and (3) induced employment, which involves tourist expenditure and other spending and circulation of local tourism income within the local economy.

regulations of governmental and semi-governmental institutions, reports and records of developmental organizations, international and local NGOs, population census and statistics, research papers, and Siem Reap provincial authorities' documents and statistics.

The second approach is based on 100 questionnaire survey interviews with accommodation proprietors and managers in Siem Reap province. This approach encompassed two phases in choosing the sample of accommodation (hotels and guesthouses) in order to ensure the quality and representativeness of data. To avoid sampling error and bias in selecting the sampling frame, the first phase involved the compilation of two complete lists of accommodation (one for hotels and another for guesthouses). This work was carried out by using the up-to-date accommodation business directory of the Ministry of Tourism, the Cambodian Hotel Association, Siem Reap Provincial Office of Tourism, and the Council for the Development of Cambodia. The second phase focused on categorizing all the hotels and guesthouses in those two separate lists into three groups (small, medium and large), depending on the size, price range, rating and number of rooms of each accommodation. Following this thorough collection of hotel and guesthouse names and classification, a 30% sampling frame of both forms of accommodation (hotels and guesthouses) was selected through a probability random sampling technique for the questionnaire survey. Eventually, 36 hotels and 64 guesthouses were chosen from the lists and their proprietors or managers interviewed accordingly.²

Thirdly, nine in-depth expert interviews were undertaken with a range of relevant tourism-related employment stakeholders who were carefully selected for this study. These respondents included representatives of the Ministry of Tourism responsible for the Department of Tourism Industry, the Cambodian Hotel Association, Siem Reap Provincial Office of Tourism, the Council for the Development of Cambodia, the APSARA Authority, Siem Reap Provincial Municipality, the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Siem Reap Workers' Union, and an academic/scientist or tourism expert. The content of the interviews covered wide-ranging issues related to regular employment in the tourism sector, business ownership rights, pro-poor business practices, the employment crisis, incentives, policies or regulations for the accommodation business, tourism revenue generation via accommodation and leakages, access to employment opportunities in the accommodation sector, staff working conditions and turnover in hotels and guesthouses, economic opportunities related to the growth and development of the accommodation sector in the SRAR, and suggestions or recommendations for promoting tourism accommodation as an

² Though the interviews followed standardized and structured questionnaires, the researcher managed to have a short informal discussion with every informant. This provides a better understanding about their employment principles and categories, motivation towards and perceptions of recruiting SR's local inhabitants as employees, employees' turnover (earnings), economic leakage via the accommodation sector, and the roles of the Angkor World Heritage Site via tourism accommodation for poverty alleviation in the SRAR.

employment sector for local economic development and poverty reduction in the SRAR.

Since the nature of this research entailed both quantitative and qualitative approaches, several methods were employed to analyse different forms of data. The secondary data were analysed by using a text-based analysis method depending on the content, essence and relevance of the documents. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), particularly descriptive statistics, correlation coefficients and multivariate analyses, were used for analysing quantitative data from the questionnaire survey of accommodation proprietors and managers. Framework analysis, which involves different systematic and tactical stages of analysis ranging from familiarization and theme categorization to interpretation, was applied thoroughly in order to analyse qualitative data from the expert interviews, as well as from the informal discussions with accommodation proprietors and managers.

Tourist Arrivals and Tourism Growth

Cambodia witnessed 2.125 million international visitor arrivals in 2008, presenting an increase of 5.5% compared to 2007. This amount was made up of same-day visitors (124,000), boat visitors (72,000), land visitors (690,000), and air visitors (1,239,000). Based on statistics of the Ministry of Tourism (MoT 2008a), international tourist arrivals in the SRAR dropped by 5.42% compared to 2007, but this represented a 49.87% share of the total amount of visits to Cambodia (see Fig. 1). This was mainly due to the global economic slowdown and financial crisis, and partly due to the swine flu outbreak and the Cambodian-Thai border conflict. However, if added to the number of domestic tourists visiting the SRAR in 2008 (1,195,264 amounted to a 34% increase compared to 2007), the total tourist visits would exceed two million. This somehow helped the SRAR to maintain the balance of its internal tourism growth based upon both inbound tourism and domestic flow. According to the MoT Annual Tourism Statistics (2008a), foreign tourists came to the SRAR for different purposes. Holiday-making (85.1%) is the most popular purpose of a visit, followed by business travel (7.5%), official travel (2.5%), visiting friends and relatives (VFR; 3.2%), and others (1.6%). Remarkably, most foreign tourists are first-time visitors (92%), thus producing a big challenge for this province to always look for new visitors in the coming years and to promote quality and diversified tourism products and services to obtain high tourist satisfaction for return or repeated visits.

Month	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
January	27,026	39,022	48,507	64,174	73,702	86,279	185,163	121,975
February	26,522	41,019	44,092	51,416	77,466	81,787	111,459	120,657
March	26,142	48,791	35,239	41,798	64,983	73,719	103,190	113,758
April	19,017	34,237	17,635	31,062	52,651	64,765	85,769	91,105
May	13,887	28,565	10,135	27,590	39,860	45,516	68,292	72,447
June	12,653	21,056	11,681	27,107	36,643	43,294	61,573	58,852
July	17,564	29,364	20,172	35,979	48,913	56,421	62,976	65,896
August	23,455	37,508	30,594	48,130	63,853	74,365	69,196	78,254
September	15,516	25,985	34,731	43,124	41,333	55,964	56,170	64,855
October	18,453	33,020	34,350	48,720	54,344	71,086	86,833	79,200
November	25,835	47,121	55,845	67,722	67,704	96,068	107,330	95,984
December	37,987	67,460	59,761	74,125	70,552	107,913	122,635	96,887
Total	264,057	453,148	402,742	560,947	692,004	857,177	1,120,586	1,059,870

Fig. 1: International tourist arrivals to Siem Reap Province by month (source: after Department of Planning and Statistics, MoT 2009).

Country of residence	Mean – Nights	N	Median – Nights	Kurtosis	Skewness	Relative Sampling Error % +/-
Australia	4.3	231	4	27.5	3.9	8
Canada	3.8	57	3	13.7	3.4	16
China	3.8	55	4	3.9	1.1	9
France	3.8	238	3	45.6	5.6	9
Germany	4.2	89	3	8.1	2.7	15
Japan	3.5	420	3	11.8	2.4	3
Korea	2.9	477	3	73.3	6.2	4
Malaysia	3.6	271	3	1.8	1.1	4
Singapore	3.7	83	3	4.3	1.6	8
Taiwan	4.1	348	4	59.3	6.7	2
Thailand	2.9	96	3	1.3	1.2	9
UK	4.8	193	4	13.4	3.3	12
USA	3.1	273	3	37.5	4.5	7
Hong Kong	3.7	88	3	25.6	4.3	9
Total	3.7	2919*	3	40.2	5.0	2

* Note that the total of N has been changed, because the total of N=3291 in the source table is not correct.

Fig. 2: Average length of stay of international visitors in Siem Reap Province by country of residence; 'N' stands for number (source: after Tourism&Leisure 2009:29).

The SRAR is one of the major determinants of tourist arrivals in Cambodia. As mentioned by the MoT (2008b), most foreign tourists come from Asia and the Pacific (62.46%) and ASEAN (26.37%), whereas the least generating regions remain the Middle

East (0.35%) and Africa (0.19%). Cambodia, as a multiple-country destination, attracted more group inclusive travellers (62.5%) than free independent travellers (37.5%). The top ten market segments of tourist visits to Cambodia are South Korea (12.5%), Vietnam (9.9%), Japan (7.7%), USA (6.8%), China (6.1%), Thailand (5.1%), France (4.6%), UK (4.6%), Australia (4.0%), and Taiwan (3.9%). Most foreign tourists come to the SRAR by air (50%), and others come by land (37%) and boat (13%). The high tourist season is usually from early November to late March. Group package tours play the most crucial role in the growth of the tourism industry in the SRAR according to Tourism&Leisure (2009).

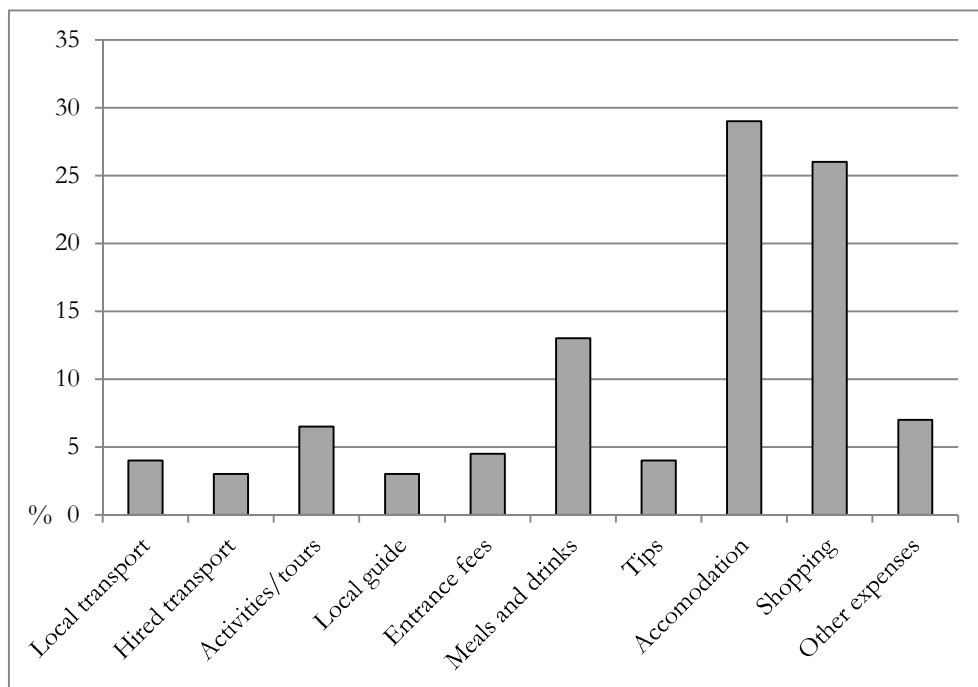


Fig. 3: Components of tourism expenditure in Siem Reap in 2007 (source: after Tourism&Leisure 2009:32).

Compared to the average length of stay for international tourists in Cambodia (5–7 days) reported by the MoT (2008a), the SRAR is a relatively short-stay holiday destination for tourist markets (3.76 nights). However, the analysis conducted by Tourism&Leisure (2009) reiterated that the tourist length of stay varies between markets and types of tourist generating regions, and tourists from Europe and the USA usually prefer staying longer (see Fig. 2).

The majority of international tourists (94%) mentioned the SRAR and its temple complex as the main reason of their visit to Cambodia (Tourism&Leisure 2009). Different tourist markets and regions have produced different direct expenditures during their visits depending on duration and location (see Fig. 3). However, it was

estimated that the average daily tourist expenses in the SRAR had declined to USD 126 in 2008, which was considerably below the level of average daily expenses of about USD 160 per tourist in 2007 (MPDF 2007a).

Since the SRAR depends strongly on Angkor Park as a major attraction, its tourism development is normally polarized within particular areas which usually host a great influx of tourist arrivals. The constant pattern of tourist arrivals in SR province has triggered a large number of visitors at protected sites, short-stay visits due to insufficient and undiversified tourism products and services, and other challenges to current site and visitor management and the carrying capacity of the must-see sites. Tourism has been concentrated on SR town and district so far, due to its suitable and fast-developed urban features, accommodation base and its close proximity to the airport.

Tourism and Economic Development

Despite being the seventh most populated province with an annual average population growth rate of 2.6% (1% higher than the national level) and the third poorest province in Cambodia (51% of its population are poor, i.e. live on less than USD 1 per day), SR has experienced a dramatic change in its conventional structural economy. In-migration from the nearby provinces and other areas is the major cause of the rapid population growth in SR (JICA 2006b), due to the fast development of the service sector and the increasing demand of tourists for services in the tourism industry. The majority of the newly increased population in SR is composed of temporary in-migrants (JICA 2006c). Most of the people in the various districts of SR Province, especially in SR town and the adjoining two districts along National Route 6 (Puok and Prasat Bakong), have transformed their occupations significantly from the primary sector (agriculture: 76%) to the secondary (industry: 10.4%) and the tertiary one (service industry: 13.2%), according to the Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (2004). However, the economic performance for SR development is still reliant on donations (USD 0.042 per resident) from the state government and especially from overseas development assistance (CDC 2004).

Tourism participated in Cambodia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with around 50% of the total tourism expenditure in SR (USD 521.6 million) in 2007, USD 200 million of which is generated as SR's Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP), which accounts for 25% of the total GRDP (Tourism&Leisure 2009). Most of the tourist expenses were spent on tourism accommodation (about 29%), followed by shopping (about 26%), meals and drinks (about 13%), and other items (about 32%) including local and hired transport, tourist activities and tours, local guides, entrance fees, tips, etc. (see Fig. 3). According to the estimate by Tourism&Leisure (2009), the first three categories of tourist expenses, especially accommodation services, have given a substantial contribution to SR's local economy. Such a contribution, on the one hand, has produced considerable income generation and job creation for the local inhabitants and other Cambodian nationals, while on the other hand, it has produced a high cost of

living for the residents of SR town. Employment in tourism enterprises in SR is approximately 50,000 jobs, 21,000 of which are direct employment.

The study shows that only an area of around 10km² in SR province, which includes especially the inhabitants in SR town, receives the most direct and indirect benefits from tourism development.³ Between 70% and 75% of SR's local inhabitants who work in the tourism industry are between 18 and 60 years old.⁴ This figure strongly supports the findings of a survey conducted by ILO (2004, cited in JICA 2006b) stating that 71% of the tourism workers in SR are from SR province itself. Most of the tourism employees come from SR town, while others are from the Puok, Kralanh, Sot Nikom, Chi Kreng, Bakong, Bateay Srey, and Angkor Thom districts. There is an equal share of labour between SR people and permanent and temporary in-migrants in restaurants alone (50:50). Revenue distribution is significantly unequal; only those living in the town or close to the centres benefit from tourism, although the majority of them are low-skilled or unskilled labourers. Monthly salaries for the local inhabitants working in the tourism industry range from USD 40 to USD 800, depending on their positions, skills and experience.

As repeatedly mentioned by expert interviewees, a number of reasons were given with regard to the limited access of SR locals to current tourism jobs, especially at professional and supervisory or specialized levels; these include: limited access to information sharing; cultural attitudes (or rather prejudices such as "being slow at work or to adapt new skills and unenthusiastic about working in a far-off workplace away from their homes"); limited skills, knowledge and experience; and limited capital (human and social). Most of the current SR local staff access jobs through direct networking, job placement firms or institutions, including universities and vocational training schools.

The immediate beneficiaries in terms of tourism employment are those who work in the accommodation sector (hotels and guesthouses) in SR, as indicated by the MPDF (2007b), the MoT (2008a), and Tourism&Leisure (2009). Tourism has generated a wide range of tourism jobs in other economic activities, both formal and informal, even though some of these do not cater exclusively to tourists. These activities are to be found in food and beverages (F&B), entertainment and sport clubs, transport, tour operators and travel agencies (TO&TA), souvenir shops, and other tourism related sectors. According to the Annual Report of Tourism Work 2008 and the Directions for 2009 made by the Siem Reap Provincial Department of Tourism (SR-PDoT 2009), the tourism accommodation industry in SR provides most jobs out of the total (11,201 workers, 7,784 directly recruited by hotels and guesthouses), whereas jobs connected with tour guides, tourist buses and cars, restaurants, motor taxis, entertainment and sport clubs, TO&TA, and the APSARA Authority attract 3,442, 3,329, 1,825, 1,463, 851, 406, and 240 (only those involved in tourism labour) workers, respectively. Tourism accommodation in SR, being the most absorbing job industry, does not only

³ Results of the expert interviews with SR's Departments of Tourism and Planning and the APSARA Authority.

⁴ Results of the expert interviews with SR's Department of Labour and Vocational Training.

generate labour for the local inhabitants, but also creates a centre of job attention for those from other provinces. About half of the tourism accommodation staff are non-SR residents. In the surge of tourism jobs in the SRAR since 2004, the pattern and potential of the tourism accommodation sector has provided a substantial range of opportunities to stimulate the local economy and income, as well as contributed significantly to the GDP growth and poverty alleviation in Cambodia.

Entrance Fees in Angkor Park and their Redistribution

As mentioned earlier, more than USD 500 million was made through different sectors of the tourism economy in SR, and approximately USD 200 million remained a substantial part of SR's GRDP in 2008, most of which stays focused on SR town and the Angkor Region (Tourism&Leisure 2009). However, as the results of the expert interviews highlight, the revenues from tourism development are unequally distributed within SR province, especially between rural and urban areas, due to polarization, limited infrastructure and superstructure, a lack of tourism product development and diversification which could allow SR's rural inhabitants to participate, a weak institutional framework, overlapping mandates and responsibilities, and insufficient institutional collaboration.

Local economic development in SR is interrelated with a long rural-urban continuum, especially in the way that the current dichotomy between urban and rural areas is reduced, while integrated development and conservation plans are undertaken promptly to support SR multi-sector development policies. The lingering educational and rural development frameworks in SR following its full political integration in 1998 are translated into many areas which are underdeveloped or less developed, with a majority of the population remaining involved in subsistence agriculture and fishing due to their limited capacities and resources. Interregional migration among the SR youth from rural areas is considerably high, especially among those who are attracted by an increasing demand for unskilled or semi-skilled labourers in the labour-intensive industry in SR town, as stressed by Acharya et al. (2003), Godfrey et al. (2001), and CDRI (2008). Additionally, labour productive people from SR are reported to have migrated to Thailand in search of temporary off-farm jobs. Factors influencing inter-migration and out-migration of the SR local inhabitants include chronic poverty, landlessness, depletion of natural resources or common pool resources, lack of year-round employment, debts, natural disasters, success stories of their migrant relatives or friends, and the demand for an unskilled, low-skilled or semi-skilled workforce in labour-intensive (i.e. garment factories, construction) and service industries (i.e. hotels, restaurants).

As has been shown, tourism revenues in SR are generally made up of both direct and indirect tourist expenditure on services and products provided by formal and informal tourism or tourism-related economies. Two major state actors, the SR Department of Tourism (SRDoT) and the APSARA Authority (AA), are responsible for tourism development and management, including fee collection, in the SRAR

Month	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Change 2009/08 (%)
Trimester 1	120,877	202,382	261,790	334,776	372,111	288,843	-22.38
January	51,875	79,398	92,976	123,570	124,548	107,339	-13.82
February	37,342	67,386	87,740	109,312	129,883	95,006	-26.85
March	31,660	55,598	91,074	101,894	117,680	86,498	-26.50
Trimester 2	73,936	119,732	151,629	214,178	212,503	166,331	-21.73
April	26,830	45,131	58,791	76,370	82,145	66,168	-19.45
May	25,474	39,588	49,625	67,729	72,786	56,989	-21.70
June	21,632	35,013	43,213	70,079	57,572	43,174	-25.01
Trimester 3	97,918	149,965	175,137	235,181	211,982		
July	29,954	49,495	56,170	78,579	70,970		
August	37,229	59,478	67,628	90,481	82,521		
September	30,735	40,992	51,339	66,121	58,491		
Trimester 4	158,315	218,908	269,267	322,755	260,177		
October	39,193	59,543	70,295	85,989	73,677		
November	56,130	79,910	92,929	114,930	96,938		
December	62,992	79,455	106,043	121,836	89,562		
Total	451,046	690,987	857,823	1,106,890	1,056,773	455,174	-22.14%

Fig. 4: International tourist statistics of entrance tickets purchased for Angkor Park from January 2004 to June 2009 (Tourism Statistics and Planning Office, Department of Angkor Development, June - 1st Semester - 2009).

(MPDF, 2007a; Tourism&Leisure 2009; APSARA Authority 2009). The SRDoT is a line department within the provincial government, and works under the umbrella of the Ministry of Tourism (MoT). The AA is a state statutory body in charge of cultural heritage site management and conservation at the Angkor Park and its vicinity over the 401km² territory in Zones 1 and 2, which covers 112 villages in 21 communes within five districts of SR Province. The AA's roles and responsibilities are also set aside for land management, environmental protection and socio-economic development of the local inhabitants residing within the areas of influence of the cultural heritage sites. The SRDoT does not play any crucial role in the SRAR, although it should have obtained priority authority over tourism within the SR provincial government. The AA, as an autonomous institution, has been given complete rights over tourism-related management and administrative work in order to deal with the conservation and protection of cultural heritage and natural resources and to promote revenue collection from entrance fees to the Angkor archaeological park. In general, the SRDoT's roles and functions are limited to regulating, supervising and monitoring tourism industry businesses (i.e. accommodation, TO&TA, guide services, etc.) outside the AA's

management zones and ensuring that they fulfil the governmental conditions. However, the SRDoT has not consented to manage tourist sites, the majority of which are cultural-historical, excluding a few of the natural and manmade ones. The SRDoT's main tasks are also: (1) the granting of permission and issuance of tourism business licenses for any tourist accommodation smaller than 15 rooms, otherwise the permit mechanisms have to be carried out by the MoT, Ministry of Commerce (MoC) and Council for Development of Cambodia (CDC) at a national level; and (2) the collection of annual tourist license fees from tourism-related businesses.

The AA's collection of the entrance fees to the Angkor Park⁵ is carried out through a private concessionaire known as Sokimex or the so-called Sokha Hotel Group (SHG), which is authorised as the sole private body on behalf of the AA and the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) in the management of the fees, fee flow and fee allocation (MoT 2009). Based on a mutual agreement between the MEF and SHG, the governance of the entrance fees pursues the following principles:

- The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), through the MEF and its General Department of Taxes, have the right to take 10% of the total revenue collected from the entrance fees as Value Added Tax (VAT).
- If the revenue is USD 3 million or less, it will be divided into two shares and distributed equally to the AA and the SHG (i.e. 50% to each).
- If the revenue exceeds USD 3 million, 15% of the total fees will be remitted into the account of the Angkor Development Committee that is responsible for the sustainable development of Angkor Complex. Of the remaining 85% of the total fees, 80% will be allocated to the AA and 20% to the SHG.
- The revenue or share given to the AA is considered and transferred to the MEF as a national budget.

According to the Report of Tourism Statistics produced by the APSARA Authority (2009), the number of foreign tourists purchasing entrance tickets to the Angkor Park has increased dramatically since 2004 (451,046), and in 2008 it amounted to 1,056,773; however, this was a 4.52% decrease compared to 2007 (see Fig. 4).

The number of days of tourist visits is usually kept confidential. Unlike the release of the MoT's verbal report (2009) of the receipts in 2007 (USD 32 million), the NZAid (cited in Tourism&Leisure 2009) stressed that the MEF is reported as obtaining approximately USD 50 million annually from the entrance fees. The AA receives about USD 10–12 million from the annual national transfer budget to cover its administrative costs and support its management, development and conservation activities. Although the AA is well staffed, the amount of support it receives from the MEF is well below

⁵ Fees are collected from selling tickets to international tourists to visit the Angkor Park and its adjoining areas. Each tourist, except invited guests or the RGC's special guests, is supposed to pay USD 20 for a day visit, USD 40 for a three-day visit, or USD 60 for a six-day visit.

that needed to proactively manage and preserve the cultural heritage sites within the Angkor archaeological park and other tourist sites in the SRAR. The meagreness of available funds together with other administrative challenges could be translated into a risk, and a projection that the process of management and preservation of cultural heritage sites, including physical restoration and maintenance, in the SRAR cannot be performed efficiently and effectively. Therefore, it is envisaged that visitor impacts at the sites will increase due to unsound management, and thus make cultural heritage resources, particularly the tangible ones, deteriorate and produce a further threat to the AA's conservation activities. The SRDoT and the SR local government do not benefit from the entrance fees and, what is even worse, the main revenues from SR tourism do not really benefit the development of the province, which is struggling to restore itself and to become a more stable and economically prosperous region.

Structure and Ownership of Tourist Accommodations

Countrywide, Cambodia has seven different types of tourist accommodation: (1) hotels (apartment, suite and resort hotels), (2) motels, (3) lodges, (4) bungalows, (5) guesthouses, (6) home-stays, and (7) camping sites (MoT 2008c). However, only two major types, hotels and guesthouses, are being dynamically run in the SRAR, most of which are located in SR town (SR Provincial Department of Tourism – SR-PDoT 2008). At present, Cambodia does not have any official rating system for accommodation. Based on its first-hand principles, the MoT has divided tourism accommodation in SR into five different categories by using the standard international rating (provisional) scheme which rates each of the accommodation establishments between one and five stars based on its size, number of rooms, facilities, location, and a range of services and products offered to tourist or non-tourist customers. This impermanent, seldom used, rating scheme applies three common standards – superior or first class, deluxe and standard – for the assessment and classification of each officially registered hotel accommodation. In terms of guesthouses, approximately 90% of the establishments are (unofficially) rated one star or less, and none of them is high-class. The study shows that only 16 hotels out of the total have received formal star rating from the MoT and its line provincial department since 2007.

The total investment in hotel accommodation in SR reached USD 151,670,959 in late 2008, 22.3% of which is foreign investment (see Fig. 6).

There were 115 hotels in SR in 2008: 19.4% were owned by foreign proprietors, mostly from South Korea (22.72%) and France (22.72%), and other countries, such as the UK (13.63%), Thailand (13.63%), Malaysia (13.63%), Australia (13.63%), Dominica, China, Switzerland, and Norway (SR-PDoT 2008). Although the majority of guesthouse establishments in SR are operated by local people, there has been a significant increase in the number of foreign proprietorships in this business: the



Fig. 5: New hotel with a roof in the form of a Buddhist monastery (pagoda) (2011).

Year	Total No.	Total Capital Investment	Hotels				Guesthouses	
			Type of Ownership				Local	Foreigner
			Local		Foreigner			
			No.	Investment	No.	Investment	No.	No.
1999	23	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	31	0
2000	31	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	67	3
2001	49	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	97	3
2002	57	\$98,956,519	50	\$42,773,836	7	\$56,182,683	115	8
2003	58	\$103,056,519	49	\$46,253,836	9	\$56,802,683	117	11
2004	70	\$147,260,959	58	\$69,208,276	12	\$78,052,683	120	12
2005	82	\$161,535,959	68	\$77,483,276	14	\$84,052,683	135	24
2006	92	\$162,665,959	78	\$78,613,276	14	\$84,052,683	144	29
2007	101	\$151,670,959	82	\$117,848,276	19	\$33,822,683	165	27
2008	115	\$151,670,959	97	\$117,848,276	18	\$33,822,683	171	37

Fig. 6: Numbers of and investment capital in hotel and guesthouse businesses in Siem Reap Province 1999–2008 (Tourism Industry Office, Siem Reap Department of Tourism 2008).

number more than doubled between 2002 and 2008. The room rates for hotel and guesthouse accommodation range from USD 15 to USD 1,900 and from USD 3 to USD 35, respectively. Hotels (4,880 rooms) and guesthouses (2,671 rooms) in SR employing a total of 6,838 and 946 staff, respectively, in 2008, had enough capacity to accommodate the growing number of foreign tourists, yet they are cautious and unsure

with regard to the influx of domestic tourists. However, unlike high-class and group or package tour travellers, most domestic tourists and foreign independent travellers or backpackers commonly stay in guesthouses in SR, and thus provide more direct impacts on local-owned businesses in the area. According to the estimate conducted in collaboration with the SRDoT, the accommodation industry's earnings might reach about USD 120 million in 2008, approximately 15%-20% might be paid out for staff salaries and at least half of this turnover might provide direct impact on local income.

Year	Hotels				Guesthouses			
	No.	Change (%)	Room	Change (%)	No.	Change (%)	Room	Change (%)
1999	23	0	1005	0	31	0	273	0
2000	31	25.8	1383	27.331	70	55.71	784	65.17
2001	49	36.734	2527	45.271	100	30	1028	23.735
2002	57	16.326	3149	19.752	123	18.70	1433	28.262
2003	58	1.724	3185	1.130	128	3.90	1458	1.714
2004	70	17.142	4675	31.871	132	3.03	1584	7.954
2005	82	14.634	5721	18.283	159	16.98	2158	26.598
2006	92	10.869	6660	14.09	173	8.09	2401	10.120
2007	101	8.910	7695	13.450	183	5.464	2375	-1.09
2008	115	8.695	8932	16.086	208	12	2671	11.08

Fig. 7: Number of hotels and guesthouses in Siem Reap Province (Tourism Industry Office, SR-PDoT 2008).

However, the study also reveals that most hotels and guesthouses in SR are facing a most difficult time due to the rapid decline in the number of tourist visits to the SRAR. According to interviews with and statistics from SR-PDoT (2008), the average room occupancy rate of hotels and guesthouses in SR in the first four months of 2009 dropped 50% compared with the rate at the same period in 2008. This signifies that the operation of hotel and guesthouse accommodation in SR could not make the grade as a good performance indicator in terms of the contribution to profitability. It is, however, astonishing to see that some hotels, whose market segments are mainly from the newly emerging generating countries such as Vietnam, experienced an increase of around 19.8% of their occupancy rate in that difficult year. It is predicted that the stagnation or degeneration of the accommodation industry in SR will continue through to 2010. Less than 72 of all the hotels in SR are running properly, although not fully operationalized. Some big hotels, especially those located outside the city centre, are reported to be preparing administrative documents to terminate or suspend their operations due to bankruptcy and rapid loss of business turnover. At present, most hotels and some larger guesthouses have cut back or are planning to lay off their staff, cut staff salaries, reduce staff working hours, rotate staff duties and moderate their room rates in response not only to seasonality, but also to the effects of global economic downturn and other impediments which result in tourist decline.

The key player in supporting and facilitating accommodation business in SR is the MoT and its provincial line department (SR-PDoT), whereas other stakeholders such as the MoC, hospitality and vocational training schools (i.e. Sala Bai, Paul Debrule, Shita

Mani Institute), the Cambodia Hotel Association (CHA) the SR Angkor Hotel and Guesthouse Association (SRAHGA), and some concerned NGOs and TO&TAs are regarded as support institutions. The size of the accommodation business denotes the type of establishment and annual fee/tax payment of each operator. The results of the study point out that 96.8% of the guesthouses interviewed are micro and small enterprises (MSEs), whereas only 52.7% of the hotel respondents are considered relatively small businesses, having the size of about or less than three stars (see Fig. 8).

Type	Business Size	%	Accommodation Rating Institution	%	Type of Application for Business Registration	%
Guest-house	Small	26	Own decision	68.6	Ministry of Tourism	13.6
	Medium	36	Ministry of Tourism	18.1	Ministry of Commerce	12.6
	Large	2	Ministry of Commerce	7.6	SR Department of Tourism	36.6
Hotel	3 stars	19	SR Department of Tourism	2.9	SR Department of Commerce	37.2
	4 stars	12	SR Department of Commerce	2.9	Total	100
	5 stars	5				

Fig. 8: Business size, accommodation rating and registration of selected accommodation businesses in the SRAR (Own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

As much as 4% of the selected guesthouse establishments are much better than a considerable amount of hotels in terms of quality, facilities and services. This leads to some confusion over the categorization of tourism accommodation in SR mainly caused by the weak institutional framework of the MoT (i.e. no official rating system) and partly by the operator's intention not to pay a higher tax or fee for their business operation. Most guesthouses and hotels (68.6%) questioned rate the size of their businesses based on their own judgment; 18.1% and 7.6% of accommodation businesses are rated by MoT and MoC, respectively (see Fig. 8).

All the accommodation establishments are obliged to register their businesses in SR as part of the administrative requirements. The majority of the establishments interviewed accessed the SR-PDoT and SR Department of Commerce (SR-DoC) at the provincial level, and about 27% of them registered at the national level with the MoT, MoC or CDC. Quite a high proportion of guesthouses in SR are owned by SR residents, both indigenous locals and previous in-migrants who have become permanent dwellers in SR, whereas hotel businesses are family-owned (47%), meaning being run by elite business entrepreneurs from outside the region or by a few better-off SR locals residing in SR town (see Fig. 9).

Exact Kind of Business	%	Subsidiary Services Provided by Guesthouse/Hotel Business	%	Means of Business Network to Attract Tourists/Consumers	%
Family-owned	47	None	8.1	Clients just walk in	22.5
Foreign-owned	15	Restaurant	27.7	Give commission to tour guides and taxi drivers	13.8
Local-owned	37	Travel agency and tour operation	9.8	Give commission to sending travel agents/tour operators or transport companies	6.0
Transnational-owned	1	Transport service	20.4	Contact branch or head offices in other provinces/cities or countries	3.4
Total	100	Café and bar	15.7	Through business contracts with travel agents/tour operators	9.2
		Guide service	6.4	Through word-of-mouth	17.1
		Meeting, Incentive, Conference, and Exhibition (MICE)	7.7	Through advertisement in mass media	12.6
		Internet	2.6	Through special promotion including augmented products	8.0
		Disco and club	0.4	Through distribution of announcement/advertisement flyers	7.5
		Spa and massage	1.3		

Fig. 9: Type of accommodation business, extent of service and means of attracting tourist customers operated by tourism accommodation in the SRAR (own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

The hotels run by foreign investors or by transnational proprietors (having Cambodian shareholders) account for 15% and 1%, respectively. The range of services being provided by the accommodation establishments interviewed was found to be homogenous and atypical. Larger establishments, such as four- to five-star hotels, offer spa and massage facilities or fitness clubs, MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Conference, and Exhibition) facilities, restaurants, transport services, and souvenir shops among other facilities and subsidiary services. Some three-star hotels offer spa and entertainment clubs, TO&TAs, cafés and bars, and a few other similar but low standard services to their customers. Guesthouses offer mostly budget-style rooms and some augmented services (e.g. internet, laundry, etc.) with a minimum standard and a lower range of facilities.

Whereas a considerable amount of the establishments interviewed (9.2%), especially hotels, attract tourists or customers to buy their services through business contracts with TO&TAs inside and outside Cambodia, the commonly used strategies are commissions offered to tour guides and taxi drivers (13.8%) and advertisements in the mass media (12.6%), as shown in Fig. 9. However, most customers are walk-in customers (22.5%) and the majority of operators try to satisfy their clients with high

quality services and hospitality. Word-of-mouth recommendations (17.1%) play the second most important role in promoting their businesses. The high local representation is easily explained in guesthouse operations, while national representation is clearly seen in many hotel establishments, excluding the high standard quality ones. Although the majority of tourism accommodation is local or family-run businesses, the interviewees reported that high economic profits have been gained by foreign-owned (28.3%) and transnational-owned (20.3%) businesses (see Fig. 10).

A sign of an increasing business monopoly over hotel accommodation was also reported by 18.8% of the respondents, and this usually happens with multiple businesses (e.g. hotels, transport, tourist guides, entertainment clubs, and restaurants) run by the rich or powerful, especially by Korean investors in collaboration with Cambodian magnates. Despite the highly competitive, and sometimes deceitful, business environments in SR, most accommodation owners perceive that the key to success is to have effective strategies to increase their competitive advantages without losing a lot of turnover to their competitors or monopolizing businessmen. Three strategies are highly acknowledged by the hotel and guesthouse respondents: (1) secure high quality services with affordable prices, (2) supply of augmented products, and (3) hospitality.

All hotel and guesthouse establishments in SR are required to pay for licences, obtained either from the SRDoT or the national MoT, for their continuing operations. The payment is usually based on the type of accommodation business and number of the rooms and services offered by each operator. As much as 83% of the respondents reported having paid annually for reactivating their licences, whereas about 17% paid monthly to the SR-PDoT. The average amount of payment ranges from USD 150 to USD 1,000.

Type of Investors Benefiting the Most from the Accommodation Business in the SR Angkor Region	%	Payment for the Licence for Business Operation	%
Local-owned business	15.2	Yes	99
Transnational-owned business	20.3	No	1
Monopolized business by the rich and powerful	18.8	Total	100
		Type of Payment for the License	%
Joint venture business	8.0	Monthly	17
Foreign-owned business	28.3	Annually	82
Multiple business	9.4	Do not pay at all	1
Total	100	Total	100

Fig. 10: Benefits received by different types of tourism accommodation and patterns of payment for licences in the SRAR (Own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

Jobs and Employment in the Accommodation Sector

Hotels in SR, being larger establishments, have the average size of 80–100 rooms (a couple of them have 200–350 rooms) and 70 employees (the four- or five-star hotels have up to 200–450 staff). Guesthouses have the average size of 15 rooms and 7–10 employees per establishment. The results of the survey interviews illustrate that 46.4% of the interviewed accommodation establishments' employees are local SR inhabitants, whereas staff from the nearby provinces around the Tonle Sap Great Lake (Battambang, Kampong Thom, Kampong Chhnang, Banteay Meanchey, Pursat, and Kampong Cham) and other provinces account for 24.4% and 22.2%, respectively (see Fig. 11).

Job opportunities in the accommodation industry are dispersed to eight major districts of SR province; SR town's locals are mostly recruited (19%) followed by Pok, Kralanh, Prasat Bakong, and Dom Dek districts. Europe, Canada and Australia also supply qualified resource people to work in the accommodation industry in SR, however, the amount of foreign staff has declined to 7% of the total accommodation establishments surveyed. The study illustrates that nowadays there is a trend to reduce the numbers of foreign staff in the accommodation sector. According to the statistics of the SR-PDoT, the quantity of foreign staff working in hotels in SR has declined between 60% and 70% over the last three to five years.

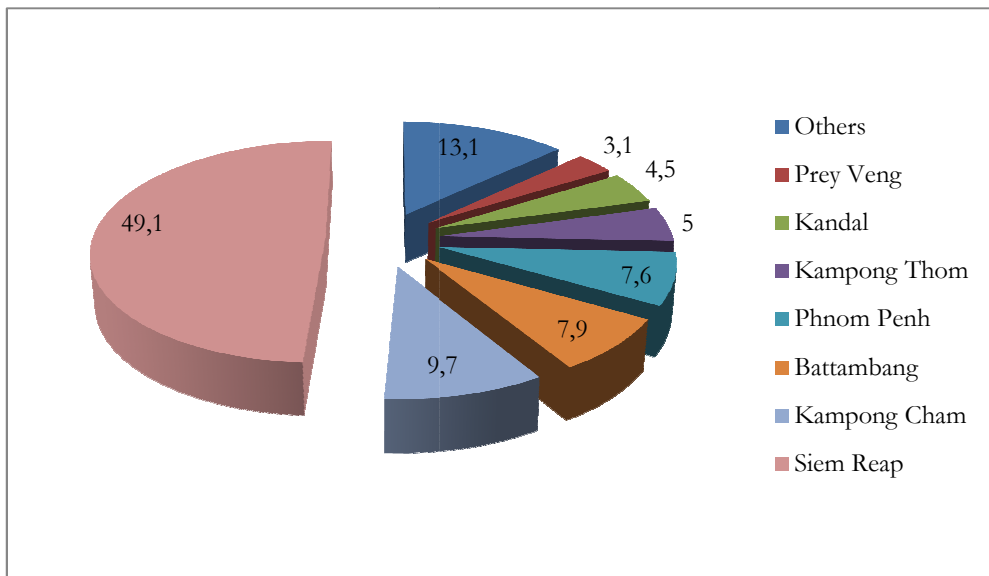


Fig. 11: Place of origin of tourism staff working in the tourism industry in Siem Reap province (source: after Tourism&Leisure 2009:38, total number of sample population = 380 tourism employees in various tourism businesses).

However, SR locals still receive limited benefits from tourism development via the accommodation sector. This point has become clearer when correlations have been used to examine differences among size categories and types of jobs. Whereas SR local inhabitants make up over three-quarters of staff in small-sized establishments, this proportion falls to about 50% and 40% for medium and large-sized establishments, respectively (see Fig. 12, distribution of staff according to gender). In addition, more than half of the staff from other provinces and almost all the foreign staff are placed into jobs at supervisory or specialized and professional skill levels. Local managers constitute a fairly large amount of specialized and managerial positions in the small scale accommodation industry, but the amount plunges significantly in medium and large scale hotel businesses. The absence of a large pool of local labour presents the lack of capabilities (knowledge, skills and experience) among local inhabitants, especially those from the remote districts, to meet the requirements of large and some medium size accommodation establishments. On the other hand, it could be said that the small-sized accommodation industry in SR provides higher rates of local participation in tourism development and benefit sharing than other size categories. Labour migration from other provinces in Cambodia also plays a vital role in fulfilling the requirements of and the increasing demand for tourism services in the accommodation sector in SR province. Although the estimate of the Cambodia Hotel Association (CHA) says that the rapid tourism growth in Cambodia might result in an urgent need of the accommodation industry to employ people for about 30,000 jobs annually, especially in the SRAR and Phnom Penh, there is still no evidence that local participation in specialized or managerial work in SR would increase. This might, on the one hand, be

Number of Staff	%	Number of Female Staff	%	Number of Male Staff	%
1 – 20	68	1 – 5	52	1 – 5	60
20 – 40	8	5 – 20	24	5 – 20	18
40 – 60	5	20 – 40	11	20 – 40	8
60 – 80	7	Over 40	13	Over 40	14
80 – 100	4				
100 – 200	5				
200 – 300	1				
300 – 450	1				
450 - 500	1				

Fig. 12: Distribution of staff according to gender (own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

due to the lack of training opportunities or affordable quality hospitality skills training and education programs in SR, and the isolation of the province from national educational institutions, which are mostly located in the capital, on the other hand. Therefore, it could be unfailingly argued that tourism development in SR provides mostly low-skilled and low paid jobs to local inhabitants, although local employment is strongly linked to the size of the accommodation business and type of ownership.

Job security is another issue related to local employment in SR. It was found that accommodation labour turnover fluctuates depending on seasonality, profitability and the treatment of staff. Most employees working in the hotels and guesthouses investigated, excluding the small-sized family-owned ones, are recruited on an irregular basis (81.9%), and 13.3% of others are employed only in the peak season (see Fig. 14).

Number of Staff Based on Profession and Skill	Professional (%)	Supervisory/ Specialized (%)	Low-skilled/ Unskilled (%)	Frequency of Staff Selection	%
1 – 10	96.9	92.8	65.3	Irregular	81.9
10 – 20	3.1	5.1	6.2	One time per year	1.9
20 – 30	-	2.1	5.1	Two times per year	0.95
30 – 40	-	-	4.1	> Three times per years	0.95
40 – 50	-	-	1.0	Only in peak season	13.33
Over 50	-	-	18.4	Only in low season	0.95

Fig.13: Staff employment based on profession and skill, and frequency of staff selection in the SRAR (Own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

Type of Contract for Staff Selection to Ensure Effective Staff Performance	Count	Response (%)
No contract	60	50.8
On job probation for a couple of months	35	29.7
One year contract	15	12.7
Two year contract	2	1.7
Contract with possible change of task assignments	1	0.8
Season contract (i.e. work during low or high tourist season)	5	4.2

Fig. 14: Type of work contract in the tourism accommodation sector in the SRAR (Own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

The system of staff recruitment in SR signifies risky and insecure job opportunities if considered from the regulatory and business standpoints. The accommodation employers interviewed are more interested in employing their staff without or with imprecise contracts (50.8%) (see Fig. 15).

Patterns of Staff Selection	Professional (%)	Supervisory/ Specialized (%)	Low-skilled/ Unskilled (%)	Means of Staff Selection	%
Through recommendation from friends/colleagues	30.6	30.9	36.1	Mass media	7.6
Through recommendation from families/ relatives	38.9	27.3	33.5	Distribute among existing staff	29.3
Through formal evaluation and selection	12.2	13.9	13.5	Ask friends / relatives to help identify	38
Through job promotion	10	15.2	6.8	Contact department of labour or tourism association	3.8
Through internship and practicum	2.8	3.6	0.5	Contact vocational skill providing agencies	6.5
Through job posting/announcement in front of guesthouse/hotel	3.3	4.8	5.2	Post announcement in front of guesthouse / hotel	9.8
Through job placement agencies	2.2	4.2	4.7	Contact job placement agencies	4.9

Fig. 15: Means of staff recruitment based on profession and skill in tourism accommodation in the SRAR (Own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

The incumbents are usually required to work on probation for a couple of months before being accepted on a more permanent basis, as mentioned by 29.7% of the respondents. Most staff, especially the low-skilled or semi-skilled, are subject to work layoffs, reductions, rotation or salary cuts, particularly in the low season or even in the case of the slowdown of tourism business, as has been apparent recently in SR. However, social networks and trust might play a more crucial role in staff employment than those mentioned by the labour law. As trust between the employers and employees and the relationships increase, the relative jobs will also increase. A lot of employers prefer recruiting their staff, regardless of job categories, through recommendations from families or relatives (Mean = 33.2%) and from friends or colleagues (Mean = 32.5%) rather than other selection styles, such as formal evaluation (Mean = 13.2%) and job promotion (Mean = 10.6%), as indicated in Fig. 15. The favourite means of selection is to inform friends and relatives (38%), i.e. personal networks, to help identify

potential staff, followed by the announcement of the jobs on offer among existing personnel (29.3%). However, the results of in-depth discussions with hotels and guesthouses interviewed demonstrate that foreign staff recruitments are usual for managerial positions, or at least specialized positions, and most of them are selected from overseas by large scale hotels and resorts (four to five star), while others are foreign expatriates who have already worked in Cambodia and obtained substantial knowledge and experience about its business environment.

There is a set of criteria commonly applied and prioritized by accommodation employers in SR province. The priority criterion is, according to the employers interviewed, to attract strongly committed staff (93%), followed by other measures including good interpersonal and hospitality skills (89%), the ability to be creative and flexible in diverse work conditions (83%), possessing good work experience (63%), and foreign languages (56%) (see Fig. 16).

Priority Criteria for Selecting Potential Staff*	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)
Foreign language	3.1	4.1	35.7	24.5	32.7
Obtain necessary skills	3.0	3.0	38.4	38.4	17.2
Be relatives, friends, or colleagues	14.1	10.1	29.3	19.2	27.3
Have solid tourism/tourism-relative knowledge	5.1	11.1	38.4	28.3	17.2
Have good work experience	5.1	5.1	26.3	37.4	26.3
Be honest and have strong commitment	2.0	0.0	4.0	17.2	76.8
Have good interpersonal and other needed hospitality skills	2.0	1.0	7.1	27.3	62.6
Be creative and flexible to diverse work conditions	3.0	2.0	11.1	26.3	57.6

* 1 = least priority, 2 = less priority, 3 = neutral/on the fence, 4 = priority, 5 = most priority.

Fig. 16: Priority characteristics for staff selection in tourism accommodation in the SRAR (Own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

Regardless of business size, 33.9% of the accommodation representatives stated that SR local inhabitants are the most targeted people to be employed to serve their operations (see Fig. 17). This preference, however, is probably related to the fact that 1) many of the employees are hired only on an irregular basis (or rather without contracts) and 2) staff selection often takes place based on criteria such as kinship and friendship. Fig. 18 can be interpreted in this direction.⁶

⁶ Nevertheless, these figures have to be interpreted with care. All respondents were certainly aware of the researcher's opinion that local people should have priority in the selection of staff. They probably reacted to his expectations by (over-) emphasizing their preference for local staff and their performance.

Target Employees for Selection	Count	Response (%)
Local inhabitants of Siem Reap	58	33.9
Skilled labour in-migrants from nearby provinces	8	4.7
Skilled labour in-migrants from all over Cambodia	46	26.9
Graduates from any universities	14	8.2
Graduates from tourism-related universities/ colleges in Siem Reap	8	4.7
Graduates from tourism-related universities/ colleges in Phnom Penh	2	1.2
Graduates from schools providing tourism vocational skills in Siem Reap	9	5.3
Graduates from schools providing tourism vocational skills in Phnom Penh	1	0.6
Student interns	9	5.3
Former staff of other hotels/guesthouses	16	9.4

Fig. 17: Type of potential staff perceived by tourism accommodation operators in the SRAR (Own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

Level of Satisfaction with Different Types of Preferred Employees	Local Inhabitants (%)	Skilled In-migrants (%)	Foreigners (%)	Level of Willingness to Recruit Local Inhabitants	%
Very satisfied	30.9	24.6	33.3	Strongly willing	17.5
Satisfied	68.1	73.9	55.6	Willing	60.8
Dissatisfied	1.1	1.4	11.1	Not willing	13.4
Very dissatisfied	0.0	0.0	0.0	Strongly unwilling	8.2

Fig. 18: Level of satisfaction with different types of accommodation employees in the SRAR (Own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

Almost an equal share (Mean = 31.6%) of the employers expressed the possibility of recruiting skilled labourers from other provinces, especially those in close proximity to SR. It was interesting to learn that despite their realization of the nature of the accommodation industry, which offers more jobs at an operational or low-skilled level, the employers interviewed also wish to provide work for universities graduates rather than vocational school graduates (see Fig. 17). This is slightly paradoxical compared to the current policy of the MoT and its line department to promote institutions which provide vocational skills in order to produce practical human resources to fulfil the need of the tourism industry in Cambodia. However, unlike low-skilled or unskilled

labourers, who are merely required to be honest, industrious and respectful, the professional and managerial employees are expected to be punctual and obtain solid educational backgrounds and experience together with sound hospitality, management, leadership, and communication skills. This would again shackle or reduce the chances of the majority of the local inhabitants, whose capacities are limited, to access better and more secure jobs in the accommodation industry in SR.

Tourism Accommodation and Local Development

A large pool of both hotel and guesthouse proprietors interviewed in SR stated that they want to improve the living conditions of the local inhabitants and stimulate local economic development through local employment. According to the respondents, 70.2% reported their willingness to recruit the locals to be on their staff, and 93% of them have already had satisfaction or high contentment working with previous and current local inhabitants compared to working with in-migrants (68%) and foreign staff (8%) (see Fig. 18). The skill, knowledge and experience of the employees are fairly influential (48%) for the process of selection, since the staff recruited will also be asked to attend on-the-job training programs which are of great substance to the practical performance of the business. However, this perception only works with a majority of local-owned businesses. The foreign-owned or transnational-owned businesses consider both the quantity and quality of staff employment to ensure that their operations match the customers' demand and the economic turnover is increased as a result of effective strategies employed by their specialized and professional staff. Poor educational backgrounds and a lack of managerial hospitality skills among SR local inhabitants make managers (professional) and supervisory or specialized staff from this province a rarity. Normally, foreign staff, in spite of the fact that their dichotomous classification is less pertinent in SR province, are recruited for the specific purposes of operating a few medium and a bulk of large scale hotel businesses. However, the pattern of foreign managerial employment in guesthouse businesses in SR is excluded since almost all the managers are also owners of the businesses, and have lived in Cambodia for a long time or have Cambodian spouses.

Nationality, size of business, range of skills, knowledge, experience, and job categories are substantial determinants of the standard salaries in the accommodation industry in SR. Although there is no difference in terms of salaries received by local inhabitants and Cambodian in-migrants for similar positions, only a few of SR locals are working as highly skilled labourers. Cambodian labourers always receive smaller salaries than those of foreign citizens working in the accommodation industry, even if performing identical work or having equal positions at professional and supervisory levels. The monthly standard salaries for professional staff range from USD 500 to USD 1,000 for Cambodian nationals and from USD 2,000 to USD 4,000 for foreigners, and some four- or five-star hotels pay foreign professionals up to USD 10,000 or more (see Fig. 19). The monthly standard salaries for supervisory or specialized staff are

between USD 200 and USD 450, whereas the semi-skilled, low-skilled or unskilled employees are paid very low wages (USD 50–150).

Standard of Staff Salary Based on Skill and Profession (Monthly in USD)	Professional Staff (%)	Supervisory/ Specialized Staff (%)	Low-skilled/ Unskilled Staff (%)
1 – 50	1.4	1.6	34.7
50 – 100	9.7	39.1	53.7
100 – 150	23.6	20.3	10.5
150 – 200	15.3	9.4	1.1
200 – 250	6.9	10.9	-
250 – 300	5.6	9.4	-
300 – 350	1.4	-	-
350 – 400	1.4	4.7	-
400 – 450	-	1.6	-
450 – 500	4.2	1.6	-
500 – 600	2.8	-	-
600 – 700	2.8	-	-
700 – 800	4.2	-	-
800 – 900	-	1.6	-
900 – 1000	9.7	-	-
1000 – 2000	8.4	-	-
2000 – 3000	1.4	-	-
3000 – 4000	1.4	-	-

Fig. 19: Standard monthly salaries of SRAR's tourism accommodation employees based on profession and skill (Own survey with senior and junior management staff of selected hotels and guesthouses, n = 100).

The contribution of each hotel and guesthouse to local economic development, local livelihood improvement and poverty reduction in SR can be regarded as another impact of tourism development on SR and its locals. When asked about the ways in which the accommodation industry in SR could contribute to poverty reduction among SR's local inhabitants, a significant number of the proprietors or managers questioned said that they would rather buy local products (22.3%), offer more job opportunities to local people (21.1%), contribute to social and community development programs (19.2%), and encourage tourists or their customers to buy local products and services (15.3%) while staying at their hotels/guesthouses or in SR. This issue was further explored and it was found that the average percentages of their annual expenditure on staff salaries, on

purchasing local products and for social or community development was approximately 10%-20%, 10%-20% or less, and less than 10%, respectively. However, the majority of them were not very interested in spending money on capacity building programs for their staff, although they understood that it was important for the improvement of staff performance, as well as for the maximization of their quality services and profitability.

Leakage and Linkage of Revenues

Economic leakage in the tourism sector in Cambodia, roughly estimated by the MoT and the Ministry of Commerce (MoC 2006), reached 40% in 2006, as cited in UNCTAD (2007) and Tourism&Leisure (2009). This amount of leakage was also predicted to continue through to 2010 (MoC 2006; UNCTAD 2007; Tourism&Leisure 2009). The sources and amounts of “leakage” or “non-retention” in SR town (SRT) and SR province (SRP) comprise: (1) the continuing import of required products and services from outside SR, especially from foreign countries (SRT: 52%, SRP: 43%); (2) the remittance of wages and salaries by Cambodian in-migrants and foreign staff out of SR (SRT: 24%, SRP: 8%); (3) the remittance of gross operating surpluses out of SR (SRT: 54%, SRP: 45%); and (4) taxes and other fees or non-taxes remitted outside the designated area (*ibid*).

The study shows that the amount of foreign staff working in the accommodation industry in SR is between 7% and 10%. Based on this relatively low figure, there is no significant leakage in terms of foreign staff, and there might be less or no significant level of the remittance of wages or salaries from Cambodia’s accommodation businesses to abroad. There is, however, a sign of ongoing leakage from SRP to other provinces in Cambodia, which is normally committed by Cambodian staff in the accommodation sector and the tourism industry in SR who come from other provinces. The amount of Cambodian in-migrants working in hotels and guesthouses in SR accounted for approximately 30% to 40% in 2008. Therefore, some wages or salaries of this type of accommodation labourer might flow out of SR to their homelands on both a monthly and annual basis. Nevertheless, the level might appear to be relatively modest since they also use the greater part of their earnings for daily survival in SR, whereas others have become permanent local residents following their long stays and marriages. Some of them have also used their earnings or savings to invest in some micro and small scale enterprises in Cambodia, which indeed signifies opportunities for the creation of more jobs and economic stimuli within the SRAR.

The insufficient supply of quality goods and services, especially to an international standard, by local production or industry in SR in response to the increasing demand from the tourism industry has triggered a constant flow of a substantial amount of tourism revenue out of SR and Cambodia. It was reported that agricultural products (meats, vegetables, flowers, etc.) and industrial products (drinks, construction and decoration materials, etc.) are generally imported from abroad, especially from neighbouring Thailand and Vietnam, to supply the local markets and urgent requirements of the tourism industry in SR. Hopefully, this leakage will be transformed

into an opportunity for producing a sound resilience and healthy growth of local industries to revitalize and accelerate their production to address the demand from the tourism industry, particularly the accommodation businesses, in SR. Local suppliers will have time during the current diminution in tourism demand caused by the decline in tourist visits to SR to invest in the development and diversification of tourism goods and services that meet the demand, in terms of both quantity and quality, of the tourism industry. In addition, the state and local governments could work more effectively on improving public and infrastructural services to facilitate tourism businesses, while at the same time promoting sustainable tourism in SR.

It would be especially worrisome if foreign investment in the accommodation industry continued to produce leakage from the gross operating surpluses which are being remitted outside SR. As mentioned earlier, the foreign stakes in the tourism accommodation sector in SR in hotel and guesthouse businesses are 19.4% and 16.74%, respectively. It might be argued that some or most of the tourism profits from this sector should be repatriated to the foreign owners' countries. In order to reduce foreign exchange leakage and the repatriation of tourism earnings, the SR local government and the RGC need to provide additional opportunities for capital investment in Cambodia. In addition, the promotion of local ownership and employment in the accommodation industry needs to be carried out in a timely and sustainable manner, especially through effective and adaptive policies and regulations on the management of foreign-monopolized or corporate foreign-owned establishments in SR.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Siem Reap, which is the foremost region in terms of the tourism economy and which has received the largest number of international tourist visits in Cambodia, is moving forward to promote all its possible assets, including the Angkor Wat Heritage Site, to enhance economic growth through sustainable tourism businesses. However, it has always been doubtful whether tourism developers and academics can grasp how socially and economically responsible the current tourism development process is for the improvement of the living conditions of the local people. This study, therefore, takes into account several issues with regard to the in-destination revenue through the tourist accommodation sector and tourism's contribution to poverty reduction and cultural heritage conservation.

Tourism is one of the most important service industries and has played a crucial role in stimulating Cambodia's GDP, as well as the local economy of SR province. The SR accommodation industry, as a major element of tourism, has enlightened a variety of local small and medium scale enterprises and has granted great opportunities, particularly in the form of tourism employment, for both local inhabitants and Cambodian in-migrants. As a result, this industry has contributed significantly to the enhancement and diversification of local livelihoods. However, while tourism accommodation in SR has usually been regarded to have provided much economic benefit, income distribution is certainly remaining unequal between the rural and urban



Fig. 20: Khmer food restaurants are visited by tourists from all over the world (2011).

areas, between the rich and the poor and between local/national-owned and foreign-owned businesses. In addition, dissimilarities of the type and size of the accommodation businesses and ownership patterns indicate substantial differences in the nature of the tourism effects on tourism employment and remuneration. Foreign-owned accommodation establishments, mostly with high quality international standards, seem to receive more benefits than the local or family-owned establishments. Although the majority of the accommodation industry in SR involves local or national ownership and is small or medium scale, the economic turnover is somehow leaked to foreign owners who sometimes end up by repatriating their earnings. Family-owned properties contain a large proportion of staff who are family or relatives, while other small-scale and

medium-scale establishments employ more local staff. The large hotels, usually with four or five stars, recruit a wide range of staff from different educational and geographical backgrounds and usually contain small proportions of SR locals in employment, especially in highly skilled positions. The study reveals that the majority of the labourers in the tourist accommodation sector in SR are local inhabitants, but they most often work in low-skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled positions and their work is low paid and seasonal. Their jobs present great problems in terms of security, work input and prosperity. Inadequate and poor training opportunities, limited educational backgrounds and hospitality skills, cultural perspectives and attitudes, social capital (i.e. networking, communication and trust) and absence of labour policy intervention have limited regular and managerial employment opportunities for local SR inhabitants mostly to small and medium-sized establishments.

Opening up SR's local economy through the tourist accommodation businesses, especially those being operated by international investors and the Cambodian elite from SR town and outside SR, has resulted in many foreigners and Cambodian skilled immigrants being employed in professional and managerial or specialized/supervisory positions. Furthermore, it has allowed some foreign investors and a few Cambodian magnates, particularly those who run joint ventures and corporate businesses, to dominate the accommodation businesses because they have partners who send customers from overseas. The study also discovered that SR province still benefits poorly from the current development process, especially from the different main sources of revenue generation such as the collection of the entrance fees to Angkor Park. Apart from this, it suffers from the leakage of tourism economic turnover, since the tourism industry is extensively dependent on external supplies and does not have a high volume of local ownership in large scale businesses.

To help make the tourism industry, especially the accommodation sector, become more economically beneficial and more socially responsible, a range of effective mechanisms and interventions should be taken into account. Firstly, Cambodia's immigration and business laws should be strengthened in order to confine the investment shares and employment rates of foreigners and elitist business monopolies (foreign and national) in SR. Secondly, the RGC and the MoT and its line departments should create and maintain a good tourism business environment which should focus more on career promotion opportunities for the locals, as well as other poor and vulnerable Cambodians. Accommodation, as well as other medium and large scale tourism-related enterprises, should be required to follow the principles of corporate social responsibilities and invest more in producing local managers for executive positions. By doing so, the tourism accommodation or the tourism industry as a whole could help to increase the amounts of salaries and the number of career promotion opportunities for local inhabitants. Thirdly, following the analysis of work markets in the tourism industry in SR, the state and local governments, in close collaboration with all stakeholders concerned, should provide more training and educational opportunities for SR locals to enhance their skills, knowledge and experience. Different levels of tourism education – operational, specialized and managerial – should be appropriately

focused, and theoretical learning should be applied with practical experience for local students or trainers before assuming their positions. Fourthly, the RGC and other related state actors should create more alternative opportunities for local and foreign capital investment in order to reduce the repatriation of foreign exchange earnings, while at the same time diversifying local economies in the area. Next, the government and the MoT should invest more in the improvement of infrastructural and superstructural services and facilities to support and promote tourism development in SR. Finally, the government should intervene politically to provide a sufficient share of the revenue collected from the entrance fees to SR's local government in order to fund the issue-specific purposes of development and conservation.

New Chances for Local Farmers and Artisans?

Efforts and Strategies to Change the Existing Structures of Tourism Supply in Siem Reap

Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin

Introduction:

World Heritage and “The Lucrative Global Tourism Pie”

Studies on the implementation and the effects of monuments listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHSs) reveal that – with only few exceptions – the tourism industry rapidly develops (Hitchcock, King and Parnwell 2010). Tourism is located at the interface between economic development (boosting tourism) and conservation of cultural artefacts (keeping them intact and unaffected by visitors). This convergence is, in many cases, conflicting and paradoxical, and includes Angkor (see Miura 2004 and the chapters by Miura in this volume). Or, as Winter puts it: “Tourism looks in both directions: It restores and promotes the past while promising future prosperity” (2007:2). Behind the conflicting convergence of conservation and development are the

diverging interests of different actors equipped with varying power according to their position. Therefore, the balance between “development” and “conservation” is continuously in motion and economy is often ahead of the game:

Nevertheless, tourism in Siem Reap is foundational to the economy on various fronts whether as a primary source for foreign currency or Angkor’s status as a global and national icon.

(Esposito and Nam 2008:III-35)

The effects of the UNESCO listing seem to be almost the same everywhere:

Private and public sectors worldwide [...] are converting cultural heritage resources into destinations and attractions in a bid to obtain a piece of the lucrative global tourism pie. The money visitors spend on admission fees, souvenirs, transport, food, and accommodation contributes billions every year to the global economy and employs millions of people directly or indirectly.

(Salazar 2010:130)

What takes place is a boost of the numbers of tourists visiting the site and, simultaneously, a springing-up of a wide range of tourist accommodation and attractions, and consequently the increase of revenues. In fact, UNESCO acknowledged tourism as a welcome side-effect of the listing of WHSs in its 1972 convention. In recent years, it has become clear that tourism needs to be “domesticated”, not only for the sake of the monuments¹, but also in a way that will be ecologically and socially sustainable. It is for this reason that UNESCO developed a “Sustainable Tourism Programme in 2001”. A practical manual on tourism management should serve as a guideline for those responsible for the management of WHSs (Pedersen 2002).

However, the particular ways in which the degree of tourism development has to be assessed when it transgresses the border of sustainability, and in which way and by whom excessive tourism can and will be efficiently “tamed”, are difficult questions to answer in a general or even binding way. One of the main obstacles to such efforts consists of the fact that WHSs have an enormous socio-economic value, implying that they are targeted as commercial resources (Starr 2010:147). Salazar puts it even more sharply when he writes: “There is a striking complicity and circularity in the relationship between transnational tourism and (neoliberal) globalisation” (2010:132).

¹ “Mass tourism is overrunning the archaeologically fragile site, with millions every year climbing unabated on the monuments”, said Global Heritage Fund executive director Jeff Morgan with regard to Angkor (quoted after Phnom Penh Post October 17, 2010).



Fig. 1: The construction boom of hotels and shopping malls is still continuing (2011).

Therefore, heritage preservation, social and ecological sustainability, and the economic exploitation of a WHS do not easily go together; they are agents in a conflicting relationship. The example of Angkor shows how difficult and complex this relationship is. The masses of tourists climbing on the monuments (often even in areas which are indicated as restricted) apparently do a lot of harm to the monuments (Califano 2005; Tyler 2007). Another consequence of mass tourism consists of the groundwater level which has drastically dropped over the past few years due to the abundant consumption of water. This led to the situation that the official water supply of Siem Reap had to be cut from one to three hours per day during the dry season (Kaliyann and Sloan 2011:11). Apart from the many other consequences this may have, even the monuments of Angkor Park – the WHS – seem to be endangered: The stone monuments gradually lose their stability because of the drop in ground pressure. Thus, tourism development, at least in this respect, seems to have already transgressed the boundary of sustainability since the natural resources, first and foremost water, are endangered (The Independent March 14, 2008; Doherty 2010; see also the paragraph on the ecosystem of Siem Reap-Angkor, especially with regard to water, in Esposito and Nam 2008:V-68-78).

Tourism has been recognized as an agent of socio-cultural change – and development. However, since profit is one of the main purposes of those who successfully participate in the creating and the selling of a WHS as a multi-faceted

product, only particular agents (mainly of national and transnational/international origin) are thriving. There are winners (the elite), who profit from the newly created economic growth, and there are losers or left-behinds. The disadvantaged – usually the poor and powerless – are those people (mostly in rural areas) or segments of society whose strategic situation or position in the international game of getting a fair share of the tourism economy is, for many reasons, unfavourable. In any case, the rural poor participate only marginally in the economic development of the province. It is certainly a structural problem, which is inherent in the globalised neoliberalism, since, due to its rules, not everybody can be a winner in such a game (see Samuels 2010). The “spin-off” of tourism, therefore, does not automatically contribute to an equal development of all strata or members of society (UNDP 2007; see also Neth, this volume), on the contrary.² However, structural problems cannot be rapidly solved in a fundamental way. To improve the situation of the poor – and the following paragraphs show that the poor have already been marginalized, recently increased through the forces of the international tourism market – is a humanistic demand and challenge. This goal is on the agenda of development programmes of the many states and their agencies, including NGOs, engaged in the preservation and/or promotion of WHSs. The local presence of a multitude of foreign aid organizations with a wide range of programmes is – at least partly – a “spin-off” of the listing of WHSs, especially in countries in “the south”.³ The target group of the GIZ RED programme are the rural poor in Siem Reap Province⁴: small farmers (possessing less than 3 ha), small manufacturers, landless people, and casual workers (GTZ 2010a:2).

Unequal Participation in Economic Growth

Cambodia has a remarkable economic growth rate (7%) due to tourism and the textile industry (mostly the garment industry) from which the urban areas especially benefit. However, the percentage of the poor in rural areas is only slowly diminishing. The gap between better-off people in urban areas and the poor in rural areas is gradually increasing. Siem Reap is still one of the poorest provinces: The third poorest in

² “The poor are described as those with little or no land, with little or no livestock, especially large livestock, and a poor labour to non-labour ratio in the household (‘too many mouths to feed’). This leads in turn to severe rice shortages (partially made up for by ‘lesser’ starches such as cassava), very poor quality housing, debts, distress sales of limited assets including land, and inability to recover from economic shocks such as major harvest losses and serious health problems. Households more likely to belong to the poorest category are women-headed, those with family members with disabilities (mine victims, for example) and child-headed (orphans)” (Gebert et al. 2007:9).

³ Though one has to add that the manifold motives behind these projects, the trajectories and means to achieve this goal, are different and need to be carefully assessed.

⁴ Siem Reap Province consists of 12 districts, 100 communes and 921 villages, with a largely rural population of 884,537. The number of households in the province is 163,803 with an average household size of 5.4 (GTZ 2010b:6).

Cambodia in 2007⁵ and an estimated 52% of the population in this province live below the national poverty line (~2,000 Riels or USD 0.50 per day). According to figures the GIZ made available, only about 20% of the salaries paid for jobs in the tourism economy in Siem Reap go to employees from a poor family background. The illiteracy rate for rural Siem Reap exceeds 60% (GTZ 2006a:1), thus, education programmes have not yet effectively reached people there. The nearest town, Siem Reap town⁶, is one of the most booming tourist towns in Cambodia. Poverty is even worse in remote areas, where physical access to markets and social services, such as health and education, are most difficult.

About one million tourists visit Siem Reap annually (Tourism statistics report 2009), and the same amount of entrance tickets to Angkor Park are also being sold every year (see Neth, this volume). The revenues from ticketing can be estimated – depending on the sources used – anywhere between USD 11 and USD 44 million, and the amount returned to APSARA for the management of Angkor is between 5% and 15 % (Starr 2010:153-154; for further figures see Neth, this volume).⁷ However, the pro-poor in-destination tourism revenues in Siem Reap amount to 5%, i.e. they are extremely low.⁸ Thus, apparently, most of the money, which could be used for setting-up an infrastructure that promotes local initiatives and agency, is flowing to other segments of society rather than those who live in poverty. There are many poor people from Siem Reap who have temporary ill-paid jobs in construction work; however, these jobs are based on day labour with no security at all.

As several studies have shown, local agriculture is, for various reasons, not (yet) linked to the tourism economy (JICA 2006c; World Bank 2003).

Yet, one could have expected (or perhaps just hoped) that a larger segment of society in Siem Reap Province should have benefited from tourism economy and its side effects over the past 15 years. But the data produced by a large number of studies carried out by different international and national organizations/agencies rather support the suggestions made earlier about the growing gap between the rich and the poor, and the larger context in which “poverty” is situated.

This chapter is based primarily on data the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (since 2011 GIZ; formerly GTZ) who, together with DED (Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst), substantially participates in the Regional Economic Development (RED) Program – Green Belt-Siem Reap Province made

⁵ Differences exist within the province. The northern districts of Srei Suam, Angkor Chum, Varin, and Svay Len, all located quite a distance from the more prosperous area, such as Siem Reap town or the Angkor temples, appear to be the poorest due to poor soil and little occupational diversity beyond rice cultivation (Gebert et al. 2007:8).

⁶ Siem Reap town, with its approximately 150,000 inhabitants, is not a municipality, but an agglomeration of four communes without any central decision-making body or services (GTZ 2006a:3).

⁷ The handling of the entrance fees into Angkor Park – granting the ticketing concession for Angkor Park without any previous competitive bidding to the hotel/petrol company Sokimex – is a good example to illustrate the relationship between (mis)management and the most powerful agents and their individual interests (see Starr 2010:153-154).

⁸ The pro-poor impact of in-destination tourism revenue in Luang Prabang (WHS in Laos) is estimated at 27% and in Da Nang (Vietnam) at 26% (Mitchell et al. 2007).

accessible to me.⁹ The GIZ (whose technical assistance is performed on behalf of Cambodia's Council of Ministers) carried out several investigations (appraisal missions in 2006 with additional studies carried out in the following years) in Siem Reap Province. These were aimed at gaining insight into the social and economic conditions and the potential locally existing conditions on which development projects could be based in order to improve the chances of the rural poor to participate in the tourism economy and to benefit from economic development in general terms.¹⁰ The increase of the local production and sale of vegetables, fruit and handicrafts (handicraft production in addition to rice production, depending on the season) in Siem Reap constitute the main goals of the projects, but are linked to other aspects, such as supporting the processes of decentralization, the improvement of rural infrastructure and local governance and service provision, the promotion of private enterprise in rural areas, as well as supporting the land reform and land titling. All together, these efforts go far beyond "technical assistance" in the narrow sense of the word (Samuels 2010), but constitute a whole set of activities which also promote a gradual encompassing structural social, political and economic change.

The following paragraphs, therefore, summarize the results of these investigations carried out on behalf of the GTZ in order to illustrate the social and economic conditions of rural Siem Reap Province where the increasingly booming tourism since the listing of Angkor as a UNESCO WHS in 1992 has not reached. These studies show that tourism is indeed a promoter of development. It rapidly established its own structures and promotes those institutions and organizations required to satisfy its own needs in the most direct and cost-efficient way, which, in turn, contributes to tourism's own development. The promotion of social justice, welfare or equality is beyond its target. As the case of Angkor shows, these ideal values are on the agenda

⁹ The program started in 2007, with a planned duration of eight years. In January 2011, the program extended into its second phase, which consists of the implementation of the strategies developed on the basis of surveys about the situation and the economic potential existing in rural areas of the Siem Reap Province. I am especially grateful to Heinrich-Jürgen Schilling, the country director of GIZ in Cambodia, Martin Orth, programme leader of the Regional Economic Development – Green Belt Programme, his deputy Katia Halabi, senior advisor Andreas Lewke, advisor Torsten Münther, and Franz-Volker Müller, team leader of the Land Management/Land Allocation Project for the information they made available and discussing it with me.

¹⁰ The project objective is described thus: "The Cambodian share of value creation resulting from the tourism economy of Siem Reap is increased and the income and regional distribution is improved" (GTZ 2006a:iii). The GIZ/DED is related to a number of other German projects, such as the Rural Development Project (RDP), the Private Sector Promotion (PSP), the Land Management and Administration Project (LMAP), and the Administrative Reform and Decentralisation Programme (ARDP). The GTZ/DED further cooperates with a number of other organizations and projects, such as the Cambodian Agri-Business Development Project (New Zealand), the Agriculture Market Information Project (CIDA, Canadian International Development Agency), the Natural Resource Management and Livelihoods Programme (Danida, Danish International Development Assistance/DFID, Department for International Development), and the project by the Worldbank, "Empowerment for the Poor in Siem Reap"(see GTZ 2006a:12-17).

There are, of course, further fields of local production, such as fish and livestock, which are the concern of other development agencies (here not further considered).

of foreign aid agencies, whether run by states or by NGOs, and their development projects.¹¹ “Development” is certainly also a desired side-effect of the establishment of a WHS and matches the general goals of UNESCO. However:

Currently [...] development is unregulated and unplanned [...]. The density of donor interventions in Siem Reap Province (consisting of 12 districts) is second highest in terms of official development aid after Phnom Penh.

(GTZ 2006a:3)

The report lists the most important development actors at the time (2006) with projects in Siem Reap as follows: ECOSCORN (European Union [EU]): “Economic and social relaunch of Northwest provinces” and “Strengthening democratic and decentralized local governance”; Danida (Danish International Development Assistance)/Department for International Development: “Natural resource management and livelihoods programme”; the Asian Development Bank (ADB): “North-west rural development project”, “Tonle Sap Basin strategy” and “Cambodia business initiative for rural development”; the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID): “The agricultural programme Cambodia”; the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA): “Agriculture market information project”; the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has been active in many fields; EU, Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) and Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst (DED): socio-economic development of urban areas and improvement of local self-government capacity; Agricultural Development Denmark Asia (ADDA): “Integrated women empowerment project”; the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID): “Cambodian agri-business development”; the United States Agency for International Development (USAID): “Micro, small and medium enterprises”; the Cambodian Chamber of Professions and Micro-Enterprise (supported by the Koblenz Chamber of Professions): handicrafts in Siem Reap; the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) was/is engaged in three projects related to food security, water management and vegetable production; and AgriCam (Groupe Accord II), an NGO-run project funded by an international hotel chain. It supports the growing of vegetables and supplying hotels with them. Furthermore, the Private Sector Forum (set up by the government) deals with the improvement of the general business and investment climate and environment.¹²

With this considerable number of agencies it is quite understandable that: “[...] in spite of good intentions and many contacts among donors, no real coordination of these efforts has been achieved” (GTZ 2006a:3). This statement is still valid today

¹¹ For a critical evaluation of the ideological background of international aid in post-conflict societies such as Timor-Leste and Cambodia see Hughes (2009).

¹² Since 2006, several of the projects mentioned have come to an end and a couple of new projects have started. Some of them, such as the EU and World Bank programmes, are of rather short term compared to those of GIZ.

(2011). The coordination of all these numerous private and state projects from all over the world is certainly not easy to achieve, the more so since an efficient local administrative structure and a representative public decision-making body are still lacking. Beside the lack of an efficient administrative structure, one of the problems from which Cambodia still generally suffers is the existence of private actors in official bodies who take personal advantage of the situation¹³ with many public domains still insufficiently regulated or governed.¹⁴

Land as a Crucial Resource

The extent of poverty in rural Cambodia (and the opposite: the rapid development of production and consumption in urban areas since the 1990s) is at least partly the result of its particular history since the late-1960s, mainly the civil war that continued in remote areas until the late-1990s. It is for this reason that the poverty, as well as the figures of in-destination revenues in Siem Reap cannot easily be compared with those of the WHSs in Laos, Luang Prabang, and in Vietnam, Dan Nang. Today's social and economic conditions are still coined by the Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1979) which left the whole country, the society and the economy shattered. The formal cadastral records of land, which covered only a minor part of the country, were destroyed by the Khmer Rouge when all land was collectivised and private ownership abolished. The aftermath of this period has had far-reaching effects with which Cambodia still struggles today. Land, land tenure and land use are a crucial issue, especially in agrarian states. Cambodia has been a predominantly agricultural country up to recently. Land constituted – and still constitutes – a major resource for a large part of the population since their livelihood was (and in rural areas still is) based on paddy rice. Most of the land under cultivation (88% in 2004) is used for rice production; the average size of a farm is around 1.3 ha.

In the context of the exploding rapidly expanding tourism, land has additionally become a new form of resource very much sought after also as an object of speculation.

The right to own land was reinstated in 1989 (Report on appraisal mission 2006:A14) and the land law enacted in 2001 also allowed indigenous communities to register their traditional land with a collective title (see GTZ 2005).¹⁵ The great majority of Cambodians today are legal possessors with rights of ownership but without holding formal titles to their land. The provincial Department of Land

¹³ There are ongoing newspaper reports of such incidents, for example, “illegal checkpoints” set up on Cambodia's major roads by ministry employees (Phann Ana 2011:14).

¹⁴ The governance system is still weak: Nepotism and corruption are problems encountered at all levels of society, and which affect the poor disproportionately (GTZ 2006a:10).

¹⁵ “Lands where indigenous communities have established their residence and where they carry out their traditional agriculture are classified as Indigenous Community Properties” (Land law of Cambodia 2003). This might imply that as soon as a community changes its agricultural pattern, they may lose either their status as an indigenous community or their land rights.

Management, Urban Planning and Construction (DLMUPC) estimated in 2005, that only some 10% to 15% of landholders in rural areas have at least ownership certificates. In the same year, the Ministry of Land Management distributed approximately 412 land titles following systematic registrations covering about 100,000 hectares in about 560 villages throughout Cambodia. The cadastral registration and issuing of land titles for private and state ownership throughout Cambodia will probably be completed in 2020 (GTZ 2006a:7; Adler and Chhim 2006).

Moreover, the likelihood of obtaining a legal land title is increasing with the growth of income, as the World Bank poverty assessment of 2006 showed (GTZ 2006a:A14). This tendency points to another, related problem: Since the 1990s, speculators have extensively occupied or bought land at modest prices and are now selling them again at excessive prices with a high profit or keeping them for profitable (tourism) projects in the future (see below).

The efforts to have Angkor nominated and listed as a WHS by UNESCO brought an additional dynamic into the question of land tenure and the right to acquire a land title. Complying with UNESCO requirements, Cambodia is responsible for the protection of Angkor as a WHS. A Zoning and Environmental Management Plan (ZEMP), which was worked out by an international team of experts, divided the whole area into zones destined for protection and development. The establishing of this zoning was reinforced by the Royal Decree No. 1 in 1994 (see for example Winter 2007; Gaulis 2008:18-19; see also Esposito and Nam 2008:I-57-58). Angkor Park was thereby turned into state property. This implied expropriation left the inhabitants of the many villages in the protected zones with restricted rights (or rather prevented them from acquiring land titles) to own, sell or transmit land to the next generation. The land use restrictions within Zones 1 and 2 of Angkor Park are also responsible for the poverty of the villages located there.¹⁶ The investigating team of the ex-anti-poverty impact assessment noted in their report:

We visited a commune in Angkor Thum District, north of Angkor Park, and it struck us as remarkably poor, relying on unproductive, rain-fed agriculture.¹⁷ It was clear that people here have very little benefit, indeed, from the tourist dollars flowing into the Park.

(Gebert et al. 2007:8; see also Khuon Khun-Neay 2006a:116)

Thus, establishing new or expanding existing settlements has become illegal and the alternatives offered are not satisfying (see Miura's chapter "Sustainable Development in Angkor" in this volume). This question of land tenure and use in Angkor Park is a

¹⁶ Already in 1929, the French colonial power had stipulated that a preserved zone for the monuments had to be established with specific regulations – to the disadvantage of the existing villages there (Luco 2006:121).

¹⁷ Khuon Khun-Neay stated in 2005 that APSARA had started to concentrate on the sustainable development of the villages in Angkor Park (2006a:115).

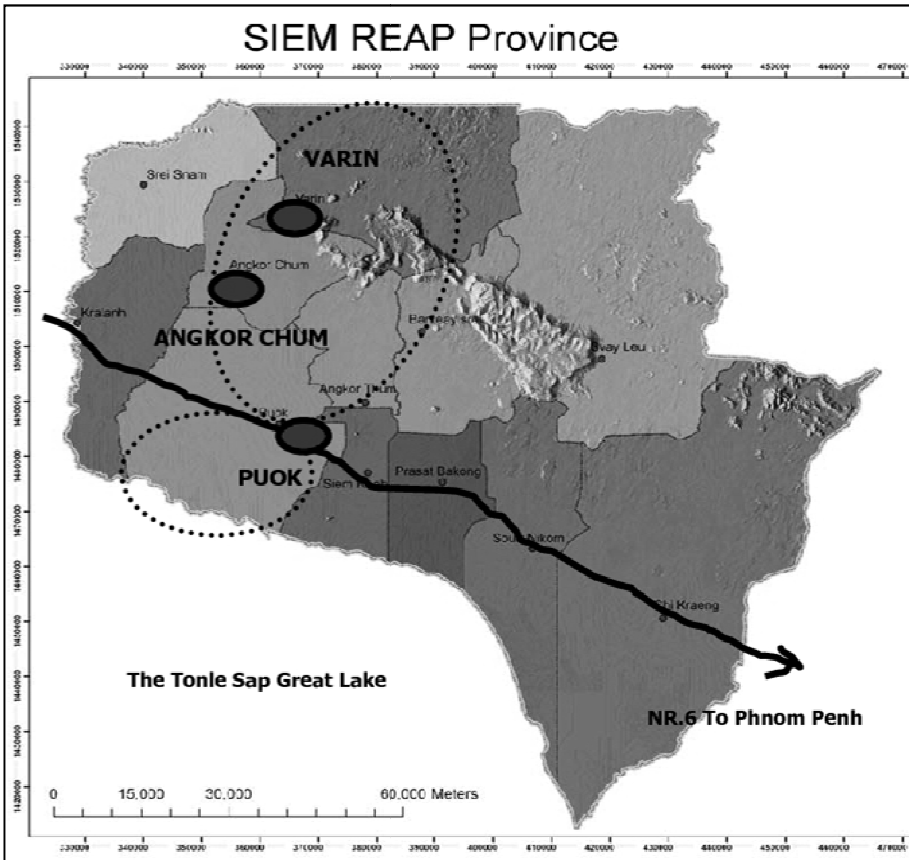


Fig. 2: Map of the location of the three districts of Siem Reap under study (source: Makathy and Klorck 2008:2; see also GTZ Internal Paper 13, 2008).

problem of its own and is a direct outcome of the requirements for a WHS as set up by UNESCO. Illegal settlements outside Angkor Park are, nevertheless, widespread, due to the as yet unsettled land tenure situation and land as a key resource also in the context of the tourism economy. Large tracts of land in the districts of Angkor Thom and Banteay Srei (north of Angkor Wat), especially along the road to Kulen National Park, have been largely illegally occupied, apparently mostly for speculative purposes. As the GTZ report reveals, some farmers in this area indicated that they were caretakers for absentee landlords (GTZ 2006a:A15). Conflicts over land – as can be expected – are quite numerous.

The insecure situation of land tenure with which families in many rural areas have to live impedes motivation and efforts to invest money (as well as receiving credits from banks) and labour into land (with soil often of poor quality) for future agricultural production. It is, therefore, not astonishing that agricultural productivity in Cambodia is the lowest in the region.

Reliable figures about the use of land are difficult to obtain. The available figures differ substantially depending on the institution which established them. In one district (Puok district), the PDLMUPC (Provincial Department of Land Management Urban Planning and Construction) categorized 42% of the total land area as abandoned fields with grass, shrub, flooded forest, and flooded shrub. In Angkor Chum, 52% of the land area was classified in this way. However, the PDAFF (Provincial Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) noted that 98% of land in Puok and 90% of land in Angkor Chum were used for agriculture (Makathy and Klorck 2008:IV).¹⁸

District	Average Prices USD/ha	Average Prices USD/m ²	
Puok	22,395	2.24	Communes in South and on NR6
	5,500	0.55	North of NR6
Angkor Chum	1,687	0.17	
Varin	381	0.04	

Fig. 3: Average land prices per hectare and square metre for land of lower quality in three districts (source: after Makathy and Klorck 2008:36).

The investigation carried out by Makathy and Klorck on behalf of GTZ showed that sales of agricultural land in three districts of Siem Reap (Puok, Angkor Chum and Varin) between 2004 and 2006 display similar developments, namely those of concentration of land: In Pouk, 70 new holders were reported to have bought 4,710 ha of land. Out of these 70 holders, 9 people/groups control 45% of the total agricultural land sold (2,085 ha). In Angkor Chum, 63 holders were reported to control 2,380 ha. Three holders control roughly 30% of the total agricultural land sold;¹⁹ the figures for Varin are similar. The investigators conclude that the land sold/purchased was mainly for speculative purposes, a process that takes place in other parts of Cambodia as well. For Pouk district, this can be easily substantiated since several proposals for development schemes focusing on building a new town/housing, a university and a golf course exist. In fact, the land prices in Puok were 59 times higher than the average price for the same types of land in Varin district and nearly 13 times higher than in Angkor Chum.²⁰ These striking differences in land

¹⁸ The reasons for these divergent assessments are unknown; perhaps the season in which these inventories were taken varied in such a way that the land was flooded or completely dried up and looked “abandoned” in one case, and the fields were flourishing in the other.

¹⁹ The investigators were unable to establish the range or categories of the size of land held by “traditional” land owners in the individual communities since no records existed. Nevertheless, the average land holding by villagers in these districts was estimated to be around 1.5-2ha/household (Makathy and Klorck 2008:14).

²⁰ The prices for land of “poorer quality” have reportedly increased from an average of USD 2,000/ha in 2004 to USD 50,000/ha in 2008, i.e., an increase of 2,500% (Makathy and Klorck 2008:43).

prices can be related to the location of the districts: Puok lies on the national road (NR 69) running from the Thai border to Phnom Penh, near the provincial town and tourist centre of Siem Reap, and is, therefore, easily accessible as the development schemes briefly mentioned illustrate.²¹ Varin is the most remote of these three districts. Additionally, most of those who bought up a lot of land were not of local origin but came from the outside.

There are different reasons and consequences behind the sale of land mostly by small land holders. Makathy and Klorck found three main reasons: Some people sold their land to improve housing conditions and/or purchased commodities such as motorcycles. Many families turned out to be poorer once the money from selling their land had been spent. Additionally, they no longer had agricultural land for their livelihood security and no land to be transmitted to their children. Others had sold their land to free themselves from debts (Makathy and Klorck 2008:31).

Thus, the rural population seems to be trapped between the outcome of the sinister history of their country and the ruthlessness of the rapidly developing capitalistic economy of which tourism is part and which threatens the powerless in several respects. The situation shows that an improvement of their structural situation without external aid would be difficult to achieve.

To sum up this paragraph: Land is a crucial factor in determining the livelihood of the inhabitants of rural areas. The knowledge of how land tenure and land use are practiced in rural areas is essential to successfully implement the development schemes of the GIZ, especially for those which aim at increasing the market share for vegetable and fruit production from small and medium scale producers in Siem Reap.

The hypothesis that tourism economy generates its own resources from which it draws all the goods and services it needs without any further social considerations²² was the starting point for this chapter. Land, accordingly, has to be seen in this context too. This statement also applies to the supply of fruit and vegetables, as well as handicrafts (and other commodities), to the local hotels and restaurants.

Local Consumption – Imported Vegetables and Fruit

What tourists are looking forward to – apart from seeing the temples of Angkor – is accommodation that fits their expectations and their wallets (see Neth this volume), tasty and healthy food and, of course, souvenirs/handicrafts to take back home. The supply of vegetables, fruit and handicrafts that satisfy the expectations of the tourists

²¹ Additionally, Pouk district has, in contrast to the other districts, abundant water resources (Western Baray).

²² There are, of course, exceptions of individual companies or establishments that are aware of their social responsibility and, therefore, try to improve the situation by different means, such as training and their own development programmes.



Fig. 4: The old market in Siem Reap (2011).

from all over the world (the majority, however, coming from Asia, see Winter 2010 and Neth this volume) is therefore indispensable. Investigations into these aspects of tourism economy in Siem Reap have shown that most of the vegetables and fruit (50% and 85%, respectively) consumed in hotels and restaurants are imported from Thailand and Vietnam (GTZ 2006a:2). Moreover, in contrast to local and regional producers, the foreign suppliers can react within a couple of hours to the demands of the hotels and restaurants; vegetables and fruit of the desired quality and in the quantity desired can be ordered and delivered within one day. What makes competition for local and regional producers harder in relation to the suppliers in Vietnam and Thailand is the fact that agricultural subsidies in Vietnam and Thailand allow the aggressive pricing of produce in comparison to Cambodia (GTZ 2006a:5).

A study conducted by CENTDOR (Center for Development Oriented Research in Agriculture and Livelihood Systems) submitted a synthesis report on the survey of the vegetable market to GIZ and ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) in 2008. This report (CENTDOR 2008a) sums up the results of research carried out at 12 markets (three or four of them wholesale markets – Psar Samaki, Phsar Leur, Phsar Puok, and Phsar Dham Daek – selling the products to retailers in other district markets or village groceries); 79 sellers were interviewed and 16 vegetables selected. The vegetables selected were: cauliflower, pechay/caisin, Chinese kale, cabbage, pokchoi, local lettuce, tomato, eggplant, chili, sweet pepper, long bean, spring onion,



Fig. 5: A substantial portion of fruits sold at local markets is imported (2011).

bitter melon, cucumber, green papaya, and lime (GTZ 2010b:9). This study served as a basis for the GIZ Regional Economic Development Program to design the project interventions to support smallholder farmers in Siem Reap province to respond to the potential of the market. However, apart from questions of demand and supply, there are other factors to be considered, such as the skill or training (and the willingness) of the peasants to grow vegetables with which the local farmers are not familiar because they themselves do not consume them or regard them as rather exotic. Other aspects which may favour or impede agricultural production for the tourism market are the availability of affordable additional agricultural land (beyond the land needed for livelihood security, i.e. rice production) at a time when land prices are exploding; the quality of the soil (often poor soils have been depleted by centuries of rice growing, see GTZ 2006a:4); equipment and capital for investing in seedlings, fertilizers and the like; access to the markets (associations or cooperatives of farmers need to be set up); and means of transportation. Further problems consist of a lack of adequate farmers' markets and the competition with importers (GTZ 2006a:5).²³ As the report outlines, there is also the risk that one day an investor will decide to set up a commercial and large-scale vegetable growing operation in or near Siem Reap. Such a company's

²³ "Unofficial tax collection at various levels, specifically along roads" seems to exist which increases transport costs significantly (GTZ 2006a:5).

funding ability and organizational advantage could push small-scale producers out of business (GTZ 2006a:47).

N ^o	Name of market	In volume: kg/year				Total
		Households	Food vendors	Hotels/ Restaurants	Retailers in other markets	
1	Phsar Chas	668,202	203,298	0	0	871,500
2	Phsar Doem Kralanh	454,941	128,160	0	0	583,101
3	Phsar Kroam	380,356	313,404	0	0	693,760
4	Phsar Samaki	107,447	0	39,266	5,674,489	5,821,202
5	Phsar Leur	2,251,861	337,363	659,070	3,000,154	6,248,448
6	Phsar Puok	894,757	274,873	0	3,137,556	4,307,186
7	Phsar Char Chhouk	269,797	28,100	0	0	297,897
8	Phsar Kralanh	409,954	259,651	0	98,190	767,795
9	Phsar Banteay Srey	258,194	29,349	0	0	287,543
10	Phsar Svay Leur	52,129	58,423	0	156,476	267,028
11	Phsar Dam Daek	192,507	46,323	0	568,717	807,547
12	Phsar Srae Noy	131,697	14,573	0	0	146,270
Total		6,071,842	1,693,517	698,336	12,635,582	21,099,277

Note: Total volume traded in the province also includes multiple-transactions.

Fig. 6: Demand structure by markets and consumer groups (in volume: kg/year). Markets N^os. 4, 5 and 6 are wholesale, and the others are retail markets (source: after CENTDOR 2008a:33).

The demand for the 16 vegetables selected for the survey amounts to 21,000 tons per year. Household consumers buy 6,000 tons of this directly, while about 12,000 tons are traded through retailers who sell to other household consumers and food vendors in markets in other districts, part of this amount is also sold to village groceries. Household consumers are the main buyers of the commodities traded in the provincial and district markets. Hotels and restaurants do not belong to the main customers of these markets (CENTDOR 2008a:35); they provide themselves with these commodities through other channels. The only commodities in demand from hotels and restaurants were/are apparently lettuce and cabbage which are bought locally. In fact, the demand from hotels and restaurants is for specific vegetables requested or expected by tourists, such as broccoli, carrots, potatoes, zucchini, and onions, which cannot be grown locally without further adjustments. The hotels and restaurants also import vegetables that are grown locally, such as cucumbers. However, the sort and quality of these locally grown cucumbers do not meet the

expectations of the consumers.²⁴ Conversely, the investigations also showed that only 30% of the vegetables and fruit were sold to hotels and restaurants, while 70% were bought by local customers. Since the tourists only stay for a short period in Siem Reap town, the annual figure of 1.5 million visitors per year would imply only 18,000 additional inhabitants, or an increase of 15%. These insights led to a re-adjustment of the programme objectives, namely to address the need of the local consumers as a first step and not the supply of the tourism market. This re-adaption also served the goal of making the farmers less directly dependent on a fluctuating tourism market (pers. comm. Orth: March 15, 2011).

The survey showed that there are three different main sources from where the vegetables sold at the markets come: local products (Siem Reap), products from other provinces and imported products. These imports came either directly, i.e. bought at markets near the border to Thailand or Vietnam, or indirectly, through wholesalers in Phnom Penh.

In value: USD/year		Overall-Sources					Total
N ^o	Name of commodity	Local producers	% of local products	Other provinces	Other countries	Other sources	
1	Cauliflower	46,218	11	28,778	57,251	277,364	409,612
2	Pechay/ Caisin	71,086	14	75,930	0	351,256	498,272
3	Chinese Kale	58,847	21	40,888	0	179,638	279,373
4	Cabbage	13,858	1	125,724	762,490	780,543	1,682,615
5	Pokchoi	14,291	10	14,206	0	120,328	148,824
6	Local Lettuce	91,214	31	8,486	0	193,433	293,133
7	Tomato	10,510	2	15,656	240,487	171,681	438,334
8	Eggplant	94,452	36	17,944	0	149,262	261,658
9	Chili	14,568	2	27,061	172,768	409,602	623,998
10	Sweet Pepper	7,013	3	18,325	89,280	94,821	209,438
11	Long Bean	81,153	18	22,884	0	345,638	449,675
12	Spring Onion	81,764	37	15,971	0	122,373	220,108
13	Bitter Gourd	11,680	7	77,938	0	83,173	172,791
14	Cucumber	38,125	3	63,319	19,184	990,381	1,111,009
15	Green Papaya	0	0	117,447	7,619	274,378	399,444
16	Lime	50,666	8	20,803	242,633	312,589	626,690
Total		685,445	9	691,360	1,591,712	4,856,460	7,824,976

Fig. 7: Supply structure by commodities (vegetables; in value: USD/year) (source: after GTZ 2010b:9).

²⁴ One of the RED programmes successfully dealt with the improvement of the quality by introducing a new sort of cucumber and providing training for technical know-how for growing them (pers. comm. Andreas Lewke: March 21, 2011).

In total, the present market share of local vegetables is 11.97% in volume. If multi-transactions are considered, (that is, for example, the retailers selling from one market to the next), the amount of local produce is only 8.59% of the total volume traded.

The fruit market survey of CENTDOR (2008b) shows similar results or even a smaller market share of local products, only about 2% of the total value; if multi-transactions are considered, the share only rises to 2.2% of the total value traded (CENTDOR 2008b:5).²⁵

In value: USD/year		Overall-Sources					Total
N ^o	Name of commodity	Local producers	% of local products	Other provinces	Other countries	Other sources	
1	Jackfruit	20,776	11.4	0	130,973	30,748	182,497
2	Dragon Fruit	5,688	1.3	10,331	328,950	100,748	445,717
3	White Banana	4,860	0.5	736,668	0	154,902	896,430
4	Pineapple	15,540	3.3	423,825	15,750	18,902	474,018
5	Guava	2,367	1.1	13,230	9,450	182,430	207,477
6	Ripe Papaya	1,515	1.7	77,385	0	8,944	86,844
7	Ripe Mango	5,540	2.0	71,640	0	202,815	279,995
8	Green Mango	7,142	2.6	17,054	0	254,840	279,036
Total		63,428	2.2	1,350,133	485,123	954,330	2,853,014

Fig. 8: Supply structure by commodities (fruit) (source: after CENTDOR 2008b:21).

The survey also demonstrates that the demand for the fruit selected from the households, food vendors, hotels and restaurants, as well as retailers, is substantially higher than that which is supplied by the markets.

		Overall-Customers				Total
N ^o	Name of commodity	Household	Food vendor	Hotel/ Restaurant	Retailers in other markets	
1	Jackfruit	70,441	80,064	7,605	130,000	288,110
2	Dragon Fruit	142,017	12,097	76,232	277,639	507,985
3	White Banana	289,927	64,660	36,282	679,544	1,088,413
4	Pineapple	81,041	78,245	83,495	411,170	653,951
5	Guava	46,189	73,546	0	170,739	290,474
6	Ripe Papaya	25,577	14,553	12,912	61,679	114,739
7	Ripe Mango	122,274	0	22,663	184,929	329,866
8	Green Mango	119,339	57,241	3,259	162,460	342,299
Total		896,805	380,406	242,448	2,096,178	3,615,837

Fig. 9: Demand structure: Commodity-consumer in value (USD/year) (source: after CENTDOR 2008b:30).

²⁵ The fruit chosen were jackfruit, dragon fruit, white banana, pineapple, guava, ripe papaya, ripe mango, and green mango.

Additionally, marked differences exist between the individual markets with regard to the amount of locally produced fruit sold (note Phsar Chas, Phsar Samaki, Phsar Leu, Phsar Puok, Phsar Kralanh, and Phsar Daem Daek also act as wholesalers).

Markets	Total traded value (USD)	Total value of local fruit (USD)	Market share of local fruit in traded value (%)	Other sources (%)	Main customer groups (%)
Phsar Chas	95,566	0	None	Phsar Leur 83, Thailand 17	Household 53, hotel 20, food vendor 18, retailer 9
Phsar Doem Kralanh	27,841	0	None	Phsar Leur 100	Household 100
Phsar Kroam	221,961	2,052	0.9	Phsar Leur 99, local producer 1	Household 84, food vendor 16
Phsar Samaki	246,710	5,688	2.3	Battambang 52, Phsar Leur 46, local producer 2	Household 84, retailer 27, hotel 16, food vendor 8
Phsar Leur	1,725,431	7,763	0.4	Other provinces (Battambang, Kampong Cham & Preah Vihear) 55, imported sources (Thailand & Vietnam) 22, Phnom Penh 22, local producer 1	Retailer 76, food vendor 10, hotel 7, household 7
Phsar Puok	224,124	0	None	Phsar Leur 44, Thailand 26, Kampong Cham 20, Preah Vihear 10	Retailer 79, household 18, food vendor 3
Phsar Char Chouk	9,452	0	None	Phsar Puok 100	Household 99, food vendor 1
Phsar Kralanh	38,928	0	None	Battambang 74, Thailand 19, Phsar Leur 7	Retailer 61, household 39
Phsar Banteay Srey	8,464	4,504	53.2	Local producer 53, Phsar Leur 47	Household 100
Phsar Svay Leur	21,870	18,855	86.2	Local producer 86, Preah Vihear 8, Phsar Dam Daek 6	Household 90, retailer 7, food vendor 3
Phsar Dam Daek	213,873	22,538	10.5	Kampong Cham 64, Preah Vihear 14, local producer 11, Thailand 11	Retailer 50, household 29, food vendor 21
Phsar Srae Noy	18,790	2,028	10.8	Phsar Leur 89, local producer 11	Household 100

Fig. 10: Summary of main findings of the 12 markets studied (source: after CENTDOR 2008b:8).

The market share of local vegetable and fruit products is indeed very poor and hopefully the development project's plan will significantly increase the local farmers'

share in a sustainable way. The GTZ annual report of 2010 shows that the implementation of the RED capacity development and other support measures, such as improving the access to quality inputs (mainly through training, innovations, etc.) to markets and brokering more transparent and reliable business relations, had the impact that 5,900 households were able to improve their income in 2010 (GTZ 2010e:5-6).

Sold as Local – Handicrafts from Thailand

A similar situation exists in the market share of handicraft sales in Siem Reap. The handicraft sector is considered to be one of the most important non-agricultural income opportunities for rural people (GTZ 2010c:5). As the study on the artisan products for the tourist trade shows (GTZ 2006b), the market share of Cambodian products is dominant in the top quality and price market segment. However, the Cambodian share of the low and medium quality and price segment is small. The majority of these goods are largely imported from other Asian countries, and are often bought directly by retailers from importers (GTZ 2006a:2; see also GTZ 2009).

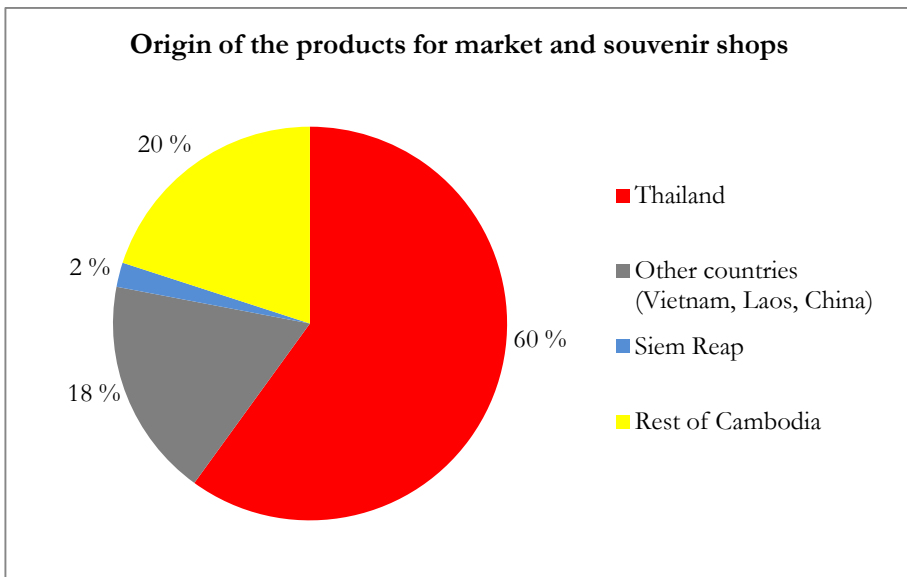


Fig. 11: Origin of the products for market and souvenir shops (source: after GTZ 2006b:14).

In contrast to the vegetable and fruit markets, an organization of artisans, who sell their high-quality products under a shared label “Artisans d’Angkor”, already exists. However, there are many artisans residing in rural areas who have neither access to markets, nor are they linked to any association that could provide or assist them with raw material needed (except for basketry) or with marketing their products. Moreover,



Fig. 12: There are a great number of stalls at Angkor where souvenirs are sold, such as paintings (2008).

the selling of handicrafts to tourists (with different tastes) depends also on refined skill, as well as the knowledge of designs and materials favoured by tourists. As investigations have shown, the types of souvenirs bought by tourists change with their composition according to their country of origin. In the 1990s, the majority of tourists came from Western countries. In 2004, 75% of the foreign tourists came from different Asian countries (Koreans 29% and Japanese 25%); only 20% of the tourists came from Europe (GTZ 2006b:6). Accordingly, as one large retailer pointed out, the type of products on offer had to be adapted; for example, Europeans like rough (raw) silk while Asian tourists do not appreciate it as much (GTZ 2010c:11).

The adaption of artisan products to the demands of buyers implies not only skill and knowledge but also training and the willingness to modify and diversify existing (“traditional”) patterns (GTZ 2006a:6).²⁶

The GTZ commissioned a study in 2006 and again in 2008 to gain more insight into the handicraft market (see GTZ 2006b, 2009). The objective of the 2006 study was to analyse income and job generation through the support of artisan production and value chains for the tourist trade in Siem Reap in the framework of a rural

²⁶ Organizations already exist which offer quality training and support in technical issues, such as Chantier-Écoles de Formation Professionnelle (CEFP), and the Foundation of Khmer Art Sculpture School (FOKASS), a NGO originally founded through a Japanese grant (GTZ 2006a:43).

development program. The market size assessed for handicrafts, fine art and shopping in Siem Reap is more than USD 61 million (foreign tourists only), with an average of USD 3 per tourist per day spent on handicrafts and souvenirs (see also Neth, this volume). The local tourism market is estimated to generate between USD 2 and 4 million a year.

As a statistic established by Lun et al. shows (GTZ 2009), the ranking of quantities of souvenirs sold at market stalls are not identical with the ranking of the quantities of souvenirs bought by tourists. The diagram (below) shows that the demand varies according to whether customers are local buyers or tourists.

Rank	Market stalls most sold products	Tourist most bought products
1	Clothing (including fabric)	Scarves
2	Scarves (silk & cotton)	Clothing – Cambodian
3	Fashion, Jewellery	Posters/Postcards
4	Bags (sedge, cotton)	Stone sculptures – cultural
5	Silverware (bowls)	Wooden sculptures – culture
6	Wooden statues	Jewellery (fashion)
7	Stone statues	Key rings
8	Key rings, trinkets	Paintings – Cambodian culture
9	Bronze statues	Bags
10	Paintings - Cambodia culture	Bronze sculptures – cultural
11	Candles	Hats (straw hats) natural fibre
12	Musical instruments	Musical instruments
13	Incense	Fabric - traditional Cambodian silk
14	Hats made of fabric	Recycled funky products
15	Gems (many not real)	Home items – placemats

Fig. 13: Ranking of the most sold and bought types of products (source: after GTZ 2009:31).

As the 2006 report states, not only tourists are the potential buyers of artisan crafts, but also hotels, which need quite a lot of handicraft products for decoration and other purposes. Additionally, there are, of course, urban Cambodians who buy handicrafts (fashion, decoration, “traditional” goods) (p.5). The investigators who produced the artisan products’ survey, therefore, speak of three segments, the foreign tourists, the hotels, and the Cambodians, which constitute the artisan market. The hotel market segment (predominately high and luxury class hotels) often remains ignored in tourism/handicraft studies. However, according to their report, the hotel market segment, which comprises 20 to 25 hotels with an annual growth of 5 to 10 hotels of this class in Siem Reap, generates a total sum of about USD 3 million per year. The money spent on furniture, ceramics, wood, stone carvings, mats, paintings, silk cushions and bedcovers, fabrics, and other things amounts to about USD 2 million. One million USD is spent on what the authors call the “art of entertaining” (not further specified) and which includes goods made from silver, copper, ceramics, glass, and basket making. They note that all these needs are not satisfied by local supply. The local market segment is estimated between USD 2 and 4 million per year and

comprises the following categories: home decoration, fashion and traditional consumer goods (such as baskets, dishes and utensils).

Type of products	Origin	Origin in Cambodia	Origin in Siem Reap	Import origin
Silk, karma	Less than 10% from Cambodia	Takeo, Prey Veng, Kompong Cham, Phnom Penh, Siem Reap	No	Thailand, Vietnam, Laos 90%
Silver	30% from Cambodia	Phnom Penh, Siem Reap	Less than 1%	Thailand 70%
Copper/bronze	50% from Cambodia	Phnom Penh, Preah Kdam, Kandal, Siem Reap	Less than 5%	Thailand 50%
Stone	80% from Cambodia	Pursat (marble), Siem Reap	30%	Vietnam 20%
Wood	30 - 40% from Cambodia	Phnom Penh, Siem Reap	Less than 1%	Thailand, Vietnam 60%
Ceramic	10% from Cambodia	Siem Reap, Kompong Chnang	Less than 1%	Thailand, Vietnam 90%
Basket making	50% (rattan, palm leaf) from Cambodia	Siem Reap	50%	Thailand, Vietnam (coconut, mixed materials) 50%

Fig. 14: Types and origin of the handicraft products (source: after GTZ 2006b:14).

The origin of the goods most sought after by tourists (tourism market) shows that only a very small percentage come from Siem Reap, or conversely, most of them are imported from Thailand, Vietnam and Laos. In contrast, the high class tourism market (with a share of 28%) is, in the majority of cases, already supplied by Cambodian artisans. These tourists mostly buy the goods in so-called “producer shops”, which are part of organizations such as Artisans d’Angkor and IKTT (Institute for Khmer Traditional Textiles).²⁷ There, tourists visit the production site and buy handicrafts designed, marketed and packaged in the organization’s shop. Fine art shops are

²⁷ The organizations with integrated projects, their donors and number of artisans are listed in the study as follows: Artisans d’Angkor (private joint venture, self-financing; 700 artisans involved); IKTT (NGO; 400 artisans involved); Proleng Khmer (a NGO, supported by Singapore Buddhist Community and Manjuri Secondary School; 20 artisans involved); OSMOSE (NGO, Belgium Aid, FAO, Air France Foundation, Wildlife Conservation Society; 15 artisans involved); Samatoa (a self-financing fair trade cooperative and the French Embassy; 18 artisans involved); House of Peace (an NGO with German donations; 30 artisans involved); Community Learning Centre (a cooperative supported by UNESCO; 30 artisans involved); CEFP (a self-financing state organization, specialized in training); APDO (NGO, Cooperation ILO and Japan, 15 artisans involved); FOKASS (NGO with Japanese donations; 30 artisans



Fig. 15: All kinds of baskets, which often originate from outside Cambodia, are displayed at stalls in the markets of Siem Reap (2011).

another form of shopping site which upper class tourists visit; these are also supplied by individual Cambodian artisans and artists. The largest handicraft business is the Artisans d'Angkor (see fn. 27) which had a turnover of USD 5.8 million in its five outlets. The sale of silk accounted for 55% of sales (Gebert et al. 2007:5).

The authors of the potential and intervention study see the highest potential for Siem Reap artists in the middle class tourism/medium quality/price market of goods (58% share of the artisan market). They estimate that 30% of this market could be supplied by local artisans. The products could be silk and cotton scarves, fabric, *karma* (chequered scarves), clothes, accessories, basket making, natural fibre work, and others. In the lower range segment (14% of the artisan market), competition with (often industrially produced) imports from other countries (70% low quality products) will leave local artisans and artists with much less opportunity.

The selling of the products (both agricultural or handicraft) under a shared brand which shows evidence of (and guarantees) their local origin as a handicraft²⁸ and its

involved); Bantey Srei Rachona II (a self-financing company; 20 artisans involved); and the Khmer Sculpture workshop (a self-financing company; 50 artisans) (GTZ 2006b:16-17, 30).

²⁸ Not all products on the tourist market sold as "handicrafts" are made by hand but are industrially produced; this applies first and foremost to products imported from other countries (pers. comm. Andreas Lewke: March 23, 2011).

conformity to defined quality standards would certainly be an advantage for marketing management. Additionally, a shared label would also meet the tourists' expectations, since they want to take back home "authentic" souvenirs of the region (GTZ 2010d). In fact, most of the tourists have been unaware that the majority of the handicrafts they have bought, even at local markets, were imports from other countries. A shared brand could then become a registered trademark and, in this case, such a brand would certainly benefit from the fame of Angkor as a WHS.

Classification	General name	Obstacles	Commentaries
1	Raw materials	Problems to ensure the supply of raw materials, especially for wood (precious wood), rattan, stone, silk, leather, quality clay, copper.	Raw material unavailability is the most important curb on local production development.
2	Market access	Problems to access to Siem Reap tourism market especially for small-village artisans.	Except for exportation of basket making craft, there are no middlemen in the value chain.
3	Credit access	Problems to access credit in order to modernize their production processes and techniques.	-
4	Design	Problems to interest the tourists in traditional and not varied designs or in classic designs never remodelled.	No information about market needs and expectations.
5	Seasonal activity	Local artisans, especially in Siem Reap, have to develop a seasonal activity. During 6 months of the year, they fully exploit their production capacity. The 6 months of the low season, they try to survive.	To increase the production represents an investment and a risk. Local artisans are not always ready to take this decision considering the economic difficulties they can encounter during low season (especially for Siem Reap artisans focused on tourism and hotel market).

Fig. 16: Difficulties and obstacles identified that impede production by local artisans (source: after GTZ 2006b:26).

The subsequent studies carried out on behalf of the GIZ showed that natural fibre products especially (mostly made by women) may have a high development potential for households in rural areas, since most of the raw material is easily available or can be collected by the artisans themselves. A corresponding program has already started. The materials used (and to be further promoted through GIZ development strategies) are *lpeak* (a small rattan species), *rombeck* (pandanus), *pha abv* shrub, water hyacinth, sugar palm, and bamboo (see Lun et al. 2009). Some of these basket works have a long history and are said to date back to the times of Angkor; it is the most important handicraft industry in Siem Reap province. In 2009, there were about 4,000 active craftswomen (95% of these artisans are women) in the province.

All these basket-work products are not only destined for the tourist market. Since many of them are utility handicrafts (such as mats or baskets), they may also be sold on the domestic and international markets (GTZ 2010c:4).²⁹

The authors name a couple of obstacles which would need to be overcome in order to increase the production and sale of local handicrafts produced for the three market segments (see Fig. 11), and it is clear that the solution to these problems cannot be solved by the artisans themselves but needs external assistance – and aid. Therefore, GTZ/GIZ has developed a multi-level support programme that aims at upgrading the handicraft sector in Siem Reap Province (GTZ 2010f).

Conclusion

From the last example given, the survey of the handicraft/artisan market, we can conclude that it was certainly the association of trained and skilled artisans who produce high-quality handicrafts and promote this under a shared label (such as “Artisan d’Angkor”) that has given a number of individual artisans a real chance. It is certainly for this collaborative effort (dating back to a French initiative, Chantiers-Écoles de Formation Professionnelle³⁰) that they have gained a substantial share of the high-price segment of tourism. This is a convincing and successful example of the opportunity artisans – and perhaps also if applied to the context of the individual farmers who produce vegetables and fruit for the tourism market – may also have for middle-price tourism. The demand of the tourists is one thing, the quality in relation to the costs another. The organizational dimension – the establishing of associations or cooperations – as well as the way in which marketing is carried out, the setting up of a brand and appropriate shops (similar to the so-called “producer shops”) or farmers’ markets, are certainly important factors that promote the participation of local people in the tourism economy. However, it goes without saying, that the training of skills and techniques, as well as being informed about the tourists’ demand and tastes, are a precondition for a successful production, be it handicrafts or produce. None of this works without the capital needed for setting up training institutions, hiring qualified teachers, allocating scholarships, purchasing raw materials, shops or

²⁹ In the 1990s, Thai traders recognized the existing *lpeak* industry and initiated a long-lasting boom. Since then most *lpeak* products have been traded mainly to Thailand. This traditional income source is currently threatened by inefficient production and increasing material scarcity. GIZ has, therefore, worked out a support strategy in order to promote this handicraft and the marketing of the products (Upgrading the *lpeak* value chain 2010:5).

³⁰ “Chantiers-Écoles de Formation Professionnelle (CEFP) is a Cambodian public establishment founded in 1992 under the common initiative of the Ministry of Education and the French League of Teaching and Permanent Education to teach stone- and woodcarving, lacquerware, furniture construction and silk-weaving. The activities of Chantiers-Écoles focus on vocational teaching which allows young, least-favoured Cambodians to acquire professional skills so that they can achieve social and economic recognition in Cambodia. Most of the apprentices are from poor rural families and have had no primary education”, see <http://www.culturalprofiles.net/cambodia/Units/312.html> , accessed February 24, 2011.

special markets, advertising and promoting, and the like. As the investigations about the existing structure in agricultural and artisan production have shown, several of the development projects (projects planned as well as already started) by foreign development agencies, such as the GIZ, and in cooperation with the Cambodian institutions, may generate a hopefully stable and strong connecting link between a broader segment of the local population and the tourism economy.

List of Speakers and Interview Partners (chapter by Aditya Eggert)

- Representative of the General Department of Administration and Finance, MCFA, Phnom Penh (pers. comm. August 18, 2009).
- Representative of the Department of Culture and Fine Arts, Siem Reap (pers. comm. June 11, 2010).
- Representative of the Department of Performing Arts, MCFA, Phnom Penh (speaker during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”, July 29, 2010).
- Representative of the Royal University of Fine Arts, Phnom Penh (speaker during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”, July 28, 2010).
- Representative of independent art associations, Phnom Penh (pers. comm. May 25, 2009; July 2, 2010; August 5, 2010).
- Secretary of State, MCFA, Phnom Penh (speaker during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”, July 28, 2010; July 29, 2010).
- Secretary of State, MCFA, Phnom Penh (pers. comm., July 23, 2010).
- Secretary of State, Council of Ministers, Phnom Penh (speaker during the “National Amateur Play Writing and Directing Workshop”, July 28, 2010).

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- UNESCO-ICC: p. 18.

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Angkor, the temple and palace complex of the ancient Khmer capital in Cambodia is one of the world's most famous monuments. Hundreds of thousands of tourists from all over the globe visit Angkor Park, one of the finest UNESCO World Heritage Sites, every year. Since its UNESCO listing in 1992, the Angkor region has experienced an overwhelming mushrooming of hotels and restaurants; the infrastructure has been hardly able to cope with the rapid growth of mass tourism and its needs. This applies to the access and use of monument sites as well. The authors of this book critically describe and analyse the heritage nomination processes in Cambodia, especially in the case of Angkor and the temple of Preah Vihear on the Cambodian/Thai border. They examine the implications the UNESCO listings have had with regard to the management of Angkor Park and its inhabitants on the one hand, and to the Cambodian/Thai relationships on the other. Furthermore, they address issues of development through tourism that UNESCO has recognised as a welcome side-effect of heritage listings. They raise the question whether development through tourism deepens already existing inequalities rather than contributing to the promotion of the poor.



ISBN: 978-3-86395-032-3
ISSN: 2190-8672

Universitätsverlag Göttingen