

Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission

From Decay to Recovery

Michael Falser *Editor*



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Michael Falser

Editor

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From Decay to Recovery

Proceedings of the 2nd International Workshop
on Cultural Heritage and the Temples of Angkor
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Cover illustration: A press photograph depicting Maréchal Lyautey (in white uniform) in his role as the official representative of the 1931 International Colonial Exhibition in Paris, guiding his guests, the future George VI of England and his wife, through the pavilion structures of the event. In the background the entry gate to the ephemeral, 1:1-scaled replica of the 12th-century Cambodian temple of Angkor Wat. Parisienne de Photographie, © Roger-Viollet

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Preface

The research field known as Global Art History is a new one that is being defined by a number of academic institutions worldwide in response to the challenge posed by global connectivity to existing disciplines. In Germany, the *Heidelberg Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context—The Dynamics of Transculturality”* has instituted the first and only Chair in the country for this area of study.¹ Built into the *Karl Jaspers Centre for Advanced Transcultural Studies* (renamed *Heidelberg Centre of Transcultural Studies* in 2014) as the institutional home of the Cluster “Asia and Europe,” the *Chair of Global Art History* under Professor Monica Juneja seeks to question the taxonomies and values that have been built into the discipline of art history since its inception and have been thereafter taken as universal. This includes a deconstruction of the disciplinary models within art history that have marginalized experiences and practices of entanglement. With a focus on the role of disciplines like archaeology, architectural conservation/preservation, and art history within larger political ideologies, this book seeks to contribute to the Chair’s main interest of investigating formation processes of art and visual practices in transcultural settings.

This book is particularly associated with one of Heidelberg Cluster’s four major research areas: “Historicities and Heritage,” which engages in a dialogue between modern disciplines like visual and media, anthropology, archaeology, and global art history. It discusses how texts, languages, spaces, objects—in this book, architecture—and concepts—in our context the notion of cultural heritage as part of culturo-political action programs—have been reconfigured over time to create entangled histories and memories as well as artefacts of hybrid materiality.

This book is part of my particular (Habilitation) project within this research area entitled *Heritage as a Transcultural Concept—Angkor Wat from an Object of*

¹ For more information about Heidelberg Chair of Global Art History, accessed February 4, 2013. <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/cluster-professorships/global-art-history.html>.

*Colonial Archaeology to a Contemporary Global Icon.*² The project investigates the modern concept of cultural heritage by charting its colonial, postcolonial, nationalist, and global trajectories. It does so through a case study of the twelfth-century temple of Angkor Wat in Cambodia and explores how different phases of its history unfolded within the transcultural interstices of European and Asian projects and conceptual definitions: from its “discovery in the jungle” by French colonial archaeology in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to its canonization as a symbol of national identity during the struggle for independence and decolonization, under the Vietnamese occupation and the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime, and finally as a global icon of contemporary heritage schemes after Cambodia’s national and cultural rebirth under UN assistance after 1990 until today. A study of material traces and architectural forms as well as of literary and visual representations of the structure are undertaken with a view to analyzing the processes of transfer and translation as well as the more recent proliferation of hybrid art forms in the wake of Angkor Wat’s transformation into a media icon. In general terms, the project deals with the modern processes of cultural appropriation, exclusion, and ascription that marked the transcultural relationships surrounding the Angkor Wat complex. By questioning the supposedly “universal” concept of “cultural heritage,” the project investigates how different regimes between Europe and Asia (France and Cambodia) made one and the same cultural heritage object—in this case the temple of Angkor Wat—an integral part of their different “cultural visions and civilizing missions.” Raising this question to a higher, comparative level through a wide range of case studies was the basic point of departure for this book, which was initiated at the *2nd International Workshop “Rebirthing” Angkor? Heritage between Decadence, Decay, Revival, and the Mission to Civilize* and took place at the Heidelberg Chair of Global Art History in May 2011.³ Not all of the original papers presented at conference have been included in this book and some additional authors were asked to supplement the final result.

² See the homepage of the project “Heritage as a Global Concept,” accessed February 4, 2013, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/d-historicities-heritage/d12.html>. The overall results of this project will be published in my forthcoming monography *Angkor Wat. From Jungle Find to Global Icon. A Transcultural History of Heritage* (De Gruyter: Berlin).

³ See the original workshop, accessed March 30, 2013, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/d-historicities-heritage/d12/angkor-workshops/2011.html>. These conference proceedings are the second in a series. The first proceedings were published, together with Monica Juneja, in 2013 as “*Archaeologizing” Heritage? Transcultural Entanglements between Local Social Practices and Global Virtual Realities*. They analyzed (a) how built cultural heritage (Angkor was again the central point of investigation) is visualized and negotiated in different media from photography to computational sciences; (b) the kinds of tensions these (often idealized) “representations” hold for the site and its stakeholders; and (c) how new approaches in theoretical research and practical on-site conservation react to these problems. See the original 2010 workshop, accessed March 30, 2013, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/d-historicities-heritage/d12/angkor-workshops/2010.html>, and the webpage of the published workshop proceedings: <http://www.springer.com/social+sciences/book/978-3-642-35869-2>.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to the making of this book—above all, the authors themselves. I would also like to thank the German Research Foundation (DFG) for providing the funding for this publication, Prof. Monica Juneja for her invaluable theoretical input and personal encouragement, as well as the Gerda Henkel Foundation and Prof. Andreas Beyer, the director of the *Centre Allemand d’Histoire de l’Art* in Paris (2009–2014), for the financial and infrastructural support needed to finalize this publication. In addition, sincere thanks are due to Andrea Hacker of the editorial office at the Heidelberg Cluster for her friendly and efficient management of the project from the start, to Angela Roberts for her careful and competent copyediting, to Birgit Muench of Springer, and to Petronela Soltesz and Jennifer Pochodzalla for their technical assistance. Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the two anonymous reviewers of the manuscript as well as to the series editors for their many constructive suggestions.

Heidelberg
January 2015

Michael Falser

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Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission: Methodological Considerations

Michael Falser

The era of decadence [...] ended with the arrival of the French in Indochina. Civilization does not exist anymore in this privileged country where it once strongly flourished, but the soil preserved its incomparable fertility. Since we put our flag into this region, it seems that [this civilization] begins to live and breathe again. [...] is it not up to us to revive the marvelous past of this people, to reconstitute the admirable oeuvres which their genius has created; in a word: to enrich the history of art and the annals of humanity with a new page?!

Louis Delaporte in this 1880 publication Voyage au Cambodge

Angkor must be saved! This challenge, in which UNESCO proposes to stand beside the people of Cambodia, extends far beyond a mere restoration of relics of the past. For the saving of Angkor will allow an entire people to regain its pride, its will to live and a renewed vigor with which to rebuilt its country. I therefore appeal to the international community as a whole to put the stamp of universal solidarity on the rebirth of Angkor.

UNESCO's director general, Federico Mayor's Appeal for the protection, preservation, restoration and presentation of the site of Angkor, launched on November 30, 1991 in front of the Angkor Wat temple

Methodological Preliminaries and Structure of the Book

The self-legitimation of political regimes in modern history was and often still is attempted through a twofold strategy: (a) a normative assessment of the ruled country's past and present, and (b) the enactment of a concrete committed action

¹ All English translations in this introduction are mine.

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programme to guide the nation towards a better future. The interest in this dynamic of a normative (*intro-*)*vision* on the one hand, and—as a practical consequence—of an applied, action-oriented *mission* on the other, forms the basis of this volume’s thematic inquiry. Although this critical assessment of the past and present may encompass a wide variety of aspects (social, financial, moral, intellectual, etc.), our focus here is on the specific field of materialized culture, and in particular on the complex of architectural manifestations that crystallizes over time through a multiform process into a (supposedly) “representative,” (i.e. trans-generational and collective) cultural canon of the nation known as *cultural heritage*.

The concept of cultural heritage as it is used here (in French: *patrimoine culturel*; in German: *Kulturerbe*) relates to material structures, institutional complexes and practices, and at the same time carries a powerful emotional charge and a value structure emanating from the idea of belonging and of shared cultural meanings, especially in the context of a young nation. Its origins go back to the European Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, which was followed by secularizing and nation-building processes. What is essential, however, in the context of this book, is that this concept was carried by concrete agency as a form of colonial modernity to the non-European world, where it worked (often with destructive side-effects within the local context) to create new identities for alien cultural objects, ranging from single sculptures to architectural ensembles such as whole temple sites. Additionally, it situated these monuments and sites within a distinct discourse that was indebted to the modern, Western disciplines of art and architectural history, archaeology, ethnography and anthropology, architectural restoration, conservation, and preservation—disciplines which together underpin the different contributions of this volume.

In order to (a) analyse transfer, translation, exchange, and hybrid innovation processes that are a product of transcultural, often asymmetrical, flows between metropolitan centres in Europe and colonial sites (in our case in Asia and Africa), and to (b) conceptualize this dynamic of normative (*intro-*)*vision* and action-based mission in the colonial, but also post-colonial and global arena, the nature of cultural heritage provides a starting point from which to explain our methodological approach. If we differentiate culture into social, mental, and material aspects, the *concept of cultural heritage* participates and is strongly intertwined in all three levels. At the social level it encompasses all the different social practices of (regional to global) identity construction and institution building. The identification, (de-)evaluation, (de-)selection, protection (or negligence, destruction), (re-)presentation and administration of cultural heritage was, and is still today, often regulated by institutionalized authorities and scholarship (e.g. governmental or international conservation agencies, museums, research institutes, NGOs). Driven by concrete culturo-political action programmes, the acting regimes stage themselves as the legal owners of these monuments and sites. As a mental construct, culture comprises values—and the quality label of (national to universal) cultural heritage is a normative projection in the name of authenticity, purity,

and originality that itself dominates preservation and conservation and forms the real physical interventions on the declared heritage sites. Finally, material culture comprises all kinds of artifacts, including architecture, and declared historic monuments (French: *monuments historiques*, German: *Baudenkmale*), which represent a normative selection from the built environment that must be protected by institutionalized authorities. This creates imposed—and therefore in situ concerns “local” stakeholders—practices and techniques of restoration, preservation, and conservation, resulting in unavoidable effects that include ideological exploitation and touristic commodification (in general Lowenthal 1985, Lowenthal 1996).

Making these three entangled levels of cultural heritage operational in the colonial, post-colonial, and global arena, and applying them to the above-mentioned dynamic of normative (intro-)visions and the culturo-political action programmes of ruling regimes, introduces the other core term of our inquiry: *civilizing mission*. The very term “civilizing mission” is directly connected with modern European expansionism towards non-European territories. Certainly, earlier Occidental reflections on culture and civilization—from Greek, Roman, Biblical, and Augustinian roots through the Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation—may have initiated some of these civilizing ideas (Fisch 1992); however, the idea that one could bring one’s own imagined superior culture to the world spread during the so-called *Sattelzeit* (after Reinhard Koselleck) between the 1760s and 1830s, which formed a “threshold of global history” (Bayly 1998) when the modern concept of cultural heritage not only matured, but also the civilizing visions and missions entered “the age of practical implementation” (Osterhammel 2006, 13). A bit later, in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century era of imperialism, these were already fully established as “an ever-shifting set of ideas and practices that was now used to justify and legitimize the establishment and continuation of overseas colonies, both to subject peoples and to citizens or subjects in the homeland” (Watt 2011, 1). According to Reinhard Koselleck, colonialism triggered “asymmetrical counter concepts” in “pairs of concepts that are characterized by their claim to cover the whole humanity [or] binary concepts with claims to universality” (Koselleck 2004, 156 and 157). Indeed, his quoted conceptual pairs “Hellene-Barbarian” and “Christian-Heathen” correspond to the “civilized-uncivilized” divide and to the colonizer’s self-identification as the torchbearer of civilization acting in the name of humanity for those who are “ignorant of their own past (or having none).” Therefore, civilizing missions—and the component “mission” is associated with a missionary-like religious project of bringing Christian faith to the infidels (cf. White and Daughton 2012)—drew upon a reservoir of ideological topoi or cultural visions that were formulated by the colonizer towards a motivated, committed action. The most prominent of these was certainly the stereotype of the colonized culture that was marked by political crises or cultural decadence and lacked the competence to conserve its heritage from falling into decay (see, for example, our introductory quotes). Adding economic, political, military, and communication to the list of

imperialist styles as “disciplinary regimes” (after Foucault), our enquiry relates to what has been defined as “cultural or scientific imperialism” in the Saidian sense (Said 1993). In this context, the agents from the colonizing centre not only imposed the norms and categories that defined what should be declared cultural heritage at the colonial periphery, but also provided the scientific expertise and leadership for the concrete data collection of research and the concrete physical intervention on-site (Galtung 1978, 55–61).

In a strategy that has been seen as a specifically modern “salvage paradigm, reflecting a desire to rescue something ‘authentic’ out of the destructive historical changes” (Clifford 1989, 73), architecture played a crucial role in the formation and justification of a civilizing mandate in which the colonial power staged itself as the symbolic custodian, legitimate inheritor, legal owner, institutionalized preserver, and specialized conservator-restorer of the “to-be-salvaged pasts” of the colonized. These salvaged pasts were then compressed in time and space into the colonial strait jacket of what we call a *cultural heritage paradigm*. This colonial strategy most often followed (a) similar (but not identical!) institutionalized practices of collective identity-production and propagandistic exploitation; (b) the use of aesthetic categories to define the physical body of protected monuments; and (c) a comparable set of norms for concrete intervention, like those used in the colonizer’s homeland. Once these monuments were declared a “cultural heritage” and within the remit of a colonial empire’s overseas possessions, their archaeological rediscovery, preservation, restoration, or full-scale reconstruction in situ—often occurring in parallel to their partial “re-presentation” in typically Western museum spaces and exhibition—became the new owner’s self-imposed task. This duty was to be fulfilled by “para-religious” devotion and supposedly altruistic care, financial and human sacrifices, and a purely scientific interest that would ultimately benefit the colonized and all of civilized universal humanity. As Edward Said has noted in a new preface to his groundbreaking 1978 publication *Orientalism*, the issue of violence, directly applied in order to enforce this mission, is rarely addressed or mentioned:

Every single empire, in its official discourse, has said that it is not like all the others, that its circumstances are special, that it has a mission to enlighten, civilise, bring order and democracy, and that it uses force only as a last resort. And, sadder still, there always is a chorus of willing intellectuals to say calming words about benign or altruistic empires. (Said 2003, xvi)

Edward Said in the 2003 preface to *Orientalism* (1978)

A crucial point of this edited volume, however, is that our enquiry is not embedded in a one-dimensional conceptualization of the imperialist one-way transfer of a Western (social, mental, and material) power structure to the non-West, as implied by Said’s Occident–Orient divide (above many other critiques cf. Al-Azm 1981; Clifford 1988; Turner 1994; Macfie 2000). Almost thirty years later, with the end of the world’s decolonizing phase (for the French case, cf. Labouret 1962) and with the new globalized dynamics of an exponentially

accelerated migration and exchange of information, ideas, values and concepts, people, products and objects, the discipline of art history, as much as the concept of cultural heritage, has become an issue that is more global than ever. As a result, the methodologies of research used in both fields need constant revision. Different approaches of a more pluralistic nature have developed, including the foci on the colonial encounters of centre/metropolis and periphery as “contact zones” (Pratt 1992, 6); the “shared,” “connected,” or “entangled histories” (e.g. for the German, post-colonial research, see Conrad and Randeira 2002); or the French, transnational approach of an “histoire croisée” (Werner and Zimmermann 2004); moreover, as regards the cultural heritage business itself, a post-national, somehow essentializing re-examination of indigenous voices can be heard (above others Smith 2006), whereas ever larger text editions summarize global (and indeed homogenized) varieties of heritage discourses and practices (Jokilehto 1999; Hoffman 2006; Fairclough 2008; Stubbs and Makas 2011).

Since 2008 the *Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context”* at Heidelberg University (see preface) has introduced the new research paradigm of *transculturality*, and within the new discipline of “global art history” (Juneja 2012a, b; cf. Juneja and Pernau 2009) an innovative approach to the phenomenon of cultural heritage has been developed (Falser and Juneja 2013a). Between 2009 and 2013, the project *Heritage as a Transcultural Concept—Angkor Wat from an Object of Colonial Archaeology to a Contemporary Global Icon*, was conceived and steered by the editor of this volume, investigated the formation of the modern concept of cultural heritage by charting its colonial, post-colonial/nationalist, and global trajectories through the case study of the Cambodian twelfth-century temple of Angkor Wat, the history of which unfolded within the transcultural interstices of European and Asian projects and conceptual definitions (Falser 2011, 2015; more references see epilogue) (Figs. 1 and 2).

Reacting to the Heidelberg Cluster’s focus on the “dynamics of transculturality,” and in relation to the above-mentioned introductory words about the role played by cultural heritage in civilizing projects, we would like to point out four general observations or working hypotheses, that will be addressed in this volume.

First, the colonial-imperialist project is here conceptualized as a more complex, highly entangled, and reciprocal relationship. Not only did (a) the “West re-invent a ‘Non-Western,’” in our case mostly Asian, antiquity as heritage, but also (b) the image of “the Orient” has served as a mirror through which “the Occident” (different Occidents of various countries) has continuously tested its civilizing visions of the Other. It (re-)formulated, or (re-)stabilized, the civilizational status of its Own (cf. Codell and Macleod 1998 for the context of Great Britain) so that the cultural heritage canon inside the homeland was now seen in relation to the cultural treasures of the colonies (compare with the iconography of the 1931 postcard on Fig. 1).

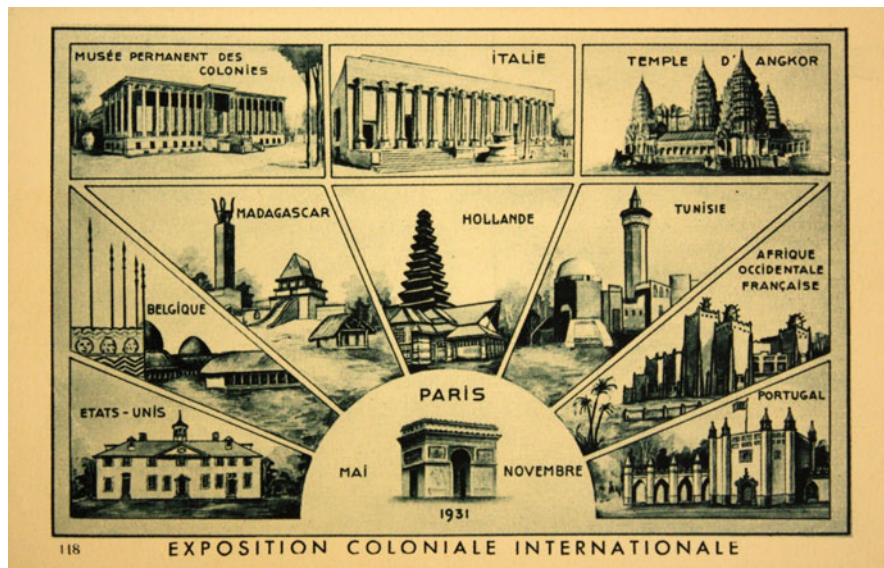


Fig. 1 A postcard for the 1931 *International Colonial Exhibition* in Paris, depicting—through icons of cultural heritage—the radiating civilizing missions of France and the other European and Western colonial powers, including the United States, Belgium, Holland, Italy, and Portugal. From the metropolitan centre of Paris (represented in the lower centre of the postcard by the *Arc de Triomphe*), colonial France claims her custodianship over the cultural heritage of her colonies from Madagascar and Tunisia to French West Africa and Indochina (in the *upper right-hand* section with the temple of Angkor Wat). All these icons of cultural heritage were temporarily “re-presented” in 1:1 life-sized replicas within the 1931 exhibition grounds in the Parisian *Parc de Vincennes*. The “temple d’Angkor [Wat]” was arguably the largest ever reconstitution of an Asian temple structure on the European continent (Personal archive Michael Falser)

Second, the receiving “to-be-colonized/to-be-civilized” culture is not conceived of here as a passive, one-to-one recipient of the various facets of the civilizing projects. On the contrary, not only had (a) the colonizer to modify his initial civilizing visions according to the new context of implementation (which sometimes never or only partially took place in situ, despite the colonizer’s affirmative rhetoric back home); but (b) the target culture could also react with its own view of its architectural manifestations or with a different conception of cultural heritage constituted by differing social carriers (such as local stakeholders), mental constellations (for example diverging, often religion-based value systems), and material configurations (e.g. another use, or non-use, of the selected monuments and sites). This process often resulted in unforeseen and conflict-laden, but also innovative, strategies that ranged from refusal to partial modification, absorption, and incorporation.



Fig. 2 An October 2010 photograph of the central hall of the former *Musée des colonies* in Paris (see its exterior on the postcard of Fig. 1 in the upper left-hand corner), built for the 1931 International Colonial Exhibition. In the central background, the allegorical mural of *France and the five continents* (painted by Henri Pierre Duclos de la Haille) depicts mother France's benevolent gesture indicating the bringing of civilization to the rest of the world. In the middle and foreground, French-African, so-called *sans-papiers*, are shown demonstrating for their right to stay in France without legal residence authorization. Their slogan "On bosse ici! On vit ici! On reste ici!" [We work here! We live here! We stay here!] can be seen on the posters located—ironically—to the *upper left* and *right-hand* of the 1931 allegorical painting (Michael Falser 2010)

Third, our investigation will not limit itself to the colonial era. As discussed in a second set of contributions in this volume treating the decolonizing phase in South, Southeast, and East Asia, newly emerging post-colonial nation-states often redefined or re-invented their "own" cultural heritage canon. This happened to a lesser degree through strategies of complete refusal of the colonial-period heritage configurations (despite often being propagated as such). In reality, this redefinition comprised reactions that ranged from an appropriation and hybridization, to exaggeration and even essentialization of Western norms, taxonomies, and topoi; these included cultural purity, originality, and authenticity (the core categories in art history and for cultural heritage), which had been formerly (and paradoxically) attributed by the ex-colonizers.

Fourth, in the last set of contributions to this volume, the hypothesis that formerly colonial and subsequently post-colonial visions towards and applied projects for the enhancement of cultural heritage were merged into a hybrid conglomeration within a universalist trend of cultural heritage politics will be explored. We will argue that currently completely globalized *national(ist)* elites gather in networks of *supra-national* institutions, such as UNESCO, ICOMOS etc., to care for what are *de facto* still very *regional* heritage formations. At the same time, all

participants in this game continue to follow a *neo-colonial* salvage paradigm that masquerades as *universal*, in which cultural heritage now supposedly belongs to all humanity according to imposed and therefore leveling civilizational standards. However the question remains: who dictates these and does the subaltern have a voice? (after Spivak 1988, compare with our second introductory quotation). Although many critical voices today discuss these dangerous developments, only a few have taken into consideration the complex, transcultural trajectories of the last two hundred years. During this period the modern Western concept of cultural heritage has travelled from Europe to Non-Europe and towards a now global arena, constantly accumulating pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial, national, international, *and* universalist elements from various civilizing visions which resulted in highly hybrid and complex heritage formations.

In order to sensitize our reader to the essential task of unpacking these multi-layered constructs known as “cultural heritage” from one individual case to the next, and in order to work towards a better reading of their contested nature, this volume will take a multi-centred and multi-sited—indeed, a transcultural position—vis-à-vis its various contributions. Consequently, it will touch upon colonial, post-colonial, and globalized contexts across different (subsequent or simultaneous) regimes, borders, and periods, which will be organized along the following thematic lines:

- (a) European colonial powers (sometime referencing each other) and their expansive civilizing ambitions inside and outside of Europe, covering studies on the Habsburg Empire, the German Empire and Africa, British India, French Indochina, and the Dutch East Indies.
- (b) Different post-colonial Asian nations that escaped colonization, from India, Indonesia, and Cambodia, to China.
- (c) The civilizing discourses perpetuated in the name of humanity and currently at work in the post-national and globalized heritage community, with a focus on Cambodia.

From the Nile in 1800 to Paris in 2000+: A Historical View of Civilizing Missions

Although a detailed historical differentiation of the various civilizing styles of prominent colonizing powers in Europe is not, as such, directly at the centre of this volume—since it was not written by researchers in the specific research area of intellectual history *per se*, but predominantly by experts in the history of art and architecture, and in the preservation of historic monuments and sites—one question does need to be answered: where and when do we anchor the beginning and end points of the complex interplay of civilizing missions and cultural heritage policies?

In the British colonial context, expressions such as “improvement, betterment, moral and material progress” were used initially (Mann 2004, 4), and the “self-civilizing initiatives” (Watt 2011, 13) of the local elites were fostered within a

wider concept of “indirect rule,” that is reliance on traditional rulers. This means that the British connotation of a “civilizing mission”—an important difference to the French connotation!—focused in the first phase on political, administrative, institutional, and economic facets. However, the Victorian era (1837–1901) in general, and the traumatizing experience of the Indian Mutiny of 1857 in particular, brought about a considerable change in policy. Although the British in India had already founded the *Archaeological Survey of India* in 1861 (building on the *Asiatic Society of British Archaeologists* from 1784), it was only around 1900 that a direct civilizing effort in combination with the declared care of built cultural heritage was established by India’s Viceroy Lord Curzon, and later by John Marshall’s 1923 *Conservation Manual* (Swenson and Mandler 2013; compare Juneja 2001; Sengupta 2013). Within the Dutch colonial project in the Indonesian archipelago (the Dutch East Indies), the term “cultuurstelsel” referred to a system of economic exploitation rather than to a civilizing project, and the term “Ethische Politiek” (ethical policy) hinted at a more social project (Gouda 1995; cf. Locher-Scholten 1981; Bloembergen and Raben 2009). Finally, the *Netherlands Indies’ Archaeological Service* was set up in 1913 to take over certain elements from the *Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences* of 1778 (Bloembergen and Eickhoff 2013). At the other end of the spectrum, the short German colonial endeavour was constructed around the concept of “Kulturarbeit, kulturelle Hebung” (Bade 1982), which had little to do with any cultural heritage, or with anything that was acknowledged as such, at least in the German Empire’s colonies in Africa.

The very term “civilizing mission” (in German “Zivilisierungsmission”) was, however, directly borrowed from the French term *mission civilisatrice*, which reached its apogee during France’s Third Republic (1871–1940), and is generally counted as the most concentrated and precise application of this concept in European colonial history. More important in this context is the fact that this French iteration of the civilizing mission had the closest connection to applied cultural heritage politics of all European colonial endeavours. “Civilization” was, roughly speaking, introduced as a normative term during the European eighteenth century: in the singular and with a capital C, meaning a status or a process (compare Elias 1976), and not in the plural, which was used for later sociological research into different “civilizations” with their individual historical processes. As a distinctive term, it “connoted the triumph and development of reason” and was intended to “capture the essence of French achievements compared to the uncivilized world of savages, slaves, and barbarians” (Conklin 1997, 14). With the French Revolution and the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* in 1789 triggering both an institutionalization and immediate export of these newly invented universal principles for an imagined perfectibility of humankind, the “universalist vocation and national particularity” of France as a *grande nation* and *République coloniale* (Costantini 2008, 23 and 77–111; cf. with Bouretz 2000; Bancel et al. 2003) made the term “civilization” globally operational and applicable for all colonizing nation-states. Now, France’s colonial mission to propagate, introduce, and even defend the concept of civilization on a universal scale also placed her in the role of the scientific re-discoverer, aesthetic reviver, legal protector, and ultimately, the moral heir and political continuer of all aspects of far distant and extinct high

civilizations, including the full richness of their built legacy. The benevolent rhetoric of a *mise en valeur* was the commonly heard expression in this context and always comprised cultural heritage politics, for example in Indochina when the *École française d'Extrême-Orient* (EFEO) was created under its first name *Mission archéologique d'Indochine* in 1898. Its declared task was to research, catalogue, restore, and protect the “near-lost” cultural heritage of the region (Singaravelou 1999; cf. with Pottier 2000; Lorin 2008).

However, the starting point for this volume may be traced back to Napoleon Bonaparte’s “adventure savant” (Laissus 1998; cf. Laurens et al. 1989), which included bringing 160 scientists, technicians, and artists along on a crusade to Egypt between 1798 and 1801. It is acknowledged that this “crusade” was primarily a military enterprise against the Ottoman Empire and British superiority in the Mediterranean (Jomard 1809–1828). Nevertheless:

The inclusion of a “scientific task force” clearly distinguished the Egyptian expedition from the plans for civilizing savages that colonial administrators had begun to elaborate before the Revolution. Napoleon transformed what was latent in Enlightenment discourse into a blueprint for cultural change [...] On the banks of the Nile, then, the idea, if not the term, of a special French mission to civilize had been born with the Republic. The word “civilization” also appears to have acquired many of the overtones that would be associated with the term *mission civilisatrice*—that is, the inculcation of new needs and wants, and the spread of French institutions and values deemed to be universally valid [...] To an important degree, Napoleon’s decision to bring all of French civilization to Egypt was determined by the view that he and his contemporaries held of the country as the original cradle of *les lumières*, [...] Napoleon’s characterization of his campaign as one designed to bring civilization back to its origins [italics MF] (Conklin 1997, 18–19).

France’s first post-revolutionary colonial expedition to Egypt—one of the first modern projects entailing a “museum-like survey of alien civilizations” (Osterhammel 2005, 411)—merged the vision of civilization with a civilizing mission, and the idea of a conquered *and* moral “inheritance” of cultural heritage into one multi-layered imperialist strategy with both military-political and economic, and cultural and scientific components (cf. Pyenson 1993, compare Basalla 1967) (Fig. 3).

Almost one hundred years after the mission to Egypt, an extremely important intermediate developmental step took place that needs to be mentioned in this context: the Universal Exhibition of Paris in 1889. There, France’s colonial *mission civilisatrice* was brought to the fore through various scientific conferences that were held alongside the popular part of the exhibition. From June 24 to 29, 1889, the *Congrès international pour la protection des oeuvres d’art et des monuments* took place at the Trocadero Palace. Those present included, in the *comité de patronage*, Charles Garnier (the president of the congress, and the architect of the famous opera house of Paris), Jean Charles Alphand (one of the organizers of the exhibition), Albert Kaempfen (director of the national museums), Jules Ferry (a politician who led and fostered France’s global expansion towards Indochina), Baron Haussmann (the urban modernizer of Paris) and Viollet-le-Duc (the leading expert on architectural restoration in France), as well as international representatives from British India (J.B. Keith, Archaeological Inspector of Central India), China, Russia, Central and South American countries from Brazil to Mexico, and from the leading colonial powers in Europe, such as Great Britain, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

The architect and director of the *Amis des monuments de Paris*, Charles Normand, outlined the aim of the conference as the installation of an international league of “civilized nations” for the protection and defence of cultural heritage:

The protection and the safeguard of monuments, or more general, of artworks, which cover the memory and the history of *all civilised nations*, must be in the mind of everybody who knows, loves and respects the traditions and the glory of his fatherland [...] United in one thought, we intend to provoke a compassionate current, an international ligue to constitute, even in the midst of the violence of war, an *effective defense of cultural heritage* inherited by all generations.² [italics MF] (Ministère du commerce 1889a, 13,14)



Fig. 3 Cover illustration of the first volume of *Description de l'Égypte* recording the Egyptian antiquities that were “rediscovered” and documented during Napoleon’s crusade to Egypt (Source: Jomard 1809, planches, tome 1, cover)

²Original French: La protection et la sauvegarde des monuments, ou plus généralement des oeuvres d’art, intéressant les souvenir et l’histoire de toutes *les nations civilisées* s’imposent à la pensée de quiconque connaît, aime, respecte les traditions ou les gloires de sa patrie. [...] Pénétrés d’une même pensée, nous voulons provoquer un courant sympathique, une ligue internationale, qui puisse constituer, même au milieu des violences de la guerre, une *défense efficace du patrimoine* légué par le passé à toutes les générations présentes. [italics MF]

Charles Normand opening the *Congrès international pour la protection des oeuvres d'art et des monuments* during the 1889 Universal Exhibition

One month later, on the same spot, the *Congrès international colonial* was opened on July 30 by the former *ministre de la marine et des colonies*, Édouard Barbey, who detailed the implicitly universalist mission of what Normand had termed the “civilized nations”: “Today, for all civilized nations the colonial expansion is a fundamental issue” (Ministère du commerce 1889b, 8). Taken together, Normand and Barbey’s statements provided the impetus for establishing the civilized nation’s self-appointed task of salvaging cultural heritage both in their own confines *and* in their colonized territories. As we shall see, this strategy also dominated France’s colonial discourse in Indochina (see introductory statement), and continued into Cambodia’s era of independence with the French remaining responsible for heritage protection issues (see epilogue).

After the destructions during World War I and the World War II approaching, the protection of endangered artworks within their architectural ensembles was negotiated and implemented on a universal scale, when, for example, the Parisian *Institut Internationale de Coopération Intellectuelle* and the *Office international des musées* published their *Technical and judicial manual for the protection of monuments and works of art in times of war* in 1939 (Office international des musées 1939). This helped the military and moral victors of the war to retrospectively establish their supposedly altruistic mission for the protection of cultural heritage. In the American case (and this occurred while two atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki!) the report of the *American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas* was established and circulated in 1946 to manifest the US-American war-time civilizing mission whose *American Defense-Harvard Group* not only covered sites in Europe, but also in China, Indochina, Japan, Korea, the Dutch East Indies, and Thailand:

During [the European] 1942 invasion [. . .] the US began to formulate plans by which some measure of protection consistent with military strategy could, in the war areas, be extended to the cultural monuments—buildings, works of art, libraries, and records—which constituted, in a broad sense, the heritage of the entire civilized world. [. . .] On December 8, 1942 Chief Justice Harlan F. Stone of the US Supreme Court asked President Roosevelt for his support of a plan for the “creation of an organization functioning under the auspices of the Government, for the protection and conservation of works of art and of artistic and historical monuments and records in Europe, and to aid in salvaging and returning to, or compensating in kind, the lawful owners of such objects which have been appropriated by the Axis powers or by individual acting with the authority in consent.” [. . .] At the same time he pointed out the incidental but important advantage to be immediately gained by proclaiming to the world, friends and enemies, our Government’s practical concern in protecting these symbols of civilization from injury and spoliation. [. . .] this group of officers and enlisted men [of the Mediterranean Theatre of Operations] was able to accomplish a task of great magnitude. The task was nothing less than to preserve as a much as they could of man’s creative past. (Report 1946, 1, 160)

Report of the American Commission for the protection and salvage of artistic and historic monuments in war areas (1946)

On an individual level, James Rorimer’s publication *Survival. The salvage and protection of art in war* became a bestseller (Rorimer 1950; cf. Skilton 1948;

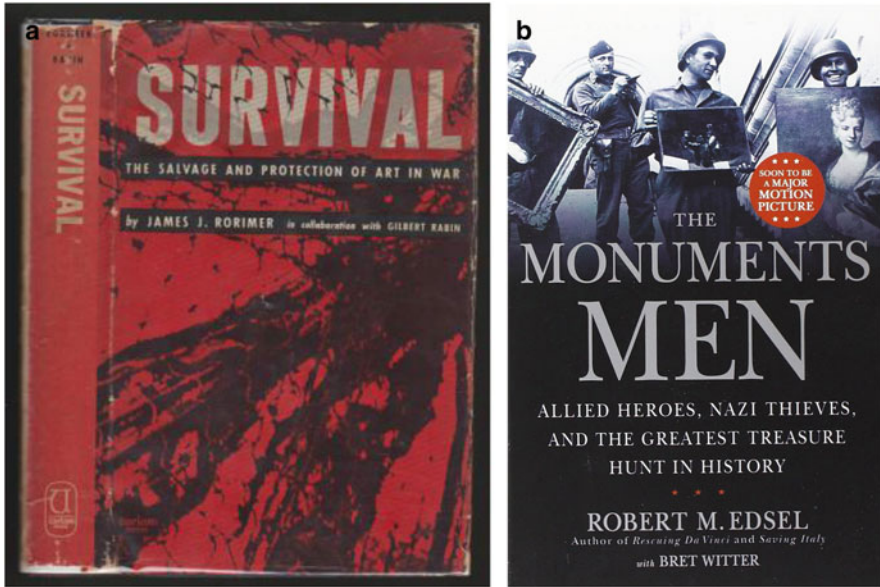


Fig. 4 Cover of Rorimer’s 1950 book *Survival. The salvage and protection of art in war* (a, left), and Edsel and Witter’s 2009 book *The Monuments Men* (b, right) (Sources: a, left: Rorimer 1950, cover; b, right: Edsel and Witter 2009, cover)

Farmer 2000) (Fig. 4a), and Robert Edsel and Bert Witter’s book *The Monuments Men. Allied heroes, Nazi thieves and the greatest treasure hunt in history* (Edsel and Witter 2009) was even made into a popular movie in 2014 starring George Clooney, Matt Damon, and Cate Blanchett (Fig. 4b).

After World War II and a new *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in 1948 at the United Nations’ General Assembly in Paris, the topos of the worldwide defence of human civilization with its unique built heritage was unpacked once again, incorporated into the 1956 *Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* and added to UNESCO’s 1972 *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (UNESCO 1972); it can be no coincidence that the organization headquarters were located in the capital of France where, two decades later, in-depth studies have since re-evaluated the nation’s history of cultural heritage (Choay 1992, 2009; Poulot 1997; Leniaud 2002). Returning to the ideological terrain of Egypt for a moment, 160 years after Napoleon the international 1959–68 relocation campaign to save the thirteenth-century BCE site of Abu Simbel against destruction by a giant dam project on Lake Nasser, serves to this day as one of the founding myths of UNESCO’s global salvage mission of cultural heritage in the name of humanity (Fig. 5, compare Fig. 14 in the contribution of Bloembergen/Eickhoff in this volume).

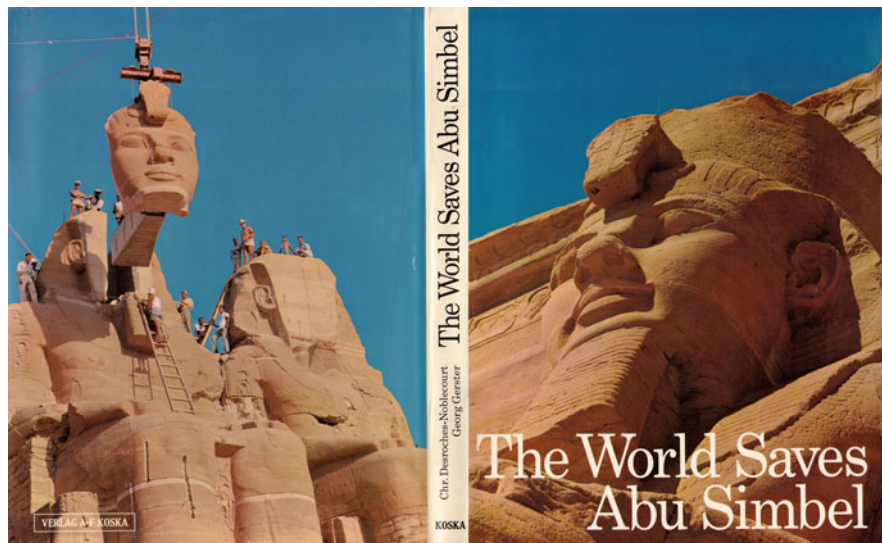


Fig. 5 The full book cover of the 1968 publication *The World saves Abu Simbel* (Source: Desroches-Noblecourt and Gerster 1968, cover)

Implicitly, UNESCO's (1972) convention was built on the influential, more practice-oriented *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites of Venice* in 1964, in which the *International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)* (founded in 1965 in Warsaw) defined a "common responsibility" and trans-generational "duty" to preserve heritage, based on a central, but still undefined, criterion of authenticity (ICOMOS 1964; cf. with Falser 2010). Now transferred to the individual nation-states subscribing to its universalist approach, but immediately referring to the "duty of the international community as a whole" (§6.1), the vision of the UNESCO Convention of 1972 was (again) based on the evocation of an imminent "decay, deterioration or disappearance" of cultural heritage as emphasized explicitly in the preamble; along with the *World Heritage List*, a so-called *List of World Heritage in Danger* was compiled in order to further dramatize the organization's global salvage mission conducted in the name of a "cultural heritage of mankind" (Nafziger and Scovazzi 2008). An exclusive classification system of elitist criteria under the decisive term "outstanding universal value" (used fourteen times in the whole text) was established, and was judged by an institutionalized, top-down evaluation authority—the *World Heritage Committee* (§8). This triggered an action-based, truly globalized civilizing mission and a commodification strategy of cultural and natural heritage (by March 2014 an astonishing 981 sites were inscribed on the List) according to UNESCO's binding and constantly inflated *Operational Guidelines*, which were last updated in 2013 (UNESCO 1977–2013) through UNESCO's *World Heritage Centre* in Paris.

The Structural Elements of Missions to ‘salvage’

In the following section, we will introduce the basic operational structure of civilizing missions in relation to the concept and medium of cultural heritage (Fig. 6), which should help readers to better understand the following chapters.

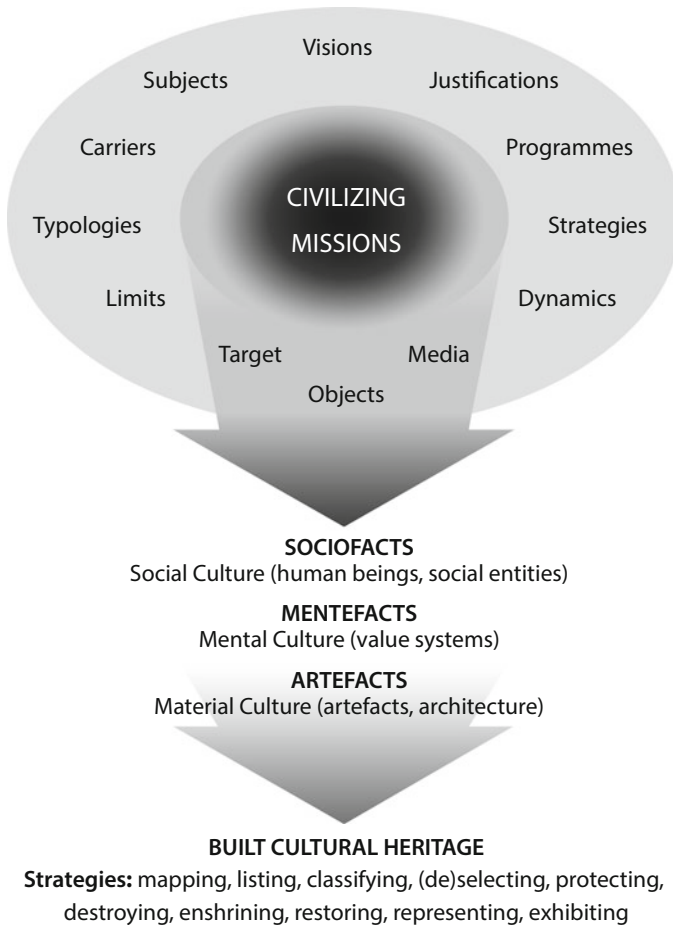


Fig. 6 Chart of the basic operational structure of civilizing missions in relation to the medium of cultural heritage (Falser 2015)

The key terms have been taken from the edited volume *Zivilisierungsmissionen. Imperiale Weltverbesserungen seit dem 18. Jahrhundert* (Barth and Osterhammel 2005), which are based from a philosophical point of view on the “terms, models of and the styles of reasoning within civilizing missions” (Schröder 2005), as well as on a historical perspective on “civilizing missions and modernity” (Osterhammel 2005; cf. Osterhammel 2006, 2012).

Subjects

Generally speaking, the most common subjects of civilizing missions are societies and their constitutive regimes (socio-cultural settings) which comprise three forms of social cohesiveness: (a) social-collective identity, (b) ethnic-political identity within a common sense of values and principles, and (c) civilizational identity, based on the practical and social common grounds of communities, including their cultural self-perceptions or relational perceptions of the (different, i.e. higher or lower) civilizational level of other social entities within their own different settings.

Carriers

Typical carriers of committed civilizing actions on the institutionalized side include state projects, such as empire-building, empire maintenance, colonialism, the selective spread of economic or geostrategic interests, or all of the above. On a smaller scale, powerful elites may try to impose their religious or cultural interests on other segments of the population. Groups (for instance the military or the administrative bureaucracy) or institutionalized agencies (such as NGOs for cultural heritage preservation) may act in a smaller sphere or towards certain specific environmental segments (e.g. urban structures, temple sites, archaeological ruins). Finally, on the individual level, teachers, missionaries, medical doctors, engineers (e.g. surveyors, architects, conservationists, or any or all of these) or scientists (e.g. art historians, archaeologists, philologists) may represent institutionalized power structures and act as single *cultural brokers* in still undefined contact zones with alien states or cultures and with constantly moving frontiers of different imperialist endeavours.

Programmes

A basic differentiation of civilizing (i.e. culturo-political action programmes) (Schröder 2005, 19 and 29) comprises (a) “civilization-building” in a field where civilization or civilizing aspects (supposedly) need to be introduced (the first implementation of inventories or protection laws of cultural heritage might be

one example of this), or re-installed after an interim period of decadence and decay (e.g. the typically colonial rhetoric of a reviving or re-purifying effort of cultural traditions such as handicraft, dance, etc. that are considered nearly extinct). This process may involve violence-free acceptance by the receiving entity of subsidiary help from more developed cultures, more specialized institutions, or more qualified individuals (e.g. the continuing acceptance of ex-colonial agencies of heritage preservation after the independence of former colonies). The other case (b) is “civilization-changing,” when only modifications, refinements, or a transfer from one civilized system (or the civilizing policy) to another are foreseen.

Civilizing missions may range from elitist programmes between those involved (in a horizontal direction), to the building of cultural bridges between the upper or intermediate national mainstream and acknowledged minorities (in a vertical direction); they can be, as already mentioned, a mere propagandistic side-programme of colonialism and imperialism towards the Other and the alien, or concern the self-civilizing efforts of nation-states, institutions, groups, or individuals. Collective self-civilizing projects (after critical *intro-vision* on the deterioration of cultural, moral, or other values) can occur internally within states and nations without any external, colonial, or internationalist motivations. The most-often cited examples of this in the Asian context are Imperial China, or Japan during the Meiji Restoration (Pomeranz 2005). On the other hand, self-modernizing and self-reforming are terms often used to describe, for example, the efforts made by Siam in the late nineteenth century to strengthen itself against French- and British-colonial ambitions. Inner-civilizing strategies became, generally speaking, a common strategy in modern nation-states in Europe after World Wars I and II (compare Germany’s inner-political efforts at re-civilization after 1945). In this context, the care and rebuilding of the nation’s built cultural heritage was a useful tool to further civilizational recovery, as was also the case for young post-colonial nation-states all around the planet in the 1950s and 1960s, which we shall discuss in the case of Cambodia and Indonesia.

Typologies

Civilizing missions can occur (a) within a state or nation, and are often carried out by cultural or political elites or both. They may involve the establishment of necessary infrastructures or culturo-political cohesiveness. The elitist appeal to register, preserve, represent, and exhibit something called cultural heritage under the dictated claim of a collective identity of “imagined communities” (Anderson 1983, 1998) may be pertinent in this context. Civilizing missions may (b) also apply to societies outside the national borders of the country of origin, along the guidelines of a master culture (*Leitkultur*), the representatives of which perceive themselves as the “civilizer,” most often in the contexts of colonialism. In this case, the civilizer’s established normative evaluation and protection systems of cultural heritage may be transferred directly to and implemented in the cultural, social, and physical landscape of those “to be civilized,” and may later be transcended in

slight modifications from a colonial to a post-colonial state configuration. Finally, civilizing missions may (c) comprise an international system as a whole within a political or legal coordination of a community of states. This may necessitate the normative motivation of collective self-restriction of the participating states along internationally accepted policy lines. In the field of heritage preservation for the interest of “humanity as a whole” (keeping in mind the international appeals during the impending destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in 2001), UNESCO, with its World Heritage Convention of 1972, is a sub-branch of the United Nations as a global advocate of the common interest of a whole community of civilized nation-states. Infringing civilizing standards may lead to a single nation’s exclusion, or a call to order through sanctions by this universal family.

Justifications

Most often, the civilizer stages himself as a benevolent donor of civilization. He formulates his project as a moral and the philanthropic duty of the more civilized towards the less civilized. Rudyard Kipling’s famous 1899 poem “The White Man’s Burden” was a comment on the impending annexation of the Philippines by the United States, which he interpreted as a noble enterprise. The idea of a civilizing mission in its modern version, comprised of vertical and horizontal inclusivity, is based on two assumptions: the civilizer’s conviction of his own superiority, as necessary for his self-accreditation of, or vision for, an intervention against or in favour of those “to be civilized”; and the expectancy of a certain “receptivity on the side of the civilized” (Osterhammel 2005, 365). In cases where the colonized refuse this intervention, or where the acceptance of the civilizer’s image as liberating friend was rejected (Schäbler 2004; Adas 2004), the charge of ingratitude was and is still a commonly heard complaint (e.g. the United States after their “mission-accomplished” rhetoric in Iraq).

From a more philosophical viewpoint, civilizing missions up to the present day may seem plausible if a moral, or ethical-political legitimation is in place to defend them. For instance, they might be defended from a moral standpoint if their culturo-political goals appear to be well defined, limited, and not totalitarian. Additionally, they may be legitimate “if they aim at stabilizing and further distributing normative, cultural universals, however, without tackling a cultural pluralism with mere pragmatic reasons in the back of the civilizer’s mind” (Schröder 2005, 31). In this case, specific civilizing interventions or corrections may be justified for their goal of serving Civilization (with a capital C) as a whole. This argument in defence of so-called universals is, however, not the typical reasoning of Western modernity (or multiple modernities when it is replicated in different sub-centres), and it will need further exploration in this volume: Who defines these (cosmopolitan) universals, for example in the context of cultural heritage, and which segments of local, subaltern stakeholders from different regional cultures and civilizations (in the plural without the term’s capital C) are excluded from these decision-finding norms and monitoring processes?

Dynamics—Strategies

Civilizing missions can be differentiated by the nature of their horizontal expansion; that is, when whole empires spread their governmental and civilizational systems so that other empires adopt them. In a vertical dimension, according to the “rhetoric of uplifting [*Erhebungsrhetorik*]” (Osterhammel 2005, 364) along imposed, often anthropologically embedded hierarchies of cultural significance, civilizational enhancement may end in blatantly racist projects. The civilizing visions of a “Greater India,” or the colonizing strategies of a Greater Holland, *La plus grande France* or *Groß-Deutschland* varied greatly. The British colonial concept of indirect rule intended to establish an administration of the natives through the mediation of traditional or neo-traditional authorities, but this concept was criticized as ineffective (cf. with Deschamps 1963). French colonial strategies included the policy of “assimilation”—meaning that “the colony was to become an integral, if non-contiguous, part of the mother country” with the cultural level of the latter seen as higher. This policy was modified after 1900 into a softer version of “association,” which was defined as “the improvement of the native’s condition without severely altering his way of life, while the latter sought the recognition of native society in the light of French civilization” (Betts 1961, 8 and 123; also Betts 1982; Girardet 1972, 130; Daughton 2002; cf. with a primary source such as Harmand 1910).

In the universalist age of heritage conservation policies, to take an example from the post-colonial age, UNESCO’s late modernist World Heritage Convention of 1972 has been modified during the last two decades in favour of greater recognition of local cultural practices on declared heritage sites under the term “living heritage.” A pluralistic acknowledgement of different visions of authenticities in heritage evaluations (compare with the shift from civilization to civilizations) was only introduced with the *Nara Document of Authenticity* in 1993, as a result of an international UNESCO/ICOMOS conference in Japan, considered—symptomatically, for this paradigm change—one of the least colonized countries in Asia (Larsen and Marstein 1994; Larsen 1995; cf. Falser 2010; Jokilehto 2013).

Limits

“Civilizing missions are not [necessarily] congruent with European and North American imperialism and colonialism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries” (Osterhammel 2005, 413). Trans-imperial civilizing missions may only aim at the spread of a nation’s language. In the case of the above-mentioned strategy of assimilation, émigrés may have individually adopted the civilizing standards of their new national environment; or the idea of civilizational equality simply superseded any missionary efforts. (Re-)Civilizational goals may have been reached (such as international special task forces acting according to the 1954 *Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* to protect endangered cultural heritage sites in war-like situations); in the colonial

context, however, successful civilizing accomplishments were only rarely honored or declared as such, since this would have ended the acting colonizers' mission, task, or self-inflicted burden. Ethnic and cultural racism made the colonizer (like the Germans in Southwest Africa, discussed in this volume) lose his civilizing mandate in the name of the family of colonizing nations. The complete refusal of the "to-be-civilized," or his attributed "not-to-be civilized/too primitive" status ("without culture") largely reduced the colonizer's interest in civilizing. In these cases, the quality of cultural heritage, as such, was not even imputed. Internal national events such as the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China after 1966, propagated racial purging or cultural self-purifying strategies through organized genocide, ranging from the Nazis against the Jews, to the Khmer Rouge against the Cambodian population (see in this volume), and turned the self-appointed "civilizer himself into the barbarian" (Osterhammel 2006, 32); such events also caused an immense, irreplaceable loss of cultural heritage on mental, social, and physical levels.

Target—Objects—Media: Cultural Heritage

Finally, the different targets, objects addressed, and media employed within civilizing missions come into focus. Whereas human beings, their groups and other social entities (we call them sociofacts), and religious, cultural, moral, intellectual, political, and economic value systems (mentefacts) may have been the target of civilizing missions most often, our main interest lies in their effects on the *material culture* (*artifacts*), ranging from art objects to architectural monuments and sites. Distinguished by their collective significance through social, often institutionalized entities, from individuals and groups to whole nation-states and transnational agencies (such as UNESCO, ICOMOS etc.), and qualified by cultural values, artifacts—in this special case, architectural manifestations—form the locus of this volume as *built cultural heritage*.

As previously mentioned, through the pathways of (mostly colonial) modernity, the *concept* of cultural heritage—we have defined it for our specific volume as a European product of eighteenth-century Enlightenment and its subsequent nation-building processes—was brought by the "carriers" of civilizing missions from Europe into Non-Europe. Once the concept of cultural heritage had reached the colonized territories, selected (but not all!) alien artifacts (in this case, architectures) became the direct target of the colonizer's civilizing efforts. This selection process was made possible through specific strategies that had already been tested for the colonizers' own canon-building process of cultural heritage in the homelands: "historiographical, observational, surveying/mapping, enumerative/collection-oriented, museological, surveillance-based, and investigative/classificatory and investigative modalities" (Cohn 1996, 6–14). Through this process of turning architectures into targets of civilizing—"decaying temples in the menacing jungle" (like Angkor) were seen and are still seen in the post-colonial/globalized era as the most prominent and recurring topoi of the benevolent civilizer's master narrative—

these sites, with their very often active social relevance and functions, were (metaphorically or actually) “archaeologized” into dead sites (like archaeological ruins) and placed under a strict colonial control system (compare with Falser and Juneja 2013b).

On the other hand, the constant need to promote the colonial projects with their (costly, and often criticized) civilizing duties and tasks (keeping Clifford’s term “salvage paradigm” in mind) necessitated the representation—that is, the visualization of selective heritages from the colonies—in the homelands’ metropolitan centres. As a result, not only were original artifacts and architectural elements from these sites exhibited in museum spaces, but so too, were whole temple structures (for example, Angkor Wat from French-colonial *Cambodge*, mud-brick structures from Equatorial Africa, or Moghul palaces from British India) temporarily staged as 1:1-scale open-air reconstitutions during World and Colonial Exhibitions from Paris to London, Amsterdam to Chicago (Mitchell 1989; cf. Celik 1992; Morton 2000; Chafer and Sackur 2002; Jennings 2005; Waterton and Watson 2010; for Cambodia see Falser 2011, 2015).

In the decolonizing era, the colonizer’s civilizing strategies were often transferred into the post-colonial psyche and into the self-civilizing attitudes of newly born nation-states. Colonially fabricated pasts turned into a new and powerful canon of national cultural heritage, which helped not only to (a) re-invent these nations’ own traditions, but also (b) to root their new collective identity in an (archaeological) antiquity, by often (c) marginalizing or even eliminating the colonial contents, connotations, or histories of these heritages (Anderson 1998; Glover 2006; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). The strategies remain unchanged: mapping and cataloguing, listing, classifying and selecting, protecting and preserving, (over)restoring and reconstructing (to the point of destruction), reinventing or decontextualizing or both, enshrining and exhibiting, representing and promoting, commodifying and exploiting. Indeed, one might argue that the recontextualizing of these civilizing strategies of cultural heritage is more important than ever before.

The Contributions to this Book

As a general framework, the studies in this volume are organized into five thematic sections:

- I. Direct Neighbors and the Primitive
- II. Civilizing Missions (post-)colonial
- III. From Cultural Brokers to Enlightened Dictators
- IV. Archaeological Pasts for Revolutionary Presents
- V. Making Cultural Heritage Global

Section I—Direct Neighbors and the “Primitive” is made up of two studies that appear to be dissimilar, both in a political and a geographical sense. However, they are conceptually comparable in their focus on ethnographic display modes of

culture as a means of underlining civilizing missions before and after 1900. The first study deals with the Habsburg Empire and its ambiguous strategy of an “inner-European colonialism” to unify neighboring crown lands through a form of cultural diversification that was controlled by a centralized government. The other contribution investigates the short history of the African colonies of the German Empire. It explores the far-reaching impact of the scholars and political brokers who conceptualized African cultural heritage in levels of the “non-civilized, primitive, or noble,” and were later re-negotiated in the post-colonial period. Both contributions are concerned with ethnographic historiography and provide a useful starting point for the following sections with their focus on the European civilizing projects in Asia, whose ancient “high civilizations” were essentialized in the post-colonial era.

Contributing the only study on a “non-colonial” state configuration with a critical perspective on post-colonial methodology, **Werner Telesko** discusses how cultural encyclopaedia projects in the Habsburg Empire aimed at reinterpreting regional particularities of the various crown lands as valid cultural expressions by merging them with an all-comprising, multi-ethnic nation-state identity. Conceptualizing this effort as a civilizing project of “inner colonization” and aligning it with the more classical tools of the trans-regional formation of style in architecture, the establishment of antiquarian societies, monument preservation, and the reform programmes of arts-and-crafts-industries, Telesko uses the *Kronprinzenwerk* publication (1886–1902) as his central source. Patronized by Crown Prince Rudolf and published in twenty-four volumes containing almost 600 articles and 4,500 illustrations on 13,000 pages, its clear focus on ethnography and folklore—ranging from local costumes, vernacular architecture, natural monuments, and the intangible heritage of folk songs—was intended to have a “civilizing impact.” It was meant to acknowledge the regional diversities and spiritual local affinities of the Empire’s cultural heritage, but at the same time to place it under the protective (and controlling) regime of the centralized government in Vienna. Whereas this undertaking could only “simulate a multi-ethnic state in book form,” its established “visual stereotypes” for cultural heritage narratives perfectly served both the nationalistic counter-movements of the past and the cultural essentialisms of the present.

The second contribution in this section, by **Winfried Speitkamp**, discusses how the German influence of pre-colonial travel writing, colonial propaganda up to World War I, post-colonial revisionism, and the emerging field of African Studies after the 1930s helped to create the notion of cultural heritage in Africa. Whereas the pre-colonial ethnological and geographical researchers described Africa’s “dynamic” culture using a Western romantic vision and methodological terminologies that emphasized their own superiority, they nevertheless demonstrated an “all-embracing curiosity” that had little to no racist undertones. However, the situation changed under the brief but brutal impact of German colonialism before World War I. Colonial agents (we might call them agitators and not cultural brokers) like Hermann Wissmann and Carl Peters characterized the African continent as a place “non-awakened to culture and civilization,” full of barbaric customs,

savage tribal conflicts, and completely lacking in any cultural achievements. This served to formulate the belief in Africa's need for Europe's civilizing intervention in the form of a German protectorate—an imagined “German India” to challenge the British civilizing mission on the Asian Subcontinent. When the German Empire lost its African possessions after World War I, owing to its “uncivilized behaviour” as a colonial power, German revisionists attempted to emphasize the German Empire's misunderstood “philanthropic enterprise” to develop and even boost and enrich African cultural heritage. However, when Leo Frobenius published his *Kulturgeschichte Afrikas* in 1933, the medium of cultural heritage once again took centre stage. According to Frobenius, Europe's colonial impact had de-civilized Africa's rich heritage and had wrongly formed the narrative of “a decadent, barbarian Negro.” In a move that is reminiscent of the Habsburgian transformation from regionalist appreciation “from above” of (im)material cultural expressions to cultural essentialisms exploited “from below,” Frobenius' concept of the *Kulturkreislehre* as regional, immaterial concentrations of “soul and feeling” was exploited by emerging African-nationalist movements such as *Negritude* or *Pan-Africanism*, as a particularly African way of thinking, feeling, and living.

Section II—Civilizing Missions (post-)colonial comprises two contributions that address how colonial heritage formations developed in the context of British India and the Dutch East Indies, in particular, how they created their own dynamics in post-colonial and nationalist state-building processes in India and Indonesia, were re-negotiated in post-modern, localist, and transnational conservation theory, and were ultimately merged with the global framework of UNESCO's World Heritage agenda.

The first paper by **Krishna Menon** analyses how the British-colonial imperatives to preserve India's antiquity were transformed into the “universal values” so central to today's global heritage doctrine. Lately, these imperatives have been counter-balanced by non-governmental initiatives that are to be reconciled with “indigenous knowledge systems and practices of building maintenance and construction” (above, we called this “living heritage policies”). Menon interprets the British Indian initiatives for modern architectural preservation in India as part of a larger civilizing mission that was meant to uplift the subcontinent's supposedly “primitive status of indigenous civilization.” He contextualizes this “civilizing project” through its different “tools and carriers,” ranging from institutions like the *Archaeological Survey of India* (established in 1861) to individual actors such as Lord Curzon and John Marshall and their colonial prescriptive doctrines, such as the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act* of 1904 or the *Conservation Manual* of 1923. These imperial norms were, according to Menon, transcribed with astonishingly little modification into India's post-colonial heritage preservation system. Lately, they have even been morphed into the universalist value system of a global conservation doctrine that is currently promoted by intergovernmental agencies such as ICOMOS and UNESCO. In response to the “impoverishment of the lexicon of contemporary practices,” the counter-balancing, non-governmental 1980s initiative called *Indian National Trust for Art and*

Cultural Heritage (INTACH) re-evaluates and implements “indigenous knowledge systems and practices of traditional building maintenance of local master-builders and stonemasons” to encourage more balanced heritage preservation strategies in India. Representing the two sides of the phenomenon called globalization, the topoi of both the “global and the local” are employed here as different but entangled civilizing narratives for the future of India’s built cultural heritage.

The study by **Marieke Bloembergen** and **Martijn Eickhoff** focuses on the continuities and discontinuities in the conservation history of the eighth-century Buddhist temple of Borobudur in Central Java, which was appropriated as an object of cultural heritage in the political legitimation of both the colonial and the post-colonial regimes. Using Marcel Mauss’ theory of the gift as its methodological basis, this paper investigates heritage dynamics beyond the borders of the nation-state and the changing political regimes in favour of transcultural, moral, and material entanglements with the temple. Tracing the temple’s heritage history in the last one hundred years, the authors uncover a complex network of relations involving the Dutch colonial narratives that were built around the conservation efforts for the temple after 1900: the (post-)colonial trans-Asian involvement with the temple within a Greater Buddhist and the Greater India Movement, a nationalist and religious appropriation of the temple during the post-colonial Sukarno and Suharto-regimes, the 1970s efforts of preservation within the emerging trans-national contact zone with India, Thailand, and Cambodia, and, finally, the impact of UNESCO applying an early form of globalized heritage doctrine to a specific local context during Cold War politics.

Section III—From Cultural Brokers to Enlightened Dictators focuses on individual protagonists in French colonial *Cambodge* (1863–1953) or post-colonial Cambodia (1954–1970), which formulated civilizing visions of Khmer antiquity to (a) institutionalize these visions in a colonial museum and arts renovation programme, and (b) implement them in a massive building programme *à la Angkorienne* for the post-colonial nation-state of Cambodia.

The first contribution by **Gabrielle Abbe** analyses the Phnom Penh-born and Paris-trained *École-des-Beaux-Art* artist George Groslier (1887–1945), who was in fact neither a politician nor an academic archaeologist or art historian. He served as a kind of “cultural broker” between General Governor Albert Sarraut’s French colonial politics in Indochina and the local scene in order to reinvent an “authentic” art and heritage practice in Phnom Penh and to further the larger goal, which was to create a proper Cambodian cultural identity. Along with his colonial discourse on the supposedly decadent and degenerated Khmer arts, full of endangering influences from neighboring Siam and China and from modern French colonialism, Groslier’s 1917 civilizing vision of a Khmer arts renovation programme aimed at a cultural and artistic rebirth under the classical European, art historical paradigms of purity and authenticity, which were rooted in a re-imagined continuity of Khmer antiquity up to present-day Cambodia. His gradually institutionalized *Service des Arts* included (a) a new “national” shrine in the traditional Khmer-style archaeological museum in Phnom Penh (1919/20), which was to be a scientific, artistic, and

economic enterprise under the control of the *École française d'Extrême-Orient*; (b) an art school to teach, design, and produce classical Khmer art; and (c) an institution to establish, protect, and control the rising art market inside and outside of Cambodia.

Helen Grant Ross's paper also relates to individual civilizing visions and their implementation of Khmer antiquity in modernity, but focuses on a totally different political framework and physical impact on Cambodia's built environment. Her paper considers the astonishing social, economic, and artistic—and more importantly, architectural—achievements during the short period of Cambodian independence under the king, prime minister, and finally, head of state, Norodom Sihanouk (r. 1941–1970) and his master architect Vann Molyvann. Calling it the “civilizing vision of an enlightened dictator,” Ross contextualizes Sihanouk's ambiguous, short-lived reform programme as a combination of external non-aligned political neutrality (backed by dictators such as Sukarno and Tito), and the internal monopolistic one-party system of the *Sangkum Reastr Niyum* (People's Socialist Community). The latter was established on the basis of royalist loyalty, an extreme nationalism based on Buddhist-socialist ethics, and a systematic re-invention of a “glorious Khmer antiquity,” which had been traced in French-colonial times through the establishment of stylistic and royalist genealogies stretching back to classical Angkor. These elements were systematically merged into the unique “civilizing experiment” of Cambodia's short independence under a Francophile king who was the self-declared descendent of the Angkorian king, Jayavarman VII, and his *École-des-Beaux Art*-trained state architect, Vann Molyvann, who transcribed the legacy of Angkor into a unique programme of “New Khmer architecture.” All this occurred over a period of only fifteen years, before Cambodia fell into the turmoil of civil war, Khmer Rouge auto-genocide, and Vietnamese occupation (1970–1989).

Section IV—Archaeological Pasts for Revolutionary Presents investigates in two contributions how archaeological pasts in particular served Maoist ideologies in revolutionary China and during the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia. Certainly, the very European concept of a “civilizing” mission as introduced above with its primarily French connotation was strongly abused and even perverted here for inhuman, and (especially in the context of the Khmer Rouge) barbarous agendas of cultural destruction and genocide.

In the first article, **Juliane Noth** investigates the relevance of archaeological campaigns and their propaganda during China's *Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution* (1966–76)—a period that is generally associated with iconoclasm against cultural heritage. During the actual archaeological campaigns, in their display in the 1972 Beijing exhibition *Cultural Relics Excavated during the Cultural Revolution*, and in their publications in working-class, scientific, and diplomacy-oriented print media, the excavated treasures of the Western Han dynasty tombs served to uphold an ideological legitimization of the ruling Communist Party under Prime Minister Zhou Enlai. This functioned through a typically Maoist “critical interpretation” of China's millennia-old civilization as the achievement of the working classes and

proof of cruel suppression and exploitation by feudal lords. The established Communist slogan to “make the past serve the present” took a crucial turn when the exhibition toured the Western world after 1973. In the exhibition tour, the Communist Chinese government used the archaeological remains of feudal China to re-establish its international credibility under the reformulated “mission not to destroy, but to protect its cultural heritage.”

The Maoist interpretation of the archaeological past for use in twentieth-century civilizing visions migrated from China to Cambodia when, as **Henri Locard** explains, the Khmer Rouge terror regime (1975–79) appropriated the re-imagined grandeur of the Angkorian era for their megalomaniac auto-genocidal utopia. Here, the French colonial essentialization of ancient Angkor as the core of Cambodia’s modern national identity merged with the nationalistic slogans of Sihanouk’s independence era and with the anti-colonial milieu of Cambodian intellectuals in post-World War II Paris to form a civilizing vision that would even surpass Angkor in a “Super Great Leap Forward.” According to Locard, an explication of the megalomaniac character of the Khmer Rouge experiment can be found in the strong influence of the French (post-)colonial archaeology. At this time, along with some of his earlier publications, Groslier’s 1967 paper “La civilisation angkoriennne et la maîtrise de l’eau” was published both in French and Cambodian and was therefore largely accessible to the intellectual Cambodian public. This formed the myth of a powerful Khmer Empire and of Angkor as a massive hydraulic city, which was understood as the basis for Angkor’s greatness. In the era of Maoist “revolutionary neo-colonialism,” it was transformed into a civilizing vision to convert Cambodia into a “hydraulic country,” this time under a centralized leadership that would guide the collective manpower of an all-embracing working class.

Section V—Making Cultural Heritage Global, finally, turns to the globalizing era from the 1980s up to the present day. Two contributions about Angkor highlight how cultural heritage as a medium within the new trends of UNESCO’s propagated concept of a “universal heritage of humanity” was (a) taken hostage during the last breath of Cold War politics, and (b) is still abused for nationalist-globalized consumption by gradually abrading the fragile cultural and natural ecosystem of the area with mass tourism.

Michael Falser’s contribution to this volume investigates Cambodia’s unique situation in the 1980s with regard to civilizing visions in modern Asian history. With the Vietnamese invasion and the installation of the USSR-backed *People’s Republic of Kampuchea* (1979–1989), whose goal was to “re-civilize” Cambodia after the genocide committed by the Pol Pot clique, the former Khmer Rouge were transformed from an internationally mistrusted terror regime inside Cambodia to an entity, recognized by the UN, but now exiled, called *Democratic Kampuchea*. Mimicking UNESCO’s humanitarian cultural heritage rhetoric during the last climax of Cold War politics in the 1980s, and with the purely political goal of regaining power in Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge converted their former slogan “Angkor as a proof of working class exploitation, but collective work achievement” into a civilizing vision of humanitarian care and universal responsibility for the cultural heritage of Angkor. Whereas the Vietnamese regime in Cambodia

rewarded India for its diplomatic recognition by granting the restoration of Angkor Wat to the Archaeological Survey of India (and in doing so helped the Indian campaign to unpack an older “Greater India” rhetoric for its restoration project), the Khmer Rouge made the temple their culturo-political hostage in order to prevent UNESCO’s supposedly apolitical and “purely scientific and technical intervention” for a neutral Angkor Park. Former King Sihanouk, in exile in Beijing, was made the leading figure in the Khmer Rouge-Republican-Royalist *Coalition Government* and was—during the collapse of the global Cold War constellations—convinced by UNESCO to call for an international campaign to safeguard Angkor. This call, in 1989, amplified through its symbolic repetition by UNESCO’s new director general, Federico Mayor, in 1991 (see the second introductory statement of this introduction) and the UN-supervised elections in Cambodia, finally led to the nomination of Angkor as a *UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site* in 1992. Ironically, the initial idea for this came (a subject that has been totally ignored by historical research until recently) from the Khmer Rouge exile government in Paris to further their territorial claims over Cambodia.

Keiko Miura discusses in her contribution the processes, agencies, discourses, terms, and applied practices that comprise the ambiguous mission of the “local” (but globally influenced) heritage administration at Angkor for the “preservation of traditions as a new kind of heritage-making.” Conceptualizing heritage sites as the “ideal stages for the politicization of space and for the institutionalization of power and knowledge,” Miura’s specific case study investigates how the former colonial heritage mission to create a *Parc d’Angkor* (1925) under the normative terms “original, traditional, authentic, pure or decadent” is now—particularly in post-conflict Cambodia where there is an attempt to regain (or re-imagine) past glory, pride, and national dignity—re-contextualized as a new, globally supported “rescue mission” to make Angkor a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In order to facilitate the “visual consumption” of the Angkor Park by the 2 million international visitors per year, a new “normative hierarchy of heritage values” under the local administration has emerged. It brings with it a hybrid conflict potential in creating a “frozen cultural landscape” of villages, monasteries, pilgrims, and local visitors. The re-enforcement of “old traditions” under a globally infused heritage paradigm coincides with the emergence of “newly invented traditions” inside the park, such as dinner parties in front of the Bayon temple hosted by high-end hotels for their distinguished international clients, ox-cart tourism to primitive villages, elephant riding, costumed theatre groups, cowboy pony riding, helicopter tours, and ballooning above the national and now global icon of Angkor Wat. One cannot help but ask: Where will all this lead?

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Part I
Direct Neighbours and the “Primitive”

Colonialism without Colonies: The Civilizing Missions in the Habsburg Empire

Werner Telesko

Abstract This article seeks to shed light on a prominent multicultural empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It explores the impact of various cultural missions in the Habsburg Monarchy on exemplary problem areas such as the protection of cultural monuments and the depictions of Austrian national history. This central question will be examined from the perspective of art history and of post-colonial studies. During the late nineteenth century, questions about Habsburg “civilizing missions” were high on the agenda in different spheres of life. As a result, it is possible to detect on the one hand a variety of phenomena and ethnographic peculiarities in the territories of the Habsburg Monarchy, and on the other to note how the multifold processes of centralization (i.e. Austria as an unified state-nation) and regionalization (multi-racial and multi-language identities in the Habsburg crown lands) existed side-by-side. Three sections—Habsburg post-colonial, inner colonization, and encyclopaedic projects to map ethnic and cultural heritage—examine the very specific circumstances of a multicultural empire that existed without colonies and questions the extent to which it is permissible to even speak of cultural missions in the Habsburg Monarchy.

Habsburg post-colonial?

The situation of the Habsburg Monarchy in the nineteenth and early twentieth century is characterized by a confusing variety of phenomena that derived from the processes of centralization and regionalization and which existed side-by-side. First, administrative measures, which had the effect of promoting an “inner” colonization of the empire, can be regarded as part of a “civilizing mission.” Second, there were also efforts to achieve homogenization “from below.” Or as Friedrich Engels put it in 1848:

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The Danube, the Alps, the rocky ramparts of Bohemia, are the existence of reasons for the Austrian barbarism and Austrian monarchy. If the House of Habsburg for a time the people against the nobility, the towns against the princes supported, so this was the only condition under which a great monarchy was even possible. If it is later supported the lower middle class again, so were the petty bourgeoisie in the rest of Europe, against the big bourgeoisie, has become even reactionary. [. . .]. Such was the house of Austria from the beginning, the representative of the barbarism, the stability of the response in Europe. His power was based entrenched in the rugged mountains behind the madness patriarchy, on the inaccessible brutality of barbarism. A dozen nations, their customs, characters and institutions most glaring contradictions were held together by virtue of their common aversion to civilization. Therefore, the House of Austria was invincible as long as the barbarism his subjects remained untouched. Therefore, he was threatened only a danger, the penetration of bourgeois civilization. But this danger was inevitable. The bourgeois civilization was blocked for a time, she could for a time of Austrian barbarism to adapt and subordinate. Earlier or later, but she had to overcome the feudal barbarism, and so the only bond was shattered, the various provinces had held together. (Engels 1972, 504–6)

Friedrich Engels (1848) *The beginning of the end in Austria*

The Habsburg “common dislike for civilization,” which Friedrich Engels emphatically invokes here is, of course, just one aspect of the historical situation in the nineteenth century. In general, this paper intends to shed light on the specific situation of a multicultural empire without colonies and to question the extent to which it is permissible to speak of cultural missions in the Habsburg Monarchy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This question will be examined not only from the perspective of art history but also within the context of post-colonial studies (Feichtinger et al. 2003). The latter discipline argues that Europe does not possess a history *sui generis*, but that the European Modern Age is interwoven with the history of colonialism, without which it would ultimately be inconceivable. Proceeding from the idea that an essential goal of any form of colonization resides in the standardization (or homogenization) of different cultural patterns, the question of whether or not post-colonial theory is helpful in prising open the power structures that underlie such attempts at homogenization in order to detect blurred differences between each culture, remains open. The application of post-colonial studies to Eastern European countries has been deemed problematic because of the pre-modern, a national, and extremely heterogeneous social constructs they continue to present. Post-colonial studies may have provided the means with which to deconstruct nationalisms, but in situations where the development of identity has been a complex process it is often difficult for the historian to separate overlapping power structures from the diverse processes of identity creation and differentiation which are embedded in them, and subsequently to give a name to such phenomena. Basically, the *modus operandi* of standardization is to include and absorb external phenomena by depriving them of their purpose. To put it briefly, measures aimed at colonization are realized through the programmatic overcoming of differences that have evolved through the course of history. Furthermore, such differences between various cultures, ethnic groups, and languages were often deliberately constructed and reinforced because cultural hybridity remains charged with conflict and was often felt to be crisis-prone. The nineteenth-century Habsburg Monarchy attempted to get to grips with such complexity (frequently perceived as

chaos) by enacting measures that were supposed to lead to homogenization—that is, measures aimed at establishing a sense of “order” in the broadest sense of the word and might, for example, concern an architectural style or language. After the end of the eighteenth century, one is confronted with an almost continual and complex interplay between cultural politics, rising nationalism, and architectural representation in the Habsburg lands.

Language policy in particular, was to assume central importance in the multi-ethnic empire. A particularly instructive example of this is Emperor Joseph II’s failed policy to introduce German as the language of administration and the state by decree in 1784. As Markian Prokopovych demonstrated in his study, Austrian officials who arrived in Lemberg in 1772 intended to beautify the city by demolishing old fortification walls and improving sanitary conditions, as well as by implementing green spaces in accordance with Enlightenment and neoclassical ideals (Prokopovych 2008). In contrast to the dominant German-Slavic competition in the Czech lands (King 2002), the two major competing nationalizing factions in Lemberg—its Polish and Ruthenian inhabitants—were imagined as “brotherly” Slavic nations rather than as competitors. Especially in the region of occupied Bosnia in the period between 1878 and the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the politics of the Habsburg Monarchy—“taming” Balkan Nationalism (Okey 2007)—addressed one central issue: the impact of “Europeanization” in a so-called backward society.

Indeed, the interplay between homogenization and differentiation (and diversification) that typified the Habsburg Monarchy must be understood as a distinctive feature of the Central European region in the nineteenth century. Peter Niedermüller arrived at the conclusion that the phenomena with which we tend to associate cultural differences do not consist of cultural differences per se but of the way in which they are interpreted at a political level (Niedermüller 2003, 69–81). According to Niedermüller, the notion of cultural difference is also important because it enables “what we perceive as being foreign or different” to be classified, categorized, and codified. The most obvious form of this phenomenon can be found in literature, where the existence of highly differentiated regional microcolonialisms within the Monarchy have been demonstrated in the case of Galicia and the multilingual authors Ivan Franko (1856–1916) and Tadeusz Rittner (1873–1921). Significantly, colonialism and its related “mission to civilize” were not just confined to Austria and Hungary: a study of Galician literature clearly shows how the dominance of the centre was often less keenly felt than that of the peripheral powers, such as the dominance of the Poles as perceived by the Ukrainians. Similarly, the conventional and enduring “centre vs. periphery” model also deserves to be questioned in the case of Bohemia and Moravia during the late period of the Habsburg Monarchy; since there is no way that we can talk of a linear, colonial relationship of dependency on Vienna for these regions either. Instead, Bohemia and Moravia were core regions for the Monarchy in political, economic, and cultural terms and on a par with the centre. Furthermore, they had already established transport links to Vienna at an early stage.

Inner Colonization

The rapid advance of historical research, which was instigated and supported by the state in the course of the nineteenth century, clearly shows the degree to which concepts of homogenization or diversification became established and offers an important point of departure for an exploration of the ways in which the Habsburg dynasty practised forms of “inner” colonization.

In Austria, scientific research into antiquity began to emerge with the work of the circle that grew around Joseph Freiherr von Hormayr in the 1820s (Telesko 2006, 320–2). At the start it was chiefly associated with the names Alois Primmer (1796–1827), Franz Tschischka (1786–1855), and Josef von Scheiger (1801–1886). Their work was complemented by two journals for writers and *literati* that appeared in the 1840s: Adolf A. Schmidl’s *Österreichische Blätter für Literatur und Kunst* (1844–1848) and Ludwig August Frankl’s *Sonntagsblätter*, which were published from 1842 to 1848. The latter consisted of articles about works of fiction, theatre reviews, notes on individual artists and new buildings, discussions of art exhibitions in Vienna, and theoretical treatises that touched on artistic issues. One major shortcoming, however, was that Vienna lacked a historical society like those already established in almost all of the imperial provinces, along the lines of the Styrian *Joanneum* in Graz. In particular, it was the cleric Joseph Chmel (1798–1858), deputy director of the *Wiener Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv*, who clearly endorsed an Austrian multi-ethnic state in which humanity was intrinsically more important than nationality, and where the different peoples could work towards a common goal like brothers in a family, as it were. In the “unified Austrian state” he saw the appropriate constitutional framework for the necessary unity of national-cultural diversity. Chmel’s efforts, and those of others, resulted in the work *Quellen und Forschungen zur vaterländischen Geschichte, Literatur und Kunst*, which appeared in 1849. Gustav Freiherr von Heider and Rudolf Eitelberger von Edelberg (Rampley 2011, 55–79) began to publish their *Mittelalterliche Kunstdenkmale in Österreich* in 1858. On March 23, 1853 the *Altertums-Verein zu Wien* (known today as the *Verein für Geschichte der Stadt Wien*) at the Landhaus for the provincial government to Lower Austria in Vienna was finally able to address a wider public. Its key tasks included the preservation of (art) historical monuments from the time they first emerged right through to the mid-nineteenth century and to make appropriate public announcements in this regard. In addition to this private association there was the *k.k. Central-Commission für Erforschung und Erhaltung der Baudenkmale* (established on December 31, 1850), many of whose conservators worked in an honorary capacity; some of them were also members of the association. However, the *k.k. Central-Commission* only held their first official meeting under the chairmanship of Carl Freiherr Czoernig von Czernhausen (1804–1889), head of the construction section at the Ministry of Trade, on January 10, 1853. Ultimately, a centrally managed system for the preservation of monuments in each of the crown lands became an important component of a uniform cultural policy throughout Austria and constituted fertile ground for creating and developing

awareness of the Austrian fatherland and even of the Austrian state. In 1910, the k.k. Central-Commission finally became the *Staatsdenkmalamt* and in 1920 the *Bundesdenkmalamt* of the Republic of Austria. It still exists under this name today. The k.k. Central-Commission had a dense network of regional staff at its disposal—naturally, in Bohemia and Moravia, too—and published the first specialist journal in this field in the form of reports and newsletters.

There is also evidence of similar efforts made in the crown lands; the *Society of Patriotic Art Lovers*, for example, was founded in Prague in 1796. Set up as a society for patrons and art collectors, it also contributed to the protection of cultural monuments, though this was not actually part of its remit. The first institution to dedicate itself to research in this sense and to the deliberate preservation of monuments was the National Museum in Prague, which was founded in 1818.

The awareness of fine art monuments that had survived and been studied by art historians evolved to such an extent that it had a decisive impact on feelings of identity with the imperial state. Examples of this include major restoration projects such as the completion of St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague (1872–1929) and the documentation of the antique palace of Emperor Diocletian in Split (Dalmatia). Scant consideration has been given to the fact that the famous Viennese art historian Alois Riegl (1858–1905) not only established a new theoretical foundation for the preservation of historical monuments during this time, but also that he devoted all his energies to it in the last three years of his life, as a member and later as the general conservator of the k.k. Central-Commission. In 1903, he published his *Draft for the lawful Protection of Historic Monuments in the Austria-Hungarian Empire* (*Entwurf einer gesetzlichen Organisation der Denkmalpflege in Österreich*) with the important first chapter “The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Origin (*Der moderne Denkmalkultus. Sein Wesen und seine Entstehung*)” in which he developed his famous theory of the *Alterswert* (age-value) (Riegl 1903). The excavation of Diocletian’s palace in Split is just one example of Riegl’s activities (Olin 1994, 107–20; Falser 2008, 91–2).

The depiction of Austrian national history as the history of the imperial Austrian state was the declared aim of Joseph Alexander Freiherr von Helfert (1820–1910), the undersecretary at the Ministry of Education between 1848 and 1860 (Telesko 2006, 322–3; Falser 2008, 91–4). He believed that a pertinent knowledge of the history of the Austrian state would eventually lead to the kind of national Austrian awareness that he wished to bring about—one that would also be open to and tolerant of regional and national myths. On the one hand, Helfert believed (as did Joseph Freiherr von Hormayr) that the pre-eminent function of history and historical research was to raise the awareness required to integrate each part of the empire. On the other, however, he wanted to ensure that the histories of the Habsburg lands could not be exploited by “centrifugal forces”—that is, by nationalist movements. For this reason Helfert preferred to interpret the concept of “nation” in political rather than in ethnographic terms. He declared emphatically, “[. . .] Austria’s national history for us is the history of the entire Austrian state and its entire people [. . .]” (cited after Telesko 2006, 323). Furthermore, he argued

vehemently for a truly popular representation of Austrian history in the best sense of the word, one that would be readily understood and adopted by the majority of the population.

Encyclopaedic Projects to Map Ethnic and Cultural Heritage

The situation was to change in the second half of the century in the sense that attention began to be paid to a wider scope of investigation. Developing in parallel with the measures carried out in the field of monument preservation, outlined above, the cultural heritage of the past and present was examined in a number of important publications to ensure that it would not be forgotten. Just as had been done in the first half of the century, Austria as the superordinate nation-state offered a suitable constitutional framework for the representation of cultural diversity. In particular, the specific plurality of the various nationalities that characterized Austria to such a large degree offered an opportunity for identification on several levels. The *Oesterreichische National-Encyklopädie* of Franz Gräffer and Johann Jakob Heinrich Czykann (1835–1837) pleaded not only for the recognition of this cultural diversity; it also introduced the concept of a superordinate nation-state that was supposed to link the autonomous nations to each other. It presented both public figures (such as statesmen, scholars, poets, and writers) and key cultural aspects (including towns, monuments, specific natural features, and popular customs) from Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Croatia, Transylvania, Slovenia, and Galicia with exemplary impartiality.

The manifest concept behind the encyclopaedia was only taken up again for extensive development by Rudolf, Archduke and Crown Prince of Austria (1858–1889). Finally completed in 1902, the *Kronprinzenwerk* consisted of twenty-four volumes and was published as *Die österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild* between 1886 and 1902 (Zintzen 1999, 2002; Telesko 2006, 324–7; Falser 2008, 94–7). The notions of “ethnography” and “folklore” are used in these works; both terms are important in that—in contrast to the German version of ethnography—they emphasize unity within the diversity of the Habsburg Monarchy. The *Kronprinzenwerk* was published in 397 installments, which were brought together in a total of twenty-four quarto volumes that first began to appear in 1886. Each ethnic group was to have its own place in this comprehensive account, which aimed to document the entire multi-ethnic empire with its crown lands in 587 monographic articles by 432 authors on the basis of the most up-to-date scientific methods. All of the articles underwent equal treatment. As the programmatic title already indicates, illustrations were now of equal value to words and appeared next to the text. The complete work was published in a German and Hungarian edition and consisted of 12,596 pages of text (in the German edition) and no less than 4,529 illustrations in the form of woodcuts. A special committee comprising a total of 264 artists from all

of the crown lands was responsible for the artwork and was headed by Hans (Johann Nepomuk) Graf Wilczek (1837–1922) and Nikolaus Dumba (1830–1900). The twenty-four German and twenty-one Hungarian volumes had the daunting task of describing the entire field of culture in the Monarchy and its crown lands, including its landscapes and peoples, though it should be noted that the separate Austrian and Hungarian editorial committees completely failed to meet the Crown Prince’s original objective. The extremely ambitious goal of the overall work is also revealed in a note addressed to the emperor from Archduke Rudolf in 1884. It stated that the work was intended to provide a “[. . .] comprehensive picture of our Fatherland and its peoples [. . .]” (cited after Telesko 2006, 324). Significantly, the introduction written by Crown Prince Rudolf in 1887 stated that the study of the peoples within the Empire was “[. . .] also of practical value for bolstering the general love of the Fatherland [. . .]” (cited after Telesko 2006, 325); thus, the work clearly drew on concepts of the early nineteenth century. And, one might add, it was on this theoretical basis that the publication aimed to provide scientific proof that the Monarchy was not a construct of chance, but of necessity. Descriptions of each crown land were added volume by volume so that the *Kronprinzenwerk* was rightly interpreted as an attempt to simulate or realize the multi-ethnic state in book form; it was regarded as a true reflection of the Monarchy.

As a result, the entries in the *Kronprinzenwerk* covered a correspondingly broad swathe of subjects. In general, the treatment of each crown land featured the following aspects: geographic descriptions of the individual landscapes, ancient history, the Roman period (Fig. 1a) and the great migration, regional history, Habsburg legends and myths (Fig. 1b), ethnography, music, literature and theatre, architecture and the fine arts, as well as various activities within the framework of the national economy.

Moreover, and in keeping with the pluralist nature of the Austrian imperial state, the ethnographic texts were written mainly by specialists and consequently offered an extremely knowledgeable “internal perspective,” meaning that the writer came from the same ethnic group that he was describing. In most cases, the history of the particular crown land was illustrated through the depiction of important artworks. This approach enabled the most important visual depictions of the history of the Austrian state to become widely popularized. As visual stereotypes, their significance for the way that the crown lands came to be regarded should not be underestimated. In addition to the depiction of works emanating from the fine arts and popular or folk art, the functionalization of natural monuments in the regions in the *Kronprinzenwerk* revealed a completely new dimension, the specific purpose of which was to convey positive feelings and emotions. Crown Prince Rudolf used this concept to refer to a “romantic” form, as it were, of representing nature—that is, the landscape, flora and fauna—and to present them as central notions of patriotic innocence. In this way the artistic heritage and natural landscape of a region became stylized and important points of reference for a kind of patriotic pride that transcended the realm of politics. The close connection between a people, its landscape or ethnic group, and geography inevitably resulted in the construction of fictitious unities that were intended to forge a collective identity. A particular

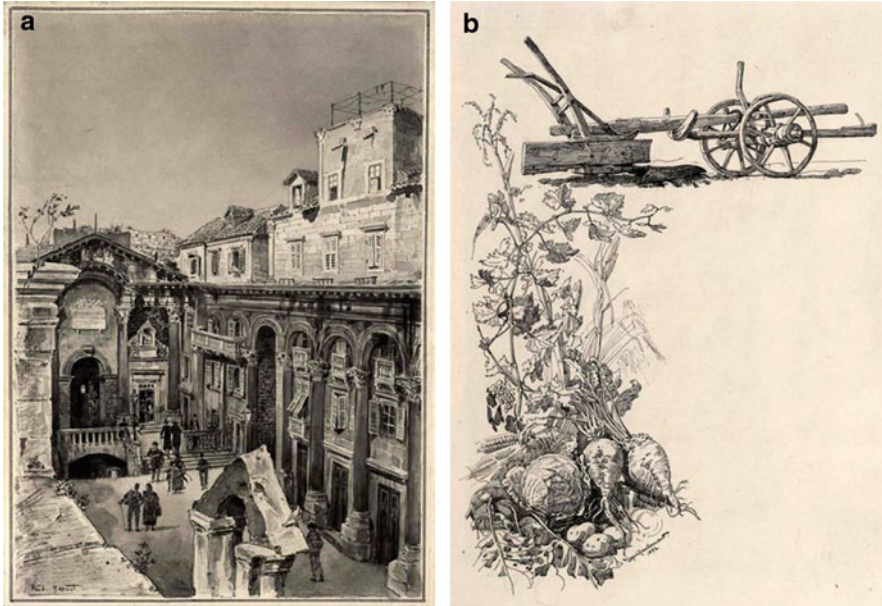


Fig. 1 (a) Diocletian's Palace, watercolour, before 1892, signed by Rudolf Bernt, preparatory drawing for the *Kronprinzenwerk*, volume Dalmatia (1892), 257 (Source: Vienna, Austrian National Library, Picture Archives and Graphics Department, inventory number Pk 1131, 148). (b) The plough of Emperor Joseph II, watercolour, 1892, signed by Hugo Charlemont, preparatory drawing for the *Kronprinzenwerk*, volume Moravia and Silesia (1897), 405 (Source: Vienna, Austrian National Library, Picture Archives and Graphics Department, inventory number Pk 1131, 618)

“mission to civilize” *inside the state* can be observed in this strategy: since *Realpolitik* in the late phase of the Habsburg Monarchy proved all but incapable of establishing unquestioning links to an abstract idea of the state. Geographic and cultural discourse began to use specific regional features as a means of conveying patriotic feelings towards the Fatherland. The illustrations in the volumes are characterized by a variety of viewpoints wherein traditional farmhouses were reproduced side-by-side with vernacular houses in the borderlands (Falser 2008, 94–6) (Figs. 2 and 3).

A look at the *Ethnographie der Oesterreichischen Monarchie* (3 volumes, Vienna 1855–1857) by Carl Freiherr Czoernig von Czernhausen clearly demonstrates that in order to understand the astoundingly widespread distribution and popularity of the *Kronprinzenwerk* we have to recall similar works that preceded it in the nineteenth century. Czoernig was the director of the commission for administrative statistics in the Austrian Empire and worked on a programme aimed at centralizing and modernizing the Monarchy. When compared with the *Ethno-Sociologie* of Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) Czoernig's ethnography, however, seemed hopelessly outdated. A further precursor of the design of the

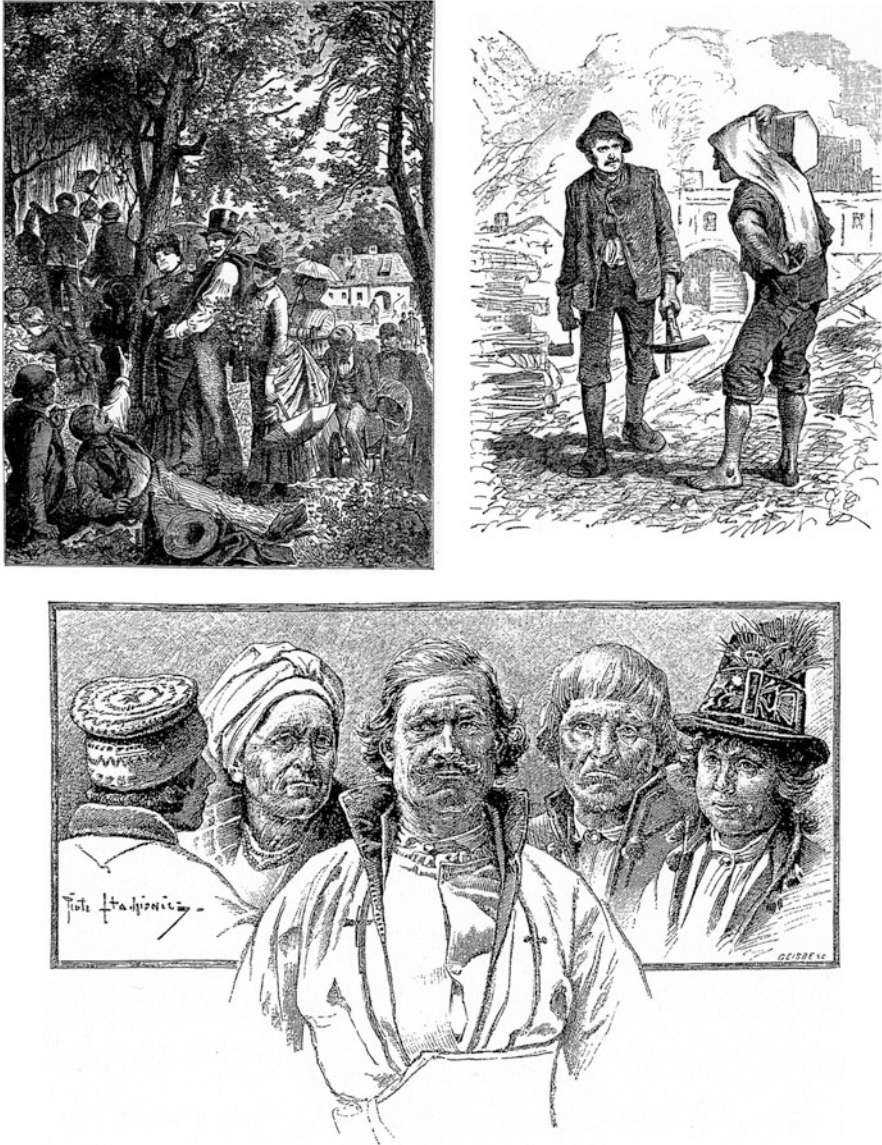


Fig. 2 Depictions of people from the *Kronprinzenwerk* (1885–1902): Viennese on a picnic excursion (upper left), salt mine workers (upper right), and people from Galicia (Source: Diverse illustrations from *Die österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild*, collage Falser 2015)

Kronprinzenwerk was the publication of *Die Volksstämme der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie, ihre Gebiete, Gränzen und Inseln* (Vienna 1869) compiled by Czoernig's successor in Vienna's central commission for statistics, Adolf Ficker (1816–1880). In addition, the 13-volume compendium entitled *Die Völker*

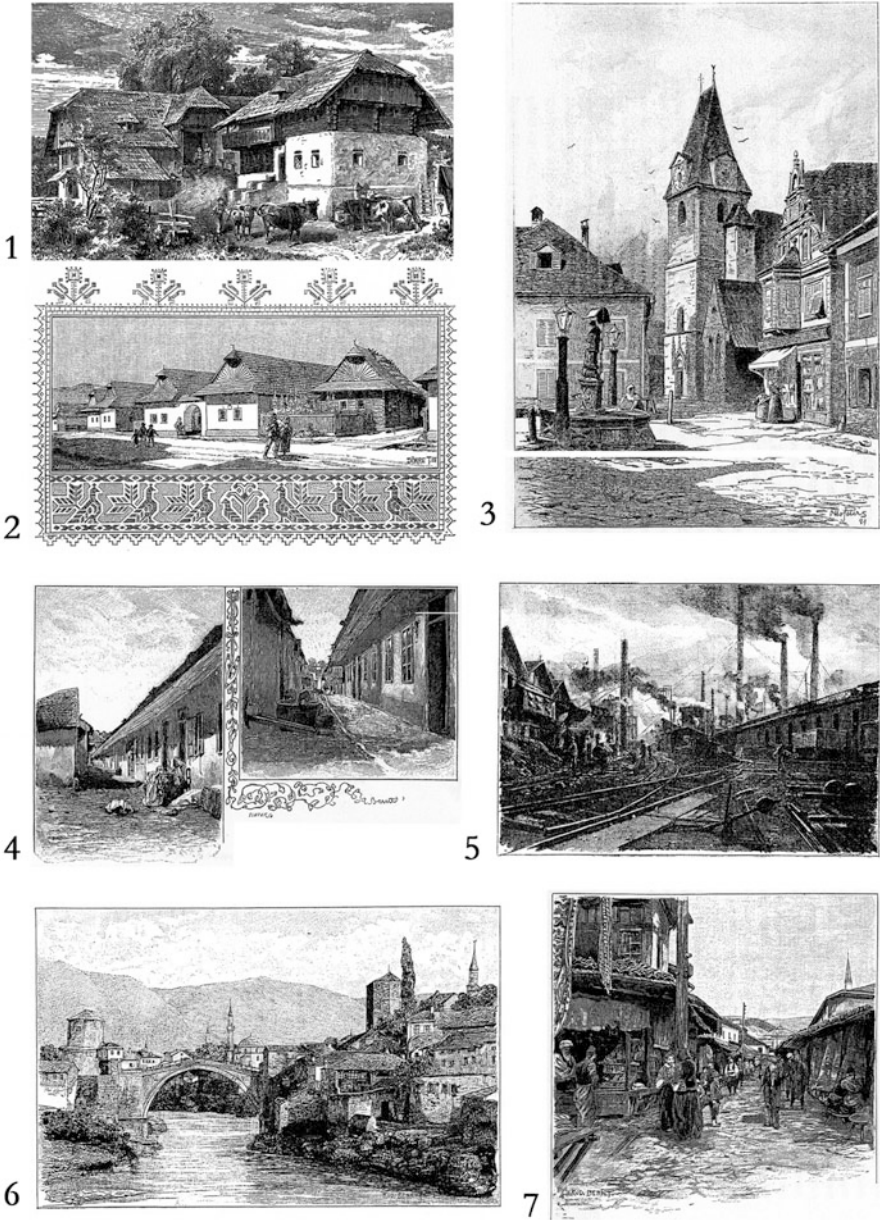


Fig. 3 Depictions of different architectures from the *Kronprinzenwerk* (1885–1902): an Austrian core state of Styria (1), vernacular houses in the Hungarian-Slovakian borderland (2), typical Austrian churches (3), houses for workers and the disabled in the Czech town of Brno (4), the iron works in Moravia (5), the famous Bridge of Mostar (6), and a typical street scene from Sarajevo (7) (Source: Diverse illustrations from *Die österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild*, collage Falser 2015)

Österreich-Ungarns. Ethnographische und culturhistorische Schilderungen was published by Carl Prochaska in Teschen (Austrian Silesia) between 1881 and 1883.

In other words, the literature of ethnography and cultural history that flourished in the final quarter of the nineteenth century dealt with the goals of modernization as well as offering a historical review. Czoernig, for example, became actively involved in an attempt to restructure Austria when he was entrusted with the organization of several central bodies, including the central maritime authority in Trieste, the above-mentioned *Zentralkommission für Erhaltung der Baudenkmäler*, and the central commission for statistics. It is for good reason that the title of his work *Österreichs Neugestaltung von 1848–1858* (1858) is programmatic in nature. Throughout history, states and rulers have repeatedly used a variety of survey methods and different forms of presentation to produce knowledge about demographic, territorial, social, societal, or ethnic matters within and at the borders of a given territory. In such cases the data was compiled, evaluated, interpreted, merged, illustrated, and thus made “readable” prior to publication. It could be said that such data produced a real knowledge—that is, knowledge about and knowledge of a geographical area. It was collected using the instruments of “regional descriptions” and an “ordnance survey” that formed part of official cartography. The resultant “areal knowledge” played a vital role in the expansion of Habsburg power towards the east and southeast, not only at the end of the seventeenth century and in the eighteenth century but also in the development of nation-state and regional identities in the nineteenth century. Whereas constructions of spatialized worldviews still tended to be the centre of attention in the seventeenth century, the cartography of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries increasingly claimed that it was able to offer a realistic depiction of an area, particularly in the field of official topographic, cadastral, and technical maps. As Diana Reynolds has demonstrated, the extensive exploration of the question of (post)colonial discourses in the Habsburg Monarchy also becomes evident in questions related to the arts and crafts (Reynolds 2003). Her research has proved that even seemingly apolitical genres of art production, like the arts and crafts, were capable of documenting hegemonial aspirations. She investigated Austria’s “civilizing mission” in Bosnia on the basis of the reform of the arts and crafts industry and as an example of inner colonization within the Habsburg Monarchy. A network of provincial museums, arts and crafts museums, new sciences (such as ethnology and art history), and exhibitions embodied the state’s involvement in the crown lands. Here was the example of a gentle yet insistent claim to power by the modern state, which was able to exert its influence on the population in educational terms with the aid of knowledge that was carefully organized and imparted by museums and exhibitions.

We can therefore see that the question of Habsburg “civilizing missions” was recognized as an issue in the final quarter of the nineteenth century with the aid of different disciplines and media—either in the form of studies intended for use in an encyclopaedia that duly recognized the accomplishments of each crown land (cf. the *Kronprinzenwerk*), or in the form of explicit artistic policy that manifested itself in the reform of the arts and crafts industries and the staging of exhibitions.

Ultimately, such actions can always be regarded as manifestations of cultural and educational policy whose aim is to create unity within diversity. To take just one example, on October 4, 1875, after it had been incorporated into the Habsburg Monarchy in 1774/1775, Emperor Franz Joseph founded a German university that bore his name in the town of Czernowitz, the capital of the crown land of Bukovina.

The functionalization of the folk song during the Habsburg Monarchy also forms part of the context of “artistic policy.” Both the *Volksliedunternehmen*, which was founded in 1904, and the *Musikhistorische Zentrale beim k. u. k. Kriegsministerium*, which was created in 1916, expended an enormous amount of time and effort collecting folk songs from all the ethnic groups represented in the empire. Both establishments pursued the same basic idea of overcoming national differences through the supposed ability of music to unite different ethnic groups above and beyond the confines of politics. By stressing the positive value of ethnic and cultural diversity in the empire, the collection of folk songs was intended to reinforce the notion of the Habsburg Monarchy as a single, unified state. After all, the simple voice of humanity emanating from the folk songs constituted the source of spiritual affinity among the ethnic groups in the Monarchy. However, the activities of these two institutions also reveal the difficulties of this undertaking. Critics from the non-German (speaking) “national tribes” regarded them as acts of interference in their internal national affairs. Inevitably, conflicts resulted from the opinion that the folk song was the clearest mirror of the people’s soul and hence the expression of a hypostatic national character. It was associated with value judgements that made the German (language) song the benchmark for the folk songs of other ethnic groups. Similar problems are evident in the appraisal of architecture; architectural concepts were frequently as at odds with each other as national and universal “languages” in the nineteenth century. Otto Wagner, the architect of Vienna’s post office savings bank, and Ödön Lechner, the architect of the post office savings bank in Budapest, are paradigms for the contrast between these different tendencies. While Lechner advocated the idea that the development of a national Hungarian style was necessary, Wagner believed that the city itself constituted the basic point of departure for architectural design and concluded that there could be no such thing as a national design since all cities are structured in the same way. Their different approaches demonstrate how the conflicting relationship between rustic-national and urban-a national architecture became increasingly evident (Moravánszky 1988).

Conclusions

The situation during the Habsburg Monarchy in the nineteenth and early twentieth century is characterized by a confusing variety of phenomena that derived from the processes of centralization and regionalization, and which existed side-by-side. On the one hand, administrative measures that had the effect of promoting an inner colonization of the empire can be regarded as part of a “civilizing mission.”

In particular, the centralistic Bach ministry between 1852 and 1859 (Alexander Freiherr von Bach, 1813–1893) pursued the goal of implementing a specific cultural system in all the Habsburg crown lands. Standardization “from above” came from the unified state and also occurred within parts of the Habsburg state structure: the policy of “magyarisation” in Hungary offers an instructive example of this. Secondly, there were also efforts to achieve homogenization “from below.” In such cases the dominant social classes were intent on securing their supremacy. The resultant weakening of centrifugal forces should be understood in the sense of a *functional enlightenment* (Bodi 1977) and went hand-in-hand with the vertical process of socio-economic differentiation. Both processes are essential components of the “Modern Age.” Furthermore, the non-verbal, symbolic language of architecture that gave rise to the uniform architectural style of numerous public buildings in the “Danube Monarchy” also had a standardizing effect.

On the other hand, the *Kronprinzenwerk* clearly shows an awareness of the existence of diversities. It not only noted the differences between the cultures of the crown lands but also investigated their history and “codified” them as such. With the resultant particularities, all the national cultures were visibly integrated into the structure of the Habsburg Monarchy, even though the *Kronprinzenwerk* assumed that each ethnic group in the Monarchy had its particular place in a cultural hierarchy (Telesko 2008).

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German Colonialism and the Formation of African Heritage

Winfried Speitkamp

Abstract In the era of colonialism most contemporaries still viewed Africa as a continent without history. Leo Frobenius, who laid the foundation for African studies in Germany, was one of the first to underline the cultural achievements in African history. Because Frobenius constructed the immaterial heritage of African culture, he is seen in Africa as a forerunner of African emancipation; this view forms the starting point for my argument. The example of Frobenius hints at the changing image of Africa in German thought especially concerning, on the one hand, the German Empire's civilizing mission and on the other, Africa's cultural heritage. This article addresses German reports on Africa dating from the pre-colonial era. First, it presents early colonial authors and their influential views on Africa; second, it asks whether the loss of Germany's colonies had any impact on the view of African culture and heritage; And finally, it looks at Frobenius, who shaped the image of Africa in the twentieth century and who even influenced Africa's views on itself—the effects of which can be felt to the present day.

Introduction

In 1968 the Senegalese poet and politician Leopold Sédar Senghor (1906–2001) published a short essay entitled *Négritude et Germanisme* (in German: *Afrika und die Deutschen*) (Senghor 1968). Senghor discussed the relationship between African *Négritude* and German cultural debates since the turn of the twentieth century. *Négritude* was a literary and philosophical movement developed by a group of intellectuals living in Paris in the 1920s and 1930s who mostly came from Francophone Africa or the Caribbean. The most famous representatives of *Négritude* thinking were Senghor and Aimé Césaire (1913–2008). *Négritude* idealized pre-colonial African life, which was believed to embody values like community,

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family life, agrarian work, and living in harmony with nature (Vaillant 1990; Riesz 2006; Heinrichs 1992). It was the Francophone counterpart to the rather Anglophone Pan-Africanism movement, which was more engaged in political questions (Geiss 1968; Langley 1973, 1979); the authors of *Négritude*, by contrast, preferred to express their thoughts about Africa through poetry and literature.

When Senghor praised the relations between what he called “germanisme” and *Négritude* he particularly underlined the importance of Leo Frobenius (1873–1938), a German ethnologist and specialist in African culture whose *Kulturgeschichte Afrikas* was first published in 1933 and was recently re-edited (Frobenius 1998). In this book Frobenius presented a wide range of material and tales, including material relicts like statues, to re-vitalize African thinking and living. Frobenius also drew up the concept of so-called *Kulturkreise*. These *Kulturkreise* represented a special way of thinking and feeling that, in Frobenius’s opinion, had to be understood by scholars through empathy. Although Frobenius was the first Westerner to underline the cultural achievements of African history, most of his contemporaries still saw Africa as a continent without history. Although today most German ethnologists view Frobenius as an outsider whose research methods do not meet modern academic standards, because Frobenius constructed the immaterial heritage of African culture in the eyes of the West, in Africa he is seen as a pioneer of African emancipation; it is this view that will form the starting point for my article. The example of Frobenius hints at Africa’s changing image in German thought, especially as regards the construction of primitivism on the one hand and of cultural heritage on the other. In fact, it was seldom asked precisely how the image of African primitivism was shaped and whether and when African heritage was discovered or, rather, constructed. It is therefore necessary to shed some light on the changes in German views on Africa in order to understand the images of Africa and the pictures of primitivism that were drawn in German minds.

This article will proceed in four steps: First, it will discuss some German reports on Africa dating from the pre-colonial decades; second, it presents two early colonial authors and their influential views on Africa; third, it asks whether the loss of Germany’s colonies had any impact on colonial authors and their view on African culture and heritage; and fourth, it hints at the consequences of this, especially through Frobenius, who shaped the Western image of Africa in the twentieth century and who even influenced African views on itself; Frobenius’s effect can be seen and felt to this day.

The Pre-Colonial Period

From the beginning of the nineteenth century up to the 1870s several Germans travelled through Africa and wrote about their experiences. Amongst them were hunters, mercenaries, missionaries, and scientists (many of whom were also geographers), but also journalists and adventurers (Essner 1985). Some became famous and others are already forgotten; but all provided valuable information about

Africa, its peoples, cultures, and landscapes. Ethnological research has concentrated on this travelling and has also pointed out that Europeans in Africa only saw what they wanted to see, that they created an African culture in their minds which they conveyed (along with their prejudices) in their reports (Rotberg 1970). Indeed, recent research has favoured the study of zones of transcultural encounter, of contact and interchange (Pesek 2005). And in fact, the early reports differed remarkably depending on the situation of the traveller and his encounters (Marx 1988). Some of the travellers remained aloof foreigners and others virtually integrated into African cultures, which was possible because it is understood that their travels usually lasted not just months but several years in many cases. Up until the 1860s a common feature of the pre-colonial reports was that they did not reflect either nationalist or even Darwinist or explicitly racist views. Indeed, more than anything these early reports reveal an all-embracing curiosity about the strange and exotic experiences, cultures, people, and behaviour of Africa. Of course, most of the travellers had a deeply rooted feeling of superiority in relation to Africans, but they were far from neglecting or denying any African achievements, African culture, and African wisdom in coming to terms with difficult natural conditions. They did not describe Africa as a continent of tribes and chiefs but of states, peoples, and kings, using the terminology of Western political and social thought to explain to their readers the special forms of social and political organization in Africa. They found feudalism, civil servants, and officers; they criticized brutal or seemingly amoral practices, but often tried to explain the inner logic of these practices.

One of the most interesting of these travellers was the German geographer Heinrich Barth. Barth (1821–1865) completed his PhD thesis in ancient history and his Habilitation in geography, and by travelling through Africa he hoped to conduct research and to lay the foundation for an academic career in Germany. Barth travelled through Africa for six years from 1845 to 1847 and again from 1849 to 1855. He published thick volumes on his travels that were very detailed but lacked the narrative excitement and suspense of Henry M. Stanley or David Livingstone's writing (Barth 1857/1858). Back in Germany, Barth's hopes for an academic career languished. He was awarded a professorship in Berlin only two years before his death, and soon after he was gone, since his esteem and respect for Africa did not fit with the colonial imperialist and nationalist atmosphere that had developed at the end of the nineteenth century, he was virtually forgotten. It is only in recent years that his work has been revived and rediscovered as a significant milestone in German African studies.

Barth accepted Africa as a continent with its own history. He made use of the new sources he found, especially of rock paintings, to do research on ancient African history. Unlike later travellers, Barth did not provide any rationales for colonial annexation. In his reports and in an article on *Neger, Negerstaaten* (*Negroes, Negro states*) in the *Deutsches Staats-Wörterbuch*, published in 1862, Barth gave a careful overview of aspects of the geography, culture, society, and the state in Africa (Barth 1862). He even analysed the term Negro, underlining that there were a wide range of cultures living and working in Africa and that the term

was far from a precise definition of all the diverse people in Africa. Barth described several political formations as states and empires, he wrote of nations and peoples, and he found aristocracies, monarchies, and republican formations in Africa without noting any principal differences between the social and political formations in Africa and elsewhere in the world. He particularly analysed empires, like those found in Mali, West Africa, during the Middle Ages where he identified for the first time a sort of imperial administration.

Barth also drew particular attention to the role of Islam in Africa. While he criticized some traditional forms of religious culture in Africa south of the Sahara, especially magical practices, human sacrifices, circumcision, and polygamy, he underlined the beneficial influence of Islamic religion and culture, for example, in bringing an end to human sacrifices, and the restrictions concerning polygamy and alcoholic drinking. From this perspective, Muslim influence represented a legal state and the “humanization” of African societies. There was one important exception to this perspective: slavery, which was introduced or at least expanded by the Muslim elites. Barth also criticized the role and influence of some Europeans in Early Modern African history, especially that of the Portuguese, harshly.

Barth also underlined African achievements in industry and commerce. While nineteenth-century philosophers and historians like Georg Wilhelm Hegel and even the liberal Karl von Rotteck described Africa as a continent without advancement, progress, and, consequently, without history (von Rotteck 1834, 60 and 80; Hegel 1928), Barth described a dynamic continent characterized by a permanent mobility of goods, ideas, and values. Nevertheless, he ascribed most forms of progress to Muslim influence and saw pagan societies as potentially despotic. Consequently, Barth described Ashanti on the one hand as an example of a highly organized and strong state, but on the other he criticized the despotic elements of a state that, in his eyes, seemed unable to achieve important cultural improvements. All in all, Barth was remarkably open in his descriptions of African societies in the decades before colonization. In fact, he recognized the enormous potential of African societies and saw it as his duty to underline African heritage in world history.

Colonial authors

Less than twenty years later the situation changed dramatically. On the eve of colonialism (that is, in the years before the scramble for Africa) several merchants, adventurers etc. travelled to Africa and published their travelogues in Germany. Most of them drew a picture of a continent characterized by barbarous customs and divided by tribal conflict; in other words, a continent that needed the civilizing intervention of Europeans. Among this latter group of travellers were Carl Peters and Hermann Wissmann, a historian and military officer respectively. Both travelled to Africa on their own initiative; both became interested in German colonialism, which began in 1884 (Gründer 1999, 2005; Speitkamp 2014); both were awarded, for a short period, leading positions in the German colonial administration

in East Africa; and both came into conflict with the Berlin government and the public in Germany. Peters had to quit service; Wissmann resigned his post for health reasons.

Hermann Wissmann (1853–1905) began his African career travelling with Belgian and other expeditions. Although he had geographical interests, he was not interested in African cultures and political systems. He did not engage directly in colonial expansion, but when he was asked by the Berlin government to defeat the so-called Arab uprising in German East Africa in 1880 he did not hesitate to wage brutal war on the African population. In his reports and books Wissmann distinguished between the natural heritage of Africa and the human societies that, in his view, seemed unable to produce any cultural advancement (von Wissmann et al. 1888; von Wissmann 1889).

Carl Peters (1856–1918) went one step further. Peters was a blatantly racist author and colonial agitator and his publications integrated a rude version of Darwinist thought. He founded the *Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation* (*The Association for German Colonization*), which initiated colonial expeditions in order to acquire territories overseas (Perras 2006). In autumn 1884, Peters travelled to the Usagara Region of East Africa where he concluded twelve treaties with local chiefs and leaders (Peters 1943a, b). On the basis of these treaties he sought to convince the German government and Otto von Bismarck to engage in Africa and to establish a German protectorate there. Peters searched for a German colony that was equivalent to England's relationship with India, a so-called "deutsches Indien"; in other words, a rich and promising territory that would solve all the problems of German society, attract German settlers, initiate plantations, and open up a new market. Peters did not attribute any cultural achievements to Africa south of the Sahara and he saw neither cultural nor natural heritage in the continent. The region's nature was, in his view, merely exotic and dangerous, and Africans themselves were an extension of this exotic nature. Peters described Africa as a continent of savages and of fools behaving like children or animals, and in his writings he even compared African servants to devoted dogs. Although he was required to accept Africans as equal counterparts in the preparation of the treaties, he was convinced that Africans themselves longed for European help and domination in developing their (material) resources.

Even the growing knowledge of Africa did not change this view, at least in the following twenty years. For example, Hermann Wissmann, the retired colonial hero and commander, published a small book in 1895 intended as a guide for people going to the colonies on how to deal with Africans (von Wissmann 1895). Africa, he warned, was still not awakened to culture and civilization. Officers and civil servants should take part in the advancement of science by promoting, for example, geographical research. Nevertheless, even the publications of German Africa specialists after 1884 (after the annexation of so-called protectorates) underlined the belief that Africa was a continent of primitivism and barbarism (Fig. 1).

Likewise, contemporary mass media, novels, and reports confirmed and illustrated this image. This is certainly the case in the colonial novels written by Frieda von Bülow. In *Tropenkoller*, for example, African traditions and African people

Fig. 1 A depiction in Hermann von Wissmann's 1890 publication *Meine zweite Durchquerung Äquatorial-Afrikas: vom Congo zum Zambesi; während der Jahre 1886 und 1887* (Source: von Wissmann 1890, illustration between VIII and I)



merely serve as the exotic background for the German protagonists and their relations, problems, and even war campaigns (von Bülow 1896). Africa was depicted as having no right of its own and as being entirely at the disposal of Germans.

Nevertheless, during the decades of German colonial power several missionaries, researchers, and geographers, among others, began to record African customs, myths, and tales for scientific or administrative reasons, or in cases of judicial conflicts. At the end of Germany's colonial period a wide range of information had been gathered that formed the basis for African cultural heritage as it was perceived and constructed by German observers.

Post-Colonial Revisionism

After World War I, as Germany lost its colonies, the situation changed again dramatically. Most German colonialist settlers had to return to Germany and only those in German South-West Africa were allowed to stay on their farms. In Germany, former officers, merchants, or administrators in Africa established associations to fight for the revision of the Treaty of Versailles (von Strandmann 1983;

Rüger 1991). A broad literature on colonial experiences and colonial politics accompanied this movement against the regulations of Versailles, particularly as concerned the main accusations made against German colonial policy in the Treaty; namely, that because of mismanagement and inhumane behaviour towards Africans, Germany was unable to initiate a human and rational colonial policy. This collective insult had a deep impact on the German public. Indeed, it ran contrary to Germany's self-perception as a colonial power, which was illustrated in the numerous novels, poems, songs, exhibitions, and lectures and drew an idyllic picture of German colonial policy as a philanthropic enterprise initiated to help Africa, a sort of development programme. A common feature in all these publications was the deep feeling of being misunderstood, the feeling of being wrongly accused abroad and—last but not least—the feeling of disappointed hopes. In this context the so-called old Africans—the colonizers—described themselves as those who had understood and who had protected African cultural heritage against the neglect of Africans themselves. But what was African cultural heritage in their eyes?

One possible answer can be found in the example of Heinrich Schnee. Schnee (1871–1949), the former governor of German East Africa, became one of the most active propagandists for colonial revision in the Weimar republic. He held several posts in colonial organizations and served as a Member of Parliament and representative of a national liberal party, the *Deutsche Volkspartei*. He also had some influence in Berlin. With his infamous political pamphlet *Die koloniale Schuldflüge*, first published in 1924, he attempted to mobilize the German public against the loss of the colonies in the treaty of Versailles and to persuade the Allied powers of the philanthropic motives and practices of German colonial policy (Schnee 1927). Schnee reported on the achievements of German research in detail. He listed achievements in geology, geography, linguistics, medicine, botany, zoology, and agriculture as *Deutsche Kulturleistungen* but he never addressed whether or not Africa had a cultural heritage. Schnee was convinced that the Germans had developed African culture and had successfully imported a European civilization to its lands.

Another influential work by Heinrich Schnee was the *Deutsches Koloniallexikon*, prepared before the outbreak of World War I and published in three volumes in 1920 (Schnee 1920). The new preface announced the work as a contribution to the legitimization of German colonial policy. Schnee not only described the achievements of German colonial policy before 1914 but also African nature and culture in the former German territories. In fact, the encyclopaedia gathered a wide range of articles on special individuals, on German activities, and foremost on African peoples and geography. In this context the publication presented relicts of African tradition and culture and even illustrations showing African customs or architectural forms. Thus, perhaps unintentionally, the *Koloniallexikon* presented a picture of African heritage in the former German territories, albeit a scattered one (Fig. 2).

To sum up, in the decades between the World Wars German reports underlined the role of Germany as a trustee not only of the African peoples but also of African culture and advancement—this was quite different from the supposed behaviour of

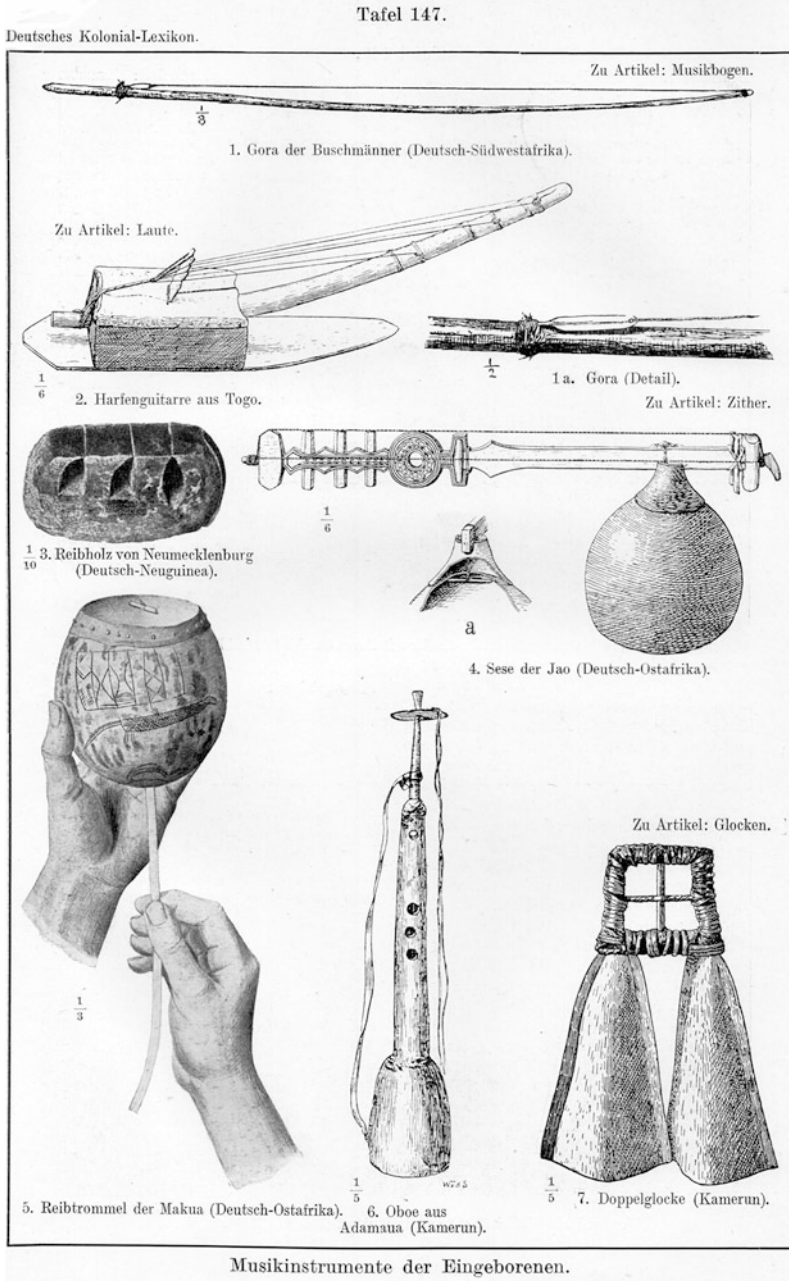


Fig. 2 An illustration of Heinrich Schnee’s *Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon* of 1920 about “musical instruments of the aborigines” (*Musikinstrumente der Eingeborenen*) (Source: Schnee 1920, vol. 2, plate 147)

the other European powers in Africa. It was only then that an image of African heritage began to take shape. The research conducted by colonial administrators, travellers, or missionaries stimulated the emergence of a new discipline of research that concentrated on Africa, which was named thereafter *Afrikanistik* or *Afrikawissenschaften*, meaning African Studies.

African Studies

The emergence of African Studies came to the fore in the next phase when renowned German ethnologists dealt with both material and immaterial African heritage and laid the foundation for modern African Studies in Germany. In fact, it was the first German researchers in Africa who created and even invented the concept of African cultural heritage. The most influential of these was the above-mentioned Leo Frobenius. Frobenius (1873–1938) was an autodidact; he had worked as an apprentice merchant but never studied at a university; between 1904 and 1935 he travelled several times to Africa. In 1932 he was appointed honorary professor (*Honorarprofessor*) at the University of Frankfurt, and in 1934 he became director of the *Frankfurter Völkerkundemuseum* (Frobenius 1933; Sylvain 1996; Heinrichs 1998; Kohl and Platte 2006; Nguepe 2006). Frobenius was famous for his above-mentioned “Kulturkreislehre,” which was influenced by his intellectual contemporary Oswald Spengler’s “Kulturmorphologie” in *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (Spengler 1986). Spengler’s “Kulturmorphologie” spoke of the quasi-biological life of the great cultures, their growth, blossoming, and decline. According to Frobenius’s definition, the cultures, or “Kulturkreise,” were characterized by a special feeling or a soul of their own (Frobenius 1953). In order to present the African soul or “Kulturseele” (*Paideuma*) Frobenius published his famous *Kulturgeschichte Afrikas* in 1933. The subtitle was *Prolegomena zu einer historischen Gestaltlehre*. The book did not treat the course of African history but rather the phenomenon of Africa and the elements of its culture, thinking, and feeling. In order to do this Frobenius analysed many sources, including rock and cave paintings in the Sahara. In the text and in numerous pictures and drawings as well as photos, Frobenius presented a wide range of elements forming cultural heritage (Figs. 3 and 4).

Furthermore, he underlined the cultural achievements of Africa and refused to discuss African culture in terms of barbarism. In order to better understand his view it is necessary to cite the following important passage from his book of 1933:

It is not as if the first European seamen of late medieval times had not already made remarkable observations of a similar type. When they arrived in the bay of Guinea and disembarked at Weida, the captains were surprised. Carefully established roads framed by planted trees stretched for many miles without interruption; days of travel through a land covered with superb fields, humans with splendid robes of self-made fabric! Towards the south, in the kingdom of Congo there was an overabundance of men attired in silk and velvet, and a painstakingly executed arrangement of large and well-organized states,

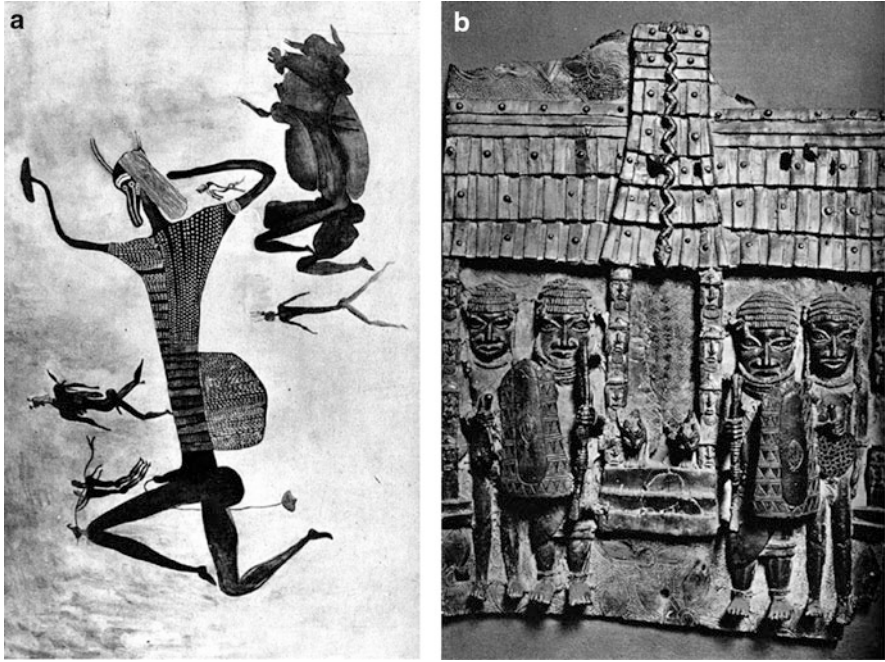


Fig. 3 Left (a): the depiction “Lying, outstretched figure of a king with mask, Rusape, South Rhodesia, South Africa” in the section on “Rock-painting from South Africa”; right (b): the depiction “Armed guardians at the entrance to the king’s palace, Benin, West Africa” in the section “Human figures”, both in Frobenius’s 1933 *Kulturgeschichte Afrikas* (Source: Frobenius, Leo. 1933. *Kulturgeschichte Afrikas*. Zurich: Phaidon, 508, plate 50 (left); and 552, plate 90 (right))

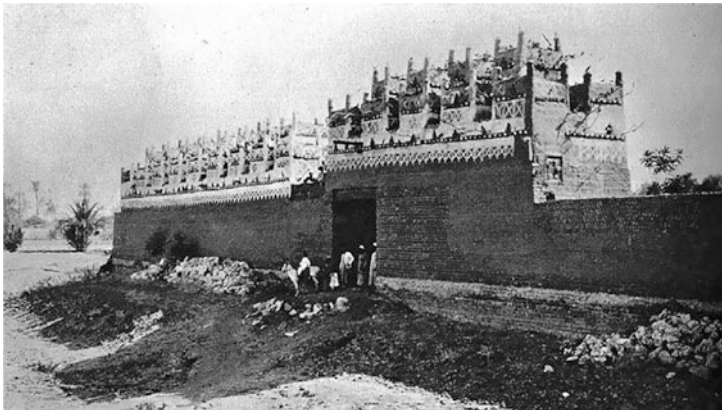


Fig. 4 “Egyptian pigeonries” in the section “architecture” in Frobenius’ 1933 *Kulturgeschichte Afrikas* (Source: Frobenius, Leo. 1933. *Kulturgeschichte Afrikas*. Zurich: Phaidon, 618, plate 154b)

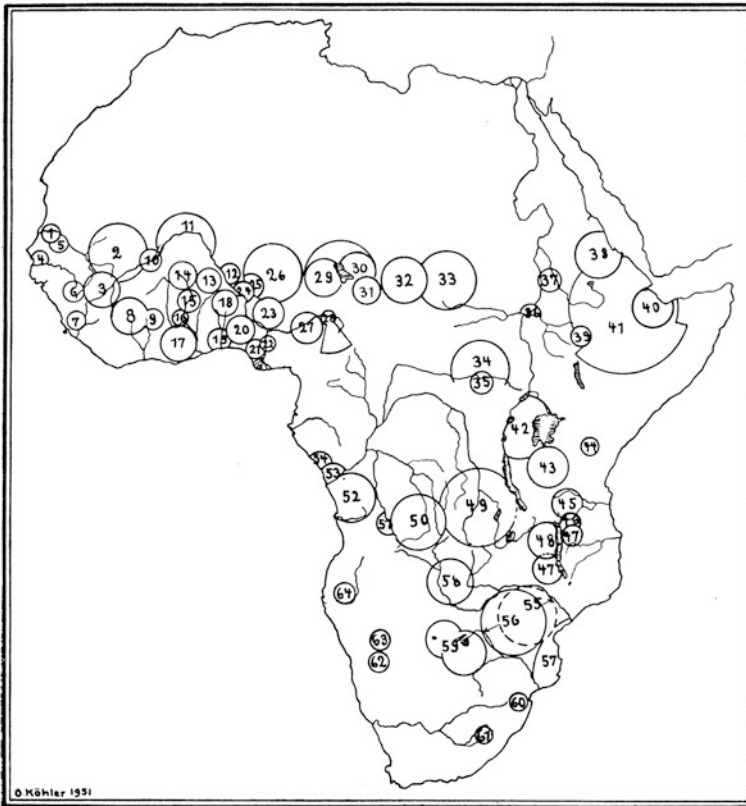
powerful rulers, abundant industries—**culture was in their bones!** [*Kultur bis in die Knochen*] The very same circumstance was to be found in the countries to the east, for example at the coast of Mozambique. From the reports of the seamen from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, there is no doubt that Negro Africa [*Negerafrika*] extending from the desert belt of the Sahara towards the south was, at that time, blossoming in a full beauty of harmoniously well-ordered cultures. The European conquistadors destroyed this blossom wherever they invaded. This was because the new land of America needed slaves; Africa offered slaves. Slaves by the hundreds, thousands, shiploads! However, the slave trade has never been an easy business. It needed a justification and so the Negro was turned into a half-animal, into a commodity [*So wurde der Neger zu einem Halbtier, gemacht, zu einer Ware*] [...] The concept of the “barbarian Negro” is an invention of Europe that has retroactively influenced Europe even up to the beginning of this century. [*Die Vorstellung vom, barbarischen Neger’ ist aber eine Schöpfung Europas, die dann rückwirkend Europa noch bin in den Anfang dieses Jahrhunderts beherrscht hat.*¹ (Frobenius 1998, 13–14)

Leo Frobenius (1933) *Kulturgeschichte Afrikas*

In Frobenius’s eyes the highlights of world culture and even of “Bildung” could be found in Africa. Furthermore, Frobenius criticized the influence of colonial penetration in the continent. While the objects of African culture were presented in museums across Europe, all that was left in Africa was “europäische Schundware, verelendete Hosennigger und schmarotzende Niggerclerks.” So that the high cultures of Africa were corrupted by Western civilization: “[. . .] auch diese letzten ‘Inseln der Seligen’ wurden mittlerweile von den Sturzwellen europäischer Zivilisation überflutet. Und die friedliche Schönheit wurde fortgespült.” (Frobenius 1998, 15).

However, not all of the representatives of African studies in Germany were prepared to admit that Africa had its own cultural heritage. A contemporary of Frobenius, the ethnologist Diedrich Westermann (1875–1956) is a good example of the opportunities and limitations of African studies in the early days of the discipline. Like Frobenius, Westermann was an autodidact. He had lived and worked as a missionary in West Africa from 1900 to 1903. In the following years he published several dictionaries, grammar books, and studies on African languages. In 1909 he was awarded a chair in African Studies at Berlin University. In 1952 he published his *Geschichte Afrikas. Staatenbildungen südlich der Sahara* (Westermann 1968). In it he analysed a wide range of states and empires in African history and—perhaps unintentionally—drew a precise picture of the political structure and development of a dynamic continent. However, he also emphasized that all cultural and political achievements in Africa were based on imports from outside (Fig. 5).

¹ Translation by Michael Falser.



18. Lagekarte der Staaten und Herrschaften

- 1 Tekrur, 2 Gana, 3 Mali, 4 Nyumi, 5 Futa Toro und Ferlo, 6 Futa Djalo, 7 Temne, 8 Samori,
- 9 Kong, 10 Masina, 11 Songhai, 12 Dendi, 13 Gurma, 14 Mosi, 15 Mamprusi-Dagomba, 16,
- Gondja, 17 Aschanti, 18 Borgu, 19 Dahome, 20 Yoruba, 21 Benin, 22 Igara, 23 Nupe, 24 Kebbi,
- 25 Sokoto, 26 Hausa-Staaten, 27 Djukun, 28 Yola-Adamaua, 29 Bornu, 30 Kanem, 31 Bagirmi,
- 32 Wadai, 33 Darfor, 34 Zande, 35 Mangbetu, 36 Schilluk, 37 Sennar, 38 Aksum, 39 Kaffa,
- 40 Adal, 41 Abessinien, 42 Hima-Staaten, 43 Nyamwezi, 44 Caga, 45 Hehe, 46 Bena, 47 Ngoni,
- 48 Nkamanga, 49 Luba, 50 Lunda, 51 Mbangala, 52 Kongo, 53 Ngoyo und Kakongo, 54 Loango,
- 55 Monomotapa, 56 Matebele, 57 Manukosi, 58 Rotse, 59 Tawana, Kama, 60 Swazi, 61 Süd-
- Sotho (Basuto), 62 Hottentotten, 63 Herero, 64 Humbe.

Fig. 5 "Location map of the states and lordships" [*Lagekarte der Staaten und Herrschaften*] in Westermann's 1968 *Geschichte Afrikas. Staatenbildungen südlich der Sahara* (Source: Westermann 1968, 452, plate 18)

Conclusion

Frobenius and Westermann were both precursors of modern African Studies in Germany. Of course, they represent two opposite ways of thinking about African culture and heritage, and two traditions of German thought on Africa. On the one hand, Westermann was influenced by the work of the missionaries and colonial administrators who had gathered information on African languages, myths, and tales. Although established in the context of a civilizing mission their work formed the basis of an African heritage, though it was admittedly seen through the eyes of European Christians. Frobenius, on the other hand, created an African cultural heritage—and even invented Africa anew. It is remarkable that he was primarily interested in Africa’s immaterial heritage—what he called the African soul—and he created this immaterial heritage on the basis of material relicts of African history and culture. To return to my initial remarks: Today in German African Studies most researchers look on Frobenius and his un-academic methods of conducting research and of interpreting African culture with contempt; by contrast, many African intellectuals see him as a forefather of African studies—the only one who truly understood that the core of African cultural heritage lay in its soul. It was this perspective that Senghor admired in Frobenius and that inspired so many other African philosophical and political thinkers when they wrote and spoke about African emancipation. Indeed, not just the authors of *Négritude* but also political thinkers from the Pan-Africanism movement like Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972) drew on Frobenius’s work when they sought to formulate an African identity and an African personality, which was identified by a special way of thinking, feeling, and living, as the essence of African cultural heritage (Nkrumah 1957, 1970).

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Part II
Civilizing Missions (Post)colonial

Between the Colonial, the Global, and the Local—Civilizing India’s Past under Different Regimes

A.G. Krishna Menon

Abstract This paper examines the colonial conservation policies and practices in India with a view towards analysing its contemporary relevance. Colonial imperatives have now transformed into universal values that are promoted by global inter-governmental agencies like UNESCO, thus perpetuating the elision of the indigenous building maintenance practices initiated by the colonial government. In 1984 the situation began to change with the establishment of the *Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage* (INTACH), a non-government institution. The professionals working for INTACH began to understand the relevance of the indigenous practices that had been used to look after the architectural heritage of the country for millennia. In 2004, INTACH collated its experiences in a *Charter for the Conservation of Unprotected Architectural Heritage and Sites in India*, in which it defined the role of indigenous building and maintenance practices alongside the universal ideology. The INTACH Charter is a significant departure from global conservation philosophies, as it offers a considered response to the consequences of the colonial civilizing mission on the conservation of Indian antiquities.

Introduction

European colonization of India, particularly that of the British between 1757 and 1947, had a profound impact on all aspects of Indian society. It set in motion forces of change that the post-colonial nation is still grappling with and accommodating at the quotidian level. Scholars in many disciplines have attempted to fathom the depths of the transformation that took place and to understand its dynamics. However, there can be no simple explanation for this complex phenomena because multiple forces were at work simultaneously. In a recent book Karuna Mantena, for example, argued that there was a shift from the early nineteenth century when imperial expansion was justified in terms of development and the civilizing

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mission, to the period after the rebellion of 1857 when British rule in India found an “alibi” in the notion that Indian society was at a primitive level of social evolution (Mantena 2010). Such alibis rationalized the fundamentally exploitative nature of the colonial enterprise. Seen in another light, the transformation that took place on account of colonization also highlights the accommodative qualities of the indigenous civilization that had continuously adopted and adapted foreign influences for millennia to create a unique syncretic culture. British colonization was just the most recent chapter in that unfolding narrative.

The process of accommodation reveals the forces of complicity and resistance at play. Something was lost and something gained; and it is the task of the contemporary analyst to evaluate the consequences and, if possible, to suggest, with the benefit of hindsight, better ways of dealing with present circumstances. This has been my objective in examining the ideology of the *Archaeological Survey of India* (ASI) and its links to the colonial initiatives to preserve Indian architectural heritage. There is both irony and tragedy in the continuity of their vision, but when one recognizes that there are still opportunities to recover the losses, there is also hope.

One of the iconic texts guiding architectural conservation practice in India is John Marshall’s *Conservation Manual* published in 1923. Marshall was the director-general of the ASI from 1904 to 1928, during which time he consolidated the “modern” practice of conserving India’s architectural heritage. “Modern” is highlighted to distinguish it from the still extant, centuries-old building maintenance traditions¹ that Marshall and the colonial conservation establishment considered “primitive” and therefore ignored when they set about establishing new covenants for conserving Indian antiquities. They drew upon their own cultural imperatives in order to conserve Indian heritage buildings, and they believed that these ways were better. Perhaps the elision of the “traditional” and its replacement with “modern” processes can be seen as part of the larger “civilizing” mission of the colonialists, who sought to inculcate reason, rationality, and Enlightenment principles in the governance of a society and culture they believed to be lacking these qualities. Their derogatory perception of Indian civilization has already been well documented, perhaps most compellingly by Partha Mitter who analysed the Western stereotyping of Indian art and culture as the product of a “heathen” culture (Mitter 1977); this attitude inflected colonial administrative policy. Thus, Thomas Babington Macaulay could famously state in the *Minute on Education* he drafted in 1835, that the aim of colonial education was to raise “a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect” (Tillotson 1989, 33). The colonialist took for granted the superiority of Western civilization and the inferiority of Eastern. So deep was this prejudice and so comprehensive its influence on education and governance that it has even shaped Indian attitudes toward Indian civilization. Therefore, it is not surprising that almost

¹I am grateful to Niels Gutschow who clarified the distinction between “traditional building maintenance” and “traditional conservation.” These terms are often used interchangeably by conservation professionals.

one hundred years after Macaulay, Marshall compiled the *Conservation Manual*, which ignored traditional building maintenance practices in order to teach Indians how to preserve their own monuments. It was intended that this manual be considered a bible by the contemporary ASI and the growing “modern” conservation movement in India.

The process of modernizing building maintenance practices in India started with the establishment of the ASI in 1861. Alexander Cunningham was appointed its first surveyor. He was a pioneer in the field of archaeological exploration, and in the twenty-three volumes of field reports he produced up to 1881 he laid the foundations for “modern” conservation ideology in India. James Burgess succeeded Cunningham in 1885 at a time when the powerful ideas of John Ruskin and William Morris were shaping conservation ideology in Britain. Not surprisingly, Indian conservation practice was imbued with British tropes that viewed archaeology as the history of art. When Marshall was appointed the director-general of ASI in 1902 the strategies of conserving historic buildings were already well defined in Britain, and Marshall had only to collate them and consolidate its objectives in the *Conservation Manual* to suit Indian conditions (Sengupta 2013).

John Marshall was a product of his times. His purposes were therefore an extension of British cultural policy in the colonies. Following the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London, the British government decided to “modernize” local craft skills in India to benefit their industrial products. They set up the Department of Science and Arts—“The Bureaucracy of Beauty”—to influence museum collections, design schools, and architecture throughout the empire. As Arindam Dutta forcefully argues in his book *The Bureaucracy of Beauty*, the thrust toward “cultural” became the rubric for appropriating agency from the native (Dutta 2007, 6). By the end of the nineteenth century the influence of John Ruskin and William Morris were clearly imprinted on the judgement of crafts products; it defined the difference between original and copy in a manner that decisively benchmarked legitimacy and fraud in the field of conservation practice. Thus, the foundations of traditional building maintenance practices, which contested these new ideological formations, had already been nullified by the time John Marshall was appointed the director-general of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1902. In the preface to the *Conservation Manual*, Marshall acknowledged his debt to “the Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments and Mr. Charles Peers, Inspector of Ancient Monuments in the United Kingdom” (Marshall 2006, vi). In the field of conservation Marshall, therefore, put in place the well-established practices of imperial governance in order to “civilize” the natives (Fig. 1).

Notwithstanding the power of imperial governance, the ASI was not the only actor in the field of conservation in India. The colonial gaze took into account only a fraction of the architectural heritage of the country. Even today the ASI protects only 3,675 monuments, and their counterparts in the states protect around another 3,000 monuments. This means that several hundreds of thousands of significant heritage buildings are still not legally protected and remain beyond the purview of ASI and Marshall's *Conservation Manual*. These unprotected heritage buildings are subject to the forces of attrition or to the care of local builders and masons who deal

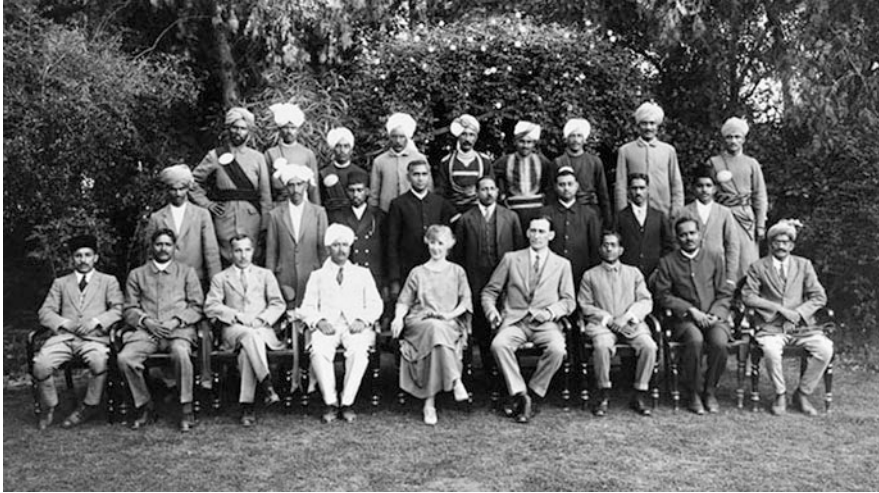


Fig. 1 John and Florence Marshall with officers and staff of the Archaeological Survey, Simla, 25 April 1925 (Source: Alkazi Collection of Photography, New Delhi)

with them using the practices of generations. This is what I refer to as the “traditional” forms of building maintenance. These practices are, of course, not approved by the “modern” conservation establishment and the schism between the two is the focus of my paper, which concerns the emerging culture of conservation of architectural heritage in India.

Universal Conservation Ideology

Architectural culture can be defined in many ways. Its values, for example, are embedded in the buildings and habitats used by society. The psychologist Michael Cole claimed that “the basic function of cultural artefacts is to coordinate human beings with the environment and each other” (Cole 1995, 32). Each society imbibes these cultural values, which are formed over generations through their experience of the tangible, intangible, and natural heritage, and integrates them into their behaviour, attitudes, and language. The culture of maintaining heritage buildings as they existed before the civilizing mission of the colonial administrators, was a product of this process. Therefore, the imposition of foreign imperatives to conserve local cultural artefacts was, in fact, an act of cultural imperialism. While such imperialistic initiatives were understandable in the colonial context, why is it that today, when conditions are different, its continued saliency is not questioned? What I am suggesting in my paper is that the “imperial” values of yesterday have morphed into the “universal” values of today.

Today, the single most shared belief in the discipline of architectural conservation the world over is, arguably, *preservation*. It translates as the preservation of the physical integrity of the fabric of a historic building in its contemporary form and condition. Preservation is regarded as the primary objective for undertaking any conservation exercise so that, in the preamble of the iconic *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites* (or the *Venice Charter*) of 1964, heritage buildings can be passed on to future generations “in the full richness of their authenticity” (The International Council on Monuments and Sites 2014). The ethics of preserving the building’s physical authenticity have been validated by several subsequent Charters adopted by international organizations like ICOMOS and UNESCO and have now seeped into the sub-consciousness of the profession: it brooks no apostasy and its doctrines define the standards of practice and moral judgement for safeguarding architectural heritage all over the world. This is the universal conservation ideology.

The establishment of universal ideology is therefore only a recent phenomenon. Over millennia and across several civilizations, societies resorted to a variety of strategies to maintain their architectural heritage in good repair. These ranged from preservation to restoration and, sometimes, rebuilding. Each provided satisfaction within the cultural context of the respective societies. This range of options to deal with historic buildings reflected the diversity of cultures that produced them, and in promoting universal conservation ideology we have impoverished the lexicon of contemporary practice and the imagination of conservation professionals practicing today. The change came about only during the last hundred years and its genealogy could perhaps be traced quite precisely to a manifesto drafted by the *Society for the Protection of Ancient Building* (SPAB) in 1877. The manifesto consisted principally of a plea to “put protection in place of restoration” (Morris 2012). It was a passionately articulated attempt to advocate a coherent and logically defensible philosophy for conserving historic buildings, and it was deeply rooted in the cultural milieu of British society at that time. Nevertheless, its compelling logic resulted in its being adopted by other European countries and by the United States as well; its principles are loosely referred to as “Eurocentric.” It undergirded the tenets of the *Venice Charter* of 1964, the first post-war attempt to benchmark international conservation practice. All subsequent international Charters have in the main adopted and developed its underlying theme even as they expanded the definitions of cultural heritage to include other attributes.

The global spread of essentially Eurocentric principles of conservation was initially accomplished through colonization, but since World War II it has been assiduously promoted by inter-governmental organizations like ICOMOS and UNESCO, and by funding agencies like the *Getty Foundation* and *The World Monument Fund* as well as educational institutions all over the world who typically complete the cycle of knowledge transmission and perpetuate received wisdom in classrooms. In 1972, UNESCO established the notion of a “world cultural and natural heritage” of “outstanding universal value” that is the “common property of humankind.” In the process, as John Stubbs points out, “the international conservation community believes that ‘Each is his brother’s keeper’” (Stubbs 2009, 271).

The unequal distribution of “cultural power” ensures and justifies the imposition of universal conservation philosophies and its benchmarks to deal with the building maintenance cultures of local societies. While the *Burra Charter* and the *Nara Document on Authenticity* are evidence of the inclusive nature of universal concerns, its core principles remain rooted in the SPAB Manifesto. Marshall et alia were the propagators of these principles in their civilizing mission in India, and they have been seamlessly transformed into universal values by contemporary conservation professionals who assiduously advocate them as a consequence of their education and in order to gain the approval of UNESCO etc. In other words—*Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose*.

This singular genealogy of contemporary conservation objectives and principles is now treated as a revealed truth in the profession. It dominates disciplinary ideology all over the world. It determines the moral judgement that is necessary for rational decision-making in the field to conserve architectural heritage in all countries who are signatories of UNESCO documents. In the process it has replaced the wide spectrum of responses for maintaining architectural heritage that were rooted in indigenous architectural cultures.

The transition is seen as a natural process of evolution, *sine qua non* for becoming a “modern” and rational profession. In developed countries this process is seldom questioned since they were the authors of the narrative of modern conservation practices, but in countries like India, where the process of modernization is still underway, one comes across evidence that both the modern and pre-modern or traditional systems of building and its maintenance are used simultaneously to meet the variety of contemporary needs of society. Thus, two clearly identifiable approaches to dealing with architectural heritage can be found in India: first, the principles and practices of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) established by the colonial government almost 150 years ago; and second, the practices rooted in the centuries-old traditions of local masons, the *Sompuras* of western India, the *Sthapatis* of eastern and southern India, and many other communities of *raj mistris* all over the country. This makes the objectives of conservation in India Janus-faced: one side faces West representing the forces of modernization, and the other faces East, responding to the persistence of “living” traditions in building and their continued saliency in contemporary times. The contestation between the two defines both the ideological and pragmatic issues confronting the conservation profession in India. Any contemporary reading of the colonial civilizing mission must be illuminated by examining this contestation.

Indian Conservation Scene

The ASI was established by the colonial government in 1862 primarily to survey and record the architectural heritage of the country. It became a legal entity for the protection of monuments in 1904 with the promulgation of *The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act* (ASI 1904), which was modelled on the

British Ancient Monuments Act of 1882, through the initiatives of Lord Curzon, the then Viceroy of India. Curzon was a keen proponent of protecting Indian antiquities, but he also had an Olympian attitude towards them that was rooted in a sense of enlightened obligation rather than empathy with the products of Indian civilization. After independence these attitudes were inherited without question by the successor, the ASI. Thus, it is hardly surprising to note that the post-independence act, *The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act* of 1958 (ASI 1958) is almost a verbatim reproduction of its colonial predecessor, and that Marshall’s *Manual* continues to guide the works of the ASI today; hence, the ideology of ASI has remained deeply Eurocentric and its attitude Olympian. It is ironic that conservation professionals see this as the process of modernization and that the forces of globalization have only validated this view (Figs. 2 and 3).

However, it is also one of the paradoxes of globalization that even as it imposes transnational values and processes on local cultures, it gives these cultures a “presence” they never had before. While it could be argued that colonialism was also a process of globalization, important differences have been noted in the area of post-colonial disciplinary studies. The more globalization disrupts and displaces local traditions, the more the academic research fostered by globalization makes us aware of the significance of what is lost by bringing to light the existence and logic of hitherto obscure indigenous knowledge systems and practices. This scholarship creates provocative voices of dissent. It questions the very premises underlying globalization and provides the *raison d’être* to resist—or at least redirect—its further progress. This process of re-evaluation in the field of conservation has



Fig. 2 Ruined portion of Khirkee Masjid, conserved by the Archaeological Survey of India (AGK Menon)



Fig. 3 Ruins of Siri Fort wall, conserved by the Archaeological Survey of India (AGK Menon)

become increasingly evident in India. Arguably, it was initiated with the establishment of INTACH in 1984.

INTACH was established as a non-government organization to focus on architectural heritage not protected by ASI or its state-level counterparts. As it turned out, what it took on as its agenda was the conservation of by far the larger segment of the architectural heritage in the country. In the process it began to engage with the hundreds of thousands of less-than-exemplary monuments that existed all over the country, particularly in the crowded heritage precincts of historic cities. For the first time (in India) INTACH highlighted the imperatives of conserving historic cities and heritage precincts within contemporary cities. For example, while UNESCO recognizes over 200 World Heritage Cities, the ASI did not consider it important to nominate any Indian city of comparable antiquity and significance for that appellation. The wide variety of architectural heritage in the country remains as incomprehensible to the present day ASI as it was to its colonial predecessors. Perhaps the situation is set to change with the establishment of a new *Monument Mission and the National Monuments Authority by the Government of India* in 2010. These ambitious initiatives are expected to record *all* the architectural heritage of the country in a single register and will include heritage precincts and cultural landscapes, but when and how this task will be accomplished and how it will affect the entrenched mindset of the ASI is still to be assessed.

As a venerable but poorly funded department of the government, the ASI has admittedly accomplished its limited task of maintaining *status quo ante* with reasonable competence, but it has done so with the perverse logic of the proverbial dog-in-the-manger. They have not understood, let alone coped with, the dynamics of Indian urbanism that has besieged much of the architectural heritage of the

country. Confronted by the forces of destruction and change brought about by rapid and generally unplanned urban development, the ASI responded by promulgating a draconian rule in 1992 that prohibited *any* development within 100 metres of a protected monument and allowed only controlled development within the next 200 metres. This legally froze the slum-like conditions that prevailed around many ASI-protected heritage sites in the cores of dense historic cities. In the face of mounting criticism, the ASI attempted to mitigate the extreme harshness of its rule by setting up an expert committee to adjudicate development projects in the proximity of protected monuments on a case-by-case basis. But in a recent judgement the judiciary ruled that this was an arbitrary exercise of ASI's powers and therefore struck it down. Instead of considering this adverse judgement as an opportunity to put appropriate laws in place, the government has come up with a new comprehensive Act, *The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Revalidation) Act* of 2010 (ASI 2010), which is even more draconian than the 1992 rule it replaced. Such reflexive action makes one suspect that what ails the ASI and the officials who govern conservation policy in India is not a lack of resources, as is often claimed, but a lack of imagination.

The promulgation of the ASI Act 2010 reflects the same Olympian attitude towards India's architectural heritage as that held by Lord Curzon. Its objectives do not reflect the social and cultural values of a dynamically evolving society. Such concerns would have necessitated a dialogue between the ASI, the official guardians of architectural heritage and civil society, its stakeholders, and between the Eurocentric and indigenous conservation ideologies; that is, between the conservation ethics of the East and the West. But such dialogue is invariably contingent on the force of socio-cultural politics both globally and within the country, and its outcome in a globalizing world predictably reinforces the Eurocentric gaze of the Indian conservation professional.

Perhaps the global consensus that buildings and settings must be seen as historical documents that should not be "falsified" grew out of the common modernist belief in the "end of history" that was cultivated by Eurocentric conservation ideologies. This has reinforced the ethics propagated in the SPAB ideology and translated it into generic catechisms like "minimal intervention," "clearly distinguishing contemporary interventions," "conserve the patina," "conservation stops where imagination begins," etc. These objectives set up complex interplays in countries with living local cultural practices that evolved organically from different cultural roots. Local cultures in India have invariably allowed considerations of cultural continuity and valued the significance of tradition and collective memory in the conservation of historic buildings.² It is interesting to note that many conservation theorists, even in Europe, have also begun to look beyond the limited vision of the SPAB ideology, and there is growing articulation of the imperatives of the "spirit of architecture," which militates against valorizing the doctrinaire

² Cf. the recent judgement of the Allahabad High Court to determine the ownership of the disputed property at Ayodhya pronounced "faith" as a justifiable concept.

preservation of the physical authenticity of historic buildings (Denslagen and Gutschow 2005; Hardy 2009). When the two perspectives confront each other it generates debates on ethical issues of seminal importance: What I am discussing in my paper is playing itself out now in the field in India.

INTACH Charter

Perhaps when John Marshall (1902–28) and Mortimer Wheeler (1944–48) guided the ASI it was at the forefront of the evolving modern conservation movement in the world (Wheeler 1976; Clark 1979). Since then, however, the institution has ossified; the ASI Act 1958 tied its hands (and mind) to colonial imperatives and there has been no revision of John Marshall's *Conservation Manual* since its publication in 1923.³ The organization is unable to come to terms with the ground realities for undertaking conservation in India as is evident by the promulgation of the ASI Act 2010. The significance of this antediluvian mindset only came to the fore with the works of INTACH. INTACH operated outside the government fold and its activities focused primarily on the unprotected architectural heritage ignored by the ASI. This shift in focus changed the conservation scene in India. For one, it highlighted the need to develop new paradigms and strategies for conserving the greater part of the country's architectural heritage, which were legally unprotected. It led to the realization that the relevance of traditional building maintenance practices, hitherto elided by official conservation policies, needed to be re-assessed and used to conserve the vast quantity of architectural heritage that existed in the country if one wanted to invest them with a future.

It also led to the realization that in India both historic buildings and *historic ways of building* constituted the architectural heritage that needed to be conserved (Fig. 4). Furthermore, INTACH's initiatives expanded the concerns of conservation beyond ASI's monument-centric approach to include the historic urban fabric of cities and its relationship to the intangible heritage of the country. This perspective introduced the role of civil society, the stakeholders of architectural heritage, in the processes of conservation. The diverse experiences of INTACH projects were collated as a Charter in 2004: INTACH's *Charter for the Conservation of Unprotected Architectural Heritage and Sites in India* (INTACH 2004). The rationale for formulating the INTACH Charter evolved slowly.

When INTACH was set up, India was opening its policy of governance to other models of development. INTACH's founders wished to emulate the National Trust in the United Kingdom. It invited British experts like Sir Bernard Feilden to teach local professionals how to go about this task and to frame conservation guidelines.

³ INTACH commissioned Sir Bernard Feilden, an eminent British archaeologist who is closely associated with the establishment of INTACH, to update Marshall's *Guidelines* in 1989, but this publication was ignored by ASI.



Fig. 4 Akshardham Temple, Delhi (AGK Menon)

Indian students were sent abroad to institutions like York University in England to imbibe those values first hand and to learn Western conservation methods and devices for use in India. The processes of globalization were therefore set in motion both in the field and in the classroom. Interestingly, as it has been noted, this had unintended consequences. During the initial years of INTACH’s operations many Indian architects who were not formally trained as conservation architects, had the opportunity to work on local conservation projects. They began to recognize the values of indigenous systems of building and maintenance and questioned the efficacy of the official strategies employed by ASI, and indeed, the intentions of the fledgling INTACH and its attempts to follow in the footsteps of the *National Trust* in the United Kingdom. They realized that traditional systems of caring for heritage buildings had always been put into practice by local craftspeople in the interstices of the official system, and their role in conserving India’s architectural heritage only needed to be foregrounded. In this manner, both systems—local and global—began to be more clearly delineated in the professional consciousness of architects working on INTACH projects.

The charter’s contents emanate from the lessons learnt from some of the projects undertaken by INTACH and the cultural paradoxes confronted in the field by the professionals it employed. These projects included the urban conservation of several historic cities, craft revival programmes, awareness-building among a variety of stakeholders, influencing government policy on city development, and

undertaking actual building conservation projects. They looked beyond the monument and thereby expanded the objectives and scope of protecting architectural heritage as defined by the ASI: whereas ASI focused on “protection,” INTACH in these projects advocated the broader imperatives of “conservation” and even “development.” Professionals who worked on INTACH’s initial projects learnt on the job, and this enabled them to understand and appreciate conditions on the ground without the burden of colonial experience and the filter of formal training.

What they discovered was that in “living” cultures, where past and present co-exist, the significance of architectural heritage included attributes other than its definition as a historic document. Intangible values inhered to tangible heritage, which were sometimes of greater relevance to contemporary society. The process of conservation had to address both values because together they constituted the architectural heritage that was to be conserved. They found that traditional master builders, operating within the framework of indigenous knowledge systems, were still available—only the rationale for their involvement in the formal world of conservation needed to be foregrounded (Fig. 5). By identifying where and when one system of conservation or the other would be appropriate, the INTACH Charter attempts to reconcile the two—the formal Eurocentric model represented by the works of ASI, and the indigenous system operating within the interstices of the formal system.

The INTACH Charter is therefore a significant departure from global conservation philosophies. It identifies and reconciles the role of both “universal” and



Fig. 5 Unprotected historic temples being restored in Tamil Nadu (Source: *The Hindu*; August 25, 2010)

“local” practices in conserving India’s architectural heritage. Its genesis and relevance are rooted in the complexity of undertaking conservation work in a country where conservation professionals have to contend with several narratives of cultural histories and a variety of social aspirations in a politically vibrant society with severe resource constraints. These conditions make it necessary to question the universal tenets that underpinned the authority of global ideologies.

Conservation architects working on early INTACH projects had to take recourse to negotiated decision-making on conservation issues. In this role, conservation professionals became facilitators not arbiters of the conservation strategies that were to be adopted. It was still necessary to have expert knowledge and produce thorough documentation and conservation reports to guide conservation strategies, but decisions on strategies had to look beyond what is known as the “curatorial management of the built world” (Fitch 1990), to include the views of local master-builders and the imperatives of the local community.

This produced a dynamic concept of conservation that is premised on dealing with a building structure that is still evolving. This was notably different to treating historic buildings as sacrosanct historic objects. Using traditional master-builders and following their knowledge and systems of construction necessitated accepting seamless repairs and additions to historic buildings and historic neighbourhoods; preserving the patina under these circumstances became irrelevant. This process was sympathetic to the economic and cultural aspirations of local societies; to allow conjecture in the aim of restoring a historic building was therefore not taboo. While Eurocentric conservation philosophies are defensive in nature, INTACH propagated the philosophy that conservation must provide an alternate strategy for development and be concerned with improving the quality of life of the people around monuments (Menon and Thapar 1988; Menon 1989).

It should be noted that the INTACH Charter distinguishes between exemplary historic buildings that need to be protected as historic documents and others that might contribute to the continuity of traditional building knowledge and practices. It therefore accommodates both imperatives; first, to treat the building as a historic document in stone; and second, to restore it based on the continuing traditions of building. It suggests that the question of whether some buildings need to be conserved as evidence of “authenticity,” and others need to be restored to reveal the “spirit of architecture” is a subject that still needs to be debated and agreed upon. In this manner, the charter seeks to rationalize and reify the Janus-faced cultural conditions that prevail in India: one that is modernizing and assiduously trying to affirm and conform to the best practices advocated by international charters, and another that responds to the traditional values implicit in the still extant *historic ways of building* to care for its architectural heritage. Suffice it to say that such paradoxes abound in India in almost all spheres of life, but in the field of architectural heritage conservation, in ethical terms, the INTACH Charter posits that one perspective should not obscure the other.

Conclusions

The narrative of contemporary conservation practice in India is inextricably linked to the colonial initiatives to civilize the Indian society they governed. Underpinning their efforts was the perception that Indian civilization lacked a sense of history. It was argued by early Orientalists that the concept of linear time that is characteristic of Judaeo-Christian and Islamic traditions associated with dialectical change, was absent from the Indian sense of time, which was seen as entirely cyclical and tied to an infinity of recurring cycles characteristic of primitive and archaic societies (Mill 1858, 107). Consequently, Indian societies treated historic buildings differently. This provided the rationale needed to justify the “civilizing” mission of the colonial guardians of Indian antiquities. Macaulay’s educational policy ensured that these “civilizing” values were internalized by the Indian elite.

Until the publication of INTACH’s Charter in 2004, an appropriate framework to redress the consequences of cultural imperialism and to objectively engage with the pluralistic themes and rich textures of diverse Indian building maintenance traditions—including the contributions of colonial conservators—had not been attempted. As far as the binary of the concept of time is concerned, historians like Romila Thapar have already reinterpreted it to point out that multiple categories of time were simultaneously in use in ancient Indian societies (Thapar 1996, 3). In the field of architectural heritage conservation in India, the INTACH Charter attempts a similar reinterpretation of the colonial legacy.

Postscript

There is a more relevant link between the theme of this workshop and the ASI that I have not touched upon in this paper. The ASI was involved in the conservation of Angkor Wat during the difficult period of civil war in Cambodia and is currently engaged in the conservation of Ta Prohm. Their interventions at Angkor Wat have attracted much international criticism, some of it truly unjustified, some of it arguable; however, their work at Ta Prohm should lay to rest any question of their competence. By any standards, the engagement at Ta Prohm, with its characteristic intertwining of vegetation and building, presented an unprecedented challenge that is being competently and imaginatively handled by the ASI. Thus, even as I have drawn attention to the outcome of the colonialists’ “civilizing” mission on the ideology of the ASI and the evolving conservation movement in India, I must also acknowledge the contributions of that ideology to the “rebirthing” of Angkor. Perhaps, away from the complexities of the contemporary Indian scene in another colonial context, the significance of Marshall’s *Manual* is being more effectively revealed.

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Save Borobudur! The Moral Dynamics of Heritage Formation in Indonesia across Orders and Borders, 1930s–1980s

Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff

*Borobudur is in great danger! Borobudur must be saved!
This heart breaking cry reverberates in every corner of the
world*

(Soekmono on May 31, 1968, in: Soekmono 1969)

Let Buddha be my refuge

(Tagore 1927)

Abstract This article focuses on the continuities and discontinuities in the conservation history of the eighth-century Buddhist temple Borobudur in Central Java, Indonesia, particularly in relation to processes of state legitimation, inclusion, and exclusion. It aims to understand how, why, and for whom this temple—which was officially listed as a World Heritage Site in 1991—transformed into heritage throughout regime changes in colonial and post-colonial times. In reaction to what seems to be a state-centred bias in the study of heritage formation, we will demonstrate how the theory of “the gift,” as discussed in the classic work by Marcel Mauss, can be a useful tool to investigate heritage dynamics beyond the perspective of state civilizing missions, state supported heritage agencies, and so-called authorized heritage discourses. We will also seek to understand the moral and material engagements with the temple from perspectives that are not exclusively related to state interests, and which come from within and across the borders of empires and post-colonial states.

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Introduction

A focus on the moral mechanism of exchange—or, as Marcel Mauss has famously postulated, “the obligation to give is explainable because this act causes the obligation to return the gift”—can be a helpful means to understand the political dynamics of cultural heritage formation. (Mauss 1954, 1; Bloembergen and Eickhoff 2013b). In the process of heritage formation we can see forms of transactions at work that are emphasized by rituals—inaugurations, diplomatic visits, or religious festivities—which create alliances and hierarchies within and between societies and across orders and borders in almost exactly the same way that Mauss has described. Where the question “heritage for whom?” is crucial to heritage politics, the act of giving is particularly meaningful, since it is the person who gives that introduces himself (or herself) as the owner. In this article we will illustrate these moral mechanisms of exchange in heritage politics, using as our example the conservation history of the eighth-century Buddhist temple Borobudur in Central Java in both the late colonial state and the post-independent Republic of Indonesia, and through several regime changes (Fig. 1).

Borobudur, the largest Buddhist shrine in the world, located in a country with, today, a predominantly Islamic population (the largest in the world), was built during the Sailendra dynasty, which ruled over Java in the eighth century. The temple fell out of use in the tenth century when the centre of power moved to East Java. According to official history after ages of neglect the shrine was famously re-discovered and uncovered from layers of plantation and mud in 1814, during the British interregnum and at the order of Lieutenant-Governor T.S. Raffles. However,

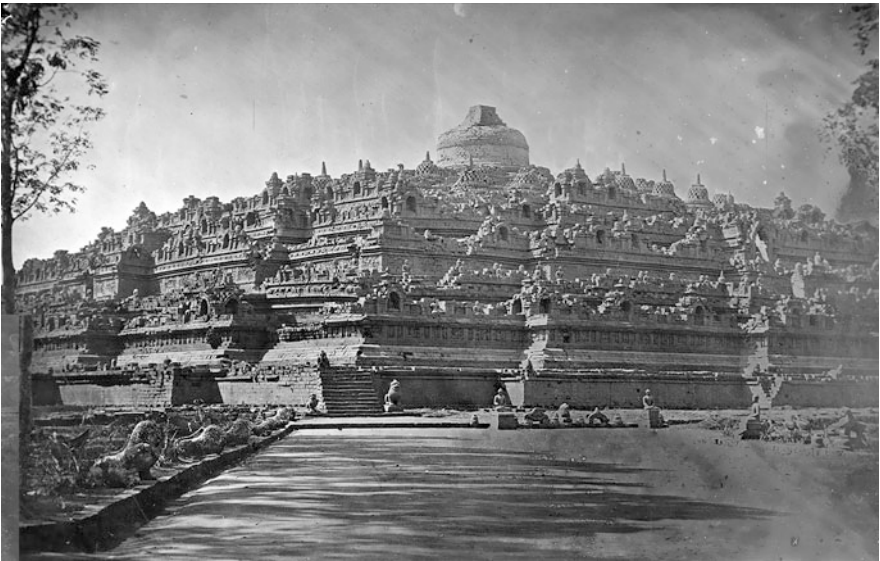


Fig. 1 Borobudur circa 1874. Photograph Isidore van Kinsbergen (*Source*: Leiden University Library, KITLV photographic collections, KLV 1874)

local people knew the site as a place called “Borro-Boedoer,” and there are references to it in early modern Javanese sources (Krom 1923, 335–336; Soekmono 2001; Bloembergen and Eickhoff 2013a). Since Raffles’ orders to intervene and clean the temple, Borobudur has grown into an object of local and foreign fascination, contemplation, and research as well as of trial and error state-supported preservation policies. Between 1907 and 1911, under the direction of the engineer Theodoor van Erp, acting on behalf of the Dutch colonial archaeological commission, it underwent its first large-scale conservation. In the 1970s a second major renovation, involving the dismantling of the temple, was initiated by the Indonesian government and was internationally supported by UNESCO as well as by foreign state and private parties.

What was it about Borobudur that moved the world to action in the twentieth century? Where can we see the colonial legacy (or colonial legacies) in these diverse engagements with the temple and in subsequent Indonesian heritage politics? This last question, which is connected to the central theme of this volume, becomes more complicated when we consider (especially from a long-term perspective) the multiple moral, political, and economic interests related to religious sites transforming into heritage. Borobudur, like other temples and shrines in Asia, was the cherished object of pilgrims from south and central Asia long before the arrival of the colonial state. Parts of the temple have travelled to other regions of the world where they have played (and continue to play) a role in alternative heritage politics that are not exclusively based in national or colonial state formations and that co-existed in parallel worlds with centres located outside of the Europe-based empires (Bloembergen and Eickhoff 2013b). Moreover, Borobudur has now developed into a World Heritage Site that has attracted the moral concern of international heritage agencies like UNESCO and ICOMOS, a situation that may also reflect (post)colonial relationships; the temple is the site of local and international mass tourism as well as of incidental large Buddhist gatherings. Has the notion of a colonial legacy in Borobudur been completely overshadowed by these other local and global interests and therefore grown increasingly irrelevant—at least in Indonesia—since the end of the 1950s?

In our larger research project we are investigating the transformation of a select number of sites in Indonesia (prehistoric, Chinese, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, and colonial sites) from ruins, religious shrines, or (still) functional historical buildings into (post)colonial Indonesian heritage. The main challenge has been how to capture the multiple layers of heritage formation in relation to the political mechanisms of identification, inclusion, and exclusion that occur within and across orders and borders in one complete analysis. This site-centred approach is for us also a means—following the device employed by the historian Dipesh Chakrabarti (Chakrabarty 2000)—of thinking beyond the boundaries of states and empires (without ignoring them) in order to investigate local, transnational, and international engagements with sites that are transforming into heritage. Mauss’s theory on the mechanisms of the gift has proven to be of help in achieving this aim. By looking at Borobudur as an object that is part of several cumulative and competitive exchanges over time (in knowledge, worldviews, and material means) we can observe “the morality and organization” at work in heritage politics (Mauss 1954,

4). We will demonstrate that these are not exclusively directed by states' civilizing missions or by the "authorized heritage discourses" as they are identified in recent theorizing on global heritage politics (Smith 2006, 29–35).

The focus of this essay will be on Borobudur's role in post-colonial heritage politics. The rituals that marked the inauguration and completion of the UNESCO-supported "Save Borobudur" campaign (1973–1983) form a prism through which we may examine the multiple concerns and conflicts that Borobudur generated at various levels because they emphasized huge local and international investments and thus diverse reciprocal obligations, alliances, and conflicts. In this article we will travel back and forth in time in order to trace the continuities and discontinuities in the local, trans-Asian, and global identifications with the temple that brought Borobudur onto the world stage in the twentieth century.

Borobudur and its Post-Colonial Ambivalences

Investments in cultural heritage politics are generally accompanied by public rituals; these rituals, according to Mauss, emphasize reciprocal obligations, old and new alliances, and hierarchies. However, they may miss parallel engagements with the heritage site or provoke negative reactions from groups that are excluded from the investment. In this sense, what took place at Borobudur in February 1983 was not unique for heritage sites, especially in cases where the site is considered to have national value (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 Inauguration of the UNESCO campaign's safeguarding of Borobudur, February 23, 1983. President Soeharto and his wife, accompanied by Soekmono, descending the stairs of Borobudur (Photograph: Eric Oey. *Source*: Miksic 1990)

The inaugural speeches made by state leaders at the launch of Angkor and Borobudur as national monuments have comparable elements. On February 23, 1983, during a festive morning-ceremony attended by national and international honorary guests and press, President Soeharto inaugurated the completion of the international campaign to safeguard Borobudur that had been coordinated and supervised by UNESCO. He left no doubt as to the importance of the monument's safeguarding for Indonesia, and declared it a gift for the country's national, moral, and unifying good from the Indonesian people's past to its present. The Indonesian government enabled this gift, which was in return intended to legitimize Soeharto's *New Order*.¹

Ten years earlier on August 10, 1973, at the ceremony inaugurating the start of the conservation works, President Soeharto had the national meaning of the event inscribed in stone at Borobudur (Fig. 3a and b).

In this inscription, Soeharto not only made it explicit that the seven-year-old *New Order* regime was the architect of Borobudur's safeguarding, he also marked this as the first step of an Indonesian national cultural heritage programme—again, a gift for the moral good of the Indonesian people. The offering of a *kerbau* (water buffalo) to mark the start of the restoration works in 1973 and the common Islamic prayer that concluded the Buddhist shrine's safeguarding in 1983 added to the particularly Javanese flavour of the two ceremonies. Yogyakarta-based *Kedaulatan Rakyat*—one of the many Indonesian newspapers reporting on the event—summarized it by declaring unambiguously that with the restoration of Candi Borobudur, Indonesia had managed “to preserve the proof of the greatness of the Indonesian people of the past, the people that gave birth to Indonesian society and the Indonesian people of the present.”²

However, the UNESCO “Save Borobudur” campaign and the temple's subsequent conservation was always described as an act that was both for the good of the Indonesian nation and for the good of humanity at large. In his 1983 speech, Soeharto explicitly addressed this ambivalence:

The modernization of our society is none other than the preservation and promotion of the noble values of our own identity, by removing the undesirable aspects and by adjusting them with the demands of building a modern society. The Borobudur temple shows us such valuable past. This beautiful and majestic temple is a concrete evidence of the thinking ability, creativity and the capacity to act of our ancestors, which are recognized by the international community as part of the cultural heritage of the entire human race.³

(Soeharto at Borobudur, on February 23, 1983)

¹ UNESCO Archives, Paris (hereafter UNESCO), CLT/CH/78: Speech Soeharto, Borobudur, February 23, 1983.

² See Pemugaran 1983 about the information on the offering of the *karbauw*, as told to MB by Henri Chambert-Loir (Jakarta, February 1, 2011) who heard this from the French architect Jacques Dumarçay. As technical advisor in the “Save Borobudur” Campaign, Dumarçay attended the inauguration.

³ UNESCO, CLT/CH/78: Speech Soeharto, Borobudur, February 23, 1983.



Fig. 3 (a) Memorial stone at Borobudur that was installed and engraved at the inauguration ceremony at the start of the conservation works, August 10, 1973 (Photo: Bloembergen 2010). (b) Detail, the engraving. Translation: “Thanking God, we the president of the Republic Indonesia, inaugurate the start of the restoration of Candi Borobudur as a major step in the development of the cultural heritage of Indonesia, for the Indonesian descendants of the future, and the well-being of mankind” (Photo: Bloembergen 2010)

The international dimension of Borobudur was present in many guises, and it overlapped to a large extent with the Indonesian government’s national interests. Apart from the moral motive of encouraging mutual understanding between East and West and the concerns for humankind’s cultural heritages that mobilized UNESCO to support the Indonesian-based lobby to preserve the temple in the late 1960s, the development of local and international tourism was another shared,

international *economic* motif. These ambivalences materialized in the international financial support that the UNESCO campaign generated, and they were visible in the attitude of some of the international partners involved in this mammoth operation. This can be deduced from the meetings of the international consultative committee that evaluated the conservation works-in-progress where international members tried their utmost to respect Indonesian interests in the enterprise. Thus, in the speech preceding Soeharto's, at the inauguration ceremony in 1983, Amaoud-Mahtar M'Bow, the Senegalese director general of UNESCO, resolved the ambivalence of universal versus nationalist values with a phrase that left no doubt about the value of Borobudur for humanity. M'Bow also emphasized Soeharto's contribution, and by extension Indonesia's honour, by pointedly declaring "The constant concern you have shown for this project, Mr President, make you one of the chief architects of the success of this operation to safeguard one of the most hallowed shrines of human spirituality."⁴

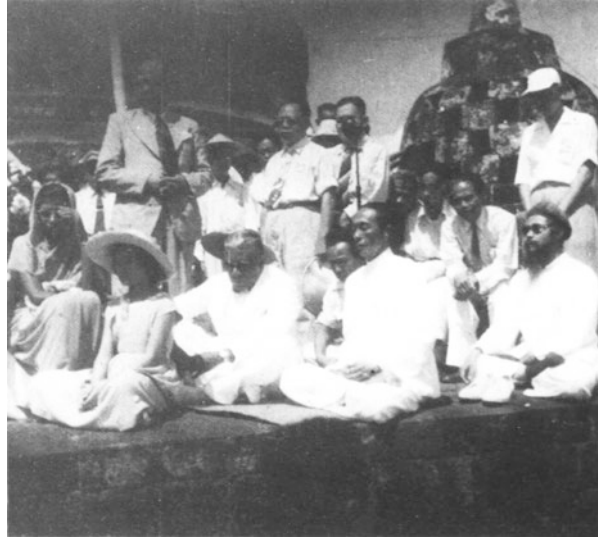
However, apart from its national and universal appeal Borobudur also embodied alternative localized and transnational values. The critical Indonesian weekly *Tempo*, writing about the inauguration of "the cultural fort Borobudur," addressed two of the worries felt by some Indonesians about the national infrastructural and moral policies that Borobudur's safeguarding generated. First, there were still some inhabitants in Ngaran and Kenayan, the two village segments (*dusun*) near the temple, who refused to be relocated in order to facilitate the Indonesian government's plans to implement a national Archaeological park—which materialized in the 1980s as PT *Taman Wisata* (Tourist Park)⁵—around the temple. The government had developed these plans in the 1970s in collaboration with Japanese governmental and private funding parties, partly under the umbrella of the *Japan International Cooperation Agency* (JICA). Officially accorded in 1980 (and publicly anticipated from that point on) they entailed a relocation policy whereby the government committed to buying land from the residents living on the reserved area.

Second, representatives of the Buddhist minorities, organized in the *Perwalian Umat Buddhis Indonesia* (Community of Indonesian Buddhists) and the World Fellowships of Buddhists in Indonesia, expressed their worries to *Tempo* reporters about the possible commercialization of the site—including the temple and the holy ground on which it stood—and the loss of its value for them as a place for *suci* (prayer, religious healing). These organizations, which were rooted in the worldwide Buddhist revival that reached the Dutch East Indies after 1900, had good reason to distrust the Indonesian government's policies towards Waisek, one of their most important religious ceremonies (during which Buddhists celebrate the

⁴ UNESCO, CLT/CH/78: Speech Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, Borobudur, February 23, 1983; Brochure of the ceremony: Acara Peresmian Berakhirnya Pemugaran Candi Borobudur, February 23, 1983.

⁵ PT, the Indonesian acronym for *Perseroan Terbatas*, is the standard use for Limited Liability Company in Indonesia. *Taman Wisata* means Tourist Park.

Fig. 4 The first Waisek festival in the newly independent Indonesian Republic, May 22, 1953 (Source: Upacara 1984)



anniversary of the supreme enlightenment and death of the Buddha). Waisek was a fairly recent tradition in Indonesia that emerged partly because of the Buddhist revival that took place at the end of the nineteenth century and was partly the legacy of colonial theosophy. At the initiative of the Dutch East Indies' *Theosofische Vereniging* (Theosophical Society, which had mixed European and Javanese elite membership), it was held for the first time at Borobudur in 1929.⁶ The first Waisek after independence was held at Borobudur in 1953 (Fig. 4), after which it continued to be held at the site on a more or less regular basis and was disrupted only by the 1965 coup and the subsequent violence.

During the dismantling of Borobudur from 1973 to 1983, the government did not give permission for Waisek to be held at Borobudur and the ceremony was moved to the ninth-century Buddhist temple of Mendut nearby.⁷ In 1982, anticipating the completion of Borobudur's restoration, the Indonesian authorities requested that the *UNESCO Office of Public Information* (OPI) not shoot its promotional documentary during Waisek because "It is important to note that Borobudur is considered as a cultural heritage, and not as a place of worship."⁸ In 1983 and 1984 the government declined to give official permission for the pilgrimage procession from

⁶ For the history of the Buddhist revival in modern Indonesia see Ishii (1984) and Brown (2004). On the first Waisek at Borobudur, see Brown (2004, 47) and Ramstedt (2011, 525). On the history of the Theosophical Society in Indonesia see Tollenaere (1996).

⁷ The first Waisek after the coup of 1965 was held in 1967. There was at least one Waisek celebration at Mendut in 1979. Waisek was held again, one time, at Borobudur in 1980 (Upacara 1984; Sekilas 1984; Di sana 1985).

⁸ UNESCO, CLT/CH/ 81: Borobudur—comité exécutif, Eiji Hattori, OPI/ACP to ADG/PRS via Deputy director OPI, May 18, 1982.



Fig. 5 Damage caused by the bomb attack at Borobudur, January 20/21, 1985 (Source: Ledakan 1985)

Mendut to Borobudur despite the fact that in January 1983 the Indonesian government announced that Waisek was to become one of Indonesia's national holidays.⁹

Almost two years after the inauguration of the UNESCO-restoration, in the night of January 20, 1985, a bomb attack at Borobudur, caused damage to nine of Borobudur's seventy-two stupas, and international upheaval (Fig. 5).

In a public statement, Soeharto referred to the then still unidentified perpetrators as "people that do not feel national pride, because Borobudur is a national monument, even more a monument of the world."¹⁰ The reasons for the attack, including its presumed religious motivations and the circumstances under which it took place, are still unclear and require further historical investigation. In this article, however, we will restrict ourselves to examining what is meaningful for our analysis—the official public reaction of the Indonesian government. While the attacks sent shockwaves through the UNESCO headquarters in Paris and among its international members, the Indonesian government outwardly appeared to be calm. By declining any assistance—a gift offered by UNESCO for the necessary restoration works—the government signalled to the international community that Indonesia could handle this problem itself. In the hands of the Indonesian government, the bomb attack was thus transformed from an internal threat into another occasion to both promote the campaigns of national safeguarding that were supported by the

⁹Ledakan (1985). For a picture overview of Waisek at Borobudur since 1953, the first post-independence *Indonesian Waisek* see Upacara (1984).

¹⁰"Ledakan Malam di Borobudur," *Tempo*, January 26, 1985.

Fig. 6 General Soegiarto, with scale model of Borobudur, under a portrait of Soeharto, reconstructing the attack (*Source: Ledakan 1985*)



general Indonesian public and to avoid international interference in its internal affairs¹¹ (Fig. 6).

From the Indonesian government's perspective, Borobudur's safeguarding campaign was a highly moral national event. The international dimension of this mammoth project and the worldwide attention that it attracted only emphasized to the world, and thus to the Indonesian public, the prestige of Indonesia and of Soeharto's *New Order*. But the modern, trans-Asian, and global concern for the temple that predated the New Order would remain strong at the site as well. Indeed, the fledgling UNESCO of the 1950s was built on pre-war, trans-Asian engagements with the temple.

Borobudur in Wider Asian and Globalizing Worldviews

In June 1956 Borobudur temple featured in a special issue of *The UNESCO Courier* that was dedicated to the theme of "Buddhist Art and Culture." The occasion for this special issue was the gigantic Waisek festival that took place when Buddhists

¹¹ UNESCO, CLT/CH/79.2. This file contains the international reactions (official and in the press), as well as UNESCO Press review, January 25, 1985. As a continuation of the normalizing policy of the New Order government, the museum Karmawibhangga at the Borobudur site, which was built in the 1980s, has a small display on heritage and destruction (caused by natural and man-made disasters), in which the bomb attack plays a tiny role and is portrayed as a completely neutralized, external attack.

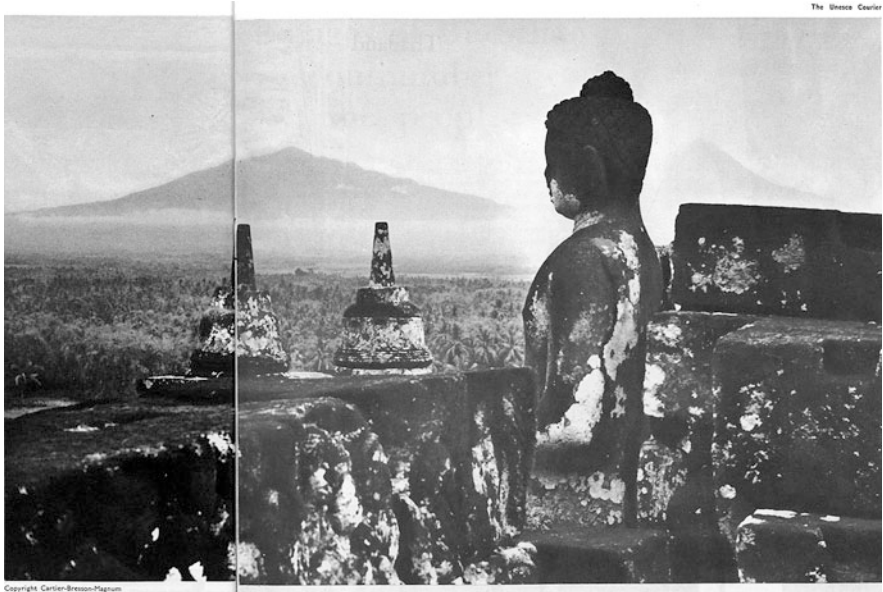


Fig. 7 Borobudur in 1949, as pictured by Henri Cartier-Bresson (Source: UNESCO Courier IX (6 June 1956))

from all over the world celebrated—for the whole year—the “2500th anniversary of the Supreme Enlightenment and death (*pari-nirvana*) of the Buddha.” The editors of the UNESCO journal fell in line with what they deemed a “more catholic taste” and with the “sincere desire to understand and love works of art which are the expression of cultures wholly different from our own” that they observed growing in the West (Fig. 7).

They wished to reveal to their readers some of “the great masterpieces of architecture, sculpture, and painting of Buddhist art in Asia,” and—in line with UNESCO’s global educational aims—to provide a “glimpse of some of the ethical ideas and the message of peace, gentleness and mercy” which Buddhism, “one of the noblest edifices of thought ever created by the human spirit” has inspired (Editorial 1956). Borobudur, presented as “Java’s monument to Buddhism,” was one of several masterpieces of Buddhist art in Asia that embellished this vision of peace and nobility (Borobudur 1956).

A map, indicating the peaceful spread of Buddhist culture and art from India via China to Southeast Asia, situated Borobudur at the outer borders of a larger Asian Buddhist sphere. This map, and the accompanying article on the spread of Buddhist culture, conveyed the concept of a trans-Asian “Greater Buddhist” and moral framework in which the site of Borobudur, like the other Asian sites discussed in

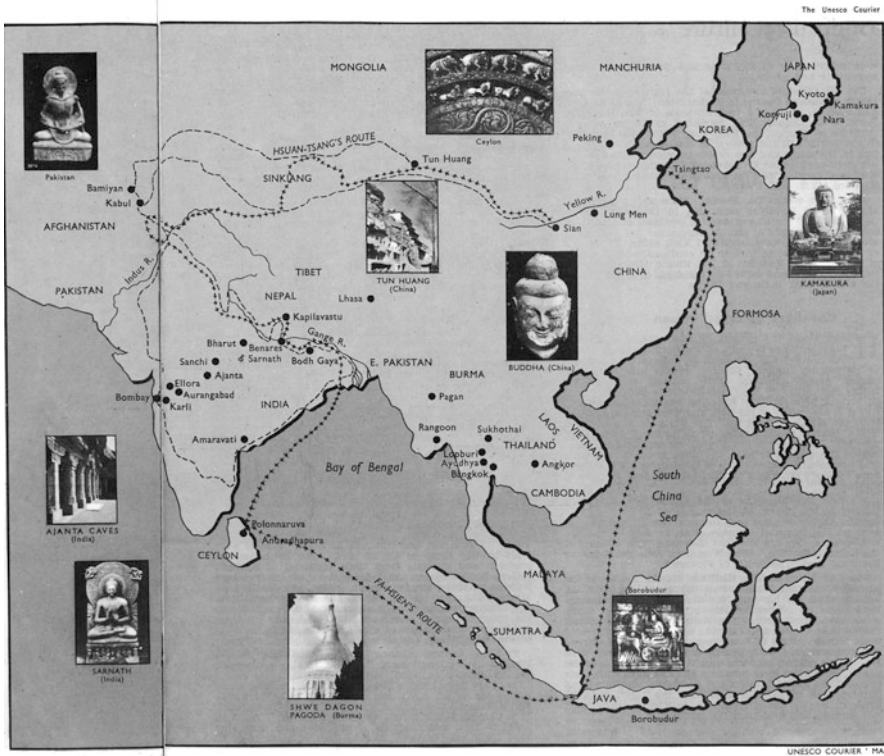


Fig. 8 Map showing the spread of Buddhist culture and art from India and China to Southeast Asia (Source: UNESCO Courier IX (6 June 1956))

this issue of the *UNESCO Courier*, were to be understood—at least according to the editors (Silva Vigier 1956) (Fig. 8).

With this popularized vision of a Greater Buddhist culture in Asia UNESCO, anticipating Cold War cultural diplomatic strategies, tallied with its new Asia-focused programme (officially launched in December 1956) to promote a mutual understanding between East and West (Fradier 1959).¹² However, UNESCO was also building here on older notions in both “the East” and “the West” of a greater Asian culture.¹³ With their Greater Buddhist Asian perspective, the editors of the *UNESCO Courier* were following in the footsteps of the French and Indian scholars who, inspired by the work of Silvain Lévy and working under a mixture of

¹² See also the UNESCO monthly newsletter *Orient-Occident*, published since 1958, informing its readers on “UNESCO’s Major project on Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values.” On the post-war developmental aims behind UNESCO’s cultural programmes in the 1950s see Rehling (2011, 3–5).

¹³ For the continuities of UNESCO’s humanitarian ideals of the unity of humankind with nineteenth-century evolutionary thinking see Sluga (2010).

academic, religious, and political motivations in the 1920s and 1930s, searched for any proofs in the cultural expressions, art, and architecture of Southeast Asia that would confirm their notion of the spread of a benign and higher Indian civilization, or Greater India. Susan Bayly has examined these (Western, mainly French) scholarly inspirations and the supra-local “Greater India” practices of the thinkers and political actors who worked within the Calcutta-based *Greater India Society* (set up in 1926), which upheld this vision and propagated its revival (Bayly 2004).¹⁴ During the colonial period these Greater Indian visions, and the question of the origin, spread, and nature of the Buddhist and Hindu civilizations in Asia, stimulated archaeological investigations, discussions, and interactions between scholars and the local elites in wider Asia.

Transnational, inter-Asian, and inter-colonial scholarly investigation, as well as more general artistic, religious revivalist, philosophical, and theosophical interests in Asia’s “classic” religious antiquities and shrines was lively in the early twentieth century. Old Buddhist temple sites were situated on new (or re-invented) religious and scholarly maps. Scholars, pilgrims, and tourists based in and outside the colonial empires, as well as royal visitors, foreign political leaders, and local elites (including anti-colonial nationalists), travelled across the borders of colonial empires and independent kingdoms (Siam) in Asia to admire and pay tribute, whether purposefully or in passing, to museums, religious shrines, or monumental buildings that were recently excavated, reconstructed, or conserved. They also sought to investigate past connections and interactions between Asian peoples or, more pointedly, to identify the Indian influences on local art and architecture on the basis of these material remains.¹⁵ This search for meaning was also a matter of giving and exchange. Cultural elites and professional scholars, delegates of archaeological institutions and learned societies, and individual researchers from Asia, Europe, and the United States visited each other at local heritage and research institutions, met at international conferences, and exchanged knowledge in collaboration and competition—thereby creating an intricate network of academic and political interdependencies and reciprocal obligations.

Of particular interest for our purposes is the impact of this Greater India (or Greater Asian) mindset on the “situating” of Borobudur within the geographic and moral imaginations that transgressed the borders of the Dutch East Indies. Thus, in 1896 King Chulalongkorn of Siam visited Borobudur on a Buddhist-cum-diplomatic pilgrimage (Bloembergen and Eickhoff 2013b). Four decades later Nerada Thera, a Buddhist monk from Sri Lanka who had felt the “pull” of Borobudur for some time, came at the invitation of the Bandung lodge of the *Theosophical Society in the Dutch East Indies* and famously planted the Bodhi

¹⁴ More specifically, for the role of Greater India thinking in Indian-Indonesian encounters, see Ramstedt (2011).

¹⁵ This line of inter-Asian cultural knowledge production and conservation practices needs further investigation. For some historiographic inventories see Casparis (1954), Basa (1998), Ali (2009). For case studies see Clémentin-Ohja and Manguin (2007), Jory (2002), Peleggi (2004), Ramstedt (2011), Bloembergen and Eickhoff (2011, 2013b).

tree at Borobudur that is still central to the Waisek ceremony. Dutch archaeologists hosted both men when they came to fulfil their Buddhist devotions at the temple, exchanging various forms of knowledge, and in Chulalongkorn's case, important material gifts.¹⁶

Here we would like to focus on one other telling case of inter-Asian-European interaction (and miscommunication)—the trip of Rabindranath Tagore to Java in 1927. The internationally famous Indian poet, who was also extremely popular among Javanese nationalists, visited Java (and Bali) in 1927 at the private invitation of the Dutch colonial society, the *Bond van Nederlandsch-Indische kunstkringen* (Association of Dutch East Indies Art circles). This was also part of Tagore's three-and-a-half month Southeast Asian tour during which he also visited Singapore, Malaya, and Siam. Although not strictly affiliated to the *Greater India Society*, Tagore's mindset during this tour was comparable. During a farewell meeting held for him by eminent Calcutta scholars, he mentioned that "he was going on a pilgrimage to India beyond its modern political boundaries" and that he was eager to find "what could be seen of the remains of ancient Indian culture" (Das Gupta 2002, 456).¹⁷

According to Arun Das Gupta, who has made a study of Tagore's writings on this trip, Tagore believed that "he was looking at India when he was walking along the galleries of Borobudur" (Das Gupta 2002, 474). While the temple as a whole did not impress him, Tagore was thrilled by what he called the temple's "soul" and by the spirituality that characterized the time in which it was built. Tagore's letters reveal that he took special interest in the Jataka reliefs located at the lower terraces of the temple, which depicted episodes of Buddha's previous lives. In them he recognized the "life of the king and the beggar in their daily appearances" and "the respect for the life of common man." He interpreted their message as the victory of the good and "the liberation from the nodes that tie our lives from all sides."¹⁸ Borobudur's Jataka reliefs may have even been the main inspiration for the poem Tagore dedicated to the temple.

Apparently, Tagore also brought with him a wider framework with which to value Borobudur, one that may have gone beyond the borders of Greater India to favour Buddhism and spiritualism in general. In the last verses of the poem about Borobudur, which he wrote while sitting on the porch of the *pasanggrahan* facing the temple, Tagore reflected upon Borobudur as "a gift" in itself to the people ("let Buddha be my refuge") that offered shelter through the possibility of enlightenment. He suggested that this "gift" had been disgracefully neglected, and

¹⁶ On Chulalongkorn's visit to Borobudur, the exchanges taking place at the site, and the impact on Siam/Thailand (see Bloembergen and Eickhoff 2013b); on Narada's visit (see Brown 2004, 49–51).

¹⁷ For Tagore's visit to Borobudur also see Ramstedt (2011).

¹⁸ KITLV, H 1214, Travel letter by Tagore, November 17, 1927. Tagore's letters were translated into Dutch by one of Tagore's travel companions in Java and Bali, the Dutch Sanskritist and musicologist A.A. Bake, and published in the (Dutch lingual and colonial) Javanese cultural journal *Oedaya* in 1927.

that it deserved to be restored to regain recognition for its original meaning of “immeasurable love”:

Boro-Budur

[...]

Generations of pilgrims came on the quest of an immortal voice for their worship; and this sculptured hymn, in a grand symphony of gestures, took up their lowly names and uttered for them:

“Let Buddha be my refuge”

The spirit of those words has been muffled in mist in this mocking age of unbelief, and the curious crowds gather here to gloat in the gluttony of an irreverent sight.

Man today has no peace,—his heart arid with pride. He clamours for an ever-increasing speed in a fury of chase for objects that ceaselessly run, but never reach a meaning.

And now is the time when he must come groping at last to sacred silence, which stands still in the midst of surging centuries of noise, ‘til he feels assured that in an immeasurable love dwells the final meaning of Freedom, whose prayer is:

“Let Buddha be my refuge.”¹⁹

Tagore (1927) Boro-Budur

Apart from this poem inspired by the temple, other important exchanges took place between Tagore and his Dutch colonial hosts through Borobudur; these were exchanges in academic, technical, and spiritual knowledge. Tagore was deeply impressed by the work done by the archaeologists and epigraphists of the *Dutch East Indies Colonial Archaeological Service*. He apparently remarked about the Dutch archaeologists P.V. van Stein Callenfels and F.D.K. Bosch (the inspector and head of the *Archaeological Service* respectively) who accompanied him to and informed him about Borobudur as well as other temples on Java including nearby Prambanan (which was under reconstruction): “They have dedicated their lives to make the dumb figures speak [...] we must accept them as our Gurus, if we would understand India in its completeness” (cit. Das Gupta 2002, 474)²⁰ (Fig. 9).

In other words, it was impossible to appreciate Borobudur without understanding its Indian connection—a line of thought that returned again and again in the history of Borobudur’s transformation into heritage during the colonial and post-colonial era. It is interesting to note that this line of thought has never caused a serious problem in the question of ownership, a fact indicating that state interests in and state control of the site are strong. However, that is not to say that the state is all determinant.

¹⁹ Final verses of Tagore’s poem, “Boro-Budur,” see Tagore (2007), also quoted (in full) in a curious biography of van Stein Callenfels, see Swanenburg (1951, 167–169).

²⁰ Also see KITLV, H 1214, Travel letter by Tagore, November 17, 1927.



Fig. 9 Rabindranath Tagore and P.V. van Stein Callenfels (among others) at Borobudur in 1927 (KITLV photographic collection, KLV 17757)

Borobudur's Colonial Legacies and Greater Indian Continuities

Heritage sites, like religious sites, are in essence moral sites that form a part of multiple moral regimes. The meaningful difference between them is that sites that have transformed into heritage can be distinguished by the fact that they not only connect multiple parties, but are also sanctified and privileged by the national state and/or by local and global heritage agencies that complicate mechanisms of in- and exclusion through the course of time. However, this does not mean that the national state is in complete control at any given time. For this the priorities of the state may lie elsewhere; moreover, the state needs the collaboration of (local) society and sometimes also of foreign parties.

The recurring notions of gift, neglect, and restoration in Tagore's poem "Boro-budur" is reminiscent of the motivations by which the colonial government of the Dutch East Indies around 1900—like national states elsewhere—started to invest in monumental care as part of their national moral obligation and a general ethical policy or civilizing mission that simultaneously legitimated the colonial (or national) state for society. Dutch ethical and paternalistic colonial concerns, Dutch nationalist concerns, and the private aesthetic worries of representatives of the Dutch colonial financial and cultural elite about the visible decay of Borobudur, which was by then a widely admired icon of the indigenous Buddhist past, formed the background for the set up of an *Archaeological Commission* in 1901 and later



Fig. 10 Borobudur, during the restoration by Th. van Erp, circa 1907 (Leiden University Library, KITLV photographic collections, nr. 5182)

the Archaeological Service in 1913.²¹ Within this framework of national obligation, Van Erp's famous restoration of Borobudur (1907–1911) was the colonial state's first prestigious project of archaeological heritage politics (Fig. 10).

We have discussed elsewhere the continuities between the heritage politics of the colonial and early independent Indonesian Republic and local and wider Asian concerns with sites in Indonesia (Bloembergen and Eickhoff 2011). There we also showed how and why the early twentieth-century conservation and reconstruction policies of the *Dutch East Indies Archaeological Service*, which were fiercely debated in the 1920s, laid the foundation for post-colonial national *Indonesian* heritage politics. That is, by making the supposed original state of previous ruins imaginable for a generation of Indonesian nationalists and cultural elites growing up between the 1910s and 1930s, by giving practice and technical training to Indonesian personnel, and last but not least, by formulating a principle that would make reconstruction part and parcel of heritage politics, the reconstruction of the

²¹ For more details on the moral motives and the institutionalization of archaeology and conservation politics in the Dutch East Indies see Bloembergen 2006, chapter 4; Bloembergen and Eickhoff 2011.

ninth-century Siwa temple at Prambanan—started by the *Dutch Colonial Archaeological Service*—could be continued under Japanese and Indonesian rule. However, while Dutch archaeologists saw the completion of this temple (officially inaugurated in December 1953) as a fine example of post-colonial Dutch-Indonesian collaboration, the inauguration of the Siwa temple was for the *Indonesian Archaeological Service*—under the direction of the Dutch-trained Indonesian archaeologist Soekmono—the kick off point for national Indonesian heritage politics.

Borobudur, much less a ruin than the Prambanan temple complex, had already become a truly modern Indonesian moral site during the early years of the Indonesian Republic, the years of revolution, and the decolonization war between 1945–1949. After the Japanese capitulation the country was divided between regions ruled by the Dutch colonial government and those governed by the Indonesian Republic; Borobudur happened to be located in the republican area—as were the Siwa temple in-progress and the offices of the architectural department of the *Colonial Archaeological Service* at Prambanan. The *Indonesian Archaeological Service*—the *Djawatan Purbakala* (later Dinas Purbakala), established in February 1946—continued the reconstruction works at Prambanan, which, interestingly enough, had been continued under Japanese rule as well (Bloembergen and Eickhoff 2011). The republican army leader, General Sudirman, the Republican government, and the new republican newspapers cleverly used Borobudur for national and international political propaganda, as an example of what the Indonesian people were capable of and what the Indonesian nationalists were fighting for (Fig. 11).



Fig. 11 General Sudirman inspecting the Tentara Keamanan Rakyat (People's Security Army) in front of Borobudur, circa. 1945/46 (Source: Lukisan Revolusi)

The Indonesian Republic also inherited the colonial worries about Borobudur's visible material decay, which had started to concern the *Colonial Archaeological Service* only two decades after Van Erp's major restoration (1907–1911). Borobudur's uncontrolled decay—the result of weathering and internal humidity—likewise caused concerns during the years of revolution, not just among the experts of the newly installed *Dinas Purbakala*, and was enough for the Republican government to engage in a solution. But this nationalist concern had an Indian motive behind it; in 1948, possibly connected with India's newly derived independence and anticipating old British Indian expertise in temple conservation, the *Dinas Purbakala* invited two young Indian experts from the *Indian Department of Archaeology*, K.R. Srinivasan (superintendent of the sub-department of the Central Circle) and C. Sivaramamurti (superintendent of the Indian Museum of Calcutta), to investigate and estimate if, and how urgently, Borobudur should undergo a second restoration. The future head of the *Dinas Purbakala*, Soekmono, looking back in his farewell speech at the University of Indonesia in 1990, identified this moment as a major step for what he classified as typical Indonesian “rescue archeology.” The fact that the young Indonesian Republic took this step in the midst of armed struggles was, according to him, convincing proof that “the Indonesian people” even “under the toughest conditions” would take care of their own cultural heritage (cf. Soekmono 1986, 11; Soekmono 1990, 3).

Whether the Indian delegation came to the same conclusion seems doubtful. For the Indonesian *Dinas Purbakala*, the findings of this Indian mission apparently never resulted in any concrete use.²² However, Sivaramamurti later published a book (translated in French with the support of Musée Guimet in Paris) in which, with a peculiar India-centric interest in connections, he compared the details of the Borobudur reliefs to old Indian art (Srinivasan 1950; Sivaramamurti 1961). The Indian archaeological interest here must have been double-faceted; it was in the tradition of the Indian archaeologists and epigraphers who in the 1920s, with the notion of “Greater India” in mind, were interested above all in the Indian influence that was visible in the Indonesian archaeological remains. And these now also fitted into Nehru's pan-Asian ideals. Incidentally, N.P. Chakravarty, the director general of the *Indian Archaeological Service*, was in the retinue of Nehru when he visited Indonesia in 1950, and he also investigated Prambanan and Borobudur²³ (Fig. 12).

In 1955, looking for an alternative trajectory for foreign assistance, Soekmono, who was by then director of the *Dinas Purbakala*, approached UNESCO's programme for the *Preservation of the Cultural Heritage of Humankind* for advice

²² Anom 2005, 54, argues that the mission's report never reached the Indonesian authorities and that the documents were lost in the renewed armed conflict: only three months after this Indian mission was completed the Dutch army invaded Yogyakarta. However, the library of the India-oriented Kern Institute in Leiden has a copy of the report of the mission (typoscript) that was submitted to the Indian government in 1950 (Srinivasan 1950).

²³ The paragraphs on these Indian archaeological missions to Borobudur are derived from Bloembergen and Eickhoff 2011, 428–9. For the influence of “Greater India” thinking on Nehru's post-independence pan-Asian ideals see Bayly 2004, 729 and 735–40. For “Greater Indian” archaeological interest in the Dutch East-Indies see Casparis 1954, Basa 1998, Ramstedt 2011.



Fig. 12 President Soekarno, the Indian Prime-Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, and his daughter Indira Gandhi at Borobudur, 1950 (Leiden University Library, KITLV photographic collections, KLV 405167)

on the weathering monuments in Java and Bali. This resulted in Paul Coremans, the Belgian archaeologist and conservation expert who was then secretary general of the international (conservation) laboratories of ICOM (*The International Council on Museums*), paying a two-month study visit to Indonesia. In exchange, a journey was made by the Indonesian pre-historian Soejono for training at the conservation laboratories in Brussels. At Borobudur, Coremans diagnosed water coming from the inside as the main cause of the deterioration—he called it “stone cancer” (Anom 2005, 55). While Borobudur here appeared to be a successful tool for cultural exchange (generating mechanisms of the gift), for the temple itself this moment of international diplomacy had no direct consequences. Coremans confirmed existing worries but his advice did not lead to immediate action apart from regular monitoring of the temple. Although the political turmoil and the introduction of president Soekarno’s *Guided Democracy* as well as the subsequent economic downturn that occurred at the end of the 1950s may partly explain this apparent reluctance to act, it was also a simple matter of technique and scale. The proposed solution was to dismantle (parts of) the monument in order to insert a modern drainage system.

Meanwhile, Borobudur’s potential topical religious uses were being highlighted internationally during this period. On May 24–25, 1956, the occasion of that year’s special Waisek festival, Borobudur hosted thousands of pilgrims from inside and outside of Indonesia. The event was planned by two organizations, both of which

had their roots in the colonial era: the *Buddhist Gabungan Sam Kauw Indonesia* (Federation of tri-religion associations) and the *Perhimpunan Theosofie* (the *Theosophical Society*).²⁴ This number of visitors brought together on the site had never occurred before, and it must have been quite an impressive sight for the local inhabitants living near the temple. The *Dinas Purbakala* monitored the event to prevent further possible harm to the temple, and all went well.²⁵

In 1960 the *Archaeological Service* tried to engage the Indonesian government morally and materially by declaring the monument “in great danger.” It was decided that they would go forward with an overall restoration that would secure the soundness of the monument for at least “seribu tahun lagi” (“another 1,000 years”—a reference to the famous lines by the Indonesian poet Chairil Anwar).²⁶ In 1963 the Indonesian government allotted funding for the restoration, bamboo scaffoldings arose, and work was started at the northwest side of Borobudur. This work was interrupted—but not cancelled—by the 1965 pre-empted coup and the mass killings that followed.²⁷ Throughout the political turmoil Soekmono managed to convince two successive Indonesian regimes to invest in the project (Fig. 13).

Conservation practices on the site apparently survived violence and even overcame Indonesia’s chilly relations with UNESCO after the country’s withdrawal from the United Nations in January 1965, and subsequently from UNESCO in February 1965. This may have been due to the combined moral motives (politically useful) and technical expertise that were involved in heritage formation; after all, one doesn’t stop working in the middle of “a heart transplantation.”²⁸ In this way heritage sites generate moral engagement dynamics that are not necessarily related to state interests or to heritage discourses.

²⁴ For the *Gabungan Sam Kauw Indonesia* see Ishii 1984, 111, Sekilas 1984, Brown 2004, 49–50.

²⁵ Archive Balai Pelestarian Peninggalan Purbakala (BP3) Yogyakarta Istimewa, Indonesia, Laporan Tiga Bulanan, Seksi Bangunan Dinas Purbakala di Prambanan, Triwulan Ke II, 3–4 [Typoscript].

²⁶ See Soekmono 1969, 2, Anom 2005, 56. The lines are from Chairil Anwar’s nationalist poem “Aku” (‘I’, 1943), written during the revolutionary struggle for independence, “Aku mau hidup seribu tahun lagi” (I want to live another thousand years).

²⁷ For the technical details see Anom 2005, 57–8. We aim to further investigate what exactly happened at the site of Borobudur during this time. Rumour has it that this early endeavour of conserving the temple was troubled more by illegal sales and financial mismanagement than by political upheaval. KITLV, Archive Van Romondt, inv. nr. 27, (Roger) Yong Djiet Tann to Van Erp junior, March 5, 1969.

²⁸ The metaphor of “the heart transplantation” is from A.J. Bernet Kempers, in UNESCO, CLT/CH/80, Campagne de Borobudur—exposition—ceremonie de cloture, 1976–1984, Bernet Kempers to Yudhishthir Raj Isar, Division of Cultural heritage of UNESCO, March 20, 1977. Working for the Dutch East Indies colonial Archaeological Service in the 1930s, Bernet Kempers had become its director after the Japanese Occupation (1947–1949) and subsequently became the first director of the Indonesian Dinas Purbakala (1950–1953). He remained an authority on Indonesian archaeology and conservation politics in Java and Bali, and was deeply engaged with Borobudur’s fate.



Fig. 13 Transport of Buddha statue during the Indonesian Republic's Borobudur conservation project, ca. 1965 (Leiden University Library, KITLV, collection Marzuki)

The Moral Concerns of a New (World) Order?

In July 1966 a new Indonesian regime, headed by former major general Soeharto and proclaiming itself the *New Order*, called off Indonesia's withdrawal from UNESCO. This occurred in the aftermath of the extremely violent period in Indonesia's history that followed the failed coup on September 30, 1965 (leading to the killing of seven of Indonesia's generals) and was repressed by the military. Soeharto, then the last highest military commander in charge of one of the most elite military units, managed to seize control of the centre of power within two days and to put down the coup, which he denounced as having been initiated by the Indonesian Communist Party. The thwarting of the coup was followed by a campaign, ordered by Soeharto and pro-actively supported by the Indonesian army, to repress presumed communists. Feeding off the existing local tensions and generating the collaboration of the civilian population, within a period of six to seven months the campaign resulted in the killing of at least half a million people and in the imprisonment of around 1,500,000 others (although the precise number of victims is unclear and estimates differ widely).²⁹ The *New Order*, while oppressing any sign of political criticism, opened up to the world for economic

²⁹ Figures here are based on Vickers 2005, 156–60. The events surrounding the coup and the mass killings have for a long time been one of the mysteries of modern Indonesian history, and continue

investment; and in this regard, culture was apparently a good negotiation tool. In this new wave of economic open-mindedness Soekmono's warning that "Borobudur is in danger" became a tool for *New Order* cultural diplomacy.

In August 1967 at the 27th *International Congress of Orientalists* in Ann Arbor, one of the world's most prestigious academic meetings of Orientalists (established in Paris in 1873), Soekmono made this warning call and instigated worries and moral concerns for Borobudur amongst the international academic community (Sinor 1971, 414–5; Anom 2005, 58). A clear sign of the changing, proactive attitude of the new Indonesian government towards promoting Borobudur's rescue to the world—via UNESCO—was the reception it gave the next year for UNESCO's assistant director general (also head of UNESCO's department of mass communication), the Norwegian Tor Gjendal; "[A]lmost every dignitary in Indonesia" raised the problem of Borobudur to Gjendal. In an ostentatious gesture meant to emphasize their concern for Borobudur, the Indonesian government chartered a special aircraft for Gjendal to visit the monument.³⁰ In the meantime, within the framework of the *United Nations Development Programme*, two foreign technical experts studied Borobudur on location. These experts, the French archaeologist Bernard Philippe Groslier, director of the *Conservatoire d'Angkor* in Cambodia, and C. Voûte, a Dutch hydro-geologist at the *Aerial Service and Earth Sciences in the Netherlands*, confirmed the worries about Borobudur and the urgent need for funding, experts, and modern equipment to restore and conserve the temple (Anom 2005, 58).

In that same year Groslier's impressions of Borobudur would appear in a short historical essay in the June 1968 issue of the *UNESCO Courier* dedicated to threatened "treasures of world art." This issue connected Borobudur to the Parthenon in Greece, mural paintings at Bonampak in Mexico, and to the Srirangam temple complex in southern India. In his essay, Groslier evoked the Greater Indian perspective on the temple:

To this day it represents the climax of the extraordinary odyssey of Buddhism which was born in India, spread throughout the whole of Asia and finally disappeared from its native soil at the very moment when its most noble monuments were being raised in countries where it had become the living faith. (Groslier 1968, 23)

Groslier was formed by a Greater Indian perspective, which he developed as the chief custodian of monuments of Angkor at the EFEO's core office in Asia at Siem Reap. He may have been inspired by the EFEO's former director, George Coedès, whose India-centric *Histoire anciennes des états hindouisés d'Extrême-Orient* of 1948 (English translation published in 1968) is considered a standard interpretation of early modern South and Southeast Asian cultural connections to this day (Coedès 1948).

in post- *New Order*, reforming and democratizing Indonesia, to be a matter of dispute. For summaries of various interpretations and problems see Cribb 2002, 2009 and Roosa 2006.

³⁰UNESCO, X07.21 (910), Relations with Indonesia, Official. Report on "Indonesia," May 24, 1968, by P.C. Terento (UNESCO's director of the Bureau of the Member states) to the director general of UNESCO (René Maheu) in Paris.

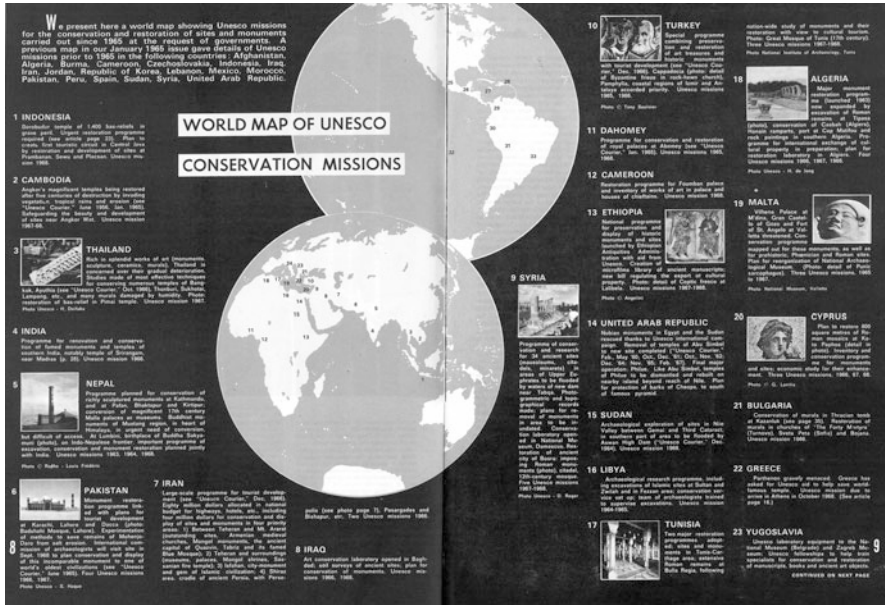


Fig. 14 Map of the UNESCO Conservation Missions in 1968 (Source: UNESCO Courier, June 1968)

However, the *UNESCO Courier* revealed that Borobudur had also become part of another, wider geography of cultural connections. Groslier and Voûte’s mission to Borobudur was part of an enlargement of the scale and instrumental repertoire of UNESCO’s programme for the preservation of cultural heritage, which it had initiated in the 1950s and which now also aimed at international technical training missions for stone conservation. Groslier and Voûte’s was one of thirty-three conservation and restoration missions UNESCO had sent around the world since January 1965 (Daifuku 1968, 6). And thus, while Bernard Groslier in this same issue had drawn links between Borobudur and Greater India, Borobudur was also situated in another moral and potentially political map: UNESCO’s map of world heritage management (Fig. 14).

The national and international initiatives relating to Borobudur’s fate were all preparatory steps for the resolution, which was submitted by Indonesia at the 15th session of the General Conference of UNESCO on July 30, 1968 and endorsed by UNESCO’s director general who noted “the importance of the monument of Borobudur [...] as part of the culture and historical heritage” (without indicating for whom) and urging UNESCO “to consider all effective measures, including an international campaign, to collect funds necessary to restore this artistic heritage.”³¹ Clearly, economic motives were also at stake here. An official report from 1969 written by Adam Malik, Indonesia’s minister of foreign affairs, to UNESCO’s

³¹ UNESCO, *Sessions of the General Conference 1968*, 15 C/DR 66, 30.7.1968.

director general, connected the cooperation between UNESCO and Indonesia in the campaign to restore Borobudur with the more general aim of developing cultural tourism in Indonesia. Taken together, these various preparatory steps—all moral and material investments (gifts)—had moved Borobudur to the centre of an international web that tied multi-centred moral and economic concerns and obligations (that were not necessarily overlapping) and Cold War cultural diplomatic interests to (Indonesian, Dutch, Japanese and French) colonial legacies.

International Interventions, Local Sacrifices, Colonial Legacies

Among the first countries that UNESCO approached in the initial lobbying phase were Japan and the Netherlands, Indonesia's former colonizers, as well as the United States, Sweden, and Australia (Anom 2005, 62). In January 1973, when Indonesia and UNESCO officially signed the agreement for the restoration, the first countries that (on January 29, 1973) formalized their donations to the special UNESCO fund to save Borobudur were Western Germany (9,000 US dollars), Belgium (17,000) and France (75,000). Cyprus (less than 5,000), Australia (283,000), Iran (less than 5,000), Singapore (less than 5,000) and India (69,000)—in that order—soon followed in the same year.³² Among the private contributions, the successful lobby in the United States, which led to an impressive donation by the *American Committee of Borobudur* of more than 1,280,000 US dollars, should be mentioned.³³ The Netherlands was relatively modest in its donations (15,000 US dollars plus 122,000 from the private foundation *Stichting Behoud Borobudur*), which were contributed in a bilateral way. But the Netherlands nevertheless played an important role in the project by offering technical assistance through the architectural enterprise NEDECO, which was put in charge of the development of the technical operation and of the supervision of the works (this added 155, 000 US dollars to the Dutch contributions).³⁴ However, Japan—

³² Figures, rounded off, are based on Labrousse 1974, 210. They reveal the state of funding in August 1973. At the beginning of 1971 a budget was assessed for the whole operation of 5.5 million US dollars, of which 2 million US dollars should have been raised on or before December 31, 1972, as a precondition to begin the operation in 1973. But after further investigations into the state of the monument, the budget that was estimated to be necessary almost doubled at a price of 7.7 million US dollars. In the end, the restoration cost, apart from the working hours of 600 men over a period of more than ten years, was almost 7 million US dollars.

³³ For the complete state of donations by the end of the campaign see UNESCO CLT/CH 77, Chief accountant to N.S. Naqvi, May 22, 1981, Appendix III. "Trust funds for the safeguarding of the temple of Borobudur. Statement of contributions pledged and received and other income to 30 April 1981."

³⁴ Moreover, since 2008 the Netherlands has once again been engaged in the preservation of Borobudur in a "Fit-in-Trust," a technical collaboration project between Indonesia and the Netherlands that is coordinated by the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO, accessed January 9, 2011. <http://whr.unesco.org/en/news/463>.



Fig. 15 (continued)

combining both governmental and private donations—would soon lead the numbers and in the course of time dominate the organization with 1,8 million US dollars. Finally, in addition to these international investments, the Indonesian government spent “the equivalent of more than 13 million dollars” for the conservation works at Borobudur³⁵ (Fig. 15a and b).

In light of this international, competitive accumulation of gifts, it is difficult to capture in one essay the mechanisms of multiple reciprocal obligations as they have been outlined by Mauss, and to follow these from the perspectives of all the parties involved. In this final section we will restrict ourselves to looking at a few transactions between international, Asian, national, and local parties as they were played out—not necessarily on an equal basis—on the local level at Borobudur, and the long term consequences this had for the arrangements at the site.

Most importantly, the technical and strategic plans for the restoration of Borobudur temple, outlined in successive and parallel phases of development, were intended not just as a pilot project for Indonesian heritage politics in the future but also for heritage politics elsewhere in Asia, thus emphasizing the wider

³⁵ UNESCO, CLT/CH/29, “Press dossier prepared by the division of cultural Heritage, December 1982.”



Fig. 15 Memorial stone commemorating the inauguration ceremony of the completion of the UNESCO Restoration of Borobudur. Two photographs, showing both sides: (a) Signing of president Soeharto; (b) The donors (Photo: Bloembergen 2010)

Asian moral concerns that were being revived. Technical training-workshops of Indonesian and other Asian trainees on location were scheduled and were intended to focus on conservation techniques and preventive hydro-geological research methods and to involve foreign experts as well as experts from the areas. The Bangkok based inter-Asian *Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts* (SPAFA, set up in 1979 under the *Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization*, SAMEO), was involved as co-facilitator. As for the restoration of Borobudur itself, the plans entailed feasibility studies and archaeological and technological (hydrological) surveys of the area, the dismantling of the temple, the chemical cleaning of each and every one of its stones, reliefs, and statues, the filling of the hill on which it was built with concrete, the improvement of the drainage system, and finally, the rebuilding of the temple itself. Ultimately, and this is the point on which we will briefly dwell, the surroundings of the temple became the object of (re-)construction and preservation as well, with the official intent to transform them into a guarantee for “the permanent preservation of the historical legacy” of “the spiritual homeland of Indonesia,” and at the same time to facilitate the development of (mass) cultural tourism (Japan International Cooperation Agency 1979). Here Japan, as international partner and prime financial supporter, played a major role.

In 1973, at the request of the Indonesian government, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) became responsible for developing plans for the “post-restoration” phase of Borobudur in collaboration with Indonesia. This culminated in a twenty-five-year master plan for the construction and development of a National Archaeological Park that was unified but multi-centred on Borobudur and Prambanan, the PT Taman Wisata Borobudur and Prambanan. In its ideal form this plan—finished on paper in 1979 and enormous in its size and ambitions—was a mixture of utopianism, 1970s optimism about the possibility of a better world, strongly Japanese-based notions of intangible and natural landscape heritage, national economic entrepreneurship, and the New Order’s need for political control.

Roughly summarized, the plan had four main targets in which economic, moral, and political motives competed (Japan International Cooperation Agency 1979, 9–10): (1) Gradual nationalization of the land surrounding the monuments, which the plan presented as a precondition for making “sanctuaries of the monuments [...] improving their environment and scenery, and caring for them on a continuous base;” (2) Land and “traditional village” development, which entailed, as we saw above, the relocation of villages, but also “an orderly and balanced land use pattern,” “the guidance of efficient public investment for the improvement of infrastructure,” and the undertaking of “new community development” in which there was to be “compatibility between preservation of the historical environment and development of the land;” (3) National education on what was presented as the spiritual homeland of Indonesia. This would be achieved through organized school trips and what the plan called “social tourism”—making the Indonesian public experience “the cultural roots of the Indonesian people;” (4) Attracting inter-Asian and international cultural tourism to a site that was also recognized as a sample of “the great sphere of Indian culture” as well as spiritual good of humankind.

The wider Asian concerns in the master plan were most clearly expressed in the argumentation for the “formation of an International Cultural Tourism City” in Central Java around the two monuments of Prambanan and Borobudur. The connection between them was “Indian culture” “[...] from which the Hindu Java Culture was born” and which had

a great influence on China, Korea, and Japan to the north and the Indochina peninsula and Indonesia to the south, putting down roots there and fusing with indigenous cultures as an initiating element in the formation of the distinct culture of each area. In fact, the capitals of various countries were sister cities within what might be considered a great sphere of Indian cultures

(Japan International Cooperation Agency 1979, 10)

This “treasure house of Hindu Java,” having once been the centre of exchange with India—so the master plan reasoned—should “once again become a center for international exchanges for the purpose of conveying an accurate picture of 20th century Indonesian culture to international society” (Japan International Cooperation Agency 1979, 10).

In order to effectively “pass on the message of Borobudur and Prambanan” to future generations—a goal that the master plan presented as a moral duty—mere preservation of the monuments and their environment was not sufficient. The monuments should be utilized as cultural and educational assets “for the purpose of giving people at home and abroad a better understanding and appreciation of their part in Indonesia’s cultural past.” It envisioned a land zoning system consisting of five kinds of circular preservation zones around the monuments each with particular restrictions. The land within these zones would be gradually nationalized, offering space for archaeological research and conservation centres as well as museums. The future development of the area implied the ambiguous and conflicting aims of village relocation and “traditional village improvement,” preservation of the historical and natural landscape, and modernization of infrastructure for tourist facilitation³⁶ (Fig. 16).

Following the mechanisms described by Mauss, “the gift” entailed by PT Taman Wisata consisted ideally of the actual material investments in this plan by the Indonesian government and its Japanese partner,³⁷ as well as the act of preservation of this cultural, spiritual heritage of Indonesia, greater Asia, and humankind at

³⁶ Although interviews thus far have not revealed the link, it may be that EFEO/UNESCO conservation projects in Cambodia can provide an example for the creation of a zoning system around heritage sites that includes the expropriation of the land around the site. We found a copy of an internal UNESCO report (Hansen 1969) in the library of the Archaeological Conservation Centre at Borobudur. This report on water management structures and conservation plans for Phnom Kulen also discussed plans for a park around the temple; it suggested involving local residents in the development of these plans in order to make them more supportive and more inclined to move from their land to make way for a national heritage park.

³⁷ Which were formalized in 1982 by the Indonesian government and its Japanese partner, with the earmarking of 150,000 US dollars to be used in the future maintenance of Borobudur and (among others) its natural surroundings.

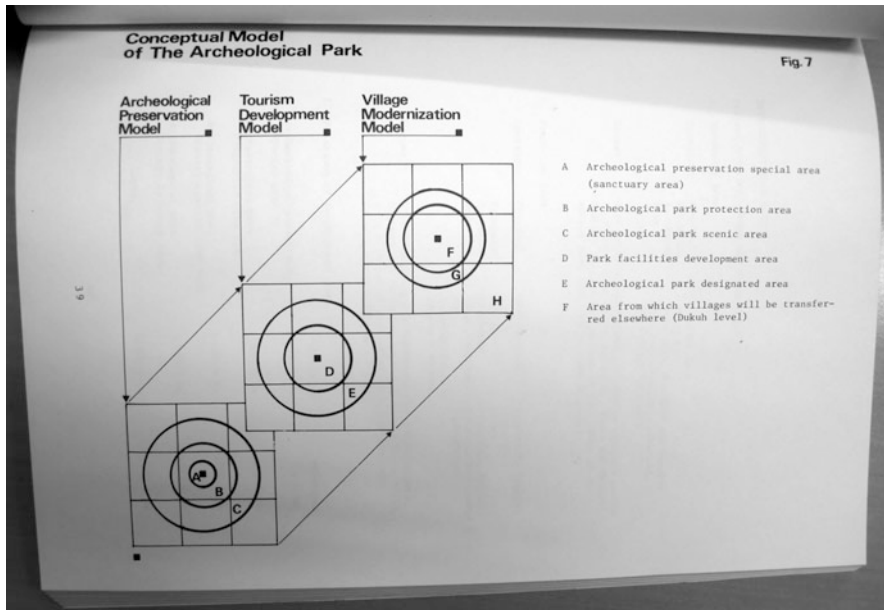


Fig. 16 Early conceptual and zoned model of *The Archeological Park* (later *PT Taman Wisata*), involving village displacement—as envisioned in the Japan International Cooperation Agency Interim Report 1975 (Japan International Cooperation Agency 1975)

large. Moreover, the gift entailed something tangible (economic development through cultural tourism) as well as something intangible “passing on the message from Prambanan and Borobudur” to Indonesia, wider Asia, and the world. It was (again, following Mauss 1954) also a matter of creating obligations and of taking. The nationalizing of the monument and the intention to turn it into a national sanctuary would mean that it could only be used for Buddhist prayer during the national holiday Waisek. State-appropriation implied a promise to make the site economically and morally profitable. But, as is always the question in heritage politics: profitable to whom and in what sense?

It is important to note here that in all of the stages of the conservation programme and in the negotiations for the master plan, various local parties became actively involved in the campaign, and therefore, following Mauss’s approach, these local parties were potentially morally supportive (allied) to it as well. At the site, the gigantic operation was hosted and facilitated by the *Indonesian Archaeological Service* under the ever-energetic Soekmono. It involved staff and students from the Department of Archaeology at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, from the Technological Institute in Bandung and Solo Saraswati University, from international parties and trainees, and from an Indonesian-Philippine joint construction company. Last but not least, local residents around Borobudur—mostly male—found jobs at the restoration works or in a slowly burgeoning tourist industry; the number of tourists at Borobudur increased from

about 5,000 a year at the end of the 1960s to over 60,000 at the end of the 1970s. After conducting interviews at the site in 2011 we realized that it is not only conflict-images of this transformation that emerge, new engagements with the temple and its academic/archaeological status were also possible. At least one man (and father) involved in the restoration project would come home, so his son told us, with “a book about Borobudur,” and would narrate to his son the many stories in the reliefs. Another informant, the owner of one of the first hotels near the site, wrote about the temple—for tourists—by gathering information from Buddhist visitors from Italy and Tibet and consulting academic studies. A third became a photographer for the restoration project and knows the reliefs by heart.³⁸

One man from the area, the former Air Marshall and Minister of Communication and Transport (1968–1973), Boediardjo, was chosen (probably for diplomatic reasons) as the first director of *PT Taman Borobudur and Prambanan* (1979–1985) and he operated as the recognizable face of an enterprise that envisioned land acquisition and relocation of complete villages (Dari 1983). It should be noted that the interests of the *Archaeological Service* (which fell under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Culture), and those of *PT Taman Wisata* (which fell under the Directorate-General of Tourism, then part of the Ministry of Transport and Communication) did not always overlap, nor would they in the future. But at this early stage the *Archaeological Service*, represented by Soekmono, and the *PT Taman Wisata* collaborated in a “socialisasi” programme that would brief local residents about the plans for the area, and thus about their fate. According to the master plan, 1,330 of these residents would ultimately have to move to make way for the development of the Archaeological Park that now is *Taman Wisata* (Japan International Cooperation Agency 1979, 24) (Fig. 17).

The relocation programme of the residents and villages around Borobudur started at the beginning of 1981 and involved the *dusun* Kenayan, Ngaran, Gendingan, Gopolan, and Sabrangrowo. Residents were offered between 5,000 and 7,500 IDR per square metre for their land (depending on the location), between 12,500 and 50,000 IDR for their house (depending on its quality) and, if relevant, between 10 and 25,000 IDR for each tree on their land (depending on the economic value of its products). While many residents chose to move to a life that—as they informed the critical journal *Tempo* in 1983—did not differ economically from their previous life, the inhabitants of Kenayan and Ngaran, the two *dusun* that were located closest to the temple, were unwilling to move. In December 1982, less than two months before the inauguration of the completion of the temple, alarming news

³⁸ Interviews with Jack Prayono, Borobudur, January 26 and 30, 2011; Atmojo and Rini, Seganan (nearby Borobudur), January 27, 2011; pak Tomo, Ngaran, May 12, 2012. See Ariswara 1992, Larissa 1995.

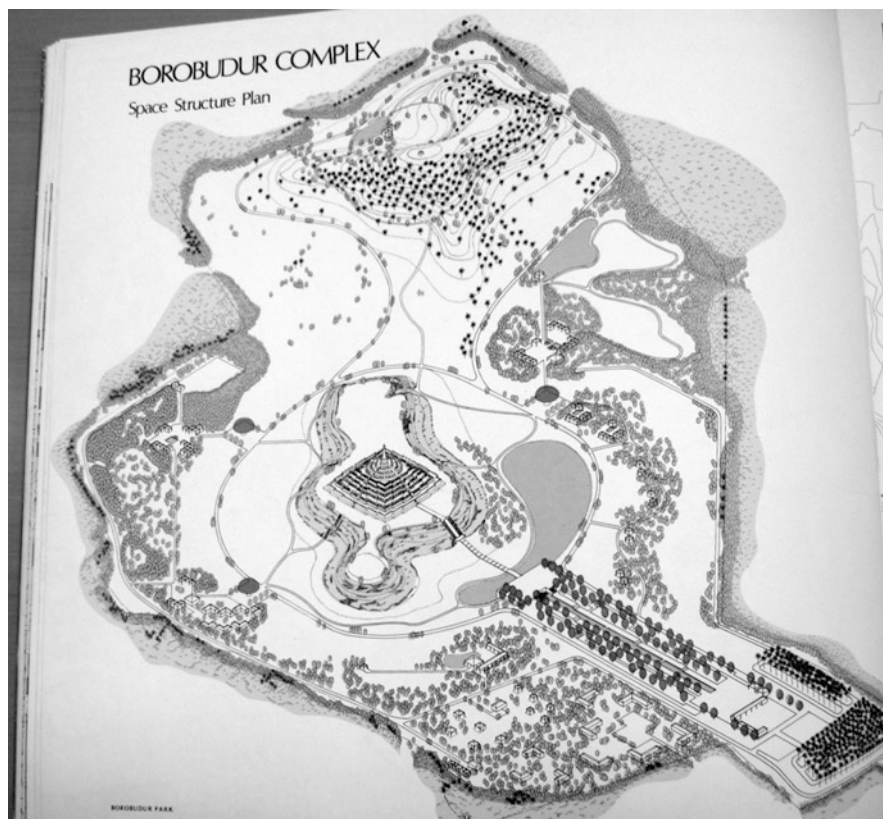


Fig. 17 Space structure plan of the Borobudur Archaeological Park (zone 1 (sanctuary) and zone 2 (park)), in which the village compartments and market near the temple are already dislocated—as envisioned in the Japan International Cooperation Agency Final Report 1979

reached the headquarters of UNESCO (intriguingly, via Japan) that protest movements against the plans for a “National Park” were to be expected on the inauguration day. About 100 families living within the 85 square hectares around the temple would participate.³⁹ The protests did occur, but not during the festive and most strategic day of the inauguration. In February 1983, *Tempo* reported that eighty-nine families were still living in Kenayan and Ngaran (Dari 1983). In the end, through a mixture of “socialisasi” (where members of the *Archaeological Service* would visit and try to convince them that this was for their own good), a policy of intimidation, and accomplished facts (the relocation of the market, the turning off of the electricity) by 1984 these last hold outs finally made room.

³⁹ UNESCO, BRX/AFE/10 (Indonesia/Borobudur, 1972–1983), Eiji Hattori (Japanese philosopher and staff member of UNESCO) to Thet Tun, December 30, 1982.

Looking at this relocation programme from the perspective of “the gift” (of moral and economic goods plus a fixed price for the land, in return for the obligation to move and engage in traditional village development), for some local residents it was not just a question of having to leave their (supposedly ancestral) land, which had suddenly become much more profitable, but also of drifting away from their social life at the site and their various (including spiritual) connections to the temple, of losing the ability to enter the site freely, make offers at the nearby Waringin tree on the occasion of marriages or for specific (healing) aims at the main stupa of Borobudur. This uneven exchange created, moreover, new obligations (“do not scratch nor climb on the walls of Borobudur; do not trade on the site; do not build in the zones”) and thus new debts to the parties that “took” (“what is in it for us; what did we, the people of Borobudur, get back from it?”). After the protests of the early 1980s, dissatisfaction would revive again in the post-Soeharto era of reformation and democratization, which coincided with the ending of the first master plan of Borobudur and the formulation of a new one. Although the post-Soeharto era goes beyond the scope of this paper, suffice to say that here the mechanisms of gifts, debts, and interdependencies still seem to function, and the conflicting concerns of the *PT Taman Wisata* and of the *Indonesian Archaeological Research and Conservation Centre* at the site, the various interests of multiple groups at location, of local and international mass tourism, and of (organized) pilgrimages from all over the world, still play their role in the development of the area as well as in the multiple identifications with the temple.⁴⁰

Indonesianizing Borobudur: Some Concluding Remarks

How Indonesian is Borobudur, considering the fact that this was all part of a process that officially transformed the temple (in 1991) into a World Heritage Site? By UNESCO’s definition, Borobudur is now a site of “outstanding universal value” (in connection to history, art, as well as living ideas or beliefs) and “a masterpiece of human creative genius.”⁴¹ While the latter definition appeals to global categories, it comes very close to what has been defined as a modern, Western appreciation of art and cultural heritage, since the notion of a “masterpiece” relates to the guild system, and the “human creative genius” to the romantic image of the artist as a unique individual. Does this mean that Borobudur mainly embodies colonial legacies by furthering the message of what Smith has identified as a Western-based and authorized heritage discourse? (Smith 2006)

⁴⁰ For a rather positive evaluation of the local versus global profits in heritage politics at Borobudur see Black and Wall 2001, 128–9.

⁴¹ This is a summary of three criteria (i, ii, and iv) by which Borobudur was enlisted as World Heritage Site in 1991. Accessed January 9, 2011. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria>.

We can easily see how (hierarchical) colonial patterns of thinking continue to work in the category of world heritage, but also how it offers space for the idealism and moral engagements that are aspects of post-colonial criticism (Rehling 2011). The colonial legacy may be most strongly embodied by the zoning system around Borobudur and the wish to create a restricted, artificial, and empty landscape around the temple—in other words, by the fact that the combination of a temple, a village, and a market on one site is apparently unthinkable to all the national and international heritage agencies involved. We could also reason that the phenomenon of world heritage in fact neutralizes the diverse national and foreign interventions (Japan, the Netherlands, India, Indonesia), into something that mattered in a global way, to the world as a whole. In becoming world heritage, Borobudur glorifies Indonesia as its responsible caretaker and the host of all these national interventions. Interestingly enough, it is the *materiality* of Borobudur that makes it a neutral and national icon for present-day, (mainly) Islamic Indonesia, and therefore easy and unproblematic to identify with. But Borobudur as a truly modern Indonesian icon—despite the fact that the temple may not speak to people in Aceh or Papua—is also a *mental* reality. Borobudur has become a modern Indonesian icon through the mechanism of “the gift,” or through the emotionally loaded moral identifications, material investments, and conservational interventions, that—following Mauss’s theory—created new moral obligations and investments. These obligations to give have been stimulated by diverse local and supra-local parties (borders) and regimes (orders) that continually identified with the temple. In other words, the moral dynamics of heritage formation made Borobudur modern Indonesian.

However, Borobudur’s conservation history also shows that the temple continues to attract the awe, amazement, and moral and economic investments of individual pilgrims and tourists, and of groups of people that do not necessarily have connections to state-supported or international heritage agencies. To this day, moreover, different local, national, and international parties continue to dispute how to take care of Borobudur—or of Angkor for that matter. This is not (only) because civilizing missions, heritage politics, and authorized heritage discourses work that way, but also because these sites, through the on-going moral mechanisms of “the gift,” generate alternative moral engagements and continue to win people to their side from within and from beyond the borders of states and empires. The American actor Richard Gere’s recent Buddhist pilgrimage to Borobudur and his plans to make a major movie about Raffles and Borobudur, as well as the fledgling intergovernmental plans to make Angkor Wat and Borobudur sister sites, are telling cases in point (Brata and Primanita 2011; Dewi 2012). Who knows what all this will imply for the positions of Borobudur and Indonesia in the wider Asian cultural imagination.

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Part III
From Cultural Brokers to Enlightened
Dictators

“Decadence and Revival” in Cambodian Arts and the Role of George Groslier (1887–1945)

Gabrielle Abbe

Abstract This paper focuses on the work of George Groslier (1887–1945), the creator and first curator of the Musée Albert Sarraut in Phnom Penh and the director of the *Service des Arts cambodgiens* from the 1920s to the 1940s. George Groslier was an artist, a painter, and one of the most important individual protagonists in the French initiative to “revive the Khmer arts” in Cambodia during the French Protectorate (1863–1953). In this particular political and cultural context, he sought to “restore Cambodia’s proper cultural identity” by creating an institutionalized programme of “Khmer arts renovation.”

This paper will attempt to consider the “civilizing vision” of George Groslier within two major developmental steps. First, the presentation of Groslier’s work will bring to light his personal values, terms, and writings addressing the pretended decadence of Khmer arts and heritage and its intended revival. This will provide a basis from which to explore, second, the process of how this individual value system imposed upon Khmer cultural heritage and gradually formed the ideological basis for two colonial institutions. These institutions became the core of the “Khmer arts renovation programme” and were led by George Groslier himself: (1) a museum to collect, classify, protect, and display works of art; and (2) a school of arts to re-create, teach, and perpetuate the Khmer artistic “tradition.” They were instrumental in the establishment of a canon of Cambodian heritage within French colonial politics, a canon that has retained its dominance to this day.

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George Groslier: An Individual Cultural Broker with a Vision to Civilize¹

George Groslier, a French artist in Cambodia

Born on February 4, 1887, George Groslier (Fig. 1) was the first French citizen born in Cambodia. In 1885 his parents, Antoine and Angelina Groslier, arrived in Cambodia, where his father worked as a civil servant. In 1889 Groslier went to France with his mother while his father stayed behind in Indochina; he travelled back to Cambodia twenty years later. In Paris George Groslier received a classical training as a painter at the *École des Beaux-Arts* where, notably, he studied under Albert Maignan. In 1910, after winning the *Second Prix de Rome*, he decided to visit his father who was then *Résident de France* (Protectorate's chief administrator in the provinces) in Ban Me Thuot in the south of Annam province. He travelled through Annam and Cambodia for more than a year painting and drawing, and devoted the last six months of his travels to Angkor where he studied Khmer art.

When he returned to Europe he organized a series of conferences, which took place between 1912 and 1913 (both in France and Belgium), and were based on his own field observations on art and archaeology in Cambodia and Khmer. Upon his return to France, George Groslier published his first book *Danseuses cambodgiennes anciennes et modernes* (Groslier 1913), which was also illustrated with many of his drawings.

In 1913, Groslier returned to Indochina when the *Ministère de l'Instruction Publique et des Beaux-Arts* (minister of public instruction and fine arts), and soon after the *Société Asiatique* also put him in charge of an “archaeological and artistic study” in Cambodia. This mission included the study and survey of “the most remote monuments of Cambodia.”² Throughout his missions and travels Groslier continued to collect material for his writings on Khmer arts and Khmer traditions, and he began to formulate a notion of their progressive disappearance. In 1914 George Groslier was mobilized for war. He took part in the Romanian campaign in October 1916 before being called back to Indochina by Albert Sarraut, the *Gouverneur général de l'Indochine* (French representative for Indochina, including Cambodia, Annam, Cochinchina, Tonkin, and Laos), in 1917. From that point he lived in Cambodia almost exclusively, returning to France only for holidays or special missions. During these years he focused all of his knowledge and artistic talent (while holding the position of director of the museum) on the establishment

¹ This research forms part of my doctoral research project “La France et les arts Khmers, du Protectorat à l'Indépendance du Cambodge” at the University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, within the U.M.R IRICE and the C.H.A.C (Centre d'histoire de l'Asie contemporaine). This research is ongoing and at this point focuses on George Groslier (1887–1945). All English quotations from original French sources are my translations unless otherwise noted.

² Cf. biographical note (no date, after 1931), no author, National Archives of Cambodia (N.A.C.), R.S.C. file n°8338 C/2.



Fig. 1 Portrait of George Groslier, curator of the Musée Albert Sarraut. No date (Private collection)

of a *Service des Arts cambodgiens* (Khmer arts service). He also carried out his own personal studies, notably on Khmer dance, which formed the subject of his first book.³ Although he was not a trained architect, he used his numerous architectural surveys and sketches of Khmer architecture to design the *Musée Albert Sarraut* in Phnom Penh, which he later re-visited on a smaller scale in an ephemeral reconstitution as the “Cambodian Pavilion” during the 1931 International Colonial Exhibition in Paris.⁴

A general presentation of George Groslier’s works— main themes

George Groslier was a man with a wide range of skills: he was a draughtsman, a designer, a painter, an architect, a photographer, a curator, and a writer all at once. The vast quantity of drawings and texts that he left after his death bear witness to his numerous activities. However, the aim of this paper is not to analyse his skills as a draughtsman, but rather to explore Groslier’s central cultural vision of establishing an urgent “renovation programme for Khmer arts,” which he developed in the late 1910s. As the head of the *Musée Albert Sarraut* and the *Service des Arts* or the *Ballet Royal* (Royal Ballet of Cambodia), Groslier had one goal: to lift Khmer arts from oblivion and to revive local artistic traditions. He also worked actively to

³ George Groslier took more than 2,000 negatives of dancers, a selection of which were displayed in 2012 at the National Museum of Cambodia in Phnom Penh.

⁴ In fact, Groslier had already participated in the 1922 National Colonial Exhibition in Marseille where he contributed sketches of the entry doors to the main Cambodian pavilion.

publicize and ensure the spread of Khmer arts within Indochina and abroad. Groslier's writings seek simultaneously to reveal his vision, declare his programme, and justify his actions. One of the main topics of his writings was the notion of "decadence" and the need to "safeguard" Khmer traditions. Since the 1910s, when he released his first publications and communications, Groslier continually described what he identified as the progressive disappearance of artistic activities in Cambodia. In 1913 his book *Danseuses Cambodgiennes anciennes et modernes* deplored the decline of traditional Khmer dance and theatre through the depiction of the dancers' lives and art; he described an art practice that had deep roots in the culture but had grown decadent (cf. Falser 2014a). This theme was taken up again in his 1916 publication entitled *A l'ombre d'Angkor* (Groslier 1916) where he simultaneously evoked artistic traditions and denounced their neglect. Two main themes were recurrent in Groslier's work and were ultimately formulated in his 1917 "renovation programme": the first involved the permanence of Khmer arts and the continuity between ancestral artistic traditions and their contemporary manifestations. The second deplored the decline of Khmer arts and underlined the need to work for their preservation.

However, Groslier was not the only one speaking out against the rapid disappearance of Khmer arts at that time. In an article published in 1913 Henri Marchal, the architect and later Conservator General of the Angkor Archaeological Park, also deplored the situation (Marchal 1913). Like Groslier, Marchal came to the conclusion that Chinese and Annam influences were mostly responsible for the decline of Khmer art and culture. George Groslier paid tribute to his predecessor in an article published under the pseudonym S.-G. Nécoli in the journal *Arts et Archéologie Khmers*. Referring to a veritable "opinion movement" that was developing at the beginning of the twentieth century "among few rare amateurs and specialists in favour of indigenous arts," he named Henri Marchal as one of the first "perceptive men of the time" (Necoli 1921a, 84). In 1917 Groslier described Khmer arts as "endangered" and "denatured" and he asked: "In this moribund art, [that has grown] suddenly mixed, where to find and how to use the seeds likely to flourish, the fresh drops of blood?"⁵ (Groslier 1931, 1) He presented his assessment as a kind of medical diagnosis, and used words like "fever" or "quinine" to underscore this. In mentioning the "forms of art infected" by foreign influences, he pointed out the necessity of going back to "healthy pieces of art," by making a "diagnosis," finding "cures," and prescribing "treatment" (Groslier 1931, 8–9).

Decadence in this case was clearly intended to mean deviations from something original and pure. For Groslier, the "pure" form of Khmer art had become endangered as a result of the encounter between the primitive local context and the influences of Chinese and Indian arts. In his 1918 article "La tradition cambodgienne," he declared that traditional Khmer ancient art had suffered under the influences of the kingdom's neighbours since the fall of Angkor in 1431

⁵Original text: "Chez ce moribond brusquement métissé, où trouver et comment utiliser les germes encore susceptibles de fleurir, les gouttes de sang pur?"

(Groslier 1918a, 466–467). This was especially true of Siam—which in Groslier’s time was under the heavy influence of Great Britain, France’s major colonial competitor in the region. For Groslier, foreign influences couldn’t be seen as a factor of enrichment, exchange, or development, but only as an attack on the integrity of this pure art (Groslier 1918b). In various texts Groslier listed three main reasons for this decadence (compare Groslier 1918d). The first was the nature of Khmer art as he defined it: it comprised of objects for daily use that could be easily damaged. Furthermore, this art was dependent upon the sensitive relationship between student and teacher, a circumstance that made its transmission especially fragile. Groslier conceptualized a standardized form of Khmer art that was based almost entirely on copying, with no space for creativity and an inability to adapt itself to changes. The second reason was linked to the special characteristics of Cambodian artists and craftsmen. Using a classifying approach, he categorized and generalized, defining craftsmen as lacking in initiative, trained to copy, and therefore vulnerable to foreign influences: “A Cambodian artist is not one of those visionary people who, being oppressed, will go underground to celebrate his worship. He is the opposite of an innovator. To imitate his past qualifies him to imitate any other example” (Groslier 1918b, 553). But the factors that he held most responsible for the decadence of Khmer art were historical ones. For instance, Groslier often brought up the influence of Siam in ancient times and suggested that Siamese influences were imposed by force and that artists did not have the freedom to choose to assimilate. According to Groslier, Siam had drawn its artistic inspiration from Khmer tradition, absorbed it, and then reintroduced it to Khmer culture. He spoke of all the loans that Siamese culture had made to Cambodia and of the stylistic migration of the *mokhot* or *naga*’s (mythological snake) head pattern. For Groslier, these exchanges between Siam and Cambodia had thrown the Khmer people and artists, who attributed many things from their own traditional culture to Siam, into confusion (Groslier 1918a, 467).

However, for Groslier it was not just Siam but also other important historical aspects of colonization that formed a part of these destructive dynamics. He pointed out that Western colonial (in this case, European) influences had been so abrupt that they had deeply destabilized Khmer art. In 1918, when Europe entered the last phase of World War I, he declared, “[b]y a very miserable fate, Cambodian traditions seem to be called to disappear all the more quickly given that, after ten centuries of decadence, they have now been subjected to the deep and overwhelming influence of the West for [the past] fifty years”⁶ (Groslier 1918a, 459). In 1931, when anti-colonial movements began to spring up in the French *métropole*,

⁶ Original text: “Par un sort vraiment malheureux, les traditions cambodgiennes semblent appelées à disparaître d’autant plus vite qu’après une décadence de dix siècles, elles sont soumises depuis cinquante ans à l’influence prédominante et profonde de l’Occident.”

Groslier continued with this notion: “If Cambodian art was still holding out, it was worm-eaten, it had no resistance left. Western influences, arising with incredible strength and speed, destroyed it all at once”⁷ (Groslier 1931, 5). Returning to the theme of decline and decadence, he described Cambodia as a victim that could only wait for help from the French Protectorate to survive. And indeed, the protection of Khmer arts was an essential field of action for the French colonial government, which included George Groslier. Within the domain of cultural action, heritage preservation was a key means of legitimating the colonial presence in Cambodia. This vision perfectly suited Groslier’s doctrine of a Cambodian arts renovation plan.

Part of this plan was to ensure the success of Khmer arts’ propaganda. In 1921, with this aim in view, Groslier launched a review called *Arts et archéologie khmers*. With the help of André Silice (director of the *École des Arts* between 1922 and 1938) he wrote most of the articles for the review himself, and the two men placed their sketching talents at the service of their scientific studies. This review served Groslier both as a means of imparting his ideas and vision for Khmer arts and as a tool for their diffusion. The two issues published between 1921 and 1926 included scientific studies on Khmer temples, general dissertations about Khmer arts and craftsmanship, the history and timeline of the museum, and even a presentation of George Groslier’s *Service des Arts*. Lastly, in addition to all his other duties, Groslier published several novels in which his singular vision for Cambodia was made clear. The 1928 novel *Le retour à l’argile*, for instance—which, incidentally, earned him the *Grand Prix de littérature coloniale* in 1929—tells of a French engineer posted in Cambodia who is slowly affected by the grace of the country and is finally submerged in it.

George Groslier’s doctrine and programme

In 1916 the Gouverneur general, Albert Sarraut, decided to create a new school of art in Phnom Penh. He wanted to replace the art section of the *École professionnelle* with a school dedicated to arts that was separate from technique. He called on George Groslier, who had all the qualifications, to develop and lead the school. Groslier knew Cambodia very well, he spoke the language, and had been studying Khmer art for a long time; furthermore, as a painter he was particularly qualified to draw up a programme for teaching art. In addition, George Groslier also enjoyed the influential support of his father-in-law, Jules Poujade, who was an editor of the newspaper *La Lanterne* and a good friend of the *Gouverneur général*. The *Gouverneur général de l’Indochine* and the *Résident supérieur du Cambodge*

⁷Original text: “Si l’art cambodgien tenait encore, il était vermoulu, à bout de résistance. Les influences occidentales, survenant avec une force et une rapidité inouïes, l’achevèrent d’un seul coup.”

(France’s chief administrator in the Protectorate) decided to put Groslier in charge of a six-month exploratory study of “the organization of a school of applied arts”⁸ in Cambodia, the purpose of which was to “study on the premises various questions raised by the intended creation and to propose a plan, drawing its inspiration from the guidelines given by the *Résident supérieur* and the *Gouverneur général*.” At the end of his mission, George Groslier was required to write a report “about the situation of arts in Cambodia and the set-up of an organization to keep them intact, and to revive those tending to disappear.”⁹ This report was submitted on July 7, 1917. Not surprisingly, it concluded that traditional Khmer arts were disappearing and that the Protectorate had to act quickly in order to ensure their conservation (Groslier 1925). Groslier advised the Protectorate not only to create a new school of art, but also a new museum and a *Direction des Arts* (Arts’ Supervision) that would be in charge of selling and advertising local handicrafts. The three institutions would be united within the *Service des Arts*. As summarized in the *Revue indochinoise*, the “renovation plan” imagined by Groslier and Baudoin (the *Résident supérieur*) in 1917 aimed to help Cambodia regain its proper cultural identity and regional importance by protecting it from the influence of neighbouring countries.

Based on these observations, Groslier drew up a “doctrine” establishing his Cambodian arts’ “renovation plan” (Groslier 1931, 7) that was based on three points: (1) he recommended developing teaching in order to prevent the disappearance of traditional artistic practices (see below in the section on the *École des Arts*). (2) He recommended the creation of a museum, assigned to the preservation and the display of artistic testimonies from the past. The museum was conceived as a resource for visitors and researchers, but most importantly as a working tool for the students of the *École des Arts*. To secure their education in accordance with what Groslier called “tradition,” he proposed that they have access to concrete examples. To better facilitate this access he suggested uniting the museum and the *École des Arts* in an architectural ensemble called the *Bloc des arts* (the block of the arts). (3) Groslier recommended fostering artistic commissions as a means of boosting art production. He proposed the creation of an organization that would be responsible for putting artisans and customers in touch with one another, for controlling the production, and for ensuring that it was promoted publically. As a direct result of this recommendation the *Direction des Arts* was created in 1919¹⁰

⁸ Baudoin, François-Marius, *Résident supérieur du Cambodge to Gouverneur général* in Hanoi, June 9, 1917. Official telegram. N.A.C. (R.S.C.), file n° 17663.

⁹ *Rapport du Résident supérieur au Cambodge à Monsieur le Gouverneur Général*, April 13, 1922, N.A.C. (R.S.C.) file n° 11886.

¹⁰ Royal Ordinance of December 31, 1919, founding the *Direction des Arts Cambodgiens*. See: *Arts et Archéologie Khmers I* (1921-3), 114–115.

and was led during its early years by George Groslier himself while he was already the director of the *École des Arts* and curator of the *Musée Albert Sarraut*.¹¹ The *Direction des Arts* was responsible for

the implementation and propaganda of Arts and art industries of the country, [...] establishing a close and constant link between the *École des Arts* and artisans of the country, [...] creating and maintaining an economic movement to indigenous artists and artisans' benefit, [...] looking for, noting, and fixing all objects, works of art, interesting monuments, practices, traditions, and evolution of arts from Cambodia, [and] lastly, ensuring the conservation of those arts, by teaching, photography, casting, if need be publication, local exhibition, or contribution to exhibitions abroad.¹²

In addition, the *Direction des Arts* was put in charge of the “protection and control of Cambodian artists and artisans.”¹³ When students from the *École des Arts* became artisans, they were given the opportunity to enter one of the *Corporations* (founded in 1920) and thus to benefit from the commissions and commercial opportunities it offered. In order to further regulate and control artistic production, Groslier also envisaged using the *Direction des Arts* as the centre for orders and deliveries, as well as a place to sell copied and original art objects in the *Office des ventes* (Sales office). Additionally, direct contact between clients and artisans would be limited in order to reduce the risk that artistic creation would be influenced and “distorted” by the clients’ tastes, which might not properly understand or adequately respect the Khmer “tradition.” The *Direction des Arts* not only regulated supply and demand, but also guaranteed the so-called authenticity of the merchandise (Groslier 1918c, 261). Although this project was more ambitious than the initial one, it was accepted without restrictions by the *Gouverneur général* and the *Résident supérieur*. In 1917 both gave Groslier a *carte blanche* for its realization.

Institutionalizing Groslier’s Vision: A Museum and an Art School

Collect, classify, protect, and display: A museum for Cambodia’s antiquity

In his report for the *Gouvernement général* in 1917, George Groslier underscored the need to replace the *Musée Khmer*, a *dépôt-musée* (museum depot) created in

¹¹ Groslier was director of the *École des Arts* from 1920 to 1922 and curator of the *Musée Albert Sarraut* from 1920 to 1944.

¹² Royal Ordinance of 31 December 1919, art. 2.

¹³ Decree by the *Gouverneur général de l’Indochine*, August 9, 1922, formalizing the *Service des Arts*.

1905, with a new museum. A brief history of this first museum is required in order to understand why Groslier felt that it had to be replaced.

Historical context

When it first became an important part of the Indochinese Union, initially Cambodia was neglected by the French colonial administration, which focused on the more geographically auspicious territories of Tonkin, Annam, and Cochinchina. Before 1907 and the retrocession of the three provinces of Battambang, Sisophon, and Siem Reap (which had been incorporated into Siam in 1794), Cambodia was used as a buffer state between Cochinchina and Siam, which was under British influence. This retrocession had a strong symbolic impact, since Angkor, capital of the ancient Khmer Empire that once ruled the region, now fell under the control of the French colonial government. From that moment, Cambodia acquired specific importance in the eyes of both scientists and the colonial government who were increasingly focusing their efforts on developing this “heritage” of antiquity as a showcase for France’s cultural action in Indochina.

The cultural field has always been a major battleground for political action and competition between European powers, notably abroad and during the era of colonial competition. Cultural influence was often used as a means of establishing political influence over other countries, and cultural actions were seen as a form of diplomatic action. During the colonial period, France, Great Britain, and the Netherlands competed in South and Southeast Asia through scientific expeditions, the creation of scientific societies and museums, and through restoration campaigns. Particularly, in Cambodia the French colonial government wanted to demonstrate that it was worthy of the *patrimoine* (heritage) placed under its protection, especially while its British and Dutch neighbours were promoting and improving the heritage of India and the Dutch East Indies. But as Baudoin, the *Résident supérieur du Cambodge*, confirmed in 1917, France also wanted to restore Cambodia’s cultural identity and sense of its own regional importance within the Indochinese Union in order to protect it from the “corrupting influence” of neighbouring countries: “You know the importance I attach to the conservation and the renovation of Khmer art, which I consider [as] being the only means of preserving for Cambodia a personality of its own.”¹⁴

European researchers were interested in Southeast Asian artistic heritage even before the nineteenth century. Scientific explorative missions from Europe usually returned home with artworks that were intended to enrich museum collections in the colonial mother countries.¹⁵ The idea soon developed of displaying the pieces from

¹⁴ Baudoin, François-Marius, *Résident supérieur du Cambodge*, in a letter to all *Résidents*, July 13, 1917, N.A.C. (R.S.C.), file n° 15200.

¹⁵ In 1866 the scientific *Mission d’exploration du Mékong* led by Ernest Doudart de Lagrée arrived and brought plaster casts and several original Khmer art pieces back to France. These were

these expeditions in the colonized Asian countries themselves. Under this new impetus, several museum projects took shape within the Indochinese Union as well as in different European colonies in the area (Delobel 2005).¹⁶ Europeans, of course, conceived these projects, mostly colonial civil servants who were a class of foreigner that had shown an interest in the study of the history, languages, and arts of Indochina since the nineteenth century. Thanks to the initiative of an official institution, the first museum was created in Indochina. Founded in 1898 by the French colonial government, the *Mission Archéologique Permanente de l'Indochine*¹⁷ (Permanent archaeological mission of Indochina) was responsible for studying and preserving Indochina's religious, written, architectural, and archaeological heritage. Converted in 1900 into the *École française d'Extrême-Orient* (French School of Asian Studies, EFEO),¹⁸ this institution had many tasks, one of the most important of which was to create a museum dedicated to the study, the preservation, and the display of arts from Indochina. The museum of the EFEO was founded in 1901 in Saigon (in the province of Cochinchina), the administrative capital of the Indochinese Union. Named the *Musée de l'Indo-Chine*, it not only united and displayed pieces from different cultures on the Indochinese peninsula but also those from other countries in the larger Asian context (e.g. India, China, Indonesia). In 1902, when the capital was transferred to Hanoi (in the province of Tonkin), most of the museum collections also migrated to the new capital. If the idea of a unique museum representing all of Indochina seemed justified in Saigon because of its central position, the installation in Hanoi, a remote capital, was by no means unanimously accepted. Moreover, after 1903 the museum encountered great difficulties. At the insistence of several influential personalities and the determination of the *Résident supérieur*, Jules Morel, the EFEO was finally convinced of the need to create local museums in each of the Indochinese territories. This is how the *Musée Khmer* was created in Phnom Penh in 1905.

displayed at the 1867 *Exposition Universelle* (World's Fair) and the *Exposition permanente des colonies*. A few years later, Louis Delaporte (1842–1925) asked the French government permission to undertake a mission to Angkor. From this mission he brought plaster casts, sculptures, and architectural pieces back for display outside Paris in the Compiègne castle and later at the Trocadéro museum where they formed the collection of the *Musée indo-chinois* (cf. Falser 2013). In 1887–1888 the architect Lucien Fourmureau brought many drawings, plans, and sections of Khmer temples, as well as casts and original pieces back from his mission. These plaster casts and drawings served as the basis for future “Khmer pavilions” in colonial and universal exhibitions from 1889 until 1937. See Falser 2014b, 2011.

¹⁶ Some examples of the museums created in Southeast Asia by colonial powers include: Great Britain in Calcutta by the Asiatic Society on February 2, 1914, in Madras by the Madras Society Library in 1851, and in Colombo in 1877 from a collection united by the Royal Asiatic Society in Colombo since 1847. Museums were also created by the Netherlands: the Batavia Society for Arts and Science united artworks and opened a museum in 1868 in Batavia (now Jakarta).

¹⁷ Decree by the *Gouverneur général* of December 15, 1898.

¹⁸ EFEO's organization decree, February 26, 1901. *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient (BEFEO)* 1 (1901): 289.

A precedent: the *Musée Khmer* (1905)

The decree of August 17, 1905 created the *Section des antiquités khmères du Musée de l'Indo-Chine* (Khmer antiquities section of the Museum of Indo-China)—an institution that was responsible for the centralizing of all ancient artefacts found in Cambodia and deemed untenable in situ.¹⁹ Placed under the EFEO's scientific control, it functioned as a local branch in the chain of the Indochinese museums. Henri Parmentier, chief of the Archaeological service of the EFEO, was appointed its curator²⁰ and was supported by an assistant curator who was chosen from among the civil servants in Indochina's Phnom Penh-based colonial administration.

To understand why George Groslier and the colonial government wanted to replace this museum in 1917, we must first investigate the problems that the *Musée* had encountered since its foundation. Due to a lack of space it was first installed within the confines of the Royal Palace. King Sisowath (r. 1904–1927) placed part of the Silver Pagoda galleries at the EFEO's disposal, as well as a pavilion located in the palace courtyard. This is where the art pieces were stored for several months until the construction of an appropriate building was effected in 1907. The new building, designed by Mr. Khuon, the director of building constructions inside the palace,²¹ was built on the Phnom Penh High School site located to the north of the city (Fig. 2). Construction started in March 1908 and was finalized in February 1909. This project was criticized by George Groslier (Necoli 1921b), among others, for its building plan, and it was felt that the small size of the area did not give visitors enough room to view the artworks properly and would lead to a very rapid overload of the museum (Fig. 3).

Groslier also denounced the location choice for the museum as too far from the city centre and too difficult to access within a school site. The first collection of the museum consisted of Khmer pieces from the former museum in Saigon. Thanks to the donations made by collectors and the pieces sent by *Résidents* of the provinces, it grew rapidly. Even King Sisowath donated part of his jewellery collection. It was soon clear that the *Musée Khmer* was too small to accommodate all the collections, and constructing a new building was quickly decided upon. In taking up this new project George Groslier did not simply seek to create a new building, he also wanted to redefine its role in the preservation of art objects.

¹⁹ Decree of August 17, 1905, see *BEFEO* 5 (1905): 508–9.

²⁰ Decree of August 17, 1905, art. 4.

²¹ M. Khuon, the *Directeur des travaux du Palais*, worked from a project designed previously by Henri Parmentier, see *BEFEO* 7 (1907): 422.

Fig. 2 The Musée Khmer, after 1909 (EFEO)



Fig. 3 The Musée Khmer, interior view, after 1909 (EFEO)



1919: the Musée Albert Sarraut

The museum was the keystone of Groslier’s plan and civilizing vision and thus it held a privileged place within the *Service des Arts*. It was conceived of not only as a place to preserve ancient art pieces and display them for a wider audience, but also as the “keeper of the tradition.” In Groslier’s system the museum guaranteed the authenticity on which the teachers, who were responsible for the education of the new artisans, must rely. In 1919 the museum planned by Groslier was finally realized, first as the *Musée du Cambodge*, and later the *Musée Albert Sarraut*.



Fig. 4 Inauguration of the *Musée du Cambodge*. Inaugural speech of the *Résident supérieur* Baudoin, February 13, 1920 (National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh)

It was inaugurated in February 1920 and opened its doors to the public in April of the same year²² (Fig. 4).

The building reflected Groslier’s vision of a pure “Khmer style” (Fig. 5) in its floor and elevation plans, which were based on traditional Khmer architecture.²³ As Groslier stated in 1917: “The plan that I propose is a plan from Prah Vihear and parts of Angkor Vat; it was slightly modified for its new destination” (Groslier 1917). Groslier also chose the craftsmen for the building, which measured 66 metres in length and 38 metres in maximal height at its central spire (Necoli 1921c). Committed to the idea that only Khmer craftsmen could execute traditional Khmer patterns, Groslier made sure that only native Cambodians worked on the decoration (Necoli 1921c; Groslier 1931). Learning from the failures of the *Musée Khmer*, he created a museum whose exhibition surface (originally 550 square metres) could be extended to accommodate future demands.

He also chose, along with the colonial authorities, a central location in the city for the new museum. Placed at the corner of Ohier’s street, north of the Royal Palace, the museum was situated in a dominant spot and was therefore accessible to

²² Foundation decree by the *Gouverneur général*, creating the *Musée du Cambodge*, August 12, 1919, renamed Musée Albert Sarraut by Royal Ordinance, April 10, 1920.

²³ Although those plans could not be located during our research, nevertheless, many sources attribute them to George Groslier.



Fig. 5 The Musée Albert Sarraut. General view from northeast, after 1923 (National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh)

all visitors. The decree of August 12, 1919 outlined its function as a “museum of art, history, and archaeology,” whose purpose was to “centralize all ancient objects that present artistic and documentary nature.” Placed under the control of the EFEO, it was designed to “receive the materials found due to excavation or any work on Cambodia territory, and whose conservation would be of artistic, historical, or ethnographic interest, or would not be properly maintained on the original site.”²⁴ The *Musée Albert Sarraut* was a place for preservation and display, it was to receive art objects from all over Cambodia and thus prevent them from being scattered across the museums of the French *métropole* or of other colonies in the area. Conforming to the remit to save Khmer art from extinction, Groslier declared the museum a “vast rescue ship” (*un vaste vaisseau de sauvetage*) (Groslier 1931, 12).

The core of the archaeological collections came from the former *Musée Khmer*, which were donated by EFEO and transferred in March 1920. From the very beginning the museum largely benefited from donations from the royal collections.²⁵ Objects sent by several *Résidents* and additional purchases soon increased this core collection. Wishing to display the most complete collection of Khmer art, Groslier also managed to gather many valuable pieces that had been kept previously in Buddhist pagodas in exchange for mentioning the name of the pagoda on the

²⁴ Decree by the *Gouverneur général*, creating the *Musée du Cambodge*, August 12, 1919.

²⁵ See: N.A.C. (R.S.C.), file n° 9076.

label and providing in exchange plaster casts or small bronze statues made by *École des Arts*’ students (Groslier 1918e). Groslier also brought pieces back from his numerous campaigns in the Indo-Chinese provinces and managed to display some of the most important pieces from the *Conservation d’Angkor*. His insistence on collecting the country’s most beautiful Khmer art in the *Musée Albert Sarraut* was not to everyone’s liking, particularly those who had hoped to see a museum located near the Angkor temples (Delobel 2005; Abbe 2012). As the collection grew, Groslier began to think about an extension and redevelopment of the museum, and as a result the display surface was extended in 1923, 1928, 1930, and in 1938.

The museum was not just a place for the conservation and display of Khmer art pieces, but also a scientific resource for artisans and researchers and an economical enterprise serving the Protectorate. As an art “conservatory,” Groslier saw it as the “guardian” of the tradition and “purity” of Khmer art. In this role the museum was meant as a tool for apprentice artisans who were encouraged to find inspiration in the collection and were trained through direct contact with the pieces. Through the display of these collections Groslier also sought to emphasize the importance of French colonial action in Cambodia. He wanted the museum to be an emblem of French intervention in the cultural field. In his view, the museum had to be a showcase for “the renaissance of a country, revealing the protective action from France” to visitors (Groslier 1918e) as well as a place of study for researchers. There were several working tools available for public use; one was a library that by 1924 housed 651 books about Cambodia and its adjoining countries. There was also a photographic laboratory and a plaster cast workshop at the museum; both were exceptional in Indochina at the time. This system was used not only for scientific purposes; it also had an economic aim: the plaster casts, photographs, postcards, and pieces made by artisans from the *Corporations* were sold in the museum shop (the *Office des Ventes*) (Figs. 6 and 7).

The production belonged to the *Direction des Arts* and was an important element of a wider propaganda campaign (Abbe 2011). Foreign visitors spent money for the entrance ticket, but Groslier hoped that they would also purchase souvenirs and reproductions or photographs of the pieces they saw at the museum to take home. Groslier’s plan was to encourage the tourists (who would no doubt be impressed by the artisans’ work) who visited the *École des Arts* nearby, to also buy items at the *Office des Ventes* in the museum.²⁶ He also believed that the presence of this museum would encourage visitors to stay a bit longer in the capital and would thus boost all the other industries in the city. Indeed, after it opened the museum drew large numbers of visitors. It benefited from the flow of tourists travelling to Angkor who also came to Phnom Penh to visit the Royal Palace. Examining the number of visitors recorded by the museum’s administration throughout this period,

²⁶ As a reference, we can give some figures for the items sold at the *Office des Ventes*, including commands: 68 in 1918, 360 in 1920, 1,479 in 1922, 2,273 in 1924, 6,937 in 1926, 4,434 in 1930 (Groslier 1931, 24).



Fig. 6 The *Office des Ventes*, inside the museum, September 1923 (National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh)



Fig. 7 The *Office des Ventes*, inside the museum. No date (1930s?) (National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh)

it is clear that it enjoyed a steady stream of European visitors as well as an increased number of Asian visitors.

Although Groslier was also supervisor of the *Direction des Arts*, he remained at the helm of the *Musée Albert Sarraut* until 1944 when he passed his duties on to Pierre Dupont. During his two decades guiding the museum, Groslier enriched its collections and publicized Khmer heritage both in Indochina and abroad. He also remained at his post and continued with his duties during World War II and the museum’s reduced activity. During the war he tried to gather together in the museum all the pieces kept in various depots around the country and, in 1941, he even acquired new, interesting pieces from the Vat Po Veal pagoda in Battambang before the province fell back under Siam’s rule. Even when the political situation intensified Groslier never lost sight of his goal. In December 1941 he was handling a difficult conflict situation, but nevertheless stood firm on everything that concerned the museum. For example, after the requisitioning of the *École professionnelle* by Japanese troops, the local Chief of Education asked Groslier to clear a museum wing in order to relocate the school’s dormitories. Groslier refused this request because it endangered the museum’s night-watch schedule. Instead, with the agreement of the EFEO’s director, he proposed relocating the dormitories of the *École professionnelle* in part of the *École des Arts*’ premises and to move the latter under the museum’s verandas (Groslier 1942). Groslier did not leave Cambodia after his retirement in 1944. He was arrested in 1945 by the *Kampetai* (the military Japanese police) and died on May 8, 1945 shortly after his interrogation. After Groslier’s departure, the head of the museum succeeded to a string of French curators: Pierre Dupont, Solange Thierry, Jean Boisselier, and Madeleine Giteau (1956–1966). It was only in 1966 that the first Cambodian curator, Chea Thay Seng, was given charge of the museum.

The École des Arts

Art teaching: George Groslier’s vision

As he detailed in 1922, the *École des Arts* answered George Groslier’s vision for instruction in Khmer arts: “The aim of this school is to place models of classical Khmer art in front of the eyes of the students, and to have them reproduced. It is out of the question, of course, to have them copy servilely and perpetually as models of Angkorian art, but to provide the student with elements of work, identifying as much as possible with his atavistic mentality, and thus to prepare contemporary art, in the light of classical art” (Groslier 1922). One of Groslier’s and the colonial administration’s main concerns when creating the *École des Arts*, was to how to encourage and allow Cambodian craftsmen to renew their artistic past, which had been, according to Groslier, contested and monopolized by the neighbouring countries. Furthermore, art was to be used as a calling card for Cambodia and Indochina. In a report to the *Gouverneur général* in 1919, Baudoin described the



Fig. 8 *École des Arts cambodgiens*, traditional mask making. Application of cut leathers on the mask, October 1930 (National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh)

École des Arts as “the innovation meant to give all its glitter back to Khmer art’s ancient splendour” (Baudoin 1919). Groslier wished to recreate and teach a “national art” that was free of Siamese and Chinese influences. In order to give the students “classical” instruction in revived and forgotten techniques, he proposed an exclusively Cambodian programme for the new school of art.²⁷ He banished all Western influences in pedagogy, techniques, and models in an attempt to realize his goal to “make nothing but Cambodian art, and to make it in Cambodia” (Groslier 1918c, 253). In order to achieve this he rejected technical innovations and recommended that all the school’s teachers be Cambodian (Fig. 8). Thus, the first teachers and foremen were confirmed craftsmen (some of them from the Royal Palace) and placed at the school’s disposal by King Sisowath (Groslier 1931, 14).

The school was not only meant to revive traditions, but also to boost artistic creation by training new craftsmen. In his reports, Groslier had identified the lack of orders as one of the main causes for Khmer art’s decline, and pointed out the necessity of finding new opportunities for craftsmen. To revive Khmer arts it was

²⁷ We must remember that although the teaching team was Cambodian, the direction of the school and the choice of programme were entirely in the hands of George Groslier’s French team. Art created under these auspices was a sort of “ideal” and encouraged a stereotyped Khmer art that corresponded to a Western vision of it. For a complete study of the influence of George Groslier’s programme of artistic creation in Cambodia, see Muan 2001.

necessary not only to train artisans but also to find new markets and to create an organization that would manage the selling of their products. As a result, the *École des Arts* was closely linked with the *Corporations cambodgiennes*. This institution was in charge of the production and selling of the artefacts, and it gathered together craftsmen and former students from the *École des Arts* (Fig. 9). Tourists and museum visitors were soon identified as new potential customers and the *Office des ventes* was stationed inside the museum to sell products from the *Corporations*.

The School of Arts played an economic role in Groslier’s system. During the opening ceremony of the new school on April 23, 1920, Groslier laid out its economic operations. He underlined the low cost of those traditional industries that “do not get a piaster out of the country”, but result in “a perpetual receipt of foreign funds.” Wood, silver, raw materials used for artistic production all came from the country and thus it was deemed unnecessary to buy anything from abroad. To Groslier “the only value of artistic goods lodges in the fingers and brain of the craftsmen.” To reap all the rewards, the French Protectorate would have to invest in “School and Museum maintenance, that’s all” (Groslier 1920, 103).

Baudoin took Groslier’s part in this issue and declared on the same occasion that “Unlimited opportunities will be brought by tourists’ purchases, sales from the



Fig. 9 Advertising for the *Corporations cambodgiennes*. No date (National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh)

exhibitions, development of local constructions and productions in ancient style: pagodas, palace, bridges, furniture, fabrics etc [...], by the setting up of a staff including architects and artists in charge of the study, the conservation, the supervision of this rich and considerable archaeological domain of Cambodia, that still waits, except for Angkor group, a methodical exploration and the organization of spreading and permanent conservation” (Baudoin 1920, 94).

Another economic advantage of the School of Arts was that it offered an inexpensive and very effective workforce. This workforce was required for the construction and decoration works at the museum, for the making of showcases and pedestals, for the restoration of some museum art pieces, and also for numerous casts and stamps made on behalf of the EFEO. Furthermore, during their training many students from the *École des Arts* also worked for the Protectorate, the king, or the religious authorities. In the early 1930s, for example, students from the school were commissioned to create the murals of Saravan Pagoda (Silice 1933).

The *École des Arts*: history and functioning

There can be no doubt that creating a new school of art in Phnom Penh was a priority for the Gouverneur general, Albert Sarraut, when he called on George Groslier in Indochina. The situation of the arts was a growing concern for the colonial authorities who wanted to initiate a reform in art teaching. In 1907 the palace workshops had been transferred to the *Manufacture Royale* (founded in January 1907 by Royal Ordinance), but their craftsmen worked only for the king and for the royal family (Baudoin 1920, 90). On April 17, 1912 the *École royale des Arts décoratifs cambodgiens* (Royal School for Decorative Arts) was created by Royal Ordinance while the *Manufacture Royale* was maintained under the name of *Magasin central*. From that point on productions were accessible to the public and sold in the palace shop (Groslier 1918b); but none of these two institutions was really a school. Furthermore, the low pay drove many of the best craftsmen to leave, leading to a loss of knowledge.

In 1913 it became a matter of urgency for the authorities to reform the *École royale*, and in July 1913 students joined a section of the *École professionnelle*. This “artistic section of the *École professionnelle*” trained mainly cabinetmakers and foundry workers, giving them a technical rather than an artistic education. As Baudoin admitted a few years later, “the result was a distorted production, more harmful than useful to the protection and continuation of local arts. Works were in an obvious state of regression” (Baudoin 1920, 91). In 1915 there were many who wanted to see a separation between art and manual work, notably Charles Gravelle, president of the *Comité cambodgien de la Société d’Angkor*. He lent his support for a school of arts that would preserve artistic traditions from disappearing (Gravelle 1915, 86). Although this project was postponed during wartime, two years later a new project emerged. After the six-month study mission granted by the *Gouverneur général* and the *Résident supérieur*, George Groslier mapped out his new School of Arts. According to the Royal Ordinance of December 14, 1917, the school was

meant to “research, preserve, and protect the artistic traditions of the Khmer people” and was in charge of the formation “of Cambodian craftsmen, by a technical and practical education.”²⁸ Between 1918 and 1920 Groslier was in charge of the organization of the school and he assumed its direction until 1922 when André Silice was named director. The role of the director was to “ensure (. . .) artistic education of the teachers, (. . .) to organize the workshops, to establish models, and prepare a catalogue for the exhibition rooms,²⁹ to set courses programme, to watch over the maintaining of inner discipline and to prepare the budget” (Baudoin 1920, 91). In addition, the native staff included an assistant manager, an accountant, a secretary, workshop supervisors, and teachers. The school was placed under the control of the Ministry of Fine Arts and the *Comité de perfectionnement* chaired by the *Résident-Maire* of Phnom Penh. In 1922 the school was linked to the *Instruction publique de l’Indochine*,³⁰ but remained under the artistic and technical control of the *Direction des Arts* (Groslier 1921a). From January 1, 1918 it was installed in “a shed of the Palace” that had been used as a warehouse for the “processions and celebrations accessories” (Necoli 1921a). The new buildings opened on April 23, 1920 in the same complex as the museum, a configuration that allowed the students to see the artefacts in the museum galleries and to draw inspiration from them directly.

The school included six workshops “corresponding to the arts practised in Cambodia”: jewellery, cabinet making, foundry, wax and clay modelling, weaving, drawing, and architecture (Groslier 1922) (Figs. 10 and 11).

Students had to begin with a three-month training in drawing, which Groslier considered “the alphabet with which the applied arts group the letters” (Groslier 1918c). It is interesting to note that the conditions for admission to the school included knowledge of Khmer language and the traditional stay at the pagoda. According to George Groslier this assisted in the selection and admission of “young people already saturated with tradition and whose Cambodian identity appears unquestionable” (Groslier 1921b).

Although it was located in the *Bloc des Arts* near the museum, the school had its own *musée spécial*, which aimed to present a repertoire of motifs and forms as expressions of contemporary Khmer art. In 1920, in order to decentralize art teaching and allow provinces to benefit from the initiative led in Phnom Penh, two secondary workshops were created in Kompong Chhnang (a ceramic workshop to perpetuate local traditions) and Pursat (marble sculpture workshop near the marble quarry). Although they were independent, these workshops received

²⁸ Royal ordinance of December 14, 1917 relative to the *École des Arts cambodgiens*.

²⁹ The third article of the Royal ordinance of December 14, 1917 provided for the creation of exhibition rooms inside the School of Arts.

³⁰ Decree by the *Gouverneur général de l’Indochine*, August 9, 1922. This decree replaced the Royal ordinance of December 14, 1917 and linked the School of Arts to the *Instruction publique de l’Indochine*.

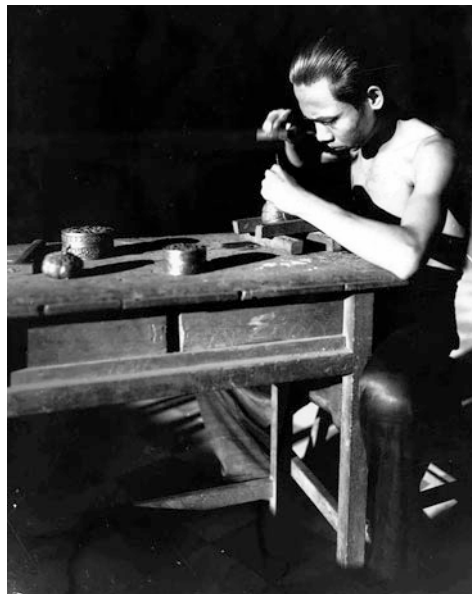


Fig. 10 *École des Arts cambodgiens*, apprentice jeweller, chasing. July 1934 (National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh)



Fig. 11 *École des Arts cambodgiens*, modelling and drawing workshop, May 1926 (National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh)

teachers and models from the *École des Arts* and were often inspected by its director (Groslier 1931, 16).

The *École des Arts* created by George Groslier was an exception in French Indochina in a period when only two types of teaching coexisted in Indochina, the schools of applied arts (Phnom Penh’s *École des Arts*, Hanoi’s *École professionnelle*, Haiphong’s *École professionnelle*, the schools of Thu Dau Mot, Bien Hoa and Gia Dinh) and Hanoi’s *École des Beaux-Arts*, whose programme was based entirely on the Western model.³¹

In the schools of applied arts, teaching was supposed to take local traditions into consideration and to combine respect for ancient practices and patterns with Western technical innovations. However, it is interesting to observe that the *École des Arts* in Phnom Penh was the only one that did not accept foreign teachers, influences, or models. This particularity is a direct reflection of George Groslier’s belief and his singular vision (that was shared by other French people living and working in Cambodia like Henri Marchal), which diverged from the widespread idea that all Western influences were improvements. At the same time as Victor Tardieu, the founder and first director of Hanoi’s School of Fine Arts, declared, “the study of Antique is absurd, it is as if we began the study of literature with philosophy.” (Silice 1926). George Groslier was fighting for the study of classical ancient Khmer arts.

Conclusion

George Groslier was both a man of his time and a man with a singular vision. His writings reflected the then widespread—and typically colonial—belief in Khmer decay and in Cambodia’s imminent disappearance, but they also proposed a complete arts renovation programme that was unique in Indochina. Although this initiative corresponded to a strong political purpose (to emphasize French-colonial cultural action in Cambodia, to give Cambodia artistic importance within Indochina, to give Cambodia economic interest, to compete with other European powers on the cultural field etc.) let us also not forget that the French colonial government found in George Groslier a vital cultural broker through which to carry out its policies successfully. Although he was a man of the field and not an academic (like members of the EFEO, for example), he succeeded in imposing his personal vision of ancient and contemporary Khmer arts on the country. For him Khmer arts were seriously endangered and it was the Protectorate’s mission to save them. Groslier’s arts renovation programme materialized in the form of a museum and a school of arts. And the result was that from 1900 to 1917 the vision of what a Khmer museum should be, changed immensely. From a simple depot that was barely open to scholars, under Groslier’s impetus it became one of the main instruments for the

³¹ Compare an overview on the art production in Indochina (André-Pallois 1997).

preservation and knowledge of Khmer heritage. This creation was a key element in the emergence of a wider notion of Khmer cultural identity. The *École des Arts* also answered Groslier's vision and corresponded to the idea he had of Khmer arts and of ancestral knowledge transmission in Cambodia. While highlighting the importance of Khmer artistic heritage and its links with contemporary Cambodia, drawing up legislation to preserve ancient monuments, and using art to introduce Cambodia to the world, George Groslier and the French colonial authorities contributed to the emergence of the notion of "cultural heritage" in this country. And his individual vision to save Khmer culture from degeneration was ultimately institutionalized within the French colonial mission to civilize.

A man with a wide range of skills—draughtsman, painter, architect, photographer, curator, and writer—George Groslier dedicated his life to the renovation and dissemination of Cambodia's artistic heritage. Throughout his work as curator of the museum and director of arts but also through his numerous writings, he tried to share his knowledge of Khmer culture with the world. He was distinguished with several honors in his career. In 1926 he was decorated with the Legion of Honour and the same year received the Duplex Medal of the *Société de Géographie commerciale de Paris* for his life's work. In 1931 he was elected a member of the *Société des Gens de Lettre*, and his book on Angkor won the French Academy Prize.

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The Civilizing Vision of an Enlightened Dictator: Norodom Sihanouk and the Cambodian Post-Independence Experiment (1953–1970)

Helen Grant Ross

Abstract In the short fifteen-year period following independence in 1953, Cambodia underwent a complete social and economic transformation and saw the emergence of all fields of artistic expression as well as the construction of hundreds of buildings, new towns, urban extensions, and infrastructure designed in an innovative style called “New Khmer Architecture.” A phenomenon like this is rare in any society and one questions what socio-political context enabled Cambodia to achieve so much in so short a time. This essay will address the political dynamic behind this ambiguous and unusual experiment in which nationalism and modernization as well as tradition worked together on a basis of religious ethics. Who were the major players in this unusual experiment? What forces were at work to encourage not only the construction of thousands of buildings to serve society’s needs, but also the emergence of an authentic and unique architecture movement?

Introduction

[T]he old Phnom Penh was beautiful, charming, but indolent under its dense foliage [...] the gentle life in a stagnant economy.¹

Kambuja in April 1966

This is no doubt a fair description of the capital of Cambodia as it stood in November 1953 when independence was peacefully negotiated by King Norodom Sihanouk. Under French Indochina, Cambodia was undeveloped compared to Vietnam. At the time of independence it had no architects or engineers of its

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¹ Translated from the French: “L’Ancien Phnom Penh: Beau, charmant, mais indolent sous ses épais ombrages [...] Douceur de vivre dans une économie stagnante.” (*Kambuja*, April 1966, 7)

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own, only nine doctors, no national administration, no government buildings, and very little social infrastructure; France had concentrated all these resources in Saigon and Hanoi.

In stark contrast fourteen years later Harold Holt, prime minister of Australia, wrote after his visit in 1967:

I was deeply impressed by the architecture, the charm and grace of Phnom Penh [...] I was also most interested in your vigorous programme for economic development with the imaginative and progressive port and town development at Sihanoukville [...] Since my return to Australia I have referred to my visit to your country in the Australian Parliament.
(Ministère de l'Information 1967, 306)

As these two contrasting passages suggest, independent Cambodia went through a dynamic fifteen-year period that gave rise to one of the most unusual architectural and economic development experiments of the century (Figs. 1 and 2).

Tragically, this interlude of peace and prosperity came to a brutal end with General Lon Nol's takeover in 1970; a military dictatorship, civil war, and extensive American bombing (1970–1975); the dismantling of society and genocide under the Khmer Rouge (1975–1979); and Vietnamese invasion, international embargo, and continued civil war (1979–1999).



Fig. 1 View of the 1960s Bassac urban development built on reclaimed land with the beautifully landscaped Independence Boulevard in the foreground. The pointed roof is the innovative National Theatre (see Fig. 11) (Source: Photos-Souvenirs 1994, vol. 6 (Urbanisme & Tourisme), cover)



Fig. 2 1960s Cambodian socialites meet at the Naga fountain with the Independence Monument in the background. The attention to detail in the creation of new public space illustrates the underlying goal of enhancing social wellbeing. The inspiration for the Independence Monument, inaugurated in 1962, came from the famous Angkorian temple Banteay Srei (RUFA archives, Phnom Penh)

Historical Context, Independence, and the Non-Aligned Nations

Historical context

The ancient Khmer Empire dominated a region that stretched from the Bay of Bengal to the Pacific Ocean. Initially Hindu, it was not until the reign of Jayavarman VII at the end of the twelfth century that Cambodian kings became Buddhist. Ever since, the dominant religion in the area has been Theravada Buddhism, although many Hindu practices have survived. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century Khmer influence steadily declined for reasons that have not been fully elucidated, although some scholars support the hypothesis that Theravada Buddhism and its principles of material detachment and egalitarianism eroded the hierarchical structure of prominent Hindu families and royalty. This was compounded by the rise of powerful Thai kingdoms that had once paid tribute to

Angkor and to the population losses that followed a series of wars. After a Thai invasion in 1431 the Cambodian court shifted southeast from Angkor to Lovek near Phnom Penh.

The four centuries following the abandonment of Angkor are poorly recorded, but Cambodia retained its language and its cultural identity and it was during this period that the country's most important work of literature, the "Reamker" (based on the Indian myth of the Ramayana), was composed. However, by the nineteenth century, as its larger neighbours Thailand and Vietnam encroached ever deeper into its territory, Cambodia was in real danger of disappearing entirely from the map. King Ang Duong (r. 1845–1860) consolidated the kingdom and engaged in diplomatic negotiations with France. But it was King Norodom I (r. 1860–1904) who made it a protectorate of France and part of French Indochina in 1865.² The capital was moved to Phnom Penh where the French colonial government, assisted by Thai architects, built a new palace for the king that was inspired by the royal palace in Bangkok complete with an emerald Buddha. However, it was not until the twentieth century that France made a concerted effort not just to exploit but also to develop this colony. During World War II, Japan controlled the region and the French reclaimed it for only a short period between 1947 and 1953. The colonial commitment therefore barely lasted forty years in total.

Independence

Crowned in 1941 at the age of eighteen, King Norodom Sihanouk lost the National Assembly elections held in September 1951 to the Democrats who had a policy of opposing the monarchy on all fronts. But by the time he astutely negotiated a peaceful independence on November 9, 1953—thereby winning public approval—he had already proven himself to be an opinionated leader. Thanks to the peaceful negotiation of independence in 1953 and France's low level of commitment to Cambodia during colonization (not to speak of neglect), Cambodia embraced its freedom both with enthusiasm and a lack of bitterness. Everything began anew, including the creation of a new currency, government, administration, and economic policy.

The 1954 Geneva agreement leading to the dissolution of French Indochina stipulated that general elections should be held in 1955 and monitored by an international commission to ensure fairness. The king was determined to defeat the Democrats and after unsuccessfully attempting to have the constitution amended on March 2, 1955 he announced his abdication in favour of his father Norodom Suramarit and "Prince" Sihanouk took the title of *samdech* or "monseigneur." He took this unusual step in order to commit himself to developing the new

²The Indochinese Union was composed of five entities: one colony (Cochinchina) and four protectorates (Tonkin, Annam and Paracel Islands, Cambodia, Laos).

nation by playing an active political role. To challenge the Democrats he brought friends of the nation with diverse political tendencies together under the Sangkum Reastr Niyum (see definition below). After winning the elections in 1955 with 82 percent of the vote, he headed the country as prime minister from 1955 until 1960, the year of King Suramarit's death. He then appointed himself head of state and ruled until 1970. Little by little a government conforming to the constitution was substituted by one largely dominated by Prince Sihanouk who was both head of state for life and president of an omnipotent Sangkum.

The era was marked by deeply engrained national pride and with its one-party politics the Sangkum regime verged on dictatorship. When the Democratic Party was dissolved in 1957 the only real opposition to Sihanouk's policies was amongst the different factions within the Sangkum. But by the early 1960s rebels began to employ guerrilla tactics in the northwest. In 1964 Sihanouk broke off diplomatic relations with the United States and even his most loyal supporter, Son Sann,³ resigned from the government in 1968. By this time the United States had started bombing Cambodia, and while South Vietnamese insurgents created havoc in the south, the communist rebels were doing the same in the north. In 1965 Sihanouk blustered:

To the Americans, we have repeated again and again that their "Free World" doctrine does not bother us in the least, as long as they do not try to convert us, especially as regards bombing and coups d'états.⁴ (Sihanouk 1965, 12)

"Notre Socialisme Buddhique", in *Kambuja* on November 26, 1965

In later years, Sihanouk would recognize that alienating the United States was the biggest political error he ever made. But nobody, not even the most hardened of politicians, could have predicted how the pressure put on Cambodia would escalate and culminate in the horror of the Khmer Rouge.

After the 1966 elections in which General Lon Nol was elected prime minister, Cambodia found itself with two sources of power: one within the National Assembly, the other concentrated in the person of Prince Sihanouk and the monolithic Sangkum. These two conflicting forces were both trying to run the country. By 1969 the Vietnam War was overflowing into Cambodian territory, and diplomatic relations had been restored with the United States. At the same time, the deterioration of the internal political situation and economy had reached a climax. Gradually, the balance was to tip in favour of the right. On March 18, 1970 a coup d'état, provoked by American interference and led by General Lon Nol, deposed Sihanouk under the pretext of defending the country "against atheist North Vietnamese invaders." This brought an abrupt end to a period of government remembered by many as a "golden age" that had put Cambodia back on the world map in a relatively short period of fifteen years (1955–1970). One aspect of this "golden age" was to produce an

³ Founder of the National Bank of Cambodia in 1955, prime minister in the 1960s.

⁴ Translated from the French by the author. "Aux Américains, nous avons dit et répété que leur doctrine du 'Free World' ne nous gênait en rien, à condition qu'ils ne cherchent pas à nous y convertir; en particulier par les bombardements et les tentatives de coups d'Etat."

architectural school that was unique in the history of Southeast Asia. This phenomenon was unusual under any circumstances but even more significant for a small third-world agrarian country. Although it is widely recognized that it came about largely thanks to Sihanouk's personal commitment, that is only part of the story. Independence, negotiated peacefully with France, and the resulting sense of national pride, acted as a catalyst that mobilized all levels of society enthusiastically towards self-improvement. French influence and the Angkorian myth also contributed to this shift, as did the solidarity shared with the non-aligned nations who, in turn, empowered Cambodians to assert their originality and diversity against models from the West.

Our survival, as I keep repeating and will repeat again today, can only be assured if the Khmer nation continues to be united around the common ideals that inspire our National Movement; union and national unity, uncompromising nationalism in the framework of Buddhist socialism and a policy of neutrality. (Ministère de l'Information 1967, 160)

Norodom Sihanouk in 1967

The group of non-aligned nations

In the 1950s and 1960s the Big Five⁵ had not yet achieved a complete stranglehold over the rest of the world. A powerful lobby of non-aligned, opinionated, and nationalistic leaders who had established strong friendships stood up to first-world nations in a show of solidarity and independence. Sihanouk's policies, which emerged in the months following the Geneva Conference, cannot be understood without reference to Cambodia's past history of foreign subjugation and its very uncertain prospects for survival as the war between north and south Vietnam intensified. Meetings in late 1954 with India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Burma's Premier U Nu made non-alignment most appealing. At the Bandung Conference in April 1955 (with participants from twenty-two Asian and seven African nations) Sihanouk held private meetings with Premier Zhou Enlai of China and Foreign Minister Pham Van Dong of North Vietnam. China accepted Sihanouk's overtures and became a valuable counterweight to growing Vietnamese and Thai pressure on Cambodia. As opinionated as ever, Sihanouk was the only head of state to attend Ho Chi Minh's funeral in 1969.

Hosted by President Josip Broz Tito in Brioni Yugoslavia in 1956, Sihanouk signed the Charter of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries proclaiming anti-colonialism and neutrality between East and West.⁶ He thus became the fifth co-founder of the movement. The Brioni declaration was written into the

⁵ Composed of the Republic of China, USSR, USA, Great Britain, and France—permanent members of the UN Security Council.

⁶ Signatories were as follows: Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Prime Minister of Cambodia; President Josip Broz Tito, Yugoslavia; President Gamal Abdel Nasser, United Arab Republic; President Soekarno, Indonesia; Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, India.

Cambodian constitution in 1957 with the *Neutrality Act* and would entirely dictate the country's foreign policy. During the Sangkum era it is clear that the support and friendship of non-aligned countries was an important contributing factor to Cambodia's unusual development experiment. The opinionated neutrality that Sihanouk succeeded in maintaining despite the Vietnam War raging on its eastern border was only possible with the support of other key leaders. Streets in Phnom Penh were named after leaders of the alliance and still commemorate these important friendships.⁷ After the non-aligned countries were excluded from the Olympic Games they also shared international sports, cultural, and commercial venues.⁸ The motto of the times was "Cambodia helps itself" but gifts were gratefully received as long as they came with no strings attached.⁹ Many non-aligned countries made donations to Cambodia, but the main development effort was paid for from the national budget.

French Colonial Influence

From the French, Cambodia inherited a strong administrative capacity and the belief that territorial development was an indispensable ingredient in any socio-economic policy. In 1947 France changed the constitution from the Khmer "enlightened monarchy" to a parliamentary monarchy along the lines of Britain and Thailand. France left behind a few well-planned towns designed by Ernest Hébrard and some pleasing but unoriginal colonial villas. Shortly before World War II two innovative buildings were erected in Phnom Penh: the Central Market with its large vaults spanning as much as 40 metres and Phnom Penh Railway Station; both made ingenious use of reinforced concrete. Reinforced concrete would remain the preferred material for the Sangkum's buildings, which were inspired by this colonial technology.

Although it is impossible to measure the effects of the culture shock brought about by the humiliation of colonization, the introduction of a new language, new ways of life, and contact with a European nation that was still in the throes of its own industrial revolution, there can be no doubt that it had a deep-seated effect on the Cambodian people. Independence, along with the lessons learnt from French colonization, sparked a second culture shock that manifested itself in a creative search for its roots and a reassertion of Cambodian authenticity.

⁷ These included boulevards named after Charles de Gaulle, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mao Tsé Toung, Maréchal Josip Broz Tito, la République Populaire de Pologne, la République Socialiste Fédérative de Yougoslavie, la République Socialiste Tchèqueoslovaque and the USSR, among others.

⁸ The National Sports Complex, Phnom Penh, was initially built to host the Asian Games in 1963 (see below).

⁹ Sihanouk said donations were acceptable but loans were not "as he did not wish to indebt his children." This presents a striking contrast to Cambodia's current dependence on international aid.

The Mekong river complex composed of the fourth largest river in the world plus the delta, its tributaries, wetlands, and the inland lake of the Tonle Sap cover 80 percent of the 181,035 km² of Cambodian territory. This was the lifeblood of the ancient Khmer; on it they had forged their civilization, their wealth, and their culture.¹⁰ One eloquent example of colonial authoritarian rule and the lack of any regard for a thousand-year-old civilization is illustrated by a law introduced by the French. In the Khmer Kingdom as much as 90 percent of the population lived on and gained their livelihood through access to water. Building on land was only allowed with the special consent of the king and applied mainly to religious complexes and occasionally to royal residences. The French Protectorate instigated a significant new law: henceforth, building would *only* be allowed on land. This complete *volte face* would have a profound effect on society's values and result in a socio-economic revolution in terms of land ownership, speculation, inheritance, cadastral management etc. The social and psychological repercussions of this radical switch from a water-based tradition to an earth-bound one still reverberates throughout Southeast Asia today (Grant Ross 2005a, 2005b, 2006).

During the Sangkum era there was an attempt to reintegrate water into building design, as can be seen in the National Sports Complex and the University of Phnom Penh campus. But the tradition of living on water was officially abandoned in urban planning. Towns in the 1960s were extended along French lines of thinking by building dykes to protect them from flooding, by using roads instead of waterways, by putting canals and waterways underground, and by extending Phnom Penh on reclaimed land. Another significant influence the French exerted on Cambodia's national identity and political future was the zeal with which they discovered and restored the Angkor temple complex that had been drowned in the jungle for centuries along with all memory of the great Khmer Empire. By unearthing a strong sense of pride in Cambodia's heroic past, France would provide the new nation with an important historical reference and identity in the Angkorian era. If the ancient Khmer had been great builders then modern Cambodians after independence would be as well; and if Jayavarnam VII had been a God King and a good king reputed to have built hundreds of hospitals and schools, then Sihanouk would likewise follow his example and commit himself to the construction of his country. Unlike the ancient "God-Kings," however, he expressed strong empathy for his people, making hundreds of visits to every corner of his country, chatting with peasants, handing out gifts, and showing a genuine concern for their well-being.

¹⁰ For more information on the SE-Asian water-based tradition see Jumsai 1997.



Fig. 3 Sihanouk participating in construction in the 1960s (RUFA archives, Phnom Penh)

The Prince, Buddhism, and the Sangkum Reastr Niyum

Sihanouk is still one of the most controversial political survivors of the twentieth century. Because of his desire to build a modern Cambodia comparable to the glorious era of Angkor, which manifested itself in such gargantuan works as the National Sports Complex paid for out of the national budget, he has been accused of megalomania (Fig. 3). It is true that his ambitions for his country were as enormous as the energy he personally deployed in their pursuit. The opinionated way in which he asserted Cambodia's independence and neutrality also attracted the ire of first-world nations, some of whom were condescending in their dealings with the leader of a small but nevertheless significant country occupying a strategic position in the Vietnam conflict.

Sihanouk and Buddhism

Buddhism inspired the Indian King Asoka (third century BCE) to establish the world's first society with a system that aimed to assist deprived members of society. Rather than a rule of law, Asoka embarked upon a policy of piety, or rule of righteousness, which functioned on the basis that the ruler who serves as a moral model is more effective than one who rules by force. He built hospitals, banned killing and slavery, and promoted peace. He called for religious freedom and declared that giving credit to another person's religion gives credit to one's own. This non-ideology and religious tolerance are peculiar to Buddhism.

Social justice, unity, solidarity, progress, an improved standard of living etc. are all just and valid principles that were taught by Buddha over 2500 years ago, i.e. long before the advent of the Free World or Karl Marx. (Marston 2004, 8)

Sihanouk in June 1966

In 1964 Sihanouk referred directly to Asoka as a model of Buddhist kingship when, shortly after breaking off diplomatic ties with the United States, he wrote an editorial for the review *Kambuja*, in which he said:

Transposed to the level of national politics, such a doctrine makes of us “warriors,” convinced and energetic, fighting for our national ideology, which is, in regard to internal politics, the fight against under-development, against social injustice, the raising of our people’s living standard, their happiness, and their *joie de vivre* in fraternity and concord. (Sihanouk 1964, 9)

Angkor and Jayavarman VII

The other analogy Sihanouk drew upon was that of the Angkorian King Jayavarman VII. The model of Jayavarman VII—a world conqueror who is depicted iconically in meditation and was also a world renouncer—is a recurrent theme throughout the Sihanouk period. In addition to being Buddhist, Jayavarman VII was also the Angkorian king who was most significantly engaged in building projects. In 1969 Sihanouk would liken the projects completed in the Sangkum period to those of Jayavarman VII, calling Phnom Penh “the new Angkor Thom.” In 1965 Sihanouk used Jayavarman VII to explain Buddhist socialism, citing the ancient king’s numerous temples and monuments, his thousands of kilometres of roads and canals, and his hundreds of hospitals:

What I would like to emphasize is the degree to which the vision of a new and “modern” society was constructed to echo the iconography of Cambodian Buddhism. (Sihanouk 1965)

Sihanouk moved out of the royal palace when he abdicated in 1955 and although his entourage was criticized for its nepotism, he did not enrich himself personally and lived a surprisingly low-key life in a somewhat eccentric but simple house located in Chamkarmon compound. Unlike Jayavarman VII, the God King, King Sihanouk stepped down from his throne to more efficiently confront the challenges of the twentieth century; he was at once king, prince, and head of state. Imbued with a sense of responsibility for his people, he inspired the likes of Lee Kuan Yew, the founding leader of Singapore (cf. Lee 1999), and Harold Holt, prime minister of Australia. In his view,

Buddha often told his disciples that it was not necessary to distinguish between a Prince and an ordinary citizen, but between good virtuous men and the badly behaved and immoral [. . .] Our (Cambodian) socialism is not some kind of backward socialism but realistic and in compliance with human potential, a kind of socialism that is way in advance of others as its origins go back more than 2500 years. (Ministère de l’Information 1967, 390)

The Southeast Asian tradition of Theravada Buddhism implies that economics and a moral spiritual life are inseparable. This operates through the recognition of universal suffering (*dukkha*) and ways to alleviate it, as well as through the practice of loving-kindness (*metta*); hence the notion of a benevolent nation provider rather

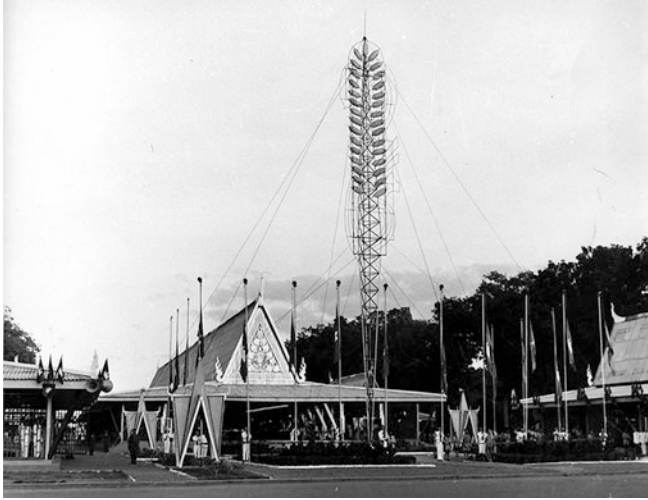


Fig. 4 Pavilion erected for 2,500 years of Buddha celebration, in front of Phnom Penh Railway Station. Architect: Vann Molyvann 1957 (RUFA archives, Phnom Penh)

than that of a politicized economy. Although Buddhism was the national religion of Cambodia, Islam and Christianity were practised by about 10 percent of the population. Tolerance was an integral part of national policy and Sihanouk actively reached out to all peoples within the country through his incessant travelling and commitments. The community centre at Anlong Romiet, designed by Vann Molyvann and inaugurated on May 3, 1961, was an experiment in community development comparable to Israel's Kibbutzim. In Ratanakiri and Mondulhiri a special effort was made to integrate ethnic hill-tribes in the country's campaign for improvement. In 1957 a significant event took place in Phnom Penh—the celebration of 2,500 years of Buddha that drew hundreds of thousands of people to the capital from all over Asia. Following Buddhist tradition this temporary structure, designed by Vann Molyvann, was dismantled after use (Fig. 4). It is interesting to compare its modest design with the French colonizer's last major construction, the pompous Cathedral of Phnom Penh (Fig. 5), which was begun in 1952.

In 1961 Phnom Penh hosted the World Fellowship of Buddhists with delegates from twenty-eight countries. This event was held in Vann Molyvann's first architectural masterpiece, the Chaktomuk Conference Hall (Fig. 6). In his inaugural speech, Sihanouk contrasted the Buddhist ethic with modern values of materialism, greed, and injustice, and he demonstrated how Buddhism is in reality compatible with rationality and a modern society. He elaborated on how "Khmer Socialism" was founded on Dharma. In true "New Khmer" style the conference hall is an ingenious triangulated concrete structure that gives the impression of being suspended in space. Its only concession to tradition is a spire integrated into the unorthodox fan-shaped roof.



Fig. 5 Phnom Penh Cathedral. Architect: Maurice Masson, 1955 (demolished down to its foundations by the Khmer Rouge in 1975) (French Mission Paris)

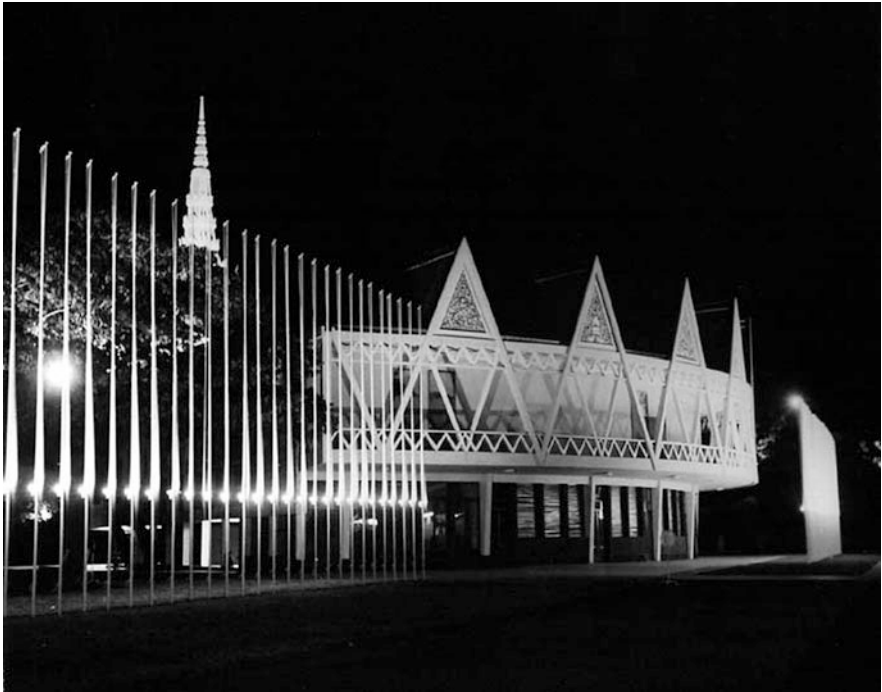


Fig. 6 Night view of Chaktomuk Conference Centre inaugurated in 1961. Architect: Vann Molyvann (Vann Molyvann)

The Sangkum Reastr Niyum

One of the more original ways in which independence asserted itself was through Sihanouk's innovative Sangkum Reastr Niyum. As observed by one political analyst who wishes to remain anonymous:

He (Sihanouk) purposely founded the Sangkum Reastr Niyum which, in his eyes, was to be both a gathering of men and a federation of parties [. . .] The Sangkum always denied being a political party [. . .] The Sangkum was created to bring about a consensus amongst the much divided and anarchic Cambodian political parties.

The Sangkum played an essential role in the development of Cambodia. More than a political party it was an assembly of committed Khmers who were striving to promote social, political, and cultural development. Under the Sangkum the nation functioned not as a religious state but as a strange mixture of monarchy and secular state. Buddhist ethics were referred to but the construction of wats and religious buildings was, on the whole, left to the generosity of the population. Religious architecture in nationalistic states tends to be built on "safe" stereotyped models, so it is significant that the religious architecture in Cambodia followed the path of innovative secular examples (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7 Kompong Kor church, designed by a Catholic priest in an exuberant interpretation of New Khmer Architecture. Destroyed by American bombing in the 1970s (French Mission Paris archives)



Fig. 8 *Société Khmère des Distilleries* showcase factory Sihanoukville, inaugurated in 1968. Architect: Vann Molyvann (Hok Sokol)

Whereas this was traditionally the role of monks, Sihanouk put all his efforts into developing health and education in secular society. Some critics have said this was to the detriment of the country's economic development. However, by the 1960s a major industrial development project covering all the provinces was underway, though this did not have time to mature before the collapse of the regime in 1970. In addition to a lively private sector, forty-five major industries were established covering such diverse fields as a showcase brewery (still functioning), a cotton-spinning factory, a glassworks, a plywood factory, a distillery, a tractor assembly plant, a petroleum refinery, and cement works. In the 1960s Sihanouk took the radical step of nationalizing all industry (Fig. 8).

To answer the question of the role of nationalism and Buddhism in Cambodia's development experiment it is necessary to understand the meaning and ethics of the Sangkum. The words "Sangkum Reastr Niyum'Niyum" are difficult to translate. King Sihanouk's website uses "People's Socialist Community," but "Popular Socialist Party" or "Popular Socialism" can also be found. An author writing in 1965 even used the term Reach Sangkum Reash Niyum, which translates into French as *Communauté Royale Socialiste Populaire Bouddhiste* or People's Royal Socialist Buddhist Community (Kambuja, April 15, 1964, 75).

Thus, in summary:

- Sangkum – group, association, a movement
- Reastr – nation, community, people
- Niyum – determination, common agreement, love, adoption

Members of the Sangkum, who were not allowed to belong to any other political group, were called "Sahachivin" (m.) or "Sahachivini" (f.):

Sahachivin: All citizens who have rallied to the “Sangkum” are called “saha-jivin” (masculine, “companion”), or “saha-jivini” (female, “companion”). The word is built from the Sanskrit “saha,” which is a prefix signifying “together” with the Sanskrit adjective “jiving” (m.) and “jivini” (f.) which means “alive.” This transparent concept does not require any further comment. (Fabricius 1960)

The Sangkum was based on Khmer nationalism, loyalty to the monarch, the struggle against injustice and corruption, and respect for Buddhist ethics, and it adopted an austere interpretation of Theravada Buddhism. As Sihanouk himself put it, it was

necessary to rid religion of superstition, wrong interpretations, false traditions and a whole array of obscure practices. This does not mean “modernizing” Buddhism but bringing it back to its authentic origins. (Ministère de l’Information 1967, 393)

In his speeches, Sihanouk referred constantly to the Sangkum in quasi-religious terms, declaring, for instance, that

In the Sangkum we have all the guiding principles necessary to defend our land and national interests. [. . .] The social justice that the reds say can only be found in Marxism is, in reality, part of Lord Buddha’s teaching. (Ministère de l’Information 1967, 161)

By recruiting all talented Cambodians regardless of their political ideology, the Sangkum succeeded in creating a political monopoly for itself by virtually depriving any other political party of its lifeblood. With the dissolution of the Democratic Party in 1957, the Sangkum became the unique political engine fusing all factions into one and thereby attracting severe criticism from the Western world. This political model was well suited to the Cambodian mentality that is anti-confrontational and avoids open debate. Unlike politics based on “liberal” versus “socialist” ideologies, the Sangkum was based on three principles: Buddhist ethics, national pride, and the Khmer tradition of monarchy. These three themes still exist in the Cambodian Constitution, which is founded on the basis of “Nation Religion King.” Sihanouk proposed membership to any one he thought useful to the country and, paradoxically, it united virulently anti-communist right-wing elements with socialist thinkers, including the members of the Democratic Party that disbanded in 1957. The right-wing Army officer Lon Nol and future military dictator, also a member of the Sangkum, would become prime minister in 1966. Future leaders of the Khmer Rouge such as Hu Nim and Hou Yuon served in several ministries between 1958 and 1963, and Khieu Samphan served as secretary of state for commerce in 1963. Highly trained Cambodians returning from abroad, like the architect Vann Molyvann, (b. 1926; privy counsellor to Sihanouk during the King’s lifetime) and engineers Ing Kieth (b. 1926) and Keat Chhon (b. 1934, at present senior minister of economy and finance) were appointed Sahachivins and promptly given enormous responsibilities in both technical and political fields.

The Achievements of the Sangkum

In 1955, liberated from the constraints of a constitutional monarch, Prime Minister Sihanouk embarked on a unique experiment in social and territorial development. This would comprise the construction of new towns including the deep-sea port of Sihanoukville, the planned urban expansion of all the country's major cities, housing experiments, roads, railways, airports, hydro-electric dams, telecommunications, and a multitude of public buildings to house the government, education, and health sector throughout the country. These achievements are even more impressive when one considers the high standard of architecture that was maintained. As the Australian journalist Alain Reid commented, at a time when the Sydney Opera House was trapped in financial and construction problems, to be completed only in 1974, "the manner in which your architects are blending utility with beauty is something that I hope we will one day copy in Australia" (Ministère de l'Information 1967, 306).

After independence, Cambodia's autonomy was complicated by the fact that it had no direct link to the sea, no international airport, and no universities; that is, none of the buildings that an independent nation needs to cover the basic requirements of its administration and society. By the 1960s all of these impediments were either resolved or in the process of being resolved: a deep-sea port in Sihanoukville was completed; Pochentong airport had been upgraded from a dirt track to an international standard runway and control tower; not only Phnom Penh University, but eight other universities specializing in fields ranging from agricultural research to marine technology were also in the pipeline.

On April 2, 1956 at the laying of the boundary stones of Wat Preah Puth Andeth, Sihanouk gave his own definition of politics: "Politics is the art of building the nation" (Sihanouk 1956). Thanks to its leader's vision, in the short space of fifteen years the country embarked on a campaign that transformed it from the rice-basket of Indochina into one of the most prosperous countries in Southeast Asia. The GNP grew an average of 5 percent a year in real terms. The service sector accounted for more than 15 percent of GDP, agriculture 36 percent, and manufacturing 12 percent. In 1969, 80 percent of rice farmers owned the land they cultivated, 90 percent of the population was literate and life expectancy was approximately 65 years.¹¹ By 1967 Cambodia was listed the fifth richest among fifteen Asian countries, just after the Philippines and ahead of Thailand. The PNB per capita in Indonesia (the poorest country) was \$70 and Cambodia's was nearly double that at \$120. Japan, the richest, had a PNB per capita of \$878 per annum. Sihanouk proclaimed:

¹¹ By contrast in 2004, 65 percent of men and only 38 percent of women were literate and life expectancy was approximately 52 years.

[I]f the Philippines are slightly ahead of us this is no doubt because our friend receives an enormous amount of aid from the immensely rich USA. Despite the fact that we can only rely on our own sweat and toil it is significant that we “beat” all the other US satellites including Thailand, South Vietnam and South Korea. (Ministère de l’Information 1967, 307)

In the early stages after independence, higher priority was given to social improvements such as health and education than to national economic growth. Thousands of schools and health facilities were built and staffed, and the health and education of the average Cambodian improved enormously.

To cite but a few figures quoted in *Kambuja* in October 1968 (Sihanouk 1968):

	1955	1968
Number of pupils in Primary School	311,000	1,025,000
Midwives	125	1,105
Nurses	630	2,380
Rice production (in tons)	1,484,000	3,251,000
International airports	0	2
Deep sea-port	0	1

The sheer amount of work accomplished in such a short time deserves praise, but it is also important to note that quantity did not belie quality. The buildings required to house educational and social development were all part of a larger territorial and urban development plan. As the education and health sectors improved, by the 1960s more effort was put into national economic growth, which in turn led to the construction of many industrial plants ranging from the petrol refinery at Sihanoukville to the textile factory of Battambang (cf. Grant Ross 2003), from the cement works at Kampot to the fish-processing factory at Koh Kong (cf. Grant Ross and Collins 2006).

The author’s *On the Road to Sihanoukville* fully documents the construction of a new rail link and road connecting Phnom Penh westwards to its new town and deep-sea port (Grant Ross 2001). In a successful example of constructive territorial development, this was coordinated with numerous urban developments such as the Ministerial complex on *Boulevard de l’URSS*,¹² (Fig. 9) the Phnom Penh University campus,¹³ (Fig. 10) the construction of an international airport at

¹² Comprising the Council of Ministers, buildings to house international agencies and experts, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Finance.

¹³ Comprising the Institute of Technology, a Teacher Training College, the Royal University of Phnom Penh, as well as housing facilities for staff and students, sports facilities, a swimming pool, and a water treatment station.

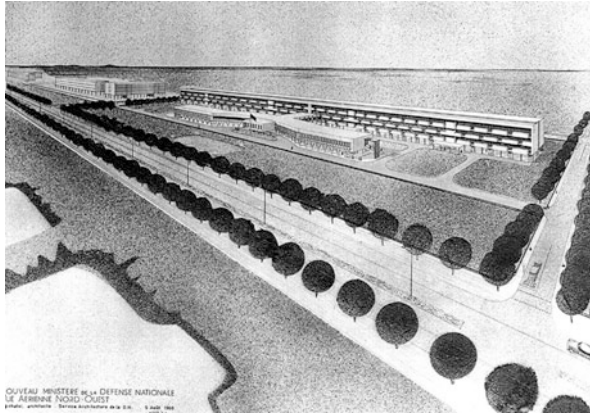


Fig. 9 1959 sketch by architect Henri Chatel of the projected Ministerial Compound on USSR Bd with the Ministry of Defence in the foreground. Vann Molyvann’s Council of Ministers (now demolished) can just be seen in the background (Henri Chatel)

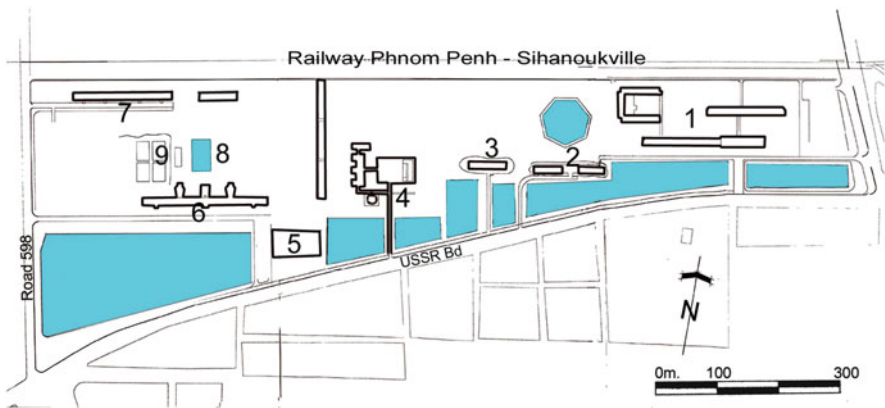


Fig. 10 1960s site plan of Phnom Penh University campus showing the use of water tanks as a landscaping and hydraulic regulatory device. Institute of Technology, 1 (Architects: Russian) the Teacher Training Institute, 4 (Architect: Vann Molyvann) and the Royal University building, 6 (Architects: Leroy & Mondet). (ARK Research drawing)



Fig. 11 The magnificent National Theatre on the River Bassac. Inaugurated in 1968 and demolished in 2005. Architect: Vann Molyvann (RUFA archives, Phnom Penh)

Pochentong, and a hillside resort at Kirirom.¹⁴ Other major urban plans that were implemented in Phnom Penh include the River Bassac development (Fig. 1), which was built on reclaimed land and focused on cultural activities¹⁵ (Fig. 11).

The fifteen-year Sangkum era (1955–1970) is a distinct period that stands out not only for the prosperity and peace that its inhabitants enjoyed but also for its legacy of exceptional modern buildings. Many of the buildings that survived the subsequent thirty years of war still serve their purpose, housing government, universities, hospitals, and the like. They were not built for the glory of their leader but as part of a coherent plan to develop Cambodia in a sustainable way.

The Architect and Angkor

It is hard to imagine that the Sangkum could have achieved such a high standard of building without the unusual conjunction of circumstances that brought an enlightened prince and an exceptionally talented architect together. The architect in question, Vann Molyvann, a man from a modest background, would prove to be the artist that would best satisfy the most demanding of patrons. Of the numerous

¹⁴ Also known as Tioulongville in homage to General Nhiek Tioulong (cf Grant Ross and Collins 2006, 76), one of the Sangkum's main supporters, Kirirom had numerous holiday chalets for people from all walks of life and social strata as well as a magnificent state villa designed by Vann Molyvann.

¹⁵ Comprising several large experimental housing projects, the National Theatre, the National Exhibition Centre, the Cambodiana Hotel, the Water Sports Complex and Chaktomuk Conference Centre.

architects who contributed to the prolific movement known as “New Khmer Architecture,” the sheer amount of work accomplished by Vann Molyvann during the Sangkum is praiseworthy, but what is most remarkable, and bears witness to his genius, is the unfailing standard and creativity of his designs (Vann Molyvann 1969).

Born on November 23, 1926 in Kampot, Cambodia (he was only four years younger than Sihanouk) Vann Molyvann, French *architect dplg*, was the first qualified Cambodian architect after independence to be trained at the *École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts* (ENSBA) in Paris from 1949 to 1956. ENSBA was a cultural shock for him and he had to repeat his first year.

I was a Buddhist jumping into Western architecture. Coming from Cambodia and being forced to draw Corinthian, Doric and Ionian columns was not easy but served me well in the end. (notes taken by the author)

Conference at French Cultural Centre Phnom Penh 1999

By royal *Kret* (decree) dated December 16, 2002, King Sihanouk elevated Vann Molyvann to the rank of *Grand croix de l'ordre royal du Cambodge* praising him as “a great architect and builder whose great constructions during the Sangkum Reastr Niyum era reveal him to be as worthy a builder as our Angkorian ancestors.”¹⁶ When Vann Molyvann returned from his studies in France, Sihanouk progressively made more demands on him. Not content with requiring that a thirty-year-old inexperienced architect build the gargantuan and magnificent National Sports Complex to Olympic standards in less than two years, (see below) Sihanouk heaped increasing responsibilities onto his protégé. They included:

- 1956–1962 Chief Architect for State Buildings and Director of the Urban Planning and Habitat Department
- 1956–1964 Adviser to the Municipality of Phnom Penh
- 1962–1964 Secretary of State for Public Works and Telecommunications
- 1965–1967 Founding Rector of the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA)
- 1965–1970 Inspector of Ancient Khmer monuments
- 1967–1969 Minister for National Education and Fine Arts
- 1969–1970 Minister of State to the Chief of State for Youth, Students and Teaching Staff

Sihanouk observed in 1967:

Thanks to the Sangkum, Kampuchea has caught up on the Angkorian era. Not only that but, as opposed to that glorious epoch especially renowned for its grandiose monuments dedicated to Khmer monarchy, the colossal achievements of the Sangkum are entirely devoted to its people’s interests. (Ministère de l’Information 1967, 155)

¹⁶ “[U]n grand architecte bâtisseur dont les grandes réalisations à l’ère du Sangkum Reastr Niyum ont fait de lui un bâtisseur digne de nos ancêtres angkoriens” (Personal archive Grant Ross, English translation by the author).



Fig. 12 National Sports Complex being used for another purpose—“re-enacting Angkor” in 1968 (Source: *Études Cambodgiennes* 16 (October-December 1968), 4–5)

Despite this laudable objective, the ancient Khmer civilization and Angkorian monuments were often exploited to reinforce national identity and a sense of pride. The National Sports Complex was not only used for international sporting venues such as the GANEFO (World Games of the New Emerging Forces) in 1966 but also for stirring popular events with crowds of as many as 100,000 people (Fig. 12). Also significant is the fact that it was built using the Angkorian construction technique of massive but economical earthworks, rather than a complicated self-bearing structure that would have required costly and complex technologies. The infrastructure was unabashedly inspired by the construction techniques of Angkor Wat, as illustrated in the comparative sketches made by the architect Vann Molyvann (Fig. 13).

Interviewed in *La Dépêche du Cambodge* on November 13, 1964, Vann Molyvann said of Cambodia in 1956 that instead of following the excellent lessons of his French teachers he had to integrate his nation’s traditions:

I noticed that there was an unprecedented creative dynamism in my country after a long period of decline. Everybody was aware that it was necessary to rediscover our origins, the motivation behind our country’s existence and, that, like any country with an ancient tradition; it should reassert its own personality. (Vann Molyvann 1964)

Vann Molyvann in *La Dépêche du Cambodge*, November 13, 1964

If the fate of his country had not destroyed the collective memory of the prosperous era that followed independence, there is little doubt that Vann Molyvann would have met with international acclaim. This was already the case

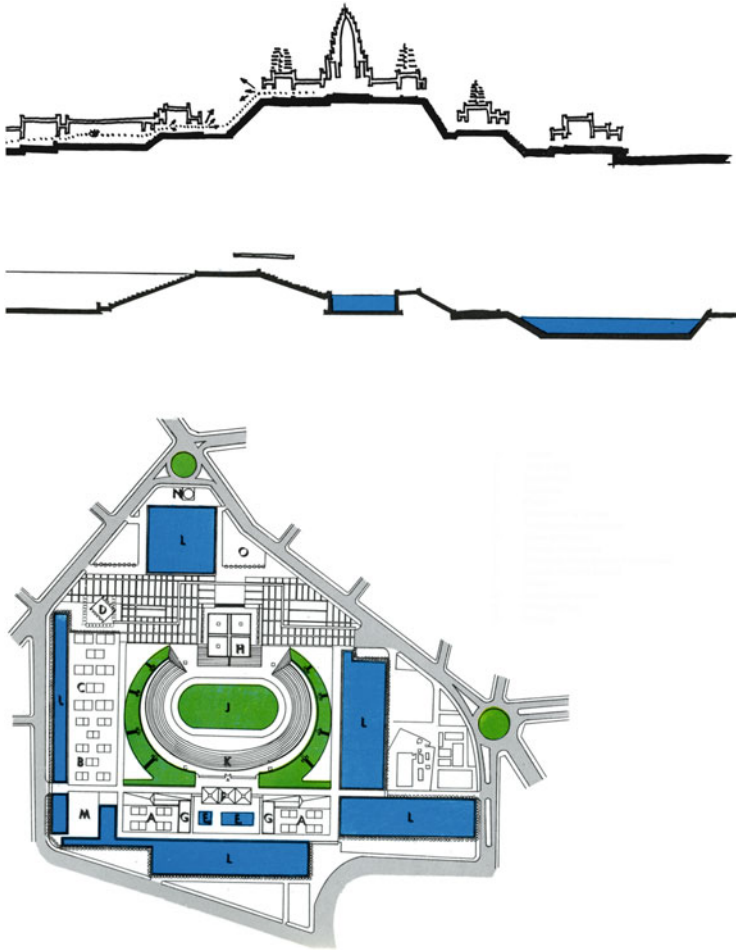


Fig. 13 Cross-section (*top*) showing the National Sports Complex compared to Angkor Wat. The National Sports Complex’s 40 hectare site plan (*bottom*) showing the extensive use of water tanks. Inaugurated in 1964. Architect: Vann Molyvann (*Source: Vann Molyvann 1969*)

with his masterpiece, the National Sports Complex, which figured in many of the major architectural journals of the 1960s.¹⁷ When reminiscing with the author, Vann Molyvann’s wife Trudy recalled:

¹⁷ In particular: “Forum de la ville de Phnom-Penh, Cambodge. Complexe olympique du Sud-Est asiatique.” *Cahiers du centre scientifique et technique du bâtiment* 73 (April 1964), 1–12; “Compleso Olimpico del Sud-Est Asiatico Foro Della Citta di Phnom Penh April 1965.” *Rassegna dei lavori pubblici*, 4, April 1965; “Complexe olympique de Phnom Penh Cambodge.” *Architecture d’Aujourd’hui*, 116 (November 1964): 30–33; “Complexe olympique et Forum de Phnom Penh 1965.” *Techniques et Architecture* 25 (1965).

One day late in 1961 Prince Sihanouk phoned. We will have the Southeast Asian Games in Phnom Penh in eighteen months and you have to complete the stadium by then. Two and a half months later Moly woke up in the night with the concept: people here, the swimming pool there. That was when I realized that architects have the idea first.

In April 1963, the SEA Games were postponed when Soekarno decided to hold the GANEFO in Jakarta. As a result the Sports Complex was finally inaugurated on November 12, 1964. The time schedule was challenging to say the least:

- Late 1961—commissioned by Prince Sihanouk
- August 1962—opening of the tender documents
- February 1963—first site meeting
- April 1963—Asian Games cancelled
- November 1964—inauguration
- November 1966—GANEFO held in Phnom Penh

Built to Olympic standards, it was composed of the following:

- an athletes' village built as part of the Bassac River development (Fig. 1)
- a water sports complex at Chaktomuk
- the 40 hectare National Sports Complex itself comprising of (Fig. 14): a stadium for 60,000 spectators, an official grandstand seating 8,000, an inside sports hall seating 8,000, a swimming and diving pool with seating for 8,000, twenty-four external courts for tennis, volleyball, basketball etc., and facilities for receptions, the press, television, and athletes

The logistics behind such complex design and building would be demanding under any circumstances, but in a country like Cambodia in the 1960s realizing the successful construction of this mammoth work was an incredible feat.

An Angkorian inspiration is evident in many of his designs but never so dramatically as in the National Sports Complex. As Vann Molyvann demonstrated in his drawing (Fig. 13) the main concept was Angkorian. How did Cambodia, with its limited technology, succeed in building a modern Olympic standard sports complex? The solution resided in doing it the ancient Khmer way by using the most readily available material—earth that was dug out of the site and then piled up and consolidated to create the elliptic stadium that can hold up to 60,000 people (Fig. 14). An incredible 500,000 cubic metres of earth were dug out of the marshy ground for this purpose and valuable water tanks were excavated at the same time (see site plan at the bottom of Fig. 13).

Construction was begun with ox-drawn carts because the land was too soft to support the weight of heavy vehicles. Only after the site had been compacted sufficiently could bulldozers be brought in safely and the mound consolidated by anchoring the reinforced concrete seating to the mound to prevent it from slipping. The tanks were big enough to collect the large volume of water that falls during the monsoon rain, thus ensuring good drainage of the track, sports field, and courts, and also making sure that the Sports Complex did not create a problem by flooding the surrounding urban area. Water was also used for cooling; wind direction was studied so that it cooled spectators but did not inhibit athletes (or increase their speed!).



Fig. 14 National Sports Complex, Phnom Penh, inaugurated on December 12, 1964. In this 1960s aerial picture the “Sports Palace” and “Grandstand” can be seen on the left of the stadium with the “Olympic” podium, swimming pool, and diving pools to the right. Architect: Vann Molyvann (Vann Molyvann)

A complex system of sewage disposal was incorporated to guarantee the hygiene needs of as many as 100,000 people at any given time.

As Vann Molyvann himself comments in the inauguration brochure (Brochure for inauguration day 1964), the Angkorian use of water, both in architecture and site plans, certain building materials, and construction techniques “did not mean reproducing the artistic creations of Angkor but to be inspired by them to transcribe and adapt them to a new reality.” One of these “new realities” was his mastery of reinforced concrete, demonstrated by the “Sports Palace” (Fig. 15) in which the roof canopy is composed of four giant reinforced concrete square umbrellas made of a network of pre-constrained, reinforced concrete ribbed squares, measuring $36.6\text{ m} \times 36.6\text{ m}$ ¹⁸ each and reposing on four massive columns. The Greek cross shaped gap between them provided space for ventilation and daylight as well as a technical gallery. A shady area cooled by water basins was created under the grandstand for official receptions.

The building cost 30 million dollars and was entirely paid for from the national budget. It would be interesting to compare it with Kenzo Tange’s famous Tokyo

¹⁸This measurement is inspired by Le Corbusier’s Modulor.



Fig. 15 National Sports Complex, “Sports Palace,” Architect Vann Molyvann (Vann Molyvann)

Olympic stadium—which was also built in 1964—as Molyvann’s is no doubt a far more economical structure. Tange’s is a fabulous feat of tensile steel and regulated parabolic hyperbolic curves that supports itself, whereas Vann Molyvann’s simple idea was to use the earth in true Cambodian tradition. During this intense period of creativity from 1957 to 1971, during which he built more than 100 major architectural works, Vann Molyvann strived to combine Cambodian tradition with his French architectural training through a deep understanding of the values of the vernacular and of what was the Angkorian. Although he cites, among other sources of inspiration, Paul Rudolph,¹⁹ Gérald Hanning,²⁰ Vladimir Bodiansky,²¹ the Italian Renaissance, and the Japanese tatami, attempts to assimilate this unique architecture with a well-known architectural movement only lead to the conclusion that this is Vann Molyvann’s own unique style.

Some common denominators in his plans include the use of water, the creation of internal patios, the systematic use of cross-ventilation, and the orientation of the main elevation of buildings to the north. His works also respect the social behaviour of Cambodians in the separation of the “wet area” of a house from the so-called noble space of the living-room, by leaving the ground open underneath buildings and by providing roof terraces for people to meet under the shade of a suspended roof. As he said at a conference in the French Cultural Centre, Phnom Penh on May 21, 1999:

¹⁹ American architect known for synthesising Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Louis Kahn, as well as for his design of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

²⁰ UN expert in Cambodia in the early 1960s and co-author with Le Corbusier of *The Modulor*.

²¹ UN expert in Cambodia in the early 1960s, famous as the engineer of Le Corbusier’s *Unité d’Habitation Marseilles*.

Cambodia is a society of half-earth half-water and cities should not be built by landfill but by incorporating water in their design. Modernity should not be inspired superficially by Western ideas that result in destroying all the traces of the past. New building should bring tradition and the heritage back to life.

The authenticity of this architecture is derived from the diversity of its inspiration and the creative powers of the artist who succeeded in injecting a “Cambodian spirit” into his designs without resorting to pastiche.

Monarchy, Secular State, and Religious Ethic

The catalyst for Cambodia’s structured social development between 1953 and 1970 was a complex blend of national spirit forged by independence, Sihanouk’s vision, and the willingness of the population to unify under a new common ideal that interlinked “renaissance” development with a socialist political agenda that was tempered by the Buddhist religion. Responsibility for the exceptional achievements of 1960s Cambodia rests squarely on the shoulders of its dynamic leader, Preah Bat Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, who was at once political animal, inspired leader, and patron of the arts.

René de Berval, editor of a Japanese publication *France-Asie*, commented on the achievements of Sihanouk as follows:

renovating his country, connecting the present to the past so as to stretch towards the future, tradition and the new State doctrine of Buddhist socialism are ever present, and he (Sihanouk) alone can facilitate the passage of his country in concord and peace, with justice and subsequently with joy [. . .] The progress accomplished by Cambodia in every field is prodigious and one can question whether there is any other country in the world that has accomplished so much in so little time. (Ministère de l’Information 1967, 413)

The three in one notion of Nation/Religion/King in which each element is inseparable from the others may be compared to the Buddhist concept of diversity in unity. In some ways the Sangkum functioned along similar lines by uniting so many political factions together. Dictatorship could be avoided as long as it was capable of ensuring that the political objectives of the country met with a broad consensus and making sure that a genuine democratic debate took place within the Sangkum itself, if not within the National Assembly.

But in 1966 the Sangkum experiment virtually came to an end when, much to everybody’s surprise, General Lon Nol was elected prime minister. The wolf was within the fold, so to speak. Sihanouk remained head of state but his days were numbered as defeat rose out of the Sangkum to eventually overthrow him in March 1970. Lon Nol’s policies involved re-establishing diplomatic ties with the United States, stirring up anti-Vietnamese feeling through the use of a nationalistic rhetoric that bordered on fascism while the Vietnam War overflowed into Cambodian territory. Of course, Sihanouk also used populist rhetoric to stir up his people’s allegiance; however, the achievements and vitality of the Sangkum were in no way those of a totalitarian state. The architecture does not bear the characteristics of an

officially validated style, encapsulated in columns and porticos; on the contrary, it demonstrates great diversity and innovation. The development of Cambodia was not entertained merely for the glory of Sihanouk but for the good of his people; though, of course, it boosted his image as well. Housing experiments of all kinds were attempted to satisfy the needs of a growing population, and even in the late 1960s when the population of Phnom Penh doubled, as people from the countryside sought refuge from American bombing, the city provided shelter for all. Except for the National Sports Complex, dubbed “the People’s Palace,” there is a notable lack of monumental architecture, presidential palaces, and gigantic boulevards such as those cherished by the likes of Adolf Hitler, Nicolae Ceaușescu, or Kim II Sung. In comparison, Ceaușescu’s territorial development plan consisted in demolishing a quarter of Bucharest, Romania, to build the *Bulevardul Unirii*, a monumental avenue leading up to his palace. Today this modern Versailles with over 300,000 m² of floor space houses all of the country’s ministerial and government offices with ease. The Sangkum was based on a strong moral ethic with constant reference to the notion of service to the people and improvement of the standard of living, education, and health. As one unidentified author wrote, “according to the ideals of the Sangkum, beautification of the city must be of direct benefit to the population.”

Sihanouk was an enlightened patron and artist in his own right who supported his architects’ vision and pressed them to stretch their minds rather than restricting them. In fact, Vann Molyvann reports how Sihanouk personally supervised every blueprint, and documents recount how Sihanouk even became involved in the design of the state palace and the interior design of several hotels (The *Le Cambodiana* in Phnom Penh and the *Independence Hotel* in Sihanoukville). Between 1966 and 1969 he developed an interest in filmmaking and produced eleven films, some of which use the new towns and architecture of the Sangkum as stage sets. During his tenure, Sihanouk bent the government’s decision-making process to suit his own policies. It could in fact be argued that the concentration of power in his hands and the nation’s one party’ politics were contributing factors to the promotion of this high standard of architecture and large scale of development. Whereas democratic societies are dragged down by never-ending debate about the public interest, Sihanouk could make decisions at the snap of his fingers.

Thus the meeting of two exceptional figures, a prince and an architect, was to have a lasting impact on Cambodian architecture. The prince was inspired by the example of the heroic Jayavarman VII, and the architect by the grandeur of ancient Khmer architecture. As Vann Molyvann is quoted as saying in *Cambodge d’Aujourd’hui* special edition in 1961:

I saw Angkor with a new eye. And every time I visit the works of my ancestors I am overwhelmed by a profound feeling of humility that gives me the strength to take on new tasks. (Vann Molyvann 1961)

Arguably, Buddhism, as a belief system that is anti-ideological, tolerant, and respectful of other religious practices, can be easily applied to secular societies without falling into the trap of bigotry. The special form of nationalism that Cambodia experimented with through the Sangkum era and its continued reference

to Buddhist ethics seems to have provided the narrow line (or the middle path) that prevented nationalism from toppling over into totalitarianism. It is no coincidence that General Lon Nol abandoned Buddhism along with the monarchy when he created a republic in 1970. In 1966 when Sihanouk wrote in *Our Socialist Buddhism* of the Buddhist recognition of the universality of suffering and of a socialist obligation to address suffering, it seems fair to deduce that the Sangkum was a society whose goals were focused on improving the lot of ordinary people in their everyday lives (Sihanouk 1966).

Closing Remarks

Who were the major players in this unusual experiment? What forces were at work to encourage not only the construction of thousands of buildings to serve society's needs, but also the emergence of an authentic and unique architecture movement?

Liberated from French rule in 1953 and on a quest to find its own identity Cambodia embarked on a unique experiment that invented its own social and political model by drawing on the powerful symbols of monarchy, religion, and Angkor. An attempt has been made here to clarify some of the dynamics behind this ambiguous and unusual experiment in which nationalism and modernization worked together with tradition. Some of the aspects that drew criticism—the one party state and centralized decision-making—were no doubt the same factors that contributed to the successful reconstruction and social development of the country. Although resolutely nationalistic, it led to a style of art and architecture that was at once authentic, diverse, and open; the antithesis of the redundant architectural language of columns and porticos so often cherished by nationalistic patrons.

This kind of architectural achievement was possible thanks to the unifying force of the Sangkum and a peculiar mixture of monarchy, secular state, and religious society that contrasts deeply with the Western model of civil society based on secularism in which religion is a private preserve.

The ancient Khmer were not only admirable architects but excelled at sophisticated engineering, barays (artificial water tanks used as reservoirs and levers to control the water level in rice paddy) and canals, roads, and bridges. Likewise, during the Sangkum era, not only were the buildings designed to the highest standard of architecture, but great attention was also paid to the urban infrastructure. Some critics complained that Cambodia could not afford the luxury of such a high standard of building but the fact that much of it is still standing and serving its purpose today disproves this short-term view. Whereas France left Cambodia ill-equipped for the independence that followed colonialism, at least it still had these assets from the Sangkum era to fall back on after the disaster of the Khmer Rouge (1975–1979).

New art forms emerge from the shock of new situations, cultural exchange, and psychological challenges. The Khmer civilization was obliterated in the fifteenth century and Cambodian society had looked inwards towards the Tonle Sap Lake

during four centuries of decline. In a short space of time French colonization, closely followed by independence, propelled Cambodia into the twentieth century. A youthful group of highly educated, committed Cambodians who were led by the strong personality of Sihanouk, enthusiastically embarked upon an experiment of modernization that materialized in the form of *New Khmer Architecture* (1953–1970). The Sangkum was a holistic experiment in which political ideals, ethics, and artistic achievement worked together. This combination takes on a renewed importance in a world where the Western model of democracy and market economics is in crisis and many nations are, at present, confronted with the task of redefining themselves.

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ARK Research archives (Architecture Research Khmer)

In 1998 Helen Grant Ross and Darryl Collins, two lecturers at the Royal University of Fine Arts of Phnom Penh, began researching the prolific but undocumented modern architecture that can be found throughout Cambodia. Thirty years of war had resulted in almost total amnesia about this era. The Toyota Foundation funded a research project (2000–2002) that enabled them to collate the scattered documentary and photographic archives from the post-independence period (1953–1970). In addition to the documented archive, they created a database of over 1,300 identified buildings, 300 bibliographical references, and 5,000 photographs and documents. The works of more than fifty architects and engineers were also identified. Numerous meetings and records were established with witnesses from the era and with HE Vann Molyvann in particular. In 2006 this led to the publication of a book that was nominated “One of the ten best Asian books of the year” by Time Magazine:

Grant Ross, Helen, and Darryl Leon Collins. 2006. *Building Cambodia: “New Khmer Architecture” 1953–1970*. Bangkok: The Key Publisher.

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Grant Ross, Helen. 2001. “On the Road to Sihanoukville—Territorial Development under the Sangkum Reastr Niyum.” Paper presented at the conference and exhibition at Phnom Penh Municipality, November 1, 2001.

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Part IV
Archaeological Pasts for Revolutionary
Presents

“Make the Past Serve the Present”: Reading *Cultural Relics Excavated During the Cultural Revolution of 1972*

Juliane Noth

Abstract While countless monuments and artworks were destroyed all over China at the outset of the Cultural Revolution, archaeological excavation continued to be undertaken and important finds made between the years 1966 and 1970. Archaeology re-entered the public stage in July 1971 when the Palace Museum in Beijing re-opened with an exhibition of *Cultural Relics Excavated during the Cultural Revolution*. The show was followed in 1972 by two publications with the same title: a high-price folio with reproductions of excavated objects in superior print quality, and a booklet introducing important excavations to a more general public. The same year also saw a re-launch of the country’s most important archaeological journals. The first issues were devoted mainly to the same finds as those featured in the *Cultural Relics* exhibition and publications. The texts have strong similarities that indicate tight political control. This article examines how the treasures excavated in the Western Han dynasty tombs at Mancheng, Hebei Province, are treated in the publications and analyses how this group of texts was orchestrated to lend ideological legitimacy to the exhibition and publications, thereby securing the recovery of archaeological work. They also laid the ideological foundations for an international travelling exhibition that successfully served as part of China’s foreign policy strategy.

Introduction

The Chinese Cultural Revolution, lasting from 1966 to 1976, has become a synonym for the destruction of cultural heritage. This is because during its first months thousands of ancient monuments, including Buddhist and Daoist temples, were attacked, and artworks and books in private households were confiscated and often burnt (Fig. 1). From mid-August to September 1966 at least 4,922 of Beijing’s 6,843 officially classified historical sites were damaged or destroyed (Ho 2006,

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Fig. 1 Buddhist statues being destroyed by Red Guards in Anhui Province (*Source: MacFarquhar and Schoenhals 2006, Fig. 30*)

64–65) in the Red Guard’s attempt to “destroy the Four Olds”: old thought, old culture, old customs, and old habits.

Only the most important monuments in the country, like the Forbidden City in Beijing or the Potala Palace in Lhasa, were spared from the Red Guard attacks, presumably through the intervention of Prime Minister Zhou Enlai. In order to protect them these building complexes were closed to the public and turned into army quarters.¹ Moreover, Dahpon Ho has demonstrated that other sites and treasures were saved by local residents through resistance, concealment, or through persuasion and negotiation (Ho 2006). Red Guards, radical student groups from universities and high schools around the country, carried out the “Destroy the Four Olds” campaign because they believed in a mission to destroy China’s old culture in

¹ Another move to distract Red Guard aggression from the Palace Museum in Beijing can be seen in a plan that was allegedly drafted for Peng Zhen, the former mayor of Beijing and one of the highest-ranking victims of the Cultural Revolution. It showed the Forbidden City completely razed and substituted by a “new imperial palace,” supposedly for Peng himself. The revolutionary rage directed against the alleged revisionist Peng Zhen was thus utilized for the preservation of the palace (Ho 2006, 72–73; Martinsen 2010).

order to make way for a new, revolutionary society.² While the campaign gradually came to a halt in early 1967 and the Red Guards were disbanded in 1969, the radical Maoist ideology that had legitimized their actions remained fundamentally unquestioned until Mao Zedong's death in 1976 and the subsequent fall from power of the radicals around Jiang Qing. Cultural activity was, with few exceptions, restricted to the praise of socialism and to representations of chubby, red-faced, and happily smiling yet determined workers, peasants, and soldiers. Sites of religious worship were closed or turned into factories or granaries, while cultural activity associated with “feudalism,” “capitalism,” or “bourgeois” culture could only be pursued in a clandestine way.

The situation was somewhat different in the field of archaeology and for objects retrieved from excavations. While the field did not remain unaffected by the sweeping violence of the early Cultural Revolution, archaeological excavations were still undertaken and this work returned to public visibility at a fairly early date in 1971. The reasons for the privileged role of archaeology in the cultural and intellectual climate of the early 1970s can be traced, at least partly, to the mission that it was assigned: the interpretation of Chinese civilization. This is a central issue in which the present paper deviates from this volume's focus on “civilizing missions” or “civilizing visions.” The premise of Chinese archaeology during the Maoist era from 1949 to 1979 is that the greatness of Chinese civilization was never contested, and the nationalist and anti-imperialist cause that served as a major legitimization for the founding of the People's Republic prompted a glorification of China's past. Furthermore, as Lothar von Falkenhausen has observed, “the perceived continuity of the Chinese historical experience [...] directly links the archaeological data to the present in a relation of ethnic and national identity” (von Falkenhausen 1993, 840). Modern Chinese archaeology has inherited a long tradition of Chinese historiography, antiquarianism, and epigraphy, which has led to a preoccupation with finds that can be related to historical records, and their interpretation to match the written sources. On the other hand, the theoretical model that was to be strictly followed was based on the stages of evolution according to Friedrich Engels' 1884 book *Der Ursprung der Familie*. It proposes a progressive development from primitive society through slave society, feudal society, and capitalist society, reaching its apogee in socialist society. Archaeological proof of this “historical law” thus served to legitimate the rule of the Communist Party (von Falkenhausen 1993, 846–847; Tong 1995, 180–181). During the years of the Cultural Revolution the writings of Mao Zedong formed the ideological framework according to which finds were interpreted, and these were applied even more strictly when archaeological publications re-entered the public sphere in 1972.

Another circumstance leading to the relative safety of archaeological work during the Cultural Revolution might have been personal relations. The Cultural Revolution was also an internal power struggle, and the “Destroy the Four Olds”

²For an account of the “Destroy the Four Olds” campaign, cf. the chapter “Declaring War on the Old World”, see Yan and Gao 1996, 65–84.

campaign in 1966 as well as the attempts by Zhou Enlai to return to a more moderate cultural politics in the early 1970s through exhibitions, the promotion of archaeological publications, and ordering paintings from traditionalist painters, cannot be separated from factional struggles; in fact, they should be regarded as powerful symbolic acts. Personal commitment by members of a certain faction to a specific field such as archaeology almost certainly played a role. In the case under consideration here, it was the relationship between Prime Minister Zhou Enlai, the president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Guo Moruo—himself a key figure in modern Chinese historiography and palaeography—and director of the *Institute of Archaeology*, Xia Nai³ that enabled the resumption of scholarly work. Still, the Maoist ideology of those years required a strict adherence to the radical rhetoric of the Cultural Revolution and an explicit commitment to Mao-Zedong-Thought.

Finally, archaeology was to play an important role in the diplomatic goals of the Chinese government. From an early stage, an international travelling exhibition was part of the plans to establish diplomatic ties with the United States and European countries (Xia 1978, 222).

The reappearance of archaeology in the public sphere was carefully planned and strictly controlled. This paper will analyse how this process was visually and ideologically orchestrated in order to reconcile radical rhetoric and pragmatic ends.

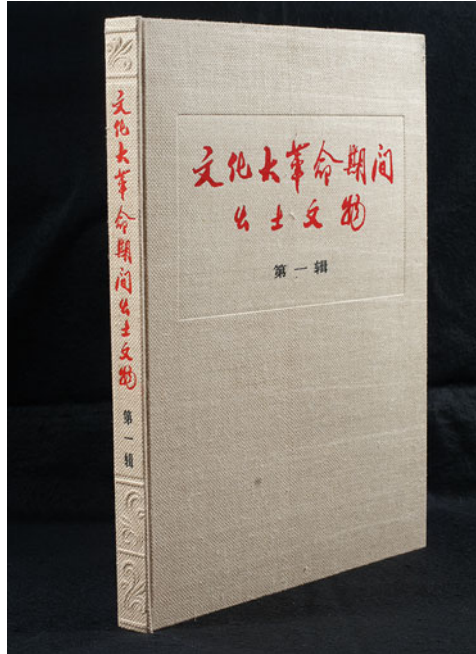
Cultural Relics Excavated during the Great Cultural Revolution: An Exhibition and Two Books

By 1971 the fighting of the early years of the Cultural Revolution had been suppressed, and the political situation had somewhat stabilized. On July 1 the Palace Museum reopened to the public with an exhibition of *Cultural Relics Excavated during the Great Cultural Revolution*. The title served a double purpose: It lent a revolutionary legitimization to the event, while at the same time shedding new light in the previous years. The iconoclasm of the Red Guards was superseded by the bringing to light of superb artworks by experts who were actively supported by workers, peasants, and soldiers.

Similar exhibits were set up in the provincial capitals to display finds excavated during the Cultural Revolution in the respective provinces (Leys 1977, 83–84 and 134).

³The political implications of these connections are indicated by Enzheng Tong who is very critical of Xia Nai: “[Xia Nai’s] authority derived mainly from the authority of the Party; his leadership in archaeology was the concretized leadership of the Party.” (Tong 1995, 196). “Even during the Cultural Revolution, Xia Nai himself was not much affected by this evil storm. Beginning with 1970, when universities and scientific institutions were still closed, and the majority of intellectuals were imprisoned in ‘cowsheds’ or sent to the countryside for re-education, he was personally appointed by Prime Minister Zhou Enlai to receive foreign guests and to visit Albania, Mexico, and Peru, carrying out ‘Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line in foreign affairs.’” (Tong 1995, 196–197, n. 9).

Fig. 2 The folio *Wenhua da geming qijian chutu wenwu* (*Cultural Relics Excavated During the Cultural Revolution*), published February 1972 (Photograph: Susann Henker)



Three weeks later on July 22, it was decided that the country’s most important archaeological journals, *Wenwu* (*Cultural Relics*), *Kaogu* (*Archaeology*), and *Kaogu Xuebao* (*Acta Archaeologica Sinica*) would be re-launched (Wenwu 1979, 409). The three journals, which like other scholarly publications had ceased to appear after May 1966 due to the upheavals of the Cultural Revolution, resumed publication in January 1972.⁴ Articles written in 1978 in commemoration of Guo Moruo indicate that he was responsible for applying for the resumed publication of the periodicals “with the support of the responsible comrades of the cultural relics and archaeological institutions,” as well as for an exhibition to be sent abroad. Zhou Enlai, in turn, is reported to have personally given his permission for these enterprises (Wenwu 1978, 5; Xia 1978, 222).

In February 1972, one month after the reappearance of the journals, a large bibliophile book appeared bearing the same title as the exhibition at the Palace Museum: *Cultural Relics Excavated during the Great Cultural Revolution, Volume One* (other volumes never followed). Although no mention of the exhibition is made in the book, it obviously complemented the exhibit by displaying the excavated artefacts. It included high-quality plates in black and white and several colour plates as well as short entries on each object and was produced with a cloth binding and embossed slipcase (Figs. 2 and 3); its high price of 30 Yuan—about a month’s

⁴ This was a very early date compared to magazines sponsored by art institutions like *Meishu* (*Fine Arts*) or *Wenyibao* (*Literature and Arts*), which were re-launched in 1976 and 1978 respectively.



Fig. 3 The slipcase for *Wenhua da geming qijian chutu wenwu* (*Cultural Relics Excavated During the Cultural Revolution*), published February 1972 (Photograph: Susann Henker)

income—indicates that it was not directed at the broad masses of workers, soldiers, and peasants (Leys 1977, 104).

For this audience another book with the same title (without a volume number), but of smaller size and at the more affordable price of 0.37 Yuan was published in September 1972. It featured short articles that introduced the main finds, sketched their historical importance, and gave an ideological interpretation of them. Moreover, according to an editorial note, most of the articles had previously been published in the newspaper *Guangming Ribao*. The two books clearly served different political functions—a powerful representation of culture in the folio and explanations of the finds for a larger audience in the booklet.

In the folio the objects were grouped according to the province where they had been excavated. The sequence of the provinces seems partly to derive from the importance and the antiquity of the finds. It opens with objects from the most spectacular of the excavations in the period, the Western Han dynasty tombs of Liu Sheng, Prince of Zhongshan, and his consort Dou Wan who died in the late second century BCE. This find is represented by forty-two objects, making up the second-largest group in the catalogue and all of the Hebei Province section. The following Hunan and Shaanxi Provinces are represented by mostly smaller groups of more diverse finds from different periods; a hoard find from Xi'an, that in 1970 had brought to light mainly Tang dynasty silver and gilt metalware, received the most attention with the reproduction of forty-eight objects. The ranking towards the end of the book of excavations in Xinjiang and Shanxi, revealing seventh- and eighth-century textiles and manuscripts from Turfan and the painted panel from the Northern Wei dynasty tomb of Sima Jinlong (d. c. 474–484) respectively, may be related to their position on the spatial and dynastic periphery of Han Chinese cultural history.

The excavations featured in the booklet differ in some cases from those in the folio, and the sequence has also been altered. The first article is again devoted to the Han tombs of Mancheng, but the second is concerned with an excavation that could not have been included in the exhibition or in the prestigious illustrated book. Yet

this find can be regarded as especially symptomatic of the fallacies of cultural heritage practice during the Cultural Revolution. In the process of demolishing Xizhimen, one of the city gates of Beijing dating back to 1436, the remains of Heyimen, one of the gates of Dadu, the capital of the Yuan dynasty (1279–1368) came to light (Cultural Relics 1972b, 17–19). Brought about by the destruction of living cultural heritage—the Beijing city wall—the find was celebrated as an achievement of Cultural Revolution archaeology conducted with the help of revolutionary workers and “in the process of construction” (Cultural Relics 1972b, 12).

The two *Cultural Relics* books, along with the first issues of the archaeological journals, are closely interrelated and based on a narrow pool of text. The international audience was also presented with parts of this text body when *Chinese Literature* and *China Pictorial* introduced the archaeological achievements of the Cultural Revolution as early as November 1971 in partly identical texts.⁵ Both *Cultural Relics* books and the January 1972 issue of *Wenwu* open with a Xinhua News Agency editorial that first appeared in the *People’s Daily* dated to July 24, 1971, two days after the decision to re-launch the archaeological journals. This text serves as both an ideological legitimation and a guideline for archaeological excavation and research. The political caution that marked the launch is illuminated by the fact that Zhou Enlai personally read the editorial and commented on the text before its publication (Guojia Wenwu Shiye Guanliju 1977, 5). The first lines of the editorial read as follows:

Under the guidance of the revolutionary line of Chairman Mao, with the support and cooperation of the broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, the cultural relics and archaeology workers of our nation have undertaken a wide range of cultural relic preservation and excavation works during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. They unearthed and restored many sites of cultural heritage and ancient tombs, and discovered a large number of precious historical relics. These are of important scientific value for the research and understanding of our nation’s historical politics, economics, culture, military affairs and the friendly contact between China and foreign nations.

The Great Leader Chairman Mao has pointed out: **Another of our tasks is to study our historical heritage and use the Marxist method to sum it up critically. Our national history goes back several thousand years and has its own characteristics and innumerable treasures** [printed bold in the original source].⁶

The main issues in Chinese archaeology during the Cultural Revolution era are touched upon in this short paragraph. First, archaeology is acclaimed as one of the achievements of the Cultural Revolution. The premises for this success are: the

⁵ Both journals were directed at international audiences: *Chinese Literature* was published in English (Hsiao 1971), and *China Pictorial* (*Renmin Huabao*) in a variety of languages, including Chinese. I quote from the German edition (*Kulturgegenstände* 1971). The layout and pagination are identical with the Chinese edition.

⁶ “Renzhen luoshi . . .” 1972, 1; *Cultural Relics* 1972a, unpaginated; *Cultural Relics* 1972b, 1, translation by the author except for the translation of the Mao Zedong quotation (printed in bold) after Mao 1938.

inclusion of workers, peasants, and soldiers in the excavation activities; the use of archaeology as part of a decidedly national historiography that relates directly to the present situation (as seen in the phrase “the friendly contact between China and foreign nations”); and finally, the interpretation of the retrieved data according to “the Marxist method.”

The editorial then enumerates the relevant finds, starting again with the Western Han tombs of Liu Sheng, Prince of Zhongshan, and his consort Dou Wan in Mancheng, Hebei Province. In the following pages, my discussion will focus on the objects that were retrieved from these two tombs to analyse how ancient artefacts, their historical and their artistic status were displayed and discussed in 1972. As mentioned above, these objects were the first to be illustrated in the *Cultural Relics* folio (Cultural Relics 1972a, 1–39), and the first discussed in the booklet (Cultural Relics 1972b, 5–11). The text in the latter is based on an article on the excavation that was printed in the January 1972 issue of *Kaogu*—the very first article after the editorial in the first post-Cultural Revolution number (Zhongguo Kexueyuan 1972a).⁷

The Mancheng Tombs

The tomb of Liu Sheng was discovered on Mt. Lingshan in Mancheng County, Hebei Province, in 1968 by a patrolling People’s Liberation Army officer. It was excavated in a very short space of time, between June 27 and August 2, 1968, by joint teams from the Institute of Archaeology at the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Cultural Relics Work Group of Hebei Province. The excavation proceeded “with the support and active cooperation of soldiers and the revolutionary masses” and “under the close attention of the Central Committee” (Zhongguo Kexueyuan 1972a, 8). Guo Moruo personally visited the excavation site⁸ (Fig. 4). A few days later, between August 13 and September 19, Dou Wan’s tomb was excavated.

The importance of the tombs of Liu Sheng and Dou Wan lies in the fact that they are the only Han dynasty imperial tombs excavated thus far that have not been looted. They rendered over 2,800 burial objects, some of which represent superb examples of Han dynasty art. Liu Sheng’s tomb measures 51.7 m in length and 37.5 m in width and reaches a height of 6.8 m; his wife’s tomb is even larger, though equipped slightly less lavishly. In their enormous size they constitute “underground

⁷ This relationship between the articles in *Kaogu* and the *Cultural Relics* booklet is not mentioned anywhere but becomes evident in a comparison of the texts.

⁸ Articles from 1977 and 1978 commemorating Zhou Enlai and Guo Moruo relate that both were informed immediately about the find and gave it high priority, sending an excavation team from the Institute of Archaeology at the Chinese Academy of Sciences to assist the team set up by the Hebei Province authorities (Xia 1977, 6; Xia 1978, 221).

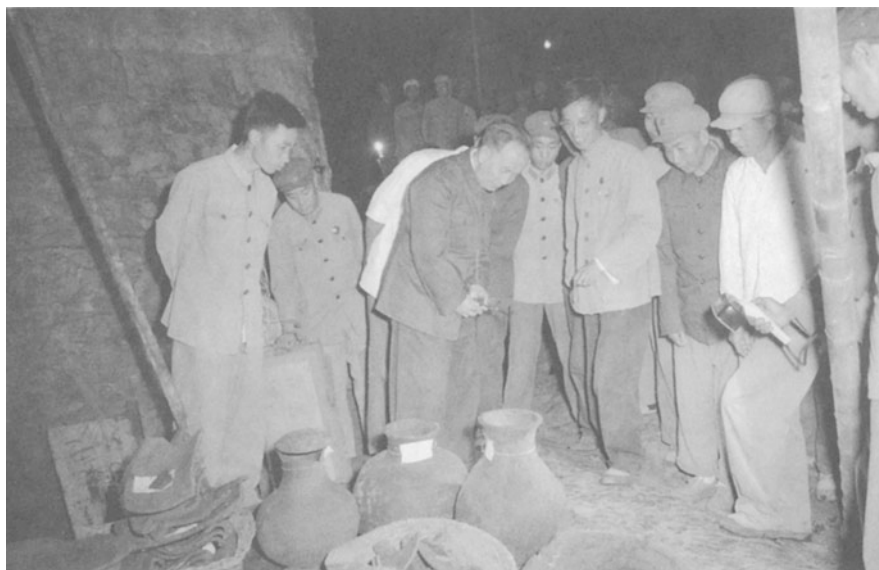


Fig. 4 Guo Moruo visiting the excavation site at Lingshan, Mancheng, Hebei Province on July 22, 1968 (Source: Hu 2007, 15, Fig. 3)

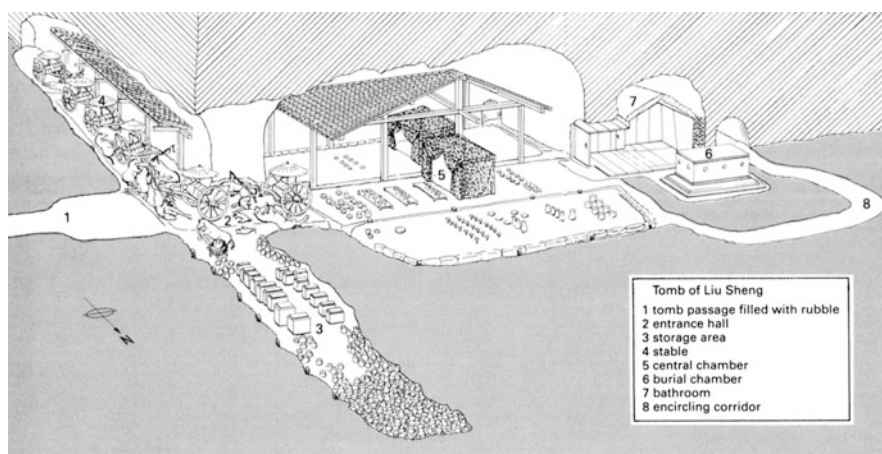


Fig. 5 Infrastructural section of tomb 1 at Lingshan, Mancheng, Hebei Province (Source: Wu 2010, 29, Fig. 18)

palaces” that provided food, drink, horses and carriages, servant figurines, a banquet hall, an inner chamber and even a bathroom for the deceased⁹ (Fig. 5).

⁹For detailed information on the tombs, cf. the excavation report published in 1980 (Zhongguo Shehui Kexueyuan and Hebei Sheng Wenwu Guanlichu 1980); discussions in Western languages

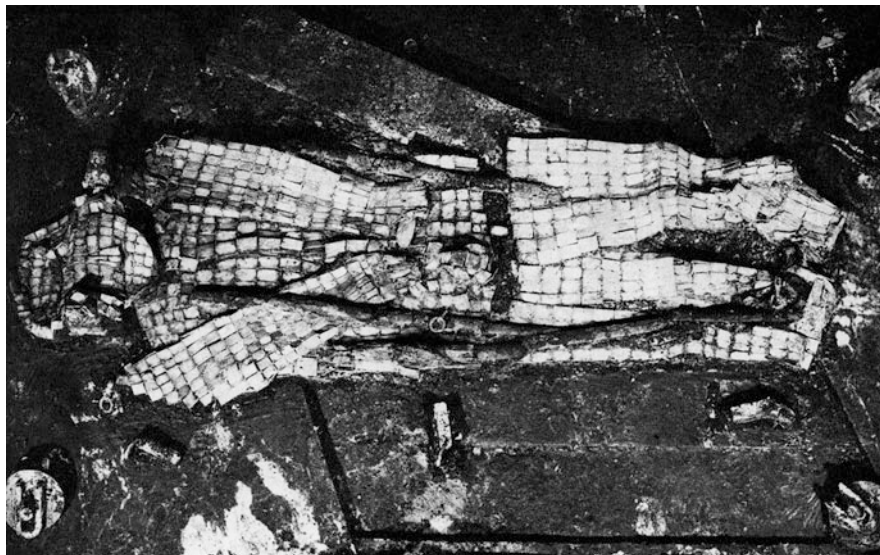


Fig. 6 Jade shroud of Liu Sheng at the excavation site in tomb 1 at Lingshan, Mancheng, Hebei Province (Source: Zhongguo Shehui Kexueyuan and Hebei Sheng Wenwu Guanlichu 1980, vol. 2, Fig. XII, 2)

Furthermore, this was the first time that complete jade shrouds had been unearthed (Figs. 6 and 10). As is known from historical records, to be buried in a jade shroud was the privilege of the Han imperial family and sometimes of lesser aristocrats. These objects probably functioned to protect the body from decay and possibly to ensure the immortality of the deceased. Liu Sheng's shroud was made of 4,298 thin jade plaques that were closely fitted around his body, drilled in the corners, and sewn together with gold-wire (Zhongguo Kexueyuan 1972a, 15; Zhongguo Shehui Kexueyuan and Hebei Sheng Wenwu Guanlichu 1980, 35–36).¹⁰

include Thorp and Jansen (Thorp 1991; Jansen 1994). On the ritual functions of the tomb architecture, the furnishings, and the use of stone cf. Wu 1997, 148–153; for the cosmological implications cf. Rawson (1999). According to Jessica Rawson, great tombs like these were meant “to realize the potential of the universe and to make that potential manifest for the benefit of the Liu family kings and their associates” (Rawson 1999, 54). Treasures from the Mancheng tombs have been displayed outside of China in numerous exhibitions and studied in the following catalogues, starting with *Trésors d'art chinois*, Paris 1973 (Elisseeff and Bobot 1973), and including *Das alte China*, Essen 1995 (Goepper 1995) and *The Golden Age of Archaeology* Washington, D.C. 1999 (Yang 1999; cf. Yang 2004, 263–266). For a general account of Han tombs cf. Erickson 2010. For recent Chinese-language publications on the Mancheng tombs cf. Zheng 2003, and Lu 2005. Both authors participated in the excavations in 1968 and co-authored the excavation report of 1980.

¹⁰ Early discussions include Shi 1972; Zhongguo Kexueyuan 1972b; Lu 1981. For the symbolism of jade and especially the jade suits cf. Thorp 1991, 33–36. Wu Hung regards the suits as jade bodies of the deceased, cf. Wu 1997, 158–166. For evidence on jade suits used in Han burials cf. Loewe 1999, 14–34.

Archaeology and Ideology in a Preliminary Excavation Report from 1972

The aforementioned article in the January 1972 issue of *Kaogu* is a preliminary excavation report that was informed by the ideological guidelines of the Cultural Revolution. After acknowledging the revolutionary masses involved in the excavation, it rather matter-of-factly describes the topography and the layout of the tombs, the arrangement of the chambers, and the most important objects retrieved, which were listed according to material: bronzes, iron, silver and gold, jade, ceramics, lacquer, and textiles. The jade shrouds and the inscriptions on coins and seals are each dealt with in extra chapters.

The authors were clearly impressed by the size of the tombs as well as by the technical quality and the sheer beauty of many of the objects that they described. Yet the aesthetic affect is closely related to and maybe even a necessary element of an ideological critique regarding the circumstances of their production. It is used in two ways towards the critical summary of the historical heritage that the Mao Zedong quotation required in the editorial.

Technical quality and beauty are described as a product of the labouring masses, constituting part of China's national cultural heritage. The interpretative light that was thus shed on the objects was clearly a positive one, but it simultaneously served as an indicator of the cruel suppression and exploitation of the masses through the feudal lords. Sentences that remind the reader of the tomb owners' cruelty and their profligate lifestyles and spending of the nation's wealth even after death are added after every passage in the article. The English version published in *Chinese Literature* is representative of this formulaic phrasing:

The workmanship [of the jade shrouds] is extremely fine, and demonstrates the high skill and artistry of the craftsmen. In the estimation of present-day craftsmen, an expert jadesmith would need at least ten years to complete one such cover. They highlight the lavish self-indulgence of the feudal rulers in contrast to the grinding poverty of the common people who were so gifted. (Hsiao 1971, 84)

These comments are inserted in a rather mechanical way, indicating an abrupt change in writing style from excavation report to ideological critique. This critique was supported by the fact that even in his own time, Liu Sheng was reputed to be immoral. The archaeologists of the 1970s often characterized him with a quotation from his contemporary, the historian Sima Qian: “Liu Sheng loved to drink and was very fond of women” (Watson 1961, 456).¹¹

¹¹ “When, however, these tombs and their furnishings are compared to other kingly burials of the period and to pre-Han burials of roughly equivalent local lords, the Mancheng finds do not appear to set any records for either ambition or indulgence” (Thorp 1991, 36).

Excavation and the Revolutionary Line of Chairman Mao

In the archaeological texts of the early 1970s, the importance of Han dynasty artisans in the creation of Chinese material culture is emphasized alongside a repeated insistence on the cruelty of class struggle, while the involvement of modern workers, soldiers, and peasants in archaeological fieldwork was a major characteristic of the Cultural Revolution. Their participation fulfilled one major aim of Maoist politics, namely the popularization of science and culture among the revolutionary masses.¹² At the same time, their presence served to ensure the correct class viewpoint in the interpretation and explanation of the finds. This aspect is documented in a photograph of the excavation that is included in the *Cultural Relics* booklet. It shows the participants' reconstruction of the arrangements of the burial objects inside the tomb's main chamber (Fig. 7). Several men in the photo are wearing uniform and are likely to be soldiers.¹³ The active participation of members of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is also the subject of an article that was published in the January 1972 issue of *Wenwu*—it was published at the same time as the preliminary excavation report in *Kaogu* and again as the very first article after the editorial. It was authored by the Party Branch of the sixth company of PLA unit 4749 (Lu 2005, 17) and bears the following title: “We participated in the excavation of the ancient tombs of the Western Han” (Jiefangjun 1972).

The tone of this article is quite enthusiastic, and it repudiates the idea spread by “some small gang of international imperialists and their lackeys” that Chinese cultural heritage had been destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Rather, the PLA unit bears witness to the contrary, since they had themselves taken an active part in the excavation and preservation of the Mancheng tombs. Moreover, archaeological work is explicitly linked to the “revolutionary line of Chairman Mao.” This is most clearly revealed in an anecdote about a young soldier named Li Mengyu who volunteered for the excavation after his shifts and who is reported to have declared laughingly with a mud-stained face: “To preserve the cultural relics is the duty of the revolutionary fighter. In order to defend the revolutionary line of Chairman Mao even a relic as small as a needle has to be recovered from the mud” (Jiefangjun 1972, 4). The article describes the excavation as a chance encounter between modern soldiers and “poor and lower-middle peasants” (*pinxiazhongnong*) with the products of their counterparts of the Han dynasty; however, a critique of the cruel feudal rulers is not omitted. The Prince and Princess of Zhongshan were also viewed in relation to their more recent counterparts, and the

¹² For a detailed study on the popularization of science in the early 1970s, especially in the field of paleoanthropology, cf. Schmalzer 2006.

¹³ Interestingly, this picture was reproduced in the 1972 *Cultural Relics* booklet (Cultural Relics 1972b, 7), but is absent in the photographic documentation included in the official excavation report published in 1980 (Zhongguo Shehui Kexueyuan and Hebei Sheng Wenwu Guanlichu 1980).



Fig. 7 Excavation team in the central chamber of Liu Sheng’s tomb, Lingshan, Mancheng County, Hebei Province, July/August 1968. Originally published in *Chinese Literature* 11 (1971), and *Cultural Relics* 1972b, 7 (Source: Yang 2004, 264)

PLA unit convened a “Remember the bitterness, think of the sweetness” meeting. “Remember the bitterness” refers to the reporting of personal suffering in the “old society”—that is, in pre-1949 China—thereby highlighting the “sweetness” of life under communist rule (Wu 2014). Historical evidence retrieved from excavations was thus slotted into the rhetoric and the reality of the denouncement of modern-day class enemies. The often-cited slogan “Make the past serve the present” which served as a somewhat general heading for archaeological writing in 1972 thus achieved acute immediacy.

Visiting the Exhibition of *Cultural Relics Excavated During the Cultural Revolution*

The same process of instrumentalizing history to fit into present-day ideological patterns and factional struggle is prominent in another group of articles: the reports made by visitors to the *Cultural Relics* exhibition in the Palace Museum. Two short texts were printed in the January 1972 issue of *Kaogu*, directly after the preliminary excavation report (Han 1972; Ma 1972), and a third followed in the June 1972 issue of *Wenwu* (Gong 1972). The authors of the articles in *Kaogu* were young “worker, peasant, soldier” students in the History Department of Beijing University, while

the text in *Wenwu* was written by a member of a group of young workers from an agricultural commune north of Beijing. Workers, peasants, and soldiers were equally important as the readers and as the audience of the events, and they were, at the same time, supposed to receive a historical education and to provide political critique. The correct audience for the show was carefully chosen, since entrance to the exhibition in the Palace Museum and similar events in the provinces was restricted to selected groups and individuals (Leys 1977, 83–84 and 134).

Contrary to the soldiers' article, which was full of pride in their participation in the discovery and the excavation of the Mancheng tombs, the exhibition reports contain a flaming ideological critique. Careful descriptions of the exhibited objects and detailed knowledge of historical data are juxtaposed with accounts of the cruel exploitation suffered by the student authors' closest relatives in pre-revolutionary China. The young worker Gong Aiwen admits that she had not understood much about the bitterness of the "old society" even when listening to elder people's stories, but had experienced the fierce suppression of the working people by the ruling class through the exhibition. Despite these personalized accounts, the language employed in the articles is highly stereotypical, with wording and phrasing that is, in many points, identical with the other exhibition reports, and also with the group of texts around the Xinhua editorial and the preliminary excavation report. Although the youth of the authors' of the exhibition reports is conveyed through the colloquial phrases that are interspersed in the text to enhance its authenticity, their reports also reflect the high degree of political control that was exerted in re-launching the archaeological journals. Written under close supervision, if not with the direct intervention of the journals' editorial boards, these contributions by the working masses have a distinctive political function. They embody the ideological legitimization of archaeology in the Cultural Revolution as postulated by the *Xinhua* editorial cited above. At the same time they also serve as an ideological safeguard to protect the enterprise of re-launching scholarly publications.

In the exhibition reports the treasures from Mancheng again receive the highest degree of attention and, according to the young worker Gong Aiwen, were the first exhibits that visitors encountered upon entering the exhibition hall (Gong 1972, 61).

The Changxin Palace Lamp as an Icon of Cultural Revolution Archaeology

Besides the jade shrouds, the object that was given the most attention in the texts was a lamp in the form of a female servant discovered in the tomb of Dou Wan (Fig. 8). Apart from being a beautifully crafted bronze sculpture, it is also a technically refined lamp, the shade of which can be adjusted to alter the brightness and the direction of its light. It bears various short inscriptions relating to the palaces it had belonged to prior to its burial with the princess. It is known as "Changxin Palace lamp" after one of the inscriptions referring to the palace of

Fig. 8 Changxin Palace Lamp, Western Han period, 2nd c. BCE, gilt bronze, H. 48 cm, Hebei Provincial Museum. Excavated from tomb 2 at Lingshan, Mancheng, Hebei Province (Source: *Cultural Relics* 1972a, 1)



Empress Dowager Dou. The empress was Liu Sheng’s grandmother and, as evidenced from the surname, a relative of Dou Wan. The lamp as a gift from the empress to the princess, or according to another suggestion, through the intermediary of the Yangxin Princess, can therefore be discussed, together with the other symbols of power that Dou Wan self-confidently displayed in her tomb, as an expression of female agency at the Han courts.¹⁴

The suffering of the labouring masses, the agency of powerful women at court, as well as the aesthetic appreciation of a work of art can all be identified in the figure of the young female servant depicted in the Changxin Palace Lamp; and for a short time it even became an icon of Maoist archaeology. The lamp was afforded page-size reproductions in every text from the 1972 series of publications. In an exhibition photograph printed with Gong Aiwen’s report, it is arranged as if in a friendly conversation with modern girl workers, thus reinforcing on a visual level the identification of historical data with modern politics (Fig. 9). But the main medium that modelled the girl servant into an icon was the visually and materially most attractive publication in the series: the expensive folio illustrating the *Cultural Relics Excavated during the Great Cultural Revolution*. The lamp is awarded the

¹⁴ For an account of the technical details, the issues of ownership, the production, and the related social costs concerning the Changxin Palace Lamp cf. Barbieri-Low (2007, 10–17).



Fig. 9 Visiting the exhibition *Cultural Relics Excavated during the Cultural Revolution*, 1971 or 1972 (Source: Gong 1972, 62)

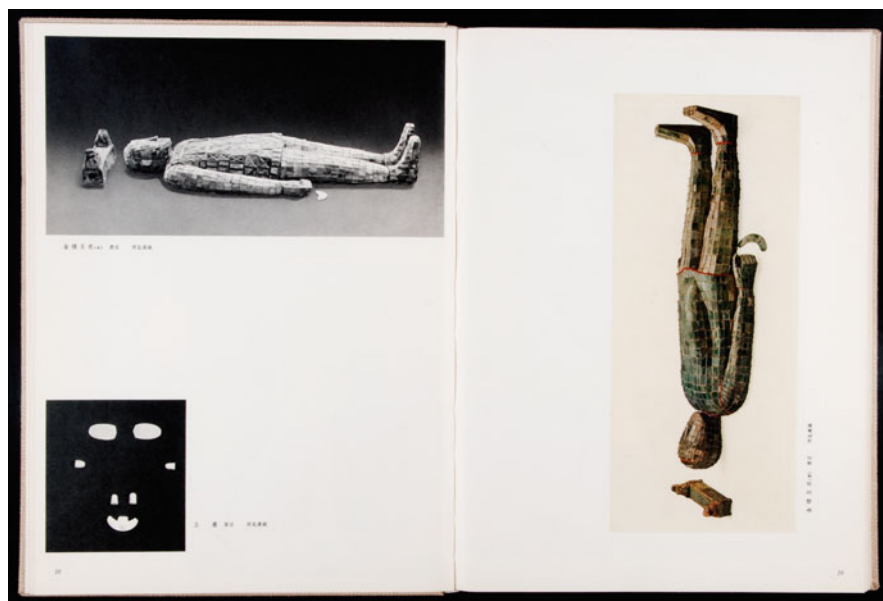


Fig. 10 The jade shrouds of Liu Sheng (right, in colour) and Dou Wan (left) as reproduced in the folio *Wenhua da geming qijian chutu wenwu* (*Cultural Relics Excavated During the Cultural Revolution*), published February 1972 (Source: Cultural Relics 1972a, 28–29)

most prominent place in the book at the beginning of the sequence of colour plates, and it is granted the largest amount of descriptive text as well as reproductions of rubbings of its inscriptions.

The jade shrouds of the feudal lords, on the other hand, are illustrated partly in black-and-white (Fig. 10), are represented as the last of the pieces excavated in

Mancheng, and are granted a conspicuously small amount of text. This is obviously a reflection of the revolutionary re-ranking of the classes: Servant and lord have exchanged places, if only within the confines of a book. In turn, this book with its lavish printing quality, cloth binding, embossed slipcase, and high price was not directed at the audience of the broad masses of workers, soldiers, and peasants. On the contrary, it was symptomatic of the new role that the illustrated objects were to play only slightly later. Only six weeks after the opening of the exhibition in Beijing, on August 17, 1971 the State Council issued a directive concerning the selection and submission of excavated artefacts for an exhibition abroad (Wenwu 1979, 409).

In May 1973 an exhibition with the Chinese title *Cultural Relics Excavated in the People's Republic of China* (*Trésors d'art chinois. Récente découvertes archéologiques de la République Populaire de Chine*) opened at the *Petit Palais* in Paris (Elisseeff and Bobot 1973). Afterwards, it travelled to Tokyo and London, and in the following years to major cities in Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Australia. Archaeology thus became a powerful tool that lent cultural legitimacy to the communist government and an effective support in the Chinese government's attempts to re-establish diplomatic ties with the outside world.

The slogan “Make the past serve the present” (*gu wei jin yong*) that adorned the travelling exhibition as a motto, obtained a new meaning. Initially, it was cited ubiquitously as a means of safeguarding the revival of archaeology against ideological attacks in a reading that can be roughly interpreted as “Criticize the feudal rulers of the past in order to denounce the ‘capitalist roaders’ of the present.” In the context of the international exhibitions, however, it could be read as “Display the beauty and wealth of historical craftsmanship in order to demonstrate to the world that present-day China of the Cultural Revolution era did not subscribe to a mission to destroy, but rather to the mission to protect its cultural heritage.”

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The Myth of Angkor as an Essential Component of the Khmer Rouge Utopia

Henri Locard

Abstract One of the reasons the Democratic Kampuchea regime was more brutal than other communist regimes may partly originate from the grandeur of the Angkorian era in the Khmer Rouge's (KR) megalomaniac, utopian imagination. Was this modelled on an illusory future or on an imagined past? Even before the KR seized power, they managed to fashion a bizarre amalgam of royalty, revolution, and past glory through the propaganda trip made by Norodom Sihanouk to Angkor in March 1973. Soon after seizing power on April 17, 1975 they organized a three-day victory celebration within the precincts of Angkor Wat temple and spared the conservation team in the evacuation of Siem Reap. Angkor and the greatness of its past civilization entered the revolutionary rhetoric and fed the megalomania of the leaders. More specifically, the revolutionaries were convinced that Angkor owed its prosperity to the achievements of their forebears who were believed to have blanketed the entire territory with an intricate irrigation network. The “hydraulic city”—a term introduced in the 1960s by the French archaeologist at Angkor, Bernard-Philippe Groslier—had become a hydraulic country. During the KR foreign visitors were granted visits to Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom, as well as visits to some of the grand reservoirs and dams built during the regime. These, along with the Potemkin villages erected in the area, served to eclipse the immense suffering of the populace. Democratic Kampuchea became a laboratory experiment for a form of revolutionary neo-colonialism that has its roots in the West—a Marxism-Leninism revised by Lenin, Stalin, and later, Mao. The KR period became an ugly caricature of the “civilizing mission” and used an incoherent jumble of ideas borrowed from the West.

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Introduction: Did the Khmer Rouge look to the Future or to the Past?

It is a puzzle to most historians why the Khmer Rouge communist regime was significantly more lethal than any other communist regime at the time—to such a degree that it has been labelled “genocidal,” while other murderous communist regimes have not. One factor—among many others, including the dramatic and brutal evacuation of all cities—might have been that the leadership modelled its utopian society as much on its perceived past as on its imagined future. According to many studies on totalitarianism, we know that terror is inextricably linked to concepts of utopia. The point I want to demonstrate here is that the myth of Angkor was part and parcel of the Khmer Rouge’s imagined utopia. Therefore, its inclusion into the mental framework of the *Revolutionary Organization’s* (*Angkar’s*) ideal society may be one the factors that can help us to understand why it resulted in such a shocking reign of terror.

The status of the *Internationale* clearly illustrates this ambiguity. The words of it were retained in French and most revolutionary soldiers, or the adolescents and children who were made to sing it, did not understand French and did not comprehend its real meaning. Singers must have been all the more baffled since the song was translated into Khmer as *Sangkum anakut* (“The Society of the Future” or “The Future Society”), thus replacing its message of international solidarity with that of a utopian society. Furthermore, instead of looking forward to a revolutionary society, as is illustrated by the original words “*Du passé faisons table rase, Foule d’esclaves, debout, debout! Le monde va changer de base,*” in their version of the *Internationale* “*Le monde va changer de base*” was translated (by Pol Pot himself?) as “Tomorrow our new regime will be restored anew” (*thnay sa’aek robop thmey phong yaung ban vinh*). After 1977 the *Internationale* was sung before the national anthem (Locard 2004, 37–38). Was this an allusion to the return to the co-called primitive and tribal communism (as they were perceived by Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, and Son Sen when they started the revolutionary uprising in the mid-1960s) of the Ratanakiri indigenous groups?

The evacuation of the cities can be seen as a restoration of these past mores since taking the defeated population as prisoners of war was normal practice in ancient Southeast Asia. And this is precisely what the triumphant Pol Pot guerrilla fighters did after entering the new and the old capitals on April 17, 1975 and the other provincial capitals in the following days. They called the townsfolk and refugees “New People” or “17th April People” and drove them out to their old base areas, the large stretches of the territory they had been controlling for up to five years.

As Penny Edwards has demonstrated in her book *Cambodge: The Cultivation of a Nation, 1860–1945* (Edwards 2007), it was the French colonizers who contributed to the view in the Khmer imagination that Angkor and its era, as symbolized by Angkor Wat temple, constituted the very symbol, if not the essence, of Cambodia’s national identity. And indeed, the Khmer Rouge followers were fierce nationalists—chauvinists, rather! In fact, all Cambodian governments since

independence have revered Angkor Wat as a national idol: a striking example of what Charnvit Kasetsiri (applying the phrase mainly to his compatriots) rightly calls “Stone-temple nationalism.”

It is surprising to note that we have not—as far as I know—kept track of the surviving correspondence from the colonial age recording King Ang Duong and King Norodom’s wish to recover the Angkorian temples that had been lost to Siam. Both sovereigns appealed to the French to come to the rescue of their kingdom, which was threatened with annihilation from their two powerful neighbours. For instance, Ang Duong in his letter dated to November 25, 1856 urged Napoleon III to help him regain no less than fourteen provinces and islands in Cochinchina that he had “recently” lost to “*la perfidie du roi annamite*.”¹ There is no mention whatsoever of a similar “*perfidie*” on the part of the Siamese kings. Was it because both had been educated in Bangkok and had spent many years in the Siamese court, thus making it impolitic to voice any demand concerning Angkor to their former mentors and protectors?

Furthermore, in the *The French-Siamese Treaty* of July 15, 1867 between France and the Kingdom of Siam, Article 4 stated that ‘The provinces of Battambang and Angkor (Nakhon-Siemreap) will stay in the Kingdom of Siam.’ At this time there was no question of claiming Angkor as part and parcel of the kingdom’s patrimony either on the part of France or the Cambodians.

Similarly, in 1900 when Prince Youkanthor—who regarded himself as the heir apparent to the throne—protested against the encroachments of the protectorate into the privileges and finances of his father, King Norodom, he made no mention of the loss of Angkor. His formal complaint was not entirely wrong, since his country was then being transformed, *de facto* and gradually, from a protectorate into a colony managed by French administrators. But he did not seem to have any concept of the chronology of Angkor, claiming that his civilization and his dynasty was “thousands of years old.”² (Lamant 1989, 226) His ignorance of Angkorian chronology was compounded by an utter ignorance of European history. His uncle, King Sisowath, was wiser when he declared, a couple of year later (November 5, 1906) in a letter to the *Résident Supérieur de la République française au Cambodge*, that

The richest provinces of Cambodia were precisely those of Battambang and of Siem Reap; in the latter, there still remain the ruins of the ancient powerful capital of our kingdom, a shining proof of the greatness of our ancestors. Those two provinces, no more than the others, have never been given to Siam by any of my predecessors, and our claiming to have then returned to Cambodia has never ceased and will never cease as long as we have not obtained satisfaction in this case.

¹ King Ang Duong in a letter to Napoleon III dated November 25, 1856.

² “Our race lived in cities over which my dynasty, my family, reigned, while your forebears were wandering westwards seeking lands where their barbarity could feed itself” (translated H.L.), original text: “Notre race [aryenne] habitait les villes sur quoi régnait ma dynastie, ma famille, alors que vos aïeux erraient vers l’ouest cherchant des terres où leur barbarie pût se nourrir.”

Obviously, the research conducted by the newly created *École française d'Extrême Orient* was beginning to bear fruit and the enlightened monarch understood the significance of these relics for Cambodian past history and identity. In fact, nationalism in Cambodia began with an evocation of Angkor's greatness made in the first Khmer political newspaper *Nagarawatta*, meaning "Angkor city." This paper was published from 1936 to 1942 and again in 1945, and in 1942 it supported the first and unsuccessful attempt to overturn the colonial regime.

Even in the modern age, this was the ultimate model for the Cambodians to follow. Sihanouk was also justifying the authoritarianism of his regime during the *Sangkum* period a posteriori. On March 16, 1955, two weeks after his abdication on March 2, he announced his "[. . .] intention of forming a new political grouping, the Sangkum Reastr Niyum [People's Community, HL], [. . .] to give birth to a truly democratic, equalitarian, and socialist Cambodia, to restore the past greatness of our motherland" (Sihanouk 2005, 55).

During that period, thanks to Sihanouk's wish of regaining some of Cambodia's ancient glory, vast and fanciful reproductions of Angkor, intended to decorate the public offices of the central and local administration and the residences of the newly rich, were built and churned out in the Phnom Penh studios of commercial painters. Perhaps these hordes of toiling workers were already stirring the imaginations of the aspiring revolutionary leaders. These imagined worksites did not merely inspire painters or illustrate Sihanouk's films, but were reproduced by the relocated masses under Democratic Kampuchea, which realized the operatic *Sangkum* worksites where Sihanouk loved to be filmed by the news cameras.

Sihanouk's visit to the Maquis in March 1973

Even before they seized power, the Khmer Rouge, who were fierce nationalists and deft manipulators of nationalist symbols, managed to bring together the "raven-clad" revolutionaries, the monarchy, and Angkor in order to deceive international opinion and conceal their plans for total revolution. This was the main objective of Sihanouk and Monique's visit to Phnom Kulen and Angkor in March 1973. The revolution had reached a turning point. In the previous years, Vietnamese communist troops had borne the brunt of the fighting and trounced Lon Nol's poorly trained young army. During that time, shortly after the January 27, 1973 Paris Peace Accord with America, the latter began "Vietnamizing" the war in Vietnam while the Pol-Potists were "Khmerizing" the war in Cambodia.

Just as the Khmer Rouge were purging the Khmer-Viet Minh, which they regarded as tainted with pro-Vietnamese leanings, they publically paraded Sihanouk, the ex-monarch, in order to demonstrate to the world that he was the flag bearer of their movement. And what a trophy he was for the revolutionaries! Sihanouk came by air to Dong Hoi in Vietnam and then overland along the Ho Chi Minh trail. It is likely that he penetrated into Cambodia through Siempang district in Stung Treng province. He was always comfortably conveyed in an air-conditioned vehicle and accompanied by an ambulance in case of emergency,

as well as by a host of other vehicles. The royal entourage moved at night in order to avoid the dust clouds being spotted from the air in this dry season. In the daytime they took photographs of their supposed trek through the jungle. They crossed the Mekong at Talaborivoat opposite Stung Treng and went straight west along a newly renovated trail to Phnom Kulen, which they reached in two days. There they celebrated the 3rd anniversary of the creation of the FUNK and GRUNK (*Front Uni d'Union Nationale Khmère and Gouvernement Royal d'Union Nationale Khmère*) on March 23, 1973, and the former king presided over a “Council of Ministers” meeting in the jungle.

A propaganda film was made of this excursion and numerous photographs were taken by the Vietnamese propaganda services.³ This was published in *La Chine* in 1973 as Supplément 6 under the title “*Tournée d'inspection de Samdech Norodom Sihanouk dans la zone libérée du Cambodge*” (*La Chine* 1973).

In addition, a book was published with the title *Prince Norodom Sihanouk, (People's Armed Forces 1973, see also discussion in the epilogue of this book). Head of State of Cambodia, in the Liberated Zone* (People's Armed Forces 1973, see also discussion in the epilogue of this book). While it is obvious that the royal couple went as far as Phnom Kulen and Banteay Srey, I am not at all certain they went as far as Angkor Wat, since all the photographs were retouched or coloured in Beijing before their publication; the photographs were taken in front of the great symbol of Khmer nationhood in the early dawn for security reasons, as they were barely more than one kilometer from the Republican front line (Fig. 1). In addition, the temple was perhaps too close to the Republican line—half way between Siem-Reap City and the great shrine—for the Prince to travel there safely, and it was clear that no risk would have been taken. It must also be noted that Sihanouk was never keen to visit Angkor Wat, as he believed it to be haunted by the ghosts of his forefathers.⁴ I have had the book of photographs examined by the Lyon Police Laboratory⁵ and was told that Norodom Sihanouk's profile had been added to some of them and that a white halo could be easily perceived around him.

Whatever the truth of the matter, the journey was an unmitigated success for the communist propaganda machine. Sihanouk was indeed present when the revolutionary radio, from its broadcasting base in a Hanoi suburb, directed the Khmers to join *Samdech Euv* [Monsignor Papa] into the *prey-maquis* (Locard 2004, 27), and it also helped to give him credibility on the international stage. Internally, and more importantly, it reassured many Cambodians that Sihanouk still appeared to be in command along with the thoroughly respectable “Three Ghosts” and ex-Secretaries of State: Khieu Samphân, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim. For most people, the end of the war came to mean the real end of suffering and corruption. The journey contributed to the significant demoralization of the Khmer Republic fighters and served to

³ Received on November 5 via personal communication with Julio Jeldres, Sihanouk's official biographer in 2011. The Vietnamese would not allow the Chinese to accompany Sihanouk on the tour.

⁴ Received on May 10, 2011 via personal communication with Claude Jacques.

⁵ The Lyon Police Laboratory was founded in 1910 by my grandfather, Edmond Locard.



Fig. 1 Norodom Sihanouk in a nocturnal group photograph in front of Angkor Wat with his wife Monique and important Khmer Rouge leaders like Khieu Samphan to his right and (most probably) Pol Pot at the end of the first row to his right; published in *Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Head of State of Cambodia, in the Liberated Zone*, most probably around 1973 (Source: People's Armed Forces c.1973, n.p.)

reassure many among the elite, who might have otherwise left the country, to stay behind in order to welcome their ex-sovereign back.

Siem Reap on April 17, 1975

Indeed, from the very first day of victory, the revolutionaries—contrary to the iconoclastic youth of the Chinese Cultural Revolution—gave pride of place to Angkor and its temples. In the article titled “Siem Reap–Angkor during the War (1970–1975) and Democratic Kampuchea (1970–1979): from Violence to Totalitarianism” (Locard 2008a), I detailed that on that day Siem Reap was not treated like other provincial capitals. First, the revolutionaries overran it on the same day as Phnom Penh, not later like Battambang or Kompong Som, and both capitals—the new and the old—were seized at the same time. Second, unlike all the other provincial capitals, the town was not evacuated immediately because the Northern Region leaders and soldiers were too busy with a grand three-day victory celebration that was taking place within the walls of Angkor Wat. There Kaè Pauk, the leader of the North region (*phumphea*), pointed to the five towers of Angkor and

declared: “This is the greatest victory of the Kampuchean people in 2,000 years—greater even than the towers of Angkor!” (Locard 2008a, 27).

When the evacuation order finally came, all the staff in the French *Angkor Conservation Office* (*Conservation d’Angkor*) and their families, who resided around the conservation offices along the river, were required to stay put and wait for orders—some 750 people in all. The town’s elites, on the other hand, were put in trucks, identified in the Lolei modern pagoda, and massacred some distance east of the old monument. It was only two weeks later that a series of lorries shuttled the *Conservation* families to the recently evacuated villages in the Lolei-Roluos area. There they remained in small *sahakor phum* (or village collectives) where everyone survived under the revolutionary regime. Pich Keo, who was the Khmer joint-conservator under the French *Conservateur d’Angkor*, Bernard-Philippe Groslier, of course, resented this situation and asserted that he had been held as a prisoner. Although this is perfectly true, it must be added that he was imprisoned under infinitely better conditions than most of the unfortunate population. In light of these circumstances one might ask, were the Khmer Rouge planning to invite the conservators to resume their mission one day? This is quite likely; otherwise, the conservation families would have also been submitted to starvation and enslavement like the rest of the population. Although the Khmer Rouge did not ultimately invite a resumption of the former conservation activities, how else can one explain the special treatment afforded to these people?

Angkor in Khmer Rouge Parlance

Instead of the hammer and sickle, or stars Democratic Kampuchea put what most people believe to be three of the five towers of Angkor on its national flag.⁶ Duch, the director of S-21, Phnom Penh’s notorious torture-interrogation centre for Khmer Rouge cadres, claimed at his trial that the central tower on the flag stood for the Party and the two smaller ones symbolized the workers and the peasants. In contrast to the People’s Republic of China—whose national flag bore four smaller stars that represented the workers, the peasants, the petty bourgeois, and the national capitalists clustered around one larger one that stood for the Party—in Democratic Kampuchea all the other classes were abolished. When Pol Pot headed a delegation to visit Mao in June 1975, the “Great Helmsman” was thrilled to hear that the Khmer Rouge had wiped out the upper classes in one fell swoop—a move he had never dared to make. In the national anthem (very likely written by Pol Pot himself) the KR also proclaimed that the “dazzling victory of April 17 [. . .] was

⁶ According to art historian Danielle Guéret, what everyone believes—namely, that the towers of Angkor Wat are represented on the Cambodian flag—is not quite true. The five towers represent Mount Meru, the residence of the gods: The central tower represents Çiva, the supreme deity, who is superior to all other gods, flanked by Brahma on his right and Vishnu on his left.

more grandiose, more meaningful than the Angkor era!” (Locard 2004, 42). Similarly, in expressing the major tenet of their economic policy the most compelling metaphor was again a reference to Angkor’s past glory: “Through rapid development, our country must surpass the Angkor era” (Locard 2004, 73).

This was one of the ways in which the Khmer Rouge expressed their desire to surpass not just the Angkorian era but also Mao’s Great Leap Forward, and their revolution became known as “The Super Great Leap Forward, the Prodigious Great Leap Forward.” *Angkar* endlessly repeated this message:

Just as Angkor Wat is a stupendous marvel, so the Khmer Rouge revolutionary society will be. No one has ever dared to relocate all city dwellers; no one has ever dared to abolish absolutely all private property and even currency; no one has ever dared to purge the entire society—including the Party—in such a sweeping way. No other communist Party leadership in the world has been as strong and clear-sighted as ours, and *Angkar* can achieve wonders that will surpass Angkor. (Locard 2004, 32 and 73)

The rhetoric employed by the Communist Party of Kampuchea was honed in the harangues of every local *apparatchik*. Their megalomania verged on the insane. The prosperity of the Angkor Empire overawed the core leaders and filled their megalomaniac fantasies, as they yearned to replicate their country’s former grandeur. In fact, currency was printed in China with pictures of Angkor Wat or Bayon but was never actually distributed to the greater population. The link between Angkor’s past and the present vision of a new hydraulic country was merged into a motif on the 50 Riel banknote (compare the depiction 22a/b of the 5 Riel banknote in the epilogue of this volume by Michael Falser) (Fig. 2).

On April 16, 1976 Khieu Samphan trumpeted:

In the period between 18th March 1970 and 17th April 1975, we won great victories of immense significance in an extremely short time. These victories were achieved by leaps and bounds (applause and cheers). In these few years, our nation and our people leaped



Fig. 2 50 riel banknote with the Bayon temple and Khmer Rouge peasants planting rice fields (Personal archive Henri Locard)

forward as far as one would in five centuries [applause]. [...] In just one year, we achieved in all aspects as much as one would in ten years. (applause).

(FBIS, April 16, 1976, H3)

The so-called decadence of the post-Angkor period had come to an abrupt end. In what appears to be one of the many contradictions in Pol Pot's muddled thoughts, he claimed that his country had been enslaved for 2,000 years and colonized because of its bad leaders who lacked "a correct and clear-sighted political line":

For more than 2,000 years, our people have lived in utter deprivation, in complete despair and hopelessness. What was the brightest day for them? It was the 17th April 1975. (applause) [...] In the past, we were known for our Angkor Wat temples, which were built in the era of slavery. Slaves built Angkor under the oppression and the coercion of the exploiting classes of that time in order to make the kings happy. If our people could build Angkor Wat, they can do anything. For example, they most creditably achieved the 17th April 1975 victory over U.S. imperialism. We must revive our national soul and pride in order to defend our nation, build the country well and preserve it forever (applause).

(FBIS, April 16, 1976, H 25 and 26)

The millenarian strain here is obvious—as it is in all communist regimes: Angkor Wat nourished what François Ponchaud rightly called the Khmer Rouge's "suicidal megalomania," taking the leadership even further away from the reality of the twentieth century (Locard 2008b, 108). Without any fear of contradicting himself again, Pol Pot continued to repeat that Cambodia had been held in thrall by traitorous leaders for more than 2,000 years and gave this as his reason for why the history of the country must start from year zero now that it was under an enlightened and devoted leadership. Thus, he was basing the national Khmer history on the primitive communism of the northeastern tribal communities.

On April 19, 1975 the DK radio broadcast a song entitled "The Red Flag of the Revolution is Flying Over Liberated Phnom Penh." It included the following words:

The red flag of the revolution is flying over Phnom Penh, the land of Angkor. [...] A new and radiant Kampuchea will be built and a most precious state power is asserting itself over the wonderful land of Angkor. People of various nationalities are united under Angkar Padevoat. True independence, peace and democracy will prevail. (FBIS, April 21, 1975, H 5)

The most significant indication of the place held by the Angkor monument in Khmer Rouge mythology and ideology is the following declaration made on June 7, 1975, which was broadcast on the radio on June 12, 1975 under the title "The Cambodian Revolution Preserves Tradition and Blends It with the Scientific Era." This is an unexpected title for a regime that mistreated so many technicians and engineers and replaced science with political awareness and willpower. Furthermore, one of the song's most important passages declares:

As we study the Cambodian civilization, art and architecture, we realize that the Cambodian people have always been hard working, active, creative and skilled. This has been matched with scientific skill. In order to appreciate this aspect of Cambodia, we must take a look at our history, including the Angkor era. We should study just two temples of this Angkor era, the Banteay Srei, which was built in 967, in the tenth century, and Angkor Wat, which was built in the twelfth century.

[...] The whole world admires these masterpieces of the Cambodian people and regards them as rare treasures of mankind. The ornamental sculptures of Banteay Srei temple are flawless in the eyes of visitors. These sculptures reflect the great care, skill and activity of

our people. The sculptures of Banteay Srei are not just ornamental, but reflect and depict the way of life of an era. As we look at Angkor Toch temple, commonly called Angkor Wat by our people, the Angkor Thom temple and the surrounding areas, we are struck by the fact that the whole area was a large city criss-crossed with straight roads and canals in a magnificent system.

The Angkor-era architecture also has artistic and scientific character. Then artistic character is reflected in the ornamental sculpture, while the scientific character is proved by the fact that the whole complex was flawlessly planned and built with great precision and care. As we study just two aspects of Cambodian civilization, we realize that our culture, art, and architecture have been developing since the tenth century. If there had been no imperialists, and no old and new colonialists to commit aggression against us, this civilization, culture, art and architecture would have continued to develop. However, since our Cambodian nation and people have been regularly subject to aggression by the imperialists, and by old and new colonialism, this civilization, culture, art and architecture faded out.

Cambodia has been completely liberated since 17th April. During the people's war against the war of aggression of the US imperialism and the lackey clique of the traitor Lon Nol, the Cambodian has striven to preserve our traditions. For example, our revolution has restored and developed the traditional textile industry. The tradition of mutual help has also been developed by way of the strength of solidarity for increasing production. In all revolutionary organizations and departments, we have never used foreign languages, but have always used the national language—the people's language. As far as the arts are concerned, we have preserved the traditional instruments and music, which our revolution has blended with decent revolutionary ideals of patriotism, love for the people and science.

On the basis of our traditions, we are again blending tradition with science. Upholding the standard of independence and self-reliance in accordance with the policy of independence, peace, neutrality, nonalignment, sovereignty, democracy, territorial integrity, and, matching the nation's traditions with modern science, our people are now in the process of building a new Cambodia.

(FBIS, June 12, 1975, H 6–7)

In addition to the belief in the existence of a massive irrigation system, was the conviction that the Angkorian Empire had been an agricultural civilization and that an immense production of rice had lain at the heart of its prosperity and power. This was identified by the Khmer Rouge as the key to rapid development and was seen as the path to be followed—at breakneck speed!

The Myth of the Hydraulic City of Angkor and the Khmer Rouge Massive Irrigation Projects⁷

Some of these projects were indeed massive, for instance at Kamping Puey in the Banan district of Battambang province, at Trâpeang Thmâr in Phnom Srok district of Banteay Meanchey province, and the 6th January dam in the Bary district of Kompong Thom province. In the Khmer Rouge mindset it was not just a hydraulic capital city that was associated with Angkor but an entire territory criss-crossed

⁷ Postscript 2014: Writing this contribution in 2011 I was not aware of the recent discoveries made by the latest laser remote-sensing technology known as *Lidar*. In this case, I would have been less adamant in my dismissal of Groslier's "Hydraulic city" theory, and less impressed by Pillot's conclusions in particular.

Fig. 3 National Emblem of Democratic Kampuchea
(Source: courtesy of DC-Cam)



with geometrically designed canals and reservoirs delineating strictly square 1 ha rice fields, as reproduced on the country's emblem (Fig. 3). As John Marston has pointed out,

During the DK period, pictures of Angkor were displayed in public places. Angkor is evoked in the second version of the National Anthem. Songs drew parallels between the glories of the new regime and those of Angkor. A section of the Four-Year plan, devoted to tourism, speaks in the same breath of tourists visiting Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom, and Banteay Srey and “the systems of dykes, irrigation channels, canals, rice-fields, vegetable gardens, fishing areas” (Chandler et al. 1988, 105) suggesting that the DK programme to build up the irrigation system was related to a conception that irrigation and was the basis of the glories of Angkor. (Ebihara et al. 1994, 108–109)

As late as the 1990s and before his arrest, Ta Mok's residence on the ridge of the Dangrek Hills near Anlong Veng in Oddar Meanchey province, boasted a vast mural of Angkor Wat. The mural made the spacious villa look like the palace of some latter day god-king.

Thiounn Mumm first gave me the idea for this article in 1998 when I was in Rouen where he gave me a photocopy of the entry in *The Encyclopaedia Universalis* summarizing Bernard Philippe Groslier's findings of the late 1960s (also translated into Khmer in the journal *Neak Cheat Niyum*) about what he perceived, based on research by his colleague Victor Goloubev of the 1930s, to be *La Cité hydraulique angkorienne* (Bernard Philippe 1967; Groslier 1979, 1985; cf. Dagens 2005) (Figs. 4 and 5)

Mumm is the scion of the illustrious family of Oknha Véang Thiounn who was the long-serving minister of the palace for three successive kings—Norodom, Sisowath, and Monivong. The minister of the palace, along with his son Thiounn Hol, retired when the entire palace was reorganized in 1941 and the concubines and dependents had to leave. One might well ask if the four brothers joined the revolution in a fit of pique after being excluded from power. Groslier and Mumm

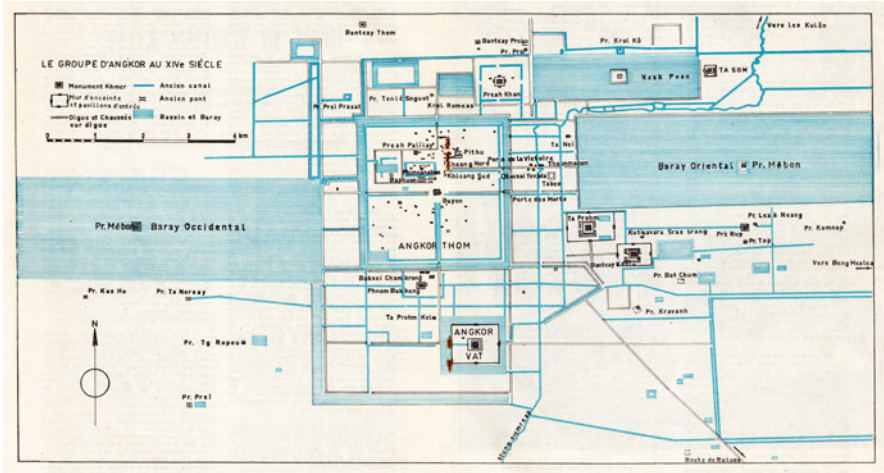


Fig. 4 *La Cité hydraulique angkorienne* as published in 1967 by the Conservator General of Angkor, Bernard Philippe Groslier, in French in *Études cambodgiennes* (Source: *Études cambodgiennes* 1967 (11): 24–25 and 27)



Fig. 5 *La Cité hydraulique angkorienne* as published in 1967 by the Conservator General of Angkor, Bernard Philippe Groslier, in French in *Études cambodgiennes* (Source: *Études cambodgiennes* 1967 (11): 24–25 and 27)

were the same age (born in 1925 and 1926 respectively) and had been school friends at the *École Norodom primary*; Mumm confirmed this by e-mail. According to Elizabeth Becker, Mumm was one of those who provided the Democratic Kampuchea regime with “a theoretical basis for the revolution”: “Our civilization is 8,800 years old—like Rome. We have copied no one. It is totally different from India. [. . .] We have succeeded to win victory over the U.S. We will succeed to win victory over the Vietnamese backed by the Soviet Union. [. . .] Now, in this revolution, we have the opportunity to express Cambodian culture for the first time” (Mumm in December 1978, quoted in Becker 1986, 415).

Twenty years later on May 18, 1998, Thiounn Mumm handed me the programme for the *Front Uni National Khmer* (FUNK), and confessed that he had written it entirely on his own one night in 1970: “The Angkorian civilization conceived power as a mission to serve the people and established the primacy of public good over that of the individual. The happiness and the welfare of an entire people was the goal of all those in power.”

Here one can see Mumm engaging in a utopian re-writing of history to suit his own purposes. Mumm also handed me the summary meant for the general public of Bernard Philippe Groslier’s findings and musings about what he termed “The hydraulic city.” In it he explained his discoveries from the 1950s to 1970s that formed an entry from the archaeology section of *Le grand atlas de l’archéologie in Encyclopaedia Universalis* published in 1985, one year before the author’s death (Groslier 1985). His theory was based partly on aerial photographs that revealed “an artificial landscape fashioned by men in order to obtain the highest number of flooded rice-fields” and on the research conducted by some of his colleagues, like Victor Gouloubev who wrote on the subject in 1941. He further added that, “waterworks gave rise to intensive rice cultivation.” Groslier also insisted on the fact that—and this must have been music to the Khmer Rouge’s ears—“an individual or family appropriation is completely ruled out [. . .] [as] the partition of the rice-fields was designed according to the supply of water, and therefore conceived for the community.” Furthermore, he concluded that, “such waterworks called for a centralized and powerful leadership” (Groslier 1985, 256, translated by the author). The king could thus be the one who fertilized the earth with water, as is still believed by many Cambodian farmers to this very day and is enacted in the Ploughing Ceremony that is performed each year in front of the royal palace at the beginning of the rainy season.

If one looks into some of Groslier’s earlier writings, one finds that he was much more prudent about the possible extent of the Angkorian irrigation system than has been implied and even suggests that it would have been difficult to guarantee two or even three crops a year in the same place. He was certain that, at best, these huge waterworks, as far as irrigation was concerned, could only compensate for the vagaries of the rainfalls in the monsoon in order to protect the young seedlings from the temporary drought, particularly during the short dry season around August. But that was not how the general public understood his “hydraulic city,” nor how journalists and the authors of guidebooks later explained it. This “standard view of the hydraulic city” also came to be the one held by the Khmer Rouge leadership.

Since and after the fall of Democratic Kampuchea that view has been somewhat discredited, but what is important for our purposes, since Angkor loomed very large for the Khmer Rouge, is that they *did* believe in it and it became a fundamental plank in their economic policy. In the Angkor guidebooks the popularizers of the “hydraulic civilization,” rather than the archaeologists or geographers themselves, turned what must have been a deft water management of scarce resources for religious, domestic, and transportation purposes into a vast agricultural project.

Jean Delvert, the great geographer of Cambodia and first director of the French *Lycée Descartes* in 1949, had already somewhat dampened the enthusiasm for this optimistic view of the agricultural wealth of Angkor in his publication *Le Cambodge* (Delvert 1983). Although it is true that what he rightly calls the hillock (*butte*) of Phnom Kulen receives 2 metres of rain a year (3–4 metres for the southern slopes of the Cardamoms) and only 1,442 metres for Siem Reap, the flow of the Siem Reap river can be reduced sometimes to 1 m³/second in the dry season. Furthermore, he also rightly insists on the fact that the soils in the Angkor-Roluos area, and even as far as the Dangrek ridge, are poor; in fact, all of the land north of the Tonle Sap (or Great Lake) and the acreage that could have been irrigated is much too poor to have supported a vast population.

In 1982, W. J. van Liere challenged the “hydraulic city” hypothesis in a highly influential article entitled *Was Angkor a Hydraulic Society?* (van Liere 1980, 1982). He argued against the idea on a number of technical grounds, notably that the *baray* had neither outlets nor any means of water distribution and that the area the system could have irrigated, and hence its productive impact, would have been insignificant and no larger than the surface of the *baray* itself. One of the latest refutations of the “hydraulic city” theory comes from an agronomist, Didier Pillot, in his *Jardins & rizières du Cambodge : Les enjeux du développement agricole* from 2007. Pillot worked for a long time in Cambodia as the head of the GRET, a respected NGO, and is currently a lecturer at the *École Supérieure d’Agronomie* in France. He calls the belief in the Angkorian hydraulic city “a deep-seated myth” (Pillot 2007, 61). This myth was based, of course, on the three great *baray* of Lolei and the larger eastern (700 × 1,700) and then western *baray* (2,100 × 8,000). He pointed out that the depth of these reservoirs was a maximum of 3 metres and that they were not dug out, but that levees were erected above the level of the plain to store monsoon rain and flooding from the secondary rivers. This represents a vast space for the possibility of watering a small number of acres. Furthermore, nowhere have archaeologists found evidence of a sluice that let the water loose in the dry season, one third of which would have disappeared through evaporation. As for Groslier’s suggestion that water could seep through the base of the levee, this would have been impossible because the dyke would have collapsed; in other words, the suggestion is “totalement fantaisiste” (Pillot 2007, 72). Yoshiaki Ishizawa’s and Bernard Philippe Groslier’s descriptions of the rice paddies being flooded one by one following the gentle slope of the land towards the Tonle Sap, is another physical impossibility because the slope is a mere 0.8/1,000 and the little surplus water that did exist would have stagnated. Pillot concludes that there was indeed an

impressive hydraulic system in the Angkor region, but it was used merely for urbanization, transport, and religious purposes (Pillot 2007, 71–85).

However, the baffling question remains: How could such a poor and comparatively dry soil supply a large surplus of rice, enough not only to feed hundreds of thousands of citizens and “slaves” in Angkor-city, but also to provide enough of a surplus to build the temples? Pillot believes that he has the answer: those surpluses were connected to a deft use of the rise and fall in the flood of the Tonle Sap. The difference in the water level between the high and the low was a little higher at the time—between 8 and 9 metres. Thus, the newly exposed surface around the lake during the low water level period was somewhat wider than today. The Angkor rice grower took advantage of the fertile silt deposited there (as indeed he does today), and this could provide a yield of two tons per hectare. In addition, the floating rice around the lake and the normal paddy rice during the wet season provided extra yield. The hydraulic management with, for instance, the norias could supply the needed water for the dry season rice around the Great Lake. As such, we can understand that these three kinds of rice could feed the farmers, plus 270,000 to 330,000 non-agricultural people. Pillot also insists—contrary to the standard view held by the Khmer Rouge—that the Angkorian period brought no technological innovations in agriculture. The political-religious system, strongly centralized around a king who acted as the powerful intermediary between men and the divinities to placate nature and bring the rains, made it possible to raise both manpower and/or taxation to build the temples. Pillot uses the most apposite phrase “*la sacralisation de l’impôt*” (Pillot 2007, 83) to describe the payment of taxation as a sacred act that mostly paid for the construction of new temples. In light of the fact that the Khmers today are very reluctant to pay taxes to the state but eager enough to lavish the local pagoda with donations and thus gain merits for the afterlife, this is a very interesting notion. Another weighty argument not mentioned by Pillot can be found in an article by Oliver de Bernon; building on Michael Vickery, de Bernon notes that the whole fertile region of Battambang and Banteay Meanchey was indeed cultivated and controlled by the Angkor Empire even before the eighth and ninth centuries, during the rise of the empire. From there vast quantities of rice could be shipped along the rivers and the Tonle Sap to feed a large city, not to speak of the rice from the Mekong delta itself (de Bernon 1997, 340–348).

The irrigation myth still exists as a major problem for Cambodia’s non-riverine poor soil. A recent article in the Phnom Penh-based *Cambodia Daily* entitled “Irrigation gains fail to trickle down” experts declared that “In 2008, a CEDAC study found that in the 13 main rice-growing provinces, only 7% of the irrigation schemes were fully functional and connected to rice-fields year-round, while 34% were partially functional, with the rest being out of function” (*Cambodia Daily*, February 26–27, 2011, 4). Most Cambodian soil is not really fertile and therefore not fit for multi-crops of rice in the same area, but during the Khmer Rouge era visitors were taken to Potemkin villages where they were shown the supposed fruits of the grand irrigation scheme: lush rice fields entirely “moulded” by the toil of man.

Visitors to Revolutionary Kampuchea and Angkor

A number of foreign dignitaries were taken to Angkor during the DK days. The *Documentation Centre of Cambodia* (DC-Cam) has numerous photographs of these visits. In 1978 dramatic changes were effected in Siem Reap in order to prepare the city to receive visitors on a more regular basis. In particular, the overcrowded large, regional prison in the precincts of the old colonial prison (since destroyed to make room for a luxury hotel) was emptied of all its inmates. Ne Win (or “Sun of Glory”), the Burmese dictator who had seized power in 1962, was the first head of state to visit DK from November 26 to 29, 1977 (Fig. 6).

The Romanian dictator, Nicolae Ceaușescu, accompanied by his wife Elena, came six months later between May 28 and 30, 1978. There were also visits from Maoist communist parties all over the world who wanted to see this collectivist paradise first-hand. The latter occurred mostly in 1978. Members came from the United States in April; Italy and Denmark in July; and France, Norway, and Canada in September. In the same year, representatives from friendship associations came from Belgium (August), Sweden (August), Japan (October) and were received by Pol Pot himself. Journalists also came: from Yugoslavia in April, Hong Kong in August, Turkey in September, Japan in October, and Peru and the United States in December. They all were taken to see Angkor and many were given an interview with Brother Number One at the end of their visit—this was the apex of the pilgrimage to the new Mecca of communism. In the Four-Year Plan (1977–1980), tourism would be restored and Cambodia would become a showcase for the wonders of its past (Angkor) together with the wonders of its present (the irrigation system and the model collectives). Aside from Angkor, a kind of militant



Fig. 6 Ne Win (or “Sun of Glory”), the Burmese dictator with Khieu Samphan, head of state (Source: Courtesy of Documentation Centre of Cambodia, Phnom Penh)



Fig. 7 Jan Myrdal, Marita Wikander, Gunnar Bergström, and Hedda Ekerwald (Source: back cover from *Kampuchea mellan två krig*, 1979 by Bergström et al.)

or revolutionary tourism was concocted for devotees of the supreme revolution. It was not yet our latter day eco-tourism, but a kind of “politico-tourism” that was instituted in 1978.

Gunnar Bergström, Hedda Ekerwald, Jan Myrdal, and Marita Wikander of the *Swedish-Kampuchea Friendship Association* visited DK from August 12 to 26, 1978 (Fig. 7), “a great experience that enabled them to understand better the wonderful achievements and feats of the Kampuchean people in defending and building Democratic Kampuchea” (FBIS September 28, 1978, H 4).⁸ Later in the year they published a small book entitled *Kampuchea mellan två krig* (translation: *Kampuchea between two wars*) in “Kampuchea Augusti 1978.” They noted:

Control of water created in Angkor time an enormous surplus production of rice, and this was the foundation of the powerful Angkor empire. They had a high culture and great wealth with the help of hundreds of thousands of peasants and slaves they erected a magnificent irrigation system with canals several kilometres long that conducted water from reservoirs to the rice-fields. The wealth did not go to the people who did the work, but to the upper classes and to warfare, temple construction and luxury living. Because of the

⁸ Editor’s note: In 2006 Peter Fröberg Idling published the Swedish book *Pol Pot’s Smile. A Swedish Travel through Cambodia of the Red Khmer* (published in German in 2013). Here, the author describes in detail how the four travelers became victims of perfectly staged Khmer Rouge propaganda.

war, the empire declined and the canals silted. From the 15th c., agriculture was stagnant, with only one crop a year. (Bergström et al. 1979, 17–36)

The visitors were told that after 1975 the farmers were released from their debt and their land was collectivized. They visited Støeng Chinit worksite in the Baray district of Kompong Thom where 3,000 youths were building a new 1st January Dam, after the old 6th January Dam had collapsed under a flood. They went to the big wall and the sluice where water was let out into the canal. They saw long lines of youths carrying baskets of sand. It looked like impressive, well organized, and efficient work from on high, but the rhythm of work was relaxed. In an interview with DK radio, Gunnar Bergström declared:

Everywhere we saw vast rice-fields and numerous waterworks. We had learnt already about all these achievements through the documents we had read, but it was even more illuminating to see with our own eyes the ditches and canals a dozen kilometre long, glittering under the rays of the sun, the water flowing from the dams and the vast rice-fields. The “6th January” dam, that thousands of people are busily and arduously striving to complete, is concrete evidence attesting to how a people who rely on their own strength and means can score wonderful feats. (FBIS, August 31, 1978, H 1)

From September 9 to 17 a delegation from the microscopic Maoist *Parti Communiste Marxiste-Léniniste Français* (about one hundred supporters) visited DK. It was reported by DK radio on their departure that Jacques Jurquet, the secretary, wrote:

[...] the guests were also impressed by the artistic ingenuity of the Kampuchean artists in building the Angkor temples. After viewing the Angkor temples, artistic pieces, inscription stones and various sculptures, the delegation of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of France remarked that the Kampuchean people are people who have performed sacred feats, which completely disprove the slanderous propaganda of imperialism, old and new colonialism and the international expansionists. (FBIS, September 19, 1978, H 5)

Further evidence that the Khmer Rouge linked their vast irrigation projects to Angkor can be found in a propaganda booklet entitled *Kampuchea Today* that was published in December 1978. In it we have a clear vision of what Angkor meant for the Khmer Rouge and how it helped them to shape their actual policies. This was the record of a visit made by four American “journalists”; in fact, they were militants from the small American Maoist Marxist-Leninist Party led by “Comrade” Daniel Leon Bernstein, editor of *The Call*. The Americans arrived at Pochentong Airport in Phnom Penh on April 22, 1978 where they were welcomed by the Foreign Affairs Ministry officials and the Chinese ambassador, Sun Hao (FBIS, April 24, 1978, H 8). They left on April 29, “with Ambassador Sun Hao also on hand to send off our guests” (FBIS, April 24, 1978, H 8). The Central Committee’s Chairman, Michael Klonsky, sent the CKP a congratulatory message on the 3rd anniversary of the fall of Phnom Penh, then the national day: “The splendid 17th April 1975 victory totally smashed the U.S. aggressive war against Cambodia. [...] This victory will remain a great object of study and a great source of encouragement for all revolutionary people everywhere. [...] May your revolutionary struggle constantly advance by leaps and bounds.” (FBIS, April 28, 1978, H 3). After

Phnom Penh, the tour took them to Siem Reap where they saw a traditional pharmaceutical production centre and the Western Baray, together with the Ta Keo, Bayon, and Angkor Wat temples. They returned via Kompong Thom to see the *1st January Irrigation System* which was started on January 5, 1976 and built in five months, then to see the southeast (*Niredey*) Tramkâk model district of Ta Mok and also traces of Vietnamese aggression that had occurred a few months before. But the highlight of the pilgrimage to the Mecca of world revolution was a long interview with Ieng Sary during which he explained that calumnies were spread about DK. As one old man put it to them:

The old society was like the darkness. There was not one day when I was not in pain—the pain of hunger, the pain of disease, the pain of working for the feudal lords. Now there is light everywhere shining on Kampuchea. The pain of the past has ended. We have enough to eat, malaria is almost wiped out. I have even learnt how to read! Now we are working for ourselves, not for our masters. [. . .] Dams, reservoirs and canals are under construction everywhere. (Bernstein 1978, 4)

The delegation was also told why the Kampuchean flag depicted the three yellow towers of Angkor Wat against a red background:

“Angkor Wat is our national symbol,” said Comrade So, our host as we travelled. “Its massiveness, its beauty, its intricate detail, its unprecedented engineering—all these are tributes to the creative talents of the labouring people of those times. [. . .] Angkor is completely unique. It was the capital of a civilization which had achieved an enormous technical revolution in agriculture and irrigation and, on the basis of those developments, was able to build up a highly advanced culture.” (Bernstein 1978, 21–22).

They were also told that Angkor Wat was taken as early as 1970 by the revolutionaries for fear that the Lon Nol army would destroy it, and how European scholars wondered at how Angkor Wat had been built, a circumstance that the Khmer Rouge explained: “Angkor was built by human labour power. Hundreds of thousands of slaves put their sweat, their blood and their whole lives into its construction. Their experiences and abilities led them to solve the technical and engineering problems, as well as to create the great art works.” (Bernstein 1978, 21–22). Here the imagined methodology for the construction of Angkor Wat seems to have set the standard for how education and training should be spread among the masses in revolutionary Kampuchea: one learns by doing—even when it comes to the most sophisticated technologies and problems. Thus Comrade So concluded that “The ancient kings may have thought that these monuments would bring eternal glory to themselves and to the gods they believed in. But really, Angkor brings glory to the traditions of the Kampuchean people. If we could accomplish such great feats even in the dark days of slavery, then we know that we will be able to accomplish things ten times greater now that we have been liberated by socialism.” (Bernstein 1978, 24).

The purpose of the ambitious and extensive irrigation systems was not just to feed the population (famines had been quite unknown in that sparsely populated country where land was abundant), but also to export rice on a massive scale in order to leap as soon as possible into industrialization—the Khmer version of

Mao's Great Leap Forward. *Angkar* was persuaded that the Angkorian Empire's affluence was based exclusively on the massive production of rice, which was the key to its power and development. This was the main reason why the human slaves of the revolutionary ideologues were forced to toil on Khmer land at such break-neck speeds.

Conclusions

Today in official rhetoric, Angkor and Preah Vihear seem to have become the very "soul" of the Cambodians and are therefore among the most untouchable and portentous symbols of Khmer nationhood. In the name of so-called Asian values, the message from Hun Sen to all critics in human rights or good governance quarters seems to be: *We've built Angkor, so please don't tell us how to govern this country or implement human rights.* This reverence for Angkor monuments and for the great past that they symbolize seems to be inversely proportional to the amount of funding that the Cambodian State is prepared to spend on the conservation of ancient monuments (i.e. very little funding at all)—not to speak of education and the arts in general.

If modern Cambodians and their political leaders are so deeply convinced that their ancestors' feat in harnessing nature is on a par with the Pharaonic temples, the comparison between this grand past and present day Cambodia cannot but plunge them into a sense of decadence. One can easily understand how for them the decline must be stopped at any cost if the country is not only going to avoid losing face but also avoid disappearing entirely. This goes some way towards explaining the Khmer Rouge's furious attempt to catch up, and then overpass, other Asian revolutions—the Vietnamese in particular. The *Revolutionary Organization (Angkar)* decided to restore Cambodia to its past glory so that it could once again become a beacon to the world, regardless of the human cost.

The Democratic Kampuchea regime was totalitarian in the way that it held sway over every aspect of individuals' private lives. But the ideology of a self-proclaimed, "enlightened" tiny group of individuals—the *Angkar*—was full of contradictions. These individuals sought to achieve one thing while engineering policies had exactly the opposite effects: They wanted a population boom in one single decade, but they starved and exterminated the people en masse. They introduced a radical cultural revolution, eradicating all the customs and mores of the past together with all forms of religion, but at the same time were fascinated by the myth of Angkor and covered the entire territory with gigantic hydraulic works that they believed replicated past Angkorian grandeur. In their eyes the revolution was also a restoration to past glory, but Democratic Kampuchea represented the utter reversal of their civilizing mission since the ultimate tools to engineer the supposedly liberating policies learnt in the West were raw violence and the sheer power of the *kalashnikov*.

Chief ideologues of the regime like Thiounn Mumm or Khieu Samphan trained at the peak of the Cold War in post-World War II Paris and had been imbibed with the Marxist ideology of Lenin, Stalin, and Mao. During that time many wise, progressive pundits in the French Communist Party proclaimed that the world was on the cusp of total revolution, and claimed the situation did not look good for “western capitalist imperialist powers.” After these latter-day missionaries had violently seized power on April 17, 1975, they inflicted a kind of “civilizing mission in reverse” upon their defenceless compatriots. Instead of attempting to bring the rule of law, democracy, and respect for the aspirations of individuals that was the order of the day in France, they thrust the abolition of all laws, the most brutal form of totalitarianism, and the crushing to pieces of individual freedoms and aspirations onto the country. Their main tenets—in particular, their absolute faith in total revolution, militant atheism, complete collectivism, unflagging toil, and the abolition of all forms of good cheer, feasts, ceremonies, and enjoyments—went against the very grain of the Khmer soul. Cambodian society is essentially attached to its traditions and is leisurely, staunchly religious, atavistically individualist, and loves to revel in festivities at every possible occasion. The puritanical and doctrinaire Democratic Kampuchea regime was diametrically opposed to all of that. It can thus be seen as a kind of perverted neo-colonialism meted out by a small clique that had completely misread both the civilization of their ex-metropolis and of their own country. In short, the criminal policies of the Khmer Rouge were at variance not only with their perception of the glorious past, but also with the realities of their present world.

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Part V
Making Cultural Heritage Global

Representing Heritage without Territory— The Khmer Rouge at the UNESCO in Paris during the 1980s and their Political Strategy for Angkor

Michael Falser

Abstract In the modern history of Cambodia, the temples of Angkor were constantly (ab)used for identity constructions by the actual ruling powers. In this game, the years between 1979 and 1989 represent a unique case study: While the Cambodian territory itself was occupied by the Vietnamese Heng Samrin-regime, the resistance movements around the Khmer Rouge were driven out of the country but recognized by the United Nations as the legal Khmer government under the name of Democratic Kampuchea. As a clever political strategy and in coalition with the former King Norodom Sihanouk, its political leaders around Khieu Samphan and Ieng Sary appropriated the Western discourse on national cultural heritage: with its Permanent UNESCO-Delegation in Paris, the “safeguarding of Angkor” was promoted as an inseparable part of the diplomatic struggle towards national independence. This paper tries to analyse the ways and means of the “Angkor-as-heritage discourse” of the Khmer Rouge/Democratic Kampuchea in the 1980s, including the reactions of UNESCO and the international community.

Perverved Missions to “Civilize” Angkor in the Last Breath of the Cold War: An Introduction

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, missions to civilize were often inseparably linked to violent claims on strictly defined territories in which mental components such as (re)discovered history were precisely conceptualized and localized as special landmarks of (re-)imagined communities. In other words, territory, cultural heritage, and collective identity formed a strong trinity of civilizing visions that could be formulated in the following ways: (1) by established

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elites or influential groups inside an existing state (-nation); (2) in relation to a society located outside the borders but within the classical situation of colonialism or land-reclamation; and (3) in relation to an international system of states.

The following case study focuses on the years 1979–1989 and will include all three types of—however strongly perverted—civilizing missions/visions as represented by one political regime or system. What makes this case study even more interesting is the fact that all three of the factions discussed here in the case of Cambodia—the Vietnamese-backed *People's Republic of Kampuchea* regime inside the country (type a); the Khmer Rouge, driven out of their former homeland in their efforts to reclaim their former territory (type b); and the supra-national community of the United Nations in their vision for regional and universal peace (type c)—used the so-called cultural heritage of Angkor to further their cultural-political action programme. In the following article I will attempt to demonstrate that even during this state of civil war the propaganda material, conference talks, and global declarations of the three factions formed different aspects of civilizing visions that were dominated by the “endgame in the ideological Cold War with players from all sides supporting and directing it” (Slocomb 2003, x). I will prove that the topos of “glorious Angkor” (and its cultural heritage) represented an important, and in some cases even decisive, element in both militaristic and diplomatic efforts.¹

The Territorial Situation in 1979–1989 and Political Alliances

The new government led by Heng Samrin, a former Khmer Rouge commander and deserter, overthrew the terror regime of the Khmer Rouge between December 1978 and January 1979. This new government called itself the *People's Republic of Kampuchea* (PRK) and was founded on January 10, 1979. Following the occupation of the capital Phnom Penh on January 7, 1979, the vast majority of the former Khmer territory, including Siem Reap and the temples of Angkor, came under its control. The regime was backed primarily by the neighbouring Socialist Republic of Vietnam, which was itself receiving heavy financial and military support from the USSR. In 1989, under the new prime minister Hun Sen and with the recent market-friendly reforms, the PRK turned itself into the *State of Cambodia* (SOC).

The Khmer Rouge, which was still officially called *Democratic Kampuchea* (DK) after their defeat in 1979, was almost completely driven out of the country but it succeeded in establishing resistance bases in the Cambodian northwest provinces of Battambang, Siem Reap, and Oddar Meanchey along and across the Thai border,

¹ Most of the sources cited in this analysis refer to the UNESCO Archive in Paris at Miollis/Bonvin-site. I am grateful to the archive staff for their patience and assistance while I conducted research. For the translation of Khmer and Vietnamese texts I would like to thank Vathdana Chavelith and Sokhalay Saur, both in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

and in recruiting guerrilla fighters in the numerous Khmer refugee camps on Thai territory. Even though the former leader Pol Pot was still the most powerful member of Democratic Kampuchea, Khieu Samphan served as both prime and foreign minister in public; and China, its powerful old ally, backed the regime. In waging their unpredictable guerrilla war, the former Khmer Rouge remained a constant threat to the Heng Samrin government in Phnom Penh and regularly attacked the city of Siem Reap and the temples of Angkor before completely losing credibility as an irascible and militaristic partner in the royal-republican-communist pact against the PRK.

The third important player on a global scale was the state community represented by the United Nations (UN). With the diplomatic support of the United States, China (against the will of the USSR), as well as the European Communities (EC), and the *Association of Southeast Asian Nations* (ASEAN) states, including Thailand, Cambodia's neighbour to the west and important supplier to the Khmer Rouge guerrilla, the UN officially recognized the Khmer Rouge as the legal representatives of Cambodia. In 1992/93 the UN provided a *Transitional Authority in Cambodia* (UNTAC) to supervise general elections and to help establish a new state under the legal definitions outlined by the global state community.

The flags of these three factions (in reference to Cambodia's flags during the French colonial times, the Kingdom of Cambodia, and the Khmer Republic) hint at the culturo-political atmosphere during the discussed ten-year timeframe (Fig. 1a–f). The defeated DK retained its red flag containing a stylized yellow three-tower temple elevation, and the PRK produced a blood-red flag containing the same red-yellow contrast and featuring a similar tower silhouette—a clear visual proof that both regimes, despite being at war with each other, shared the same communist base in the cultural-revolutionary (bloody) struggle in Southeast Asia that went back to the 1950s Viet Minh/Khmer Viet Minh movement against Western imperialist powers. The UN (and UNESCO as its cultural representative), on the other hand, tried to remain neutral, although it did recognize the Khmer Rouge and blocked all diplomatic invitations from the PRK. Access to any civilizing efforts in Cambodia ultimately had to include all the stakeholders in Angkor's cultural heritage under the accepted UN Transition Authority. Although UNTAC's flag depicted the outline of Cambodia on a blue (neutral) background, like its declared enemies its coat of arms also made use of the iconic tower silhouette of Angkor Wat.

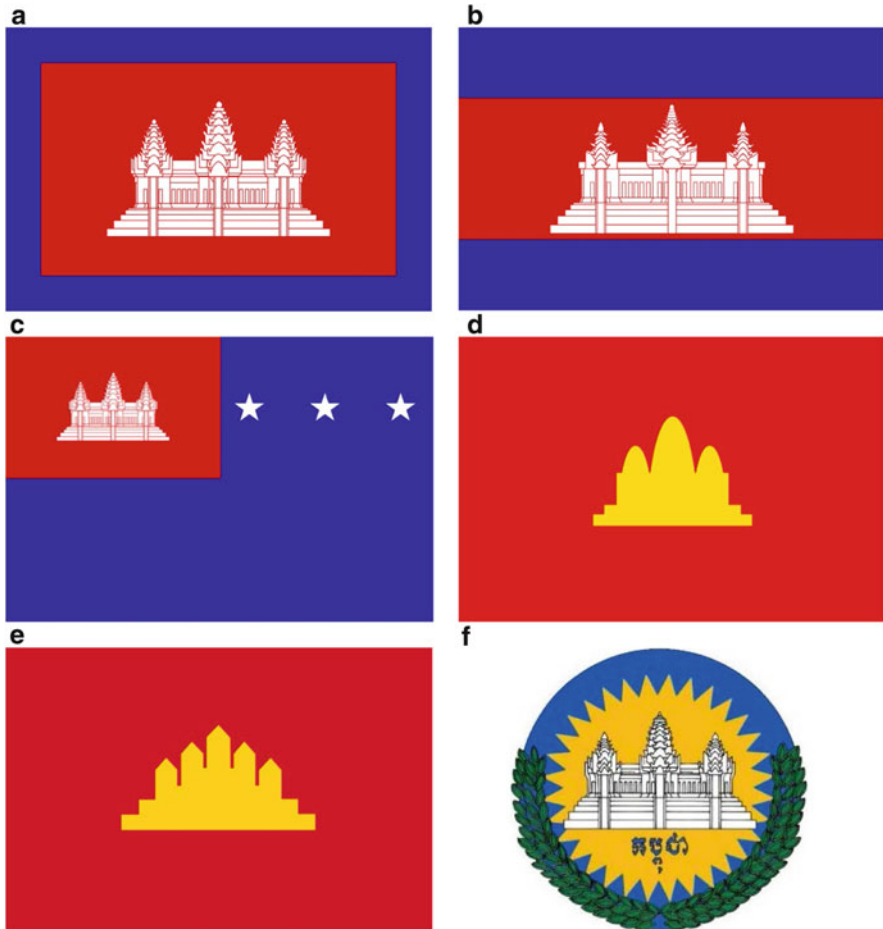


Fig. 1 (a) The flags of French colonial Cambodia (1863–1953); (b) Kingdom of Cambodia (1953–1970); (c) Khmer Republic (1970–75); (d) Democratic Kampuchea (1975–1979); (e) the People's Republic of Kampuchea (1979–1989); (f) the coat of arms of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) flag

People's Republic of Kampuchea

In 1979, the first year of its existence, the PRK embarked on an ultimately unsuccessful campaign to gain international recognition;² it published a series of small books and leaflets in order to disseminate its mission of creating a new, re-civilized state. However, the PRK's justification for this was based entirely on

²For the general history of the PRK, see Klintworth 1989, Chhim 2000, Slocomb 2003, for its political strategies compare Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1983, 1985.

the supposedly victorious sacrifices and the “long and arduous struggle” of the Khmer people in ridding themselves of the genocidal “Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique” that had “massacred 2 million” inhabitants over a period of four years. In 1979 the *Ministry of Information, Press, and Cultural Affairs* in the *Kampuchean People’s Revolutionary Council* announced “The birth of new Kampuchea” on the title page of a French–English publication. Along with a map of the national territory and a photo of Heng Samrin, the text on the cover was directly related to the new flag’s meaning as described in the new national anthem written by Keo Chenda, the former Viet Minh and future minister of information, press, and culture: “We draw our strength from our unity and stand ready to shed our blood for victory [. . .] The blood-red flag with five golden towers is raised and will lead the nation to happiness and prosperity” (Ministry of Information 1979, 10). In the constitution that was released some time later in 1981, §88 also explicitly referred to the five towers of the Angkor Wat temple. Celebrating the January 1979 victory, President Heng Samrin outlined the PRK’s revolutionary mission to re-civilize the country—after the completely uncivilized Khmer Rouge auto-genocide—using various cultural heritage metaphors:

Blood of our men and women cadres [. . .] flowed in rivers through this land, and their bodies have filled, so to speak, all bomb craters, lakes and ponds of our country [. . .] Kampuchea had become a sea of blood under the sway of the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique, betrayers of the Fatherland [. . .] They banned all levels of education, keeping the people in complete ignorance [. . .] *At the same time they trampled under foot our brilliant millennia-old civilisation and turned the radiant land of Angkor into an area of devastation, flowing with blood and strewn with corpses. Owing to their policy, many ancient temples, gardens and parks, which had been built by the skilful hands of our people and were representative of our brilliant civilisation, were seriously damaged and turned into wilderness.* Our people’s ways, customs, and fine traditions were flouted. [. . .] The Pol Pot-Ieng Sary traitors cheaply sold out our country and people to become instruments of Peking’s expansionist policy, which was materialized in the most perfidious schemes of annexation and pursued a policy of genocide and plundering our natural riches [. . .] They are reactionary, barbarous and warlike people, more cruel than Hitler’s fascists [. . .] It was in this spirit that the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea was born and made public its 11-Point Political Programme on December 2, 1978 [. . .] Not to be separated from the all-round assistance of the peoples in the socialist countries. . . it is the victory of peace and justice-loving people in the world. (Ministry of Information 1979, 66–77).

Ministry of Information (1979) *The Birth of New Kampuchea*

Vice-President Pen Sovann’s speech to the *National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea* drew parallels between Angkorian civilization and the tradition of a revolutionary and socialist mission in order to mandate the protection of this glorious heritage. In the little Vietnamese book entitled *Cambodia—Victory by a Pure Revolution*, published in Hanoi in 1979 (Fig. 2), this tendency turned into a veritable invention of tradition. The cover of the booklet depicted the face-towers of the Angkorian Bayon towers as a late-modern socialist abstraction, and although chapters one and two focused on “The Betrayed Revolution” of the Pol Pot regime and “The Resistance Fight for a Pure Revolution,” chapter one offered an unctuous treatise on “The Country of Angkorian Glory.” The basic message was that this “country of temples [. . .] rich and beautiful,” and “Angkorian glory,” was a result of

Fig. 2 Book cover of the Vietnamese 1979 publication *Cambodia—victory by a pure revolution* (Source: People’s Republic of Kampuchea 1979, cover)



the “hard labour work of the Khmer people [who were full of] love, independence, justice and diversity [...] and hated any kind of pressure regime.” “A nation that had developed to such a glory” could not accept the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary regime of slavery and cruelty and proved that it had “enough energy and power to fight back” (People’s Republic of Kampuchea 1979, 11–15).

In 1984, decisions were made to set up a “committee for the care of the Angkorian temples” and the government planned a culturo-political “mass campaign” in which cadres and civilians were obliged to do volunteer work at the Angkor site to “ensure orderliness and restore the area to its original beauty,” an area that had suffered under the Khmer Rouge programme to “destroy our national cultural health.”³ Despite this rhetorical support for Angkor as a constructed past for the socialist present and the glorious future, the war-time efforts of the 1980s Heng Samrin-government concerning Angkorian heritage were limited by their small budget for social services, including for education and culture.

However, the PRK played its most relevant culturo-political card on the international, Asian stage. In 1980, with strong support from Indira Gandhi’s Congress Party and as part of the Congress Party’s diplomatic rapprochement towards the USSR, India recognized the PRK. And as the only non-Warsaw Pact country to do so, India was rewarded with the project to restore Cambodia’s greatest cultural

³“Decision concerning the setting up of a committee to report on and care for the Angkorian temples,” no. 49SSR, for COM, chairman Chan Si, (16.3.1984, Phnom Penh). Mentioned in Slocomb 2003, 184 and 305.

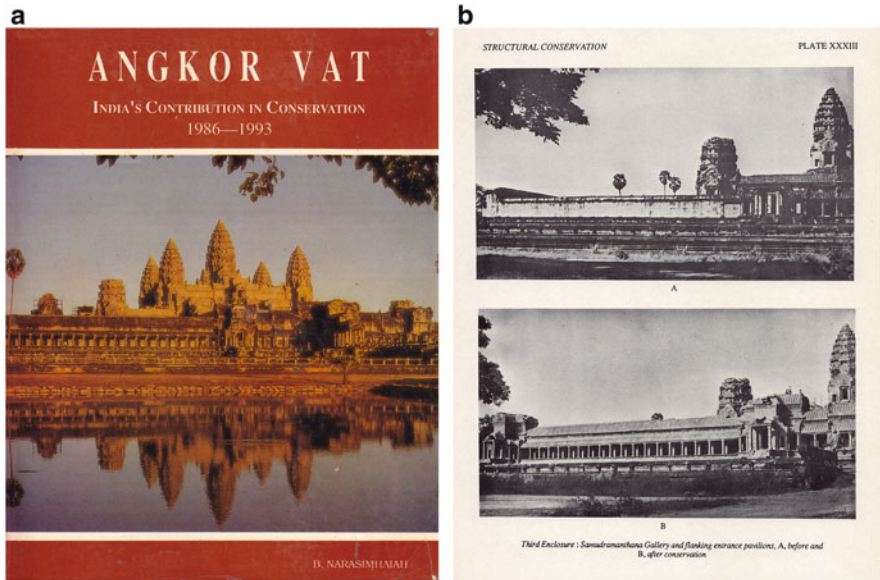


Fig. 3 Book cover (left, **a**) and page (right, **b**) from: *Angkor Vat. India's Contributions in Conservation* (1986–93) by the Archaeological Survey of India (1994) (Source: Narsimhaiah 1994, cover, plate 33)

highlight—the temple of Angkor Wat. The first negotiations and contact visits made by experts from the Archaeological Survey of India commenced in 1980 and survey work was initiated shortly thereafter; but the major physical interventions took place between 1986 and 1993 (Fig. 3a, b).

These basically comprised structural repair work including the re-assembling of the temple's outer southeastern gallery, which had been dismantled for an intended restoration (*anastylosis*) by the *École Française d'Extrême-Orient* (EFO) (right before its archaeologists were forced out of Cambodia in 1972 due to the escalating civil war), and a complete chemical cleaning of the temple that was internationally criticized for its highly aggressive procedure and for its devastating effect on the temple's colour scheme.⁴ This Indian civilizing (i.e. restoring) mission to Angkor was also exploited as a means of underlining India as the birthplace of a “Greater Indian” culture in Asia and thus its supposed role as the caring mother of Angkor, which was considered to be “a part of the larger heritage of India and the world” (Narsimhaiah 1994, xi–xii; cf. Chakraborti 1985, 82–89).

⁴ See the undated report of the Archaeological Survey of India “Conservation at the Angkor Wat during the season 1986–7 and 1987–88.” UNESCO Archives Paris, dossier CLT.CH.191/1986–1989.

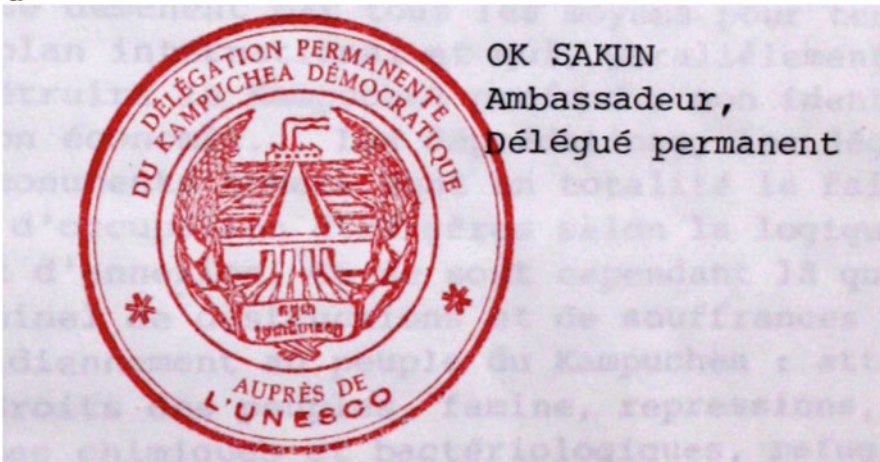
Liberate Cambodia—Save Angkor! Democratic Kampuchea before and after 1979

However, the central culturo-political game—a cleverly invented mission to civilize, with a clear territorial goal—was played by the Khmer Rouge during the mid-1980s. As the UN-recognized representatives of a country whose territory was occupied by the Vietnamese-backed enemy, the exiled DK-government underwent a considerable change of strategy towards the cultural heritage of Angkor between its status as “1975–79: in power/on territory—but internationally mistrusted” and “1979–1989: out of power/out of territory—but internationally recognized.” Before 1979 the references to Angkor seemed to be almost non-existent in internal documents, and official ones served only as a “tool in public relations” in the name of the revolution (Chandler 1983, 43; cf. Sher 2003; cf. Chandler 1976). This was already evident in the national anthem text (drafted by Khieu Samphan) that declared the “great victory of the 17th of April [1975, the occupation of Phnom Penh] more wonderful and much more meaningful than the Angkor period.” As previously mentioned, the blood-red revolutionary background of the KR-flag featured a three-tower silhouette of a temple, which symbolized the “national tradition and the People of Kampuchea who defend and build a country that grew more glorious every day” (Jennar 1994, 70). In the first years of the revolution, public speeches made by high-ranking Khmer Rouge reveal considerable propagandistic efforts to *downgrade* Angkorian civilization. During the celebrations of the first anniversary of the revolution of 1976 the “building of a new nation” and the “rebirth of the national soul” was proclaimed (most probably by Pol Pot himself), and Angkor was ranked third and last on the list of “masterpieces.” After the revolution and “the great revolutionary movement of transforming the Kampuchean countryside into a garden of rice crops,” which was seen as the ultimate proof of “collective heroism,” Angkor was even denounced: “The previous generation preferred the magnificent masterpieces of the Angkorian period. Our people built Angkor, but we are not very proud of that because the people at that time were in a slavery agriculture regime and were seriously exploited by the feudalists of that generation” (Pol Pot 1976). During Pol Pot’s famous 1977 address in honour of the 17th official anniversary of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, these various elements were streamlined into a stricter “periodization of Cambodian history,” which was combined with the discourse on the tradition of Angkor (Chandler 1983, 34–56). At this point Angkor (mentioned just once in a sixty-eight page transcript of the speech) ranked somewhere between an undefined earlier period of primitive communism and the new era that emerged after 1975; nonetheless, it served as proof of the high achievements realized under forced collective labour. To quote Pol Pot (compare the longer citations in Henri Locard’s contribution and in my epilogue in this volume): “Long ago there was Angkor. Angkor was built during the era of slavery. Slaves like us built Angkor under the yoke of the exploiting classes for the pleasures of the king. [If] Our people were able to built Angkor, [then] they can built everything” (Pol Pot 1977, 50). Besides these rare references to Angkor, it can be said that Angkorian civilization was heavily provincialized by the Khmer Rouge before 1979 when it was

defined as a purely national phenomenon without any historical embedding or inter- or transcultural entanglements, or even acknowledgement of its being one the great cultural achievements of human civilization or a world wonder.

Shortly after the Vietnam-based Heng Samrin government took over Phnom Penh and forced the Khmer Rouge to the northwestern borderland between Thailand and Cambodia, the Security Council and General Assembly of the UN—with the USSR's veto, but with the support of the ASEAN countries—condemned the invasion and demanded the immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces from Cambodia in repeated resolutions. The Khmer Rouge were now obliged to fight their war in two directions: first, on the battlefield inside Cambodia (which also touched the territory of Siem Reap/Angkor) in the form of a guerrilla strategy; and second, on the diplomatic field outside of Cambodia (Fig. 4a, b) (and here we

a



b

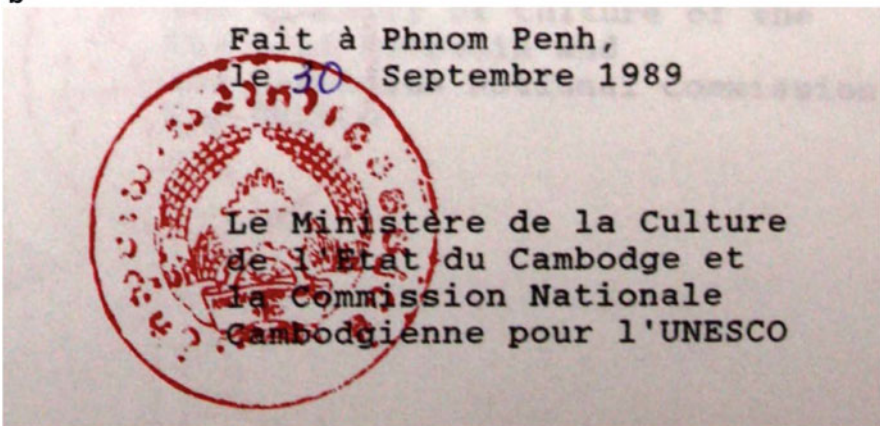


Fig. 4 Stamps from the UNESCO-correspondence of the Khmer Rouge in 1981 (a) and the Vietnamese government in Cambodia in the final transitory status into the *State of Cambodia* (b) (UNESCO Archives)

shall focus only on the relationship to UNESCO in Paris) in the form of a newly invented political mission for the protection of Cambodian cultural heritage, a mission to civilize using the adopted humanitarian rhetoric of and for a Western-democratic audience.

This mission underwent the following three major phases: first, the search for an inner-political consolidation and international culturo-political strategy (1979–1982); second, the coalition government and its propagandistic mission to civilize (1982–85); and third, a perestroika for the civilizing mission in Angkor (1985–1990).

The Khmer Rouge as the Representatives of Cambodia at UNESCO: A New Civilizing Mission within the Cultural Heritage of Angkor

Search for an Inner-Political Consolidation and an International Culturo-Political Strategy (1979–1982)

During the first months after its expulsion from Phnom Penh in 1979, the DK government was busy establishing its exile government and the guerrilla bases along the Khmer-Thai border. Astonishingly, international solidarity for the exiled Khmer Rouge amongst leftist intellectuals was well organized and resulted in three Kampuchea conferences: Stockholm in 1979, Tokyo in 1982, and Bangkok in 1987. Kampuchean culture, with Angkor as its symbol, was a constant emblematic topic at these events. In the same year, the propagandist medium *Voice of Kampuchea* announced the new political line of the Khmer Rouge: “Our struggle is no longer one of ideology, but one of defending the territory and race of our beloved Kampuchea, which is as dear as our lives” (Raszelenberg and Schier 1995, 31). This discourse transcended race and territory and spilled into the culture section. In 1980 Thiounn Mumm, the new chairman of the scientific and technical commission of DK, presented the Khmer Rouge’s new rhetoric of a supposedly civilizing mission both in a personal letter to the Senegalese director-general of UNESCO between 1974 and 1987, Amadou-Mahtar M’Bow, and publicly during the 21st General Conference of UNESCO in Belgrade (September 23–October 28, 1980) (cf. General Conference 1980). The main points of his argumentation formed future culturo-political features and systematically adopted Western Cold War rhetoric on humanity and global heritage (Thiounn 1980):

1. The “marvellous cultural heritage of Angkor” (only few years earlier declared a symbol of enslavement) was now “one of the great world civilizations” due to “the construction of an extremely rational irrigation system” and a source of “pride for the Kampuchean people [...] who built it”;
2. “After the liberation of the region of Angkor in 1970 [the coup d’état against Norodom Sihanouk, MF] by the [our] army, these monuments, along with other cultural heritage like the National Museum and the Silver Pagoda in Phnom Penh, were affectionately maintained and protected”;
3. The Vietnamese forces had turned Siem Reap and Angkor into a “combat zone” with a military base and missile and artillery installations only a few kilometres from Angkor Vat [the Phnom Bakheng hill fortification, MF] and soldier camps inside the perimeters of historic monuments;
4. The “Vietnamese expansionist aggressors” committed a “crime” in the “massive extermination of the people with conventional and chemical weapons and through famine,” with “systematic destructions of all economic, industrial, agricultural and in particular cultural infrastructures” and with the “pillage of Angkorian statues, bas-reliefs to be found for sale in Saigon and Hanoi”—in short, with the “wanton aim to destroy Kampuchea’s cultural and historic roots and to turn its people into a minority without a past or historic evidence”;
5. But the Khmer people proved its “untamableness [original French: *indomptabilité*] as the builders of Angkor” and “will never accept to live under foreign domination [...] the nation of Kampuchea will never disappear, the grand civilization of Angkor will continue to live forever in the spirit, the souls and the heart of its dignified descendants”;
6. Finally, UNESCO should intervene against such destruction, pillage, and “genocide” and the DK was willing to collaborate with UNESCO to restore the cultural heritage of Angkor, but *only* under the “undebatable condition of the total liberation, independence and sovereignty of the country” after the full withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops.

However, a simple telex addressed to the UN headquarters of culture in April 1981 proves that the DK-UNESCO delegation with Ambassador Ok Sakun as its permanent delegate was not at all ready to enhance this hastily invented civilizing mission with credible propaganda material (Fig. 5). Even if the acting director-general of UNESCO had, during the Belgrade Conference in 1980, already spoken about the idea of a “military neutralisation of the Angkor Zone” as the political condition for any cultural action programme, his suggestion would be the subject of difficult internal debates in the years to come. Ok Sakun, on the other hand, warned M’Bow to contact the Heng Samrin government in Phnom Penh or to visit Angkor under its occupation but made—and that was the official line all the way up to the president of the DK who was the alleged “victim” in the regional conflict—the topic of a “neutralized Angkor” the diplomatic hostage for the DK’s central demand for the unconditional withdrawal of “the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as aggressor” from Cambodia.

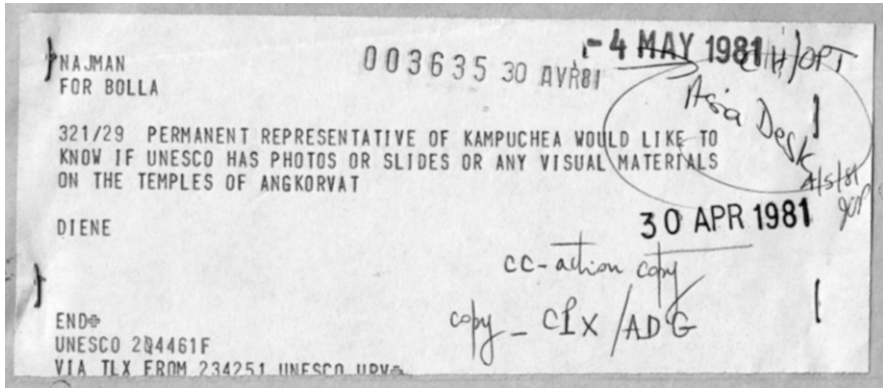


Fig. 5 Telex by the *Khmer Rouge Permanent Delegation to UNESCO* in Paris (April 30, 1981) requesting visual material for the Angkor case (UNESCO Archives Paris)

After the visit of Ieng Sary, the DK-Minister of Foreign Affairs, and his delegation at UNESCO in 1981 (just a few days after the International Conference on Kampuchea in New York under the auspices of the UN), Ok Sakun even invited the director general for a visit to the supposedly DK-controlled site of Angkor. M'Bow insisted on the following: (1) any action by UNESCO “should be shielded against all political interpretation”; (2) UNESCO’s mission for “saving Angkor was a purely scientific and technical undertaking” in relation to §§19/23 of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict; and (3) it was a “humanitarian” task, since UNESCO initially acted in Cambodia under the “lead agency” of UNICEF installed in Phnom Penh (M'Bow 1982). In an effort to bypass the UN resolutions, UNESCO’s mission to re-civilize Angkorian heritage as part of a humanitarian action programme was publicly supported by Willibald Pahr, the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, during the UN General Assembly in October 1982, and was internationally acclaimed. The case on Angkor became an abstract, metaphorical substitute for virtually every country’s political positioning in the highly complex late-Cold War constellation. However, during the 115th session of the Executive Council in 1982, M'Bow admitted that he was not happy with the UN recognition of the DK that had to be respected by his cultural sub-division and which blocked UNESCO’s direct actions on Cambodian territory.

Angkor became the subject of wild speculation after different missions and visits in 1981 (UNICEF, a Polish ICOMOS-mission, the Japanese expert Ishizawa) reported both collapsing and undamaged temples that were heavily overgrown due to many years of neglect. In the meantime, an undated statement by the



Fig. 6 Press releases of the Permanent Mission of Democratic Kampuchea to the United Nations (a, left: Issue of November 1982, cover; b, right: Issue of August 30, 1982, 2) (UNESCO Archives, Paris)

Vietnamese government alerted UNESCO to the invented rumour of a “new genocide under the Heng Samrin administration,” which had actually liberated Phnom Penh and saved the Kampuchean people from extinction.⁵ On April 5, 1982 the DK’s Permanent UN-Mission published a 14-page special issue press release called “The Marvellous Monuments of Angkor and their Strategy” (see Fig. 28 in the epilogue of this volume), and the “national resistance against the Vietnamese aggressor” was a permanent slogan in published media (Fig. 6a, b).

Using almost the same word choice, it basically summed up all the relevant points mentioned above. It accused the “Hanoi authorities” of “taking advantage of the world-wide reputation of the monuments of Angkor” and disguising a “political purpose” to gain international recognition through a supposedly “cultural” mission: “Actually, they want to take advantage of the emotion caused by the fate of the monuments of Angkor to achieve their diplomatic manoeuvres and aims.” They declared this to be “odious hypocrisy” and above all the “root cause of the present

⁵ “The monks have returned to the restored pagodas to pray Buddha [...] Kampuchea is on the way of rebirth. On the tombs of the victims of a monstrous genocide, a whole nation, strong from the glorious past of the Angkorian civilisation, revived and is marching firmly straight on, following this era’s common trend [...] under the flag of Marxism-Leninism” (Truong Chinh 1981/82).

tragedy of the monuments of Angkor” (Permanent Mission 1982, 13–14). However, the press release closed with exactly the same manoeuvre, arguing that the “preservation and restoration of the monuments of Angkor” was dependent on national independence and sovereignty. Additionally, it recycled images (previously published in *Le Figaro* and *The Washington Post*) of peaceful tourists at the site and of some of the 2,000 Khmer Rouge workers and caring guards in Angkor *before* the regime change in 1979.

In the same month—April 1982—the first large international exhibition on Angkor took place in the very centre of the international states community. National Geographic presented their photo panels of the site in the lobby of the UN headquarters in New York along with an entreaty to demilitarize Angkor. In addition to the opening remarks made by UNESCO representatives and Wilbur Garrett, the publishing director of *National Geographic Magazine*, Ambassador Thiounn Prasith, the permanent UN-delegate of DK, used the opening to denounce the Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin government as cultural barbarians and to underline the “magnificent cultural patriotism and the brave fight of the people for the several thousands of years old civilisation and their national identity.”⁶ The *National Geographic Magazine* published a cover story entitled “The temples of Angkor: Will they survive?” in May 1982 (Fig. 7a, b).

In contrast to the Khmer Rouge polemic displayed at the exhibition, the photo stories in *National Geographic* “slightly lifted the veil of secrecy” that had lain across the long suffering, civil war-prone people and the Angkor temples. The pictures were breath-taking and the message was simple: “Despite rumours and exaggerated reports that the temples were demolished or severely damaged, we can report that, amazingly, they are nearly unscratched by the years of war,” but after the menacing vandalism of the last decade and the fast-growing vegetation the article concluded that “After a thousand-year cycle of destruction, decay, and rebirth, the ancient complex of temples now desperately needs a renewal of the loving and expert preservation and reconstruction once lavished on it by Cambodia and France” (Garrett 1982, 548–51). Although one article in this issue provided deep insight into the plight of the recovering Cambodian people who were living under a Vietnamese-backed government that was accepted passively after the trauma of the Khmer Rouge terror, another took the reader on a tour through the temples with Pich Keo, the acting but isolated Angkor conservator on-site and concluded: “In short, I have learned that the major problem at Angkor of late has been neither war damage nor thievery, but simply neglect” (Garrett 1982, 585). Despite this relatively optimistic vision of Angkor’s cultural heritage, the propaganda machine of the exiled Khmer Rouge regime was getting ready to take off.

⁶ *Bulletin d'information, Délégation permanente du Kampuchéa Démocratique auprès de l'UNESCO* 10 (May 3, 1982): 15–16.

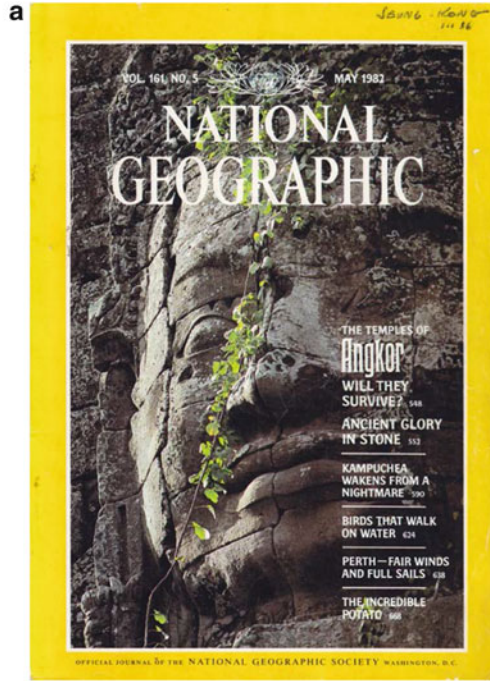


Fig. 7 “The temples of Angkor: Will they survive?” cover story of *National Geographic Magazine* (May 1982). Above/a: cover, **b**: Vietnamese soldier in front of Angkor Wat (Source: National Geographic Magazine (May 1982), cover, 550/551)

The Coalition Government and its Propagandistic Mission (1982–85)

On June 22, 1982, under pressure from the Chinese, Prince Norodom Sihanouk (who was living in exile in Beijing and Pyongyang) finally agreed to form the *Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea* (CGDK) as its president, with the Khmer Rouge under Khieu Samphan as vice-president and minister of foreign affairs, and the Republican Son Sann (the former president of the Khmer Republic until 1975) as prime minister. Despite being a royal-communist-republican resistance pact against Heng Samrin, all factions of this tripartite coalition kept their own political identity and their own military forces gathered along the Thai-Cambodian border. However, the ideological rapprochement between the prince and the Khmer Rouge was not a new phenomenon—on the contrary. The temples of Angkor played an important role in this development. Three years after the coup d'état of the Lon Nol regime against Sihanouk in 1970, the prince made a quasi-official visit to the Khmer Rouge strongholds, or the *People's Armed Forces of National Liberation of Cambodia* as it was called in the a published photo album of the visit (People's Armed Forces 1973, n.p.). The trip was publicized as Sihanouk's cultural pilgrimage from China to Angkor (researchers still doubt the authenticity of these images, especially the photomontage cover with Sihanouk in front of Angkor Wat, compare the contribution of Henri Locard in this book). In these photos he and Princess Monique posed in Khmer Rouge uniforms with Hou Youn, Ieng Sary, Khieu Samphan and others⁷ and were depicted at the temples of Angkor Wat and Banteay Srei (Fig. 8a, b). After the 1973 visit to Angkor, Sihanouk undertook the same symbolic pilgrimage again in July 1981 with “[our] heroic fighters” from the Khmer Rouge, into “the deep interior of the [our] fatherland,” supposedly travelling by “automobile, on foot and on the back on an elephant,” as he told the UN General Assembly in September 1982.

With the celebrated and internationally accepted figure of Norodom Sihanouk as president of the *Coalition Government*, the Khmer Rouge gained confidence and the *Délégation Permanente du Kampuchea Démocratique auprès de l'UNESCO* published two “Angkor Dossiers” in 1982 and 1983 (Fig. 9a, b). The main issues were the following (quotes collected from the dossier of 1983, see *Délégation Permanente* (1983), and compare quotation in the epilogue of this volume):

1. Angkor was geographically and mentally re-invented as the “heart of Kampuchea” and the “soul, the spirit and even the body of the Kampuchean people,” and as a symbol “not only the heritage of the Kampuchean people, but equally of the whole humanity.”
2. The time span of 1970–75 [the Lon Nol civil war] did “very little damage to the temples” [a comment probably made as a political concession to the republican partner in the newly founded coalition government]. The Khmer Rouge

⁷ Cf. with Fig. 1 in Locard's contribution, and Fig. 23 in the epilogue in this volume.



Fig. 8 Sihanouk with Khieu Samphan (*left*), and with Monique in Khmer Rouge uniforms in front of the temple of Banteay Srei (*right*), in “Prince Norodom Sihanouk, head of Cambodia, in the liberated Zone,” published by the People’s Armed Forces of National Liberation of Cambodia (1973) (*Source*: People’s Armed Forces of National Liberation of Cambodia 1973, n.p.)

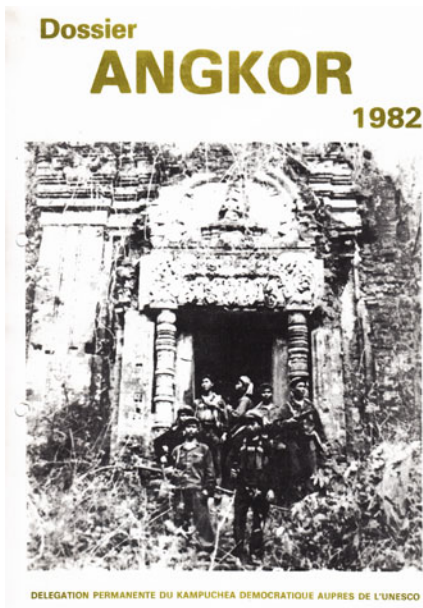


Fig. 9 “Dossier Angkor” (a, *left*: 1982; b, *right*: 1983), published by the *Délégation permanente du Kampuchea Démocratique auprès de l’UNESCO* (ICOMOS International Archive, Paris)

government in 1975–1978 “had not forgotten Angkor, but cared for it with 2,700 people” and the site had been used for various diplomatic visits and even for tourists. However, the Vietnamese Heng Samrin government endangered the site through destruction and pillage [compare with the story from *Paris Match* in its 1982 November issue], the proximity of military installation, internationally barred chemical and biological weapons, and random vandalism. It made Angkor a “display window for its alleged pacification” and therefore “in total immorality as hostage” for the manipulation of international opinion, public endorsement, political recognition, and colonial expansion.

3. Quoting Prince Sihanouk, DK could not accept UNESCO initiating and conducting any restoration project in Angkor, since this would be a de facto recognition of the Heng Samrin government.
4. “Quel avenir pour Angkor?” As a territorial and symbolic centre—both nationally and internationally—Angkor represented a strategic zone of importance and its defence was not only “a preoccupation for all Khmers” and their army but also a civilizing mission for the international preservation community.

As mentioned above, the Angkor discourse was entirely adjusted to the international public and mirrored enemy-stereotypes from both the Hot and Cold War rhetoric (from biological warfare to ethnic extinction programmes) using Westernized “cultural heritage of humanity” slogans. However, tales of bloody class and national struggle sacrifices, like Khieu Samphan’s statement on the occasion of the traditional Khmer New Year (or the 9th anniversary of DK) dominated internal political speeches at that time, and Angkor was only rarely mentioned.

In the meantime, newspapers reported that the ASEAN-EC ministerial meeting in Bangkok on April 12, 1983 had welcomed the proposal of a security zone along the border and the restoration of Angkor under the condition of its being declared a “zone of peace.”⁸ However, a neutralization of Angkor was no solution for the conflicting parties in Cambodia who both claimed to be the legal custodians of Angkor’s heritage: the coalition government issued a “Memorandum on the problem of Angkor” in February 1984 (Permanent Delegation of Democratic Kampuchea 1984) and rejected all these “noble ideas of peace- and justice-loving countries and the international community,” referring to the obvious “gap between the goal longed for to safeguard Angkor and the inevitable grave consequences for the struggle for survival of the Kampuchean people” (Permanent Delegation 1984). The PRK’s foreign minister, Hun Sen, was quoted as rejecting a “demilitarized zone (DMZ)” as simply a backdoor means of interfering in internal affairs: “If people want to help, they should send the money to us [. . .] our Angkor is in a state of safety.”⁹ In the meantime, National Geographic’s Angkor exhibition travelled from the UN headquarters in New York and around the world from Washington in 1983 to Vienna, Marseille, and Barcelona in 1985 with an intermediate stop at the

⁸“ASEAN welcomes Angkor Wat plan.” *Bangkok Post*, September 11, 1984.

⁹Ted Morello. “Bid to save Angkor. A proposal to protect Cambodia’s most revered monument is rejected by Heng Samrin regime.” *Economic Review*, December 6, 1984.

UNESCO headquarters in Paris in February/March 1984. The inauguration ceremony on February 23, 1984 produced the same canon of heritage discourse by the main protagonists, Director-General M'Bow and Ok Sakun. After its past status as a colonial concern under the French, a nationalist object in the Sihanouk and Lon Nol era, and a highly provincialized (regionalized) point of reference during the Khmer Rouge/Heng Samrin revolutions, John G. Morris, the European correspondent of *National Geographic*, predefined the heritage slogan that would, after the rebirth of Cambodia under UN supervision in the 1990s, finalize the transformation of the cultural heritage of Angkor into a globalized icon: "Angkor must live for all humanity!"¹⁰

The End of the Cold War: *Perestroika* for the Civilizing Mission in Angkor (1985–1990)

This paper focuses on the three different civilizing missions developed for the same cultural entity (Angkor) by three different political/institutional protagonists—the PRK, DK, and UNESCO. It is astonishing that all three of these factions underwent major culturo-political transformations in their heritage discourse between 1985 and 1990. To a very large extent this was related to the dramatic political changes that occurred at the end of the Cold War, particularly the fall of communism and the problematic status of and changing power constellation between China (backing the Khmer Rouge) and Russia (supporting Vietnam and the PRK).

The first major change concerned the PRK in January 1985 when, after the mysterious and sudden death of his predecessor Chan Si, Hun Sen was appointed the world's youngest prime minister. This marked an end to the old guard socialist revolutionaries in Cambodia, and Hun Sen gradually outgrew Heng Samrin's image as a Vietnamese-controlled puppet leader. Thanks to the slow recovery after 1979 and after severe floods, disastrous harvests, failed agricultural reforms, and international trade restrictions, by 1985 the PRK's economy found itself in deep crisis; Hun Sen had to initiate the gradual de-socialization of Cambodia's economy. With no money to hand, the cultural sector, including the preservation of cultural heritage, was either restricted to sporadic, small-scale initiatives or, as regards Angkor, dependant on selected international campaigns by India at Angkor Wat and a Polish mission on basic temple investigations. Despite victories during the 1984/85 dry season offensive to destroy the enemy's military camps in order to fortify the Cambodian-Thai border (called the "K5-plan") and to protect major strategic points inside Cambodia including Siem Reap and the Archaeological Park

¹⁰ [UNESCO Press Release 12](#) (February 1984) and an internal report both in UNESCO Archives Paris, dossier CLT.CH.THS.APA 566 (1982–1986).

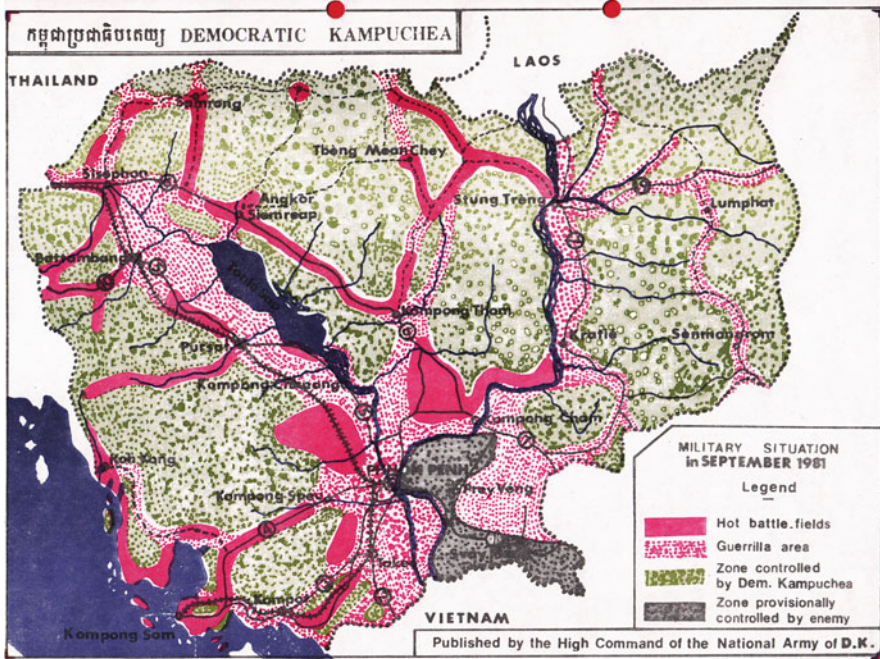


Fig. 10 Battle map including the zone of Angkor (Source: D el egation permanente du Kampuchea 1983)

of Angkor,¹¹ the morale in the PRK’s army was at an all-time low in the face of the effective propaganda campaign that was being waged by the resistance forces after their successful coalition. Faced with mounting international pressure, Hun Sen finally agreed to start direct proximity talks with Norodom Sihanouk in order to work toward national reconciliation.

Because of their destabilizing martial image and their unwillingness to negotiate with the PRK, after 1985 the Khmer Rouge, with Khieu Samphan as president and Son Sen as vice-president, lost more of its international credibility. Military maps from 1984/5 (Fig. 10) demonstrate the different military strategies of the conflicting parties.

¹¹ Heng Samrin’s army installed artillery at the Phnom Bakheng, a temple hill not far from Angkor Wat, and controlled the major entry points to the city of Siem Reap. However, the Khmer Rouge were a constant threat, especially during the night. There are even reports of fortification works inside the Angkor Park after 1982 that could not be verified for this research: “[. . .] the frequency and the difficulty of the levies increased. The work involved cutting swathes in the forest and erecting strategic barriers around villages. The first clearing seems to have taken place in the park of Angkor in late 1982. They then occurred almost everywhere in the country for the purpose of destroying the guerillas’ sanctuaries, situated in the dense forests of the mountains and plains.” (Martin 1994, 222).

According to the publication *Undeclared War against the People's Republic Kampuchea* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1985) the PRK focused on the fight against the coalition's strongholds along the Thai border, whereas the DK concentrated their guerrilla war efforts in the core zone around the Tonle Sap lake, including the Angkor zone. It speaks to the continuing militaristic strategy of the DK that the permanent delegation of the DK to UNESCO constantly (re-)published battle maps and "front news" about attacks on and temporary occupations of PRK/Vietnamese installations in Siem Reap and Angkor in their *Bulletin d'Information*, in press releases, and in the indirect communications between delegate Ok Sakun and the UNESCO's director-general. In the meantime, in 1986 Sihanouk presented an 8-point plan in Beijing that, apart from calling for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops, a cease-fire, UN-supervision, free elections for a non-aligned, neutral and non-Vietnam-aggressive Cambodia, also included the offer of a quadripartite government *with* Heng Samrin's PRK and Sihanouk as president.

Whereas UNESCO was still dependent on indirect UNICEF-endorsement for ideas about a non-governmental consortium to "save" Angkor, it was the year 1987 that brought about the greatest shift in direction. On June 12, 1987 *Xinhua News Agency* in Beijing broadcast Son Sann's proposal to start "technical talks between the parties to the conflict without political preconditions to create a 50 km security zone around Angkor Wat."¹² His official letter from June 15, 1987 for a "cultural zone of peace" was commented on by Ok Sakun of the Khmer Rouge in a letter to M'Bow on June 16, where he remarked that large parts of the monument group of Angkor were now under the control of the national army of DK. Even if the PRK rejected this proposal as a strategy to penetrate deeper into the country, it gave UNESCO its first official mandate for providing international assistance toward the establishment of a demilitarized zone at Angkor under the 1954 Hague Convention. A few weeks later M'Bow wrote—along with a "thank-you" note to Son Sann—a letter to the UN's secretary-general Javier Perez de Cuellar outlining Son Sann's proposal and extending an invitation to personal talks about "a mechanism for UNESCO's task without any political and legal implications."¹³ A positive response arrived in August 1987 with reference to a special UN-agent for humanitarian affairs in Southeast Asia. At about the same time, the first direct talks between Sihanouk and Hun Sen took place in northern France (December 2–4, 1987) and the prince renewed a proposal for the neutralization and demilitarization of the Angkor Wat area by appealing to the international community, which included the UN, UNESCO, and the EFEO.

¹² Broadcasts of Xinhua News Agency Beijing on 12.6.1987 and on Radio Phnom Penh on 30.6.1987 (Summary of World Broadcasts by British Broadcasting Corporation), quoted in Raszelenberg and Schier 1995, 122.

¹³ Letter from M'Bow to Javier Perez de Cuellar, the secretary-general of the United Nations, New York (July 4, 1987). UNESCO Archives Paris, dossier CLT.CH.191/1986–1989.

Until mid-1988 several internal reports circulated, and a special task force was initiated for Angkor in February 1988, which judged the political and security situation on-site to be too complex and unpredictable for a concrete UNESCO-intervention. Frederico Mayor Zaragoza, the deputy-director and advisor, was elected UNESCO's new director-general in November 1987, but the preparative expert group for his July 1988 meeting with Son Sann in Paris still saw insurmountable obstacles in its call for a neutralized Angkor zone. Mayor informed Perez de Cuellar in New York that he intended to formulate a message to the Jakarta Informal Meeting of all Cambodian Factions, which was to be held a few weeks later (July 25–28, 1988), about UNESCO's readiness to assist. As an alternative, the Indonesian minister of foreign affairs suggested placing the region of Angkor under the symbolic protection of UNESCO. The subsequent UNESCO missions for the case of Angkor mirrored the rapid diplomatic rapprochements between Hun Sen and the coalition government. These were, from a highly political point of view, the direct result of the Sino-Soviet rapprochements and their mutual agreements to withdraw financial and military support for the Khmer Rouge and Vietnam. Whereas the UNESCO expert Etienne Clement still had to carry out his mission in October 1988 via UNICEF and the regional UNESCO office in Bangkok, subsequent international conferences on Kampuchea and the re-definition of Hun Sen's PRK into the *State of Cambodia* in April 1989 facilitated the next UNESCO mission of Claude Jacques (special consultant to the director-general of UNESCO for Angkor)¹⁴ and Ishizawa Yoshiaki (director of the Institute of Asian Studies, Sophia University in Tokyo) in direct collaboration with the government in Phnom Penh in May 1989 (Ishizawa and Jacques 1989; Jacques 1989). During Sihanouk's visit to UNESCO on September 1, 1989 Mayor directly *asked* the prince for his consent for UNESCO's activities (and not vice versa, as was later reported).¹⁵ The agreement between Sihanouk and Phnom Penh to "depoliticize" the issue of

¹⁴ The author would like to thank Mr. Jacques for his valuable insights into this period during his visit to and talk at the Heidelberg Conference in 2011, which finally led to this publication.

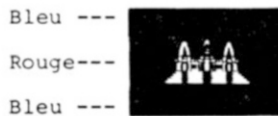
¹⁵ The minutes of this meeting were summarized in several points: "6. The DG stressed the need for immediate action to strengthen the on-going restoration efforts which have only received limited international assistance [...] 7. Assuring the Prince that Unesco's relations with the UN-recognized Coalition Government will remain unchanged, the DG requested the Prince for his consent for Unesco to assume international co-ordination of activities for the safeguard and restoration of the Angkor monuments and to carry out through indirect means, the most urgent tasks required to minimize the risks of irreparable damage. 8. The Prince, stating that Angkor was 'not only a heritage of the Khmer people, but of mankind,' agreed to Unesco taking on the responsibility of international co-ordination 'outside all political considerations.' He agreed to Unesco organizing a technical round table for Khmer and international experts on the restoration of Angkorian monuments, Unesco involvement in a survey and inventory of the Angkor complex and objects of the National Museum, assistance to the international (i.e. Indian and Polish) conservation teams and the training of Khmers in conservation skills. [...] 10. Ambassador Ok Sakun attributed the destruction of the monuments to the Vietnamese and stated that the site of the Angkor complex was situated in militarily contested zones. Prince Sihanouk, however, did not follow-up on the Ambassador's comments. [...] "Meeting between Prince Norodom Sihanouk and the director general (1.9.1989)," UNESCO Archives Paris, dossier CLT.CH.191/1986–1989.

Angkor paved the way for the famous “Appeal for Angkor” (The Ministry of Culture 1989, see quotation in the epilogue of this volume) that was made on September 30, 1989 when the international community was officially asked to help save Angkor. The introduction of the Australian *Evans Plan* in November 1989 and its modified approval by the Perm-5 countries in the UN’s Security Council in January 1990, along with the withdrawal of the Vietnamese forces from Cambodia, facilitated the most important civilizing mission in the history of the UN: the establishment of a *Transitory Authority for Cambodia* (UNTAC) in 1992/3 supervising new elections for a new state of Cambodia after the Paris Agreement in 1991.

Meanwhile, in February 1990 Norodom Sihanouk announced important symbolic changes in the coalition government: the name of Democratic Kampuchea was changed to “Cambodia” with a declared political orientation towards the “5th French Republic,” the national anthem was revised to the version of the independent era (second verse only), and the flag of Cambodia returned to its form before the coup d’état in 1970: “the silhouette of Angkor Wat in front elevation with three visible towers.”¹⁶ (Fig. 11).

However, UNESCO’s mission to civilize Angkor, including the nomination of the Angkor Archaeological Park for World Heritage Status, had only just begun, and the refrain “Save Angkor” would be heard once more (UNESCO 1992–1994, compare UNESCO Cambodia 1994)¹⁷ (Fig. 12).

Le drapeau national du Cambodge n'est plus le drapeau rouge de Pol Pot-Khmer Rouge mais le traditionnel drapeau de la nation cambodgienne depuis des siècles et dont voici le dessin en miniature:



(Silhouette d’Angkor Wat vu de face, dont 3 tours sont visibles. Silhouette en blanc et non pas jaune).

Fig. 11 Conceptualization by Norodom Sihanouk in a letter from February 1990 of the new (old) flag of Cambodia with the tower silhouette of Angkor Wat (UNESCO Archives Paris)

¹⁶ “§6: Le Régime du Cambodge est le meme que celui de la Ve République Française.” In *Delegation permanente de Cambodge auprès de l’UNESCO*, Information (No. 003/90, 14.2.1990). And further explanations: “§4: L’armoire nationale comporte comme motif central les trois tours visibles du monument d’Angkor Wat avec en arrière plan le soleil avec ses rayons, couleur or, irradiant autour d’Angkor Wat. Au-dessous d’Angkor Wat et l’encadrant en demi-cercle, une demi-couronne de feuilles de banian. Angkor Wat est le symbole de la nation, la civilisation et la grandeur du Cambodge. Le soleil et ses rayons symbolisent la renaissance nationale. Les feuilles de banian symbolisent le Bouddhisme, religion de l’Etat du Cambodge.”

¹⁷ For more details about this transformative period in the early 1990s see the introduction of Miura’s paper and the epilogue of this volume.



Fig. 12 “Save Angkor’. Angkor” (Source: News Bulletin of UNESCO 4 (July 1994), cover)

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Discourses and Practices between Traditions and World Heritage Making in Angkor after 1990

Keiko Miura

Abstract After three decades of civil war in Cambodia, Angkor was recaptured to serve the civilizing visions of a country that had re-emerged from barbarity and the decadence of its cultural heritage and traditions. In this sense, UNESCO's international campaigns to "Save Angkor," launched in 1991, and the subsequent World Heritage nomination in 1992 (Angkor was simultaneously inscribed on the list of World Heritage Sites in Danger) were to become civilizing missions that allowed Cambodia to be re-integrated into the international community of "civilized nations." In the nearly two decades since, the focus of attention paid to Angkor by the Cambodian government and the international community has shifted from a rescue operation of the monuments and sites to a campaign on how to effectively utilize the heritage for economic development in the country. It has also involved questions of how to control people's presence and activities in the site, which has necessitated the restriction of some "traditional" local practices. Many of the restrictions were imposed on the inhabitants for the sake of tourism development and the maintaining of the assumed ideal conditions of a World Heritage Site; that is, World Heritage-Making. Discourses have emerged about which traditions to respect and maintain, and which ones to restrict or abandon. At the same time, new traditions have been invented to suit the era of tourism development. This paper analyses the divergent and somewhat contradictory discourses and practices on traditions and "World Heritage-making" in Angkor, as demonstrated by various social actors, local, national, and international.

Introduction

The central question of this book is related to the premise that Angkor and other prominent heritage sites, mostly in Asia, have been affected by colonial "civilizing missions," which took advantage of the political crises or cultural decadence of former European colonies in order to have ancient and unique architectural heritage

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restored, recovered, and saved from oblivion. These missions were justified on the conviction of their moral superiority before the colonial subjects, who were considered so ignorant and incompetent that they required “proper” guidance, education, and know-how to improve their knowledge and better protect their culture and society (Osborne 1997). The strategic utilization of the domination of power, knowledge, and space is characteristic of the technology used by the civilizers upon their ‘uncivilized’ subjects (Foucault 1980). This paper does not deal with the colonial period per se, but with how both colonial and post-conflict Cambodia has required a similar mission. Through the study of discourses and practices between traditions and the creation of an assumed ideal World Heritage Site by different social actors, both individual and organizational, it will explore how the colonial discourses and visions on how to manage Angkor are being recaptured after the World Heritage nomination. As we shall see, the creation of a World Heritage Site is not considered a straightforward “civilizing mission,” although it inherits the philosophy and methodology of colonial heritage management. This paper will also analyse the interconnectedness between “preserving traditions” and “World Heritage-making” and how the two have been utilized (and by whom) to promote concerns and present justifications for practices, as well as how diverse social groups have negotiated the concepts at various historical stages in post-conflict Cambodia.

Divided into five sections, this paper first examines the period of the “Save Angkor” campaign and the Cambodian cultural renaissance in the early 1990s; second, it elucidates the processes of re-contextualizing Angkor as a World Heritage Site. The third section deals with discourses on heritage and traditions as expressed and negotiated by different social actors; and the fourth explores which practices have been put into place and by whom, and which practices are restricted or encouraged in order to create the ideal conditions for a World Heritage Site. The final section considers how the saving of a cultural heritage site in general and a World Heritage Site in particular, entails the arbitrary selection of traditions that should be respected and promoted, as opposed to those which are to be ignored or deliberately destroyed.

Saving Angkor and the Cultural Renaissance in Post-Conflict Cambodia

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Angkor was “discovered” by the French and “saved” from negligence when the country was nearly torn apart by Siam and Vietnam. Something similar took place in the post-conflict period of the 1990s. This time it was the international community that came to assist Cambodia in ending the war, reconstructing the country, and saving it from destruction. It was important that Angkor be “recovered” and “saved” from destruction and loss, and from a prolonged isolation from the rest of the world.

The joint efforts of Cambodia and the international community eventually led Angkor to gain status as a World Heritage Site (compare with the contribution of Michael Falser in this volume). The saving mission of Angkor was initiated by the *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO), which represented the international community, after a series of requests made by the late former king, Norodom Sihanouk after 1989 (UNESCO 1993, 18–21). The fact that UNESCO’s headquarters is in Paris and that Sihanouk was highly influenced by French culture makes it difficult to deny that the mission also took a European, if not particularly French, outlook.

With the initiation and development of peace negotiations in 1989, UNESCO sent a fact-finding (technical assessment) mission to Angkor with the approval of the then Prince Sihanouk, at that time President of the UN-recognized *Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea* (C.G.D.K.). Later in that year, Prince Sihanouk met Federico Mayor, the then director-general of UNESCO, at its headquarters in Paris for UNESCO to assume the co-ordination activities for the preservation of Angkor monuments. A similar request was also put to UNESCO by Prime Minister Hun Sen of the Phnom Penh-based People’s Republic of Kampuchea (later renamed State of Cambodia). In the 25th Session of the UNESCO General Conference, an oral resolution was tabled by Australia, and backed by Japan and France, for UNESCO to initiate preparatory activities for Angkor. Subsequently, two international round tables of experts on Angkor took place in Bangkok in June 1990 and in Paris in September 1991; meanwhile UNESCO sent a number of assessment missions to Angkor. One month after the second round table meeting, the *Paris Peace Agreement* was signed by the four Cambodian parties. Prince Sihanouk then invited Federico Mayor to visit Cambodia, which soon took place in November 1991. From Angkor Wat, Mayor launched “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, 18–21, compare with the epilogue in this volume). This was the official start of the campaigns to save Angkor. In the two decades that followed, Angkor would become not only one of the largest archaeological working sites in the world (cf. ICC 1998, 5; Lemaistre and Cavalier 2002, 125), but also one of the most successful restorations achieved, as described in “Success Stories” of the World Heritage Centre’s website (UNESCO 2012). Angkor operations have since become an inspiration and have set standards for successful restorations of cultural heritage throughout the world.

The restorations in Angkor, now declared successful, were in part due to the stark contrast with the *status quo ante* of the monuments and sites before the 1990s. Owing to war and the lack of ability or the disinterest of successive Cambodian governments, the conservation of monuments and sites in the area of Angkor had been neglected since early 1972 (Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin 2007, 61), though work continued in the area south of Siem Reap, according to former restoration workers. The consequences were that, to a certain degree, the monuments and sites had been taken back by the forest, and that the erosion of sandstone surfaces, alarming rates of destruction, and the illicit traffic of artefacts proceeded

unimpeded. On the eve of the political settlement and national reconciliation among the warring parties in Cambodia, the safeguarding of Angkor was analogous with the physical restoration of a broken and divided Cambodia. The restoration and reconstruction of Angkor was both practical and symbolic; it was tantamount to recovering the past, lost glory, pride, and dignity of the nation (UNESCO 1993; Ang et al. 1998), as well as the “imaginary” national unity of the country and the legitimacy of the ruler or the government.

Decades of war, and especially the destruction of the socio-cultural fabric under the Pol Pot regime, had led the Cambodians, and some foreigners, to feel the sense of a loss of order in Khmer culture and to believe that Khmer culture was lost or was being lost. Contemporary anthropologists tend to argue against viewing culture “as a bounded entity with certain essentialist or static “traditions” (Ebihara et al. 1994, 1–5),” but instead to see it as a dynamic entity created through processes of selection, incorporation, discarding, changing, or all of these. Even so, because of the extent of cultural destruction and the death of the masters and bearers of “traditional” cultures many have sympathized with this view of Khmer culture as lost or being lost. The model representation of Khmer culture and the “traditions” to be restored or reinvented (Hobsbawm 1983) are based largely on the cultural features of the 1950s and 1960s, a period that older people cherish through their memories of the “good old days” (Ebihara et al. 1994, 1–9). Cultural renaissance soon followed, recovering the loss and reconstructing “original,” “traditional,” and “authentic” Khmer culture. It necessitated the rehabilitation of a disappearing or lost culture, including its customs, traditions, and material culture. As noted by Edwards, this is a recurring theme in Cambodia (Edwards 2004, 75) and part of a nationalist discourse celebrating the “pure,” “authentic,” and “original” Khmer that had been crystallized by the late 1930s. A similar sentiment was apparently felt earlier by a French painter, George Groslier, who, according to Gabrielle Abbe (in this book), reported in 1917 that traditional Khmer arts were disappearing and “that the Protectorate must act fast to ensure their conservation.” From that point on, Groslier tried to “save” Khmer arts from “decadence.” The French colonial masters felt it their obligation to restore the symbolic national culture of their colonies to past glory, which would in turn enhance the legitimacy of the new colonial ruler. The management and restoration of national heritage is therefore one of the most efficacious ways to justify one’s *raison d’être* in the eyes of the subject. Heritage sites are ideal stages for the politicization of space and the institutionalization of power and knowledge (Miura 2004, 121–2). In the process of reconstructing Cambodia, Angkor was being placed at the heart of a cultural renaissance and was being used as the political stage for new social elites. As Michael Falser has revealed (Falser 2013a, 2), the combination of Angkor Wat (as a tangible heritage) and Royal Khmer Ballet (as an intangible heritage) have been “‘salvaged’ by the global heritage community, locally exploited by profit-oriented national(ist) elites, and instrumentalized to overwrite memories of recent postcolonial traumata.” This tradition or reinvention of performing Royal Khmer Ballet at Angkor Wat is a revival of Khmer traditions of performing dances dedicated to the gods/spirits, which was recontextualized during the French

colonial period to entertain the human gaze (Falser 2013a; see also Edwards 2007, 38–9).

Re-Contextualization of Angkor as a World Heritage Site

After the World Heritage nomination, the task of heritage guardianship was transferred to the *APSARA Authority for the Protection of the Site and Development of the Region of Angkor* (hereinafter referred to as APSARA), a national body created in 1995 with international assistance. Old Angkor, created by the French as *Parc d’Angkor* in 1925 (Falser 2013b), was to be re-contextualized and restructured as a World Heritage Site (Fig. 1).

The reorganization of the heritage site and the method of management were modelled after the French system, which was established during the colonial period (cf. Luco 2006; Lloyd 2009); thus, its “civilizing mission” succeeded in a new socio-cultural context. The fundamental similarities between *Parc d’Angkor* and

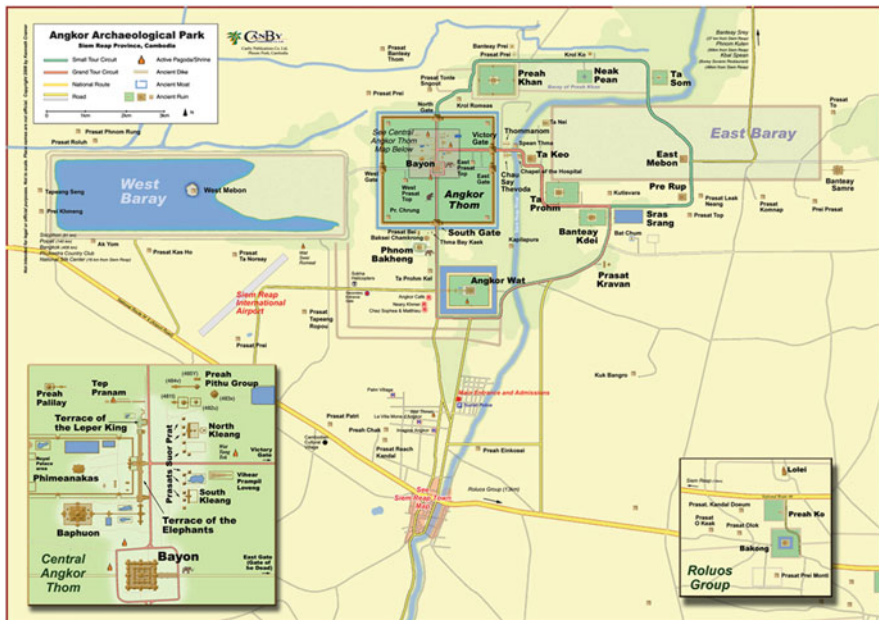


Fig. 1 Angkor Archaeological Park, Main Park Area. The zones were introduced in February 19, 1995 by the Royal Decree establishing Protected Cultural Zones in the Siem Reap/Angkor Region and Guidelines for their Management (so-called zoning law) (Ang et al. 1998, 212–20) (Source: <http://www.canbypublications.com/maps/SR-AngkorParkMain.htm> (2011))



Fig. 2 A past view of cattle around Angkor Wat (Miura 2000)

Angkor World Heritage Site include the priority given to protecting monuments and forests—the area coverage and spatial organization of the heritage site considered ideal for outsiders’ visual consumption—and the historical and technical studies chiefly conducted by and for foreign scholars.

New restrictions and regulations introduced to the local inhabitants by the Cambodian government in post-conflict Cambodia emulated those implemented earlier by the French. They included the relocation of some of the local inhabitants and restrictions on clearing forests, felling trees, tapping resin, extending land cultivation, hunting, releasing animals to stray on the pavements and terraces of Angkor (Fig. 2), and building new houses (Luco 2006, 121; Lloyd 2009, 153) The relocation of local inhabitants had also been effected in other times, including in 1962, during the Pol Pot regime (1975–1979), and in 1991 (Miura 2004, 146–7 and 131–3; Luco 2006, 121). Nonetheless, the French were less strict in the enforcement of rules and regulations than APSARA and also allowed old land usage, fishing, and cattle grazing in areas other than those specified above (Luco 2006, 121; Lloyd 2009, 153). The French even encouraged rice farming in two *barays* (water reservoirs) and the moat of Angkor Thom (the capital city from the late twelfth century to the thirteenth century) (Luco 2006, 121). After the World Heritage nomination, some of the land use, including the customary use of ponds and lakes in Angkor Thom and parts of its moat for rice cultivation, and collecting forest products were restricted, whilst fishing and cattle grazing in the heritage sites, as well as releasing water buffalo in the moat of Angkor Wat, were completely banned (cf. Miura 2004: 147–51; Luco 2013).

Concerning the religious practices of Buddhist monks, both periods have been influenced by nationalistic sentiment, and these movements for reforms emerged with restrictions imposed by some Cambodian authorities who were conscious of the presence of foreigners. In short, both French and Cambodian authorities used mixed approaches in their attempts to expel monks from ancient temple sites or in allowing them to continue practices, albeit with restrictions.

A local account tells us that during the colonial period, the French first tried to expel Buddhist monks from Angkor Wat because they were living in small huts along or adjacent to the so-called Terrace of Honour (cf. Rooney 1994, 86) or the Cruciform Terrace (cf. Dieulefils 2001, 31, 35 and, 39), which might have been seen as disruptive to the idealized views of historical monuments, conservation, and tourists' visits (Falser 2013b). The French were said to have later reconsidered the expulsion of the monks because Angkor Wat means a "city of a temple" and a temple without monks would be inappropriate. The monks were allowed to build two monasteries away from the main building mass, as it exists today (Miura 2004, 124–5). A local inhabitant also mentioned that there used to be a monastery called Wat Preah Ngok located west of Preh Ngok Vihāra (temple hall) in Angkor Thom, which ceased to exist during the colonial period. It was explained that the French had ordered the monks to leave, which the latter refused to do. In response, the French were said to have brought a cow to kill and wine to drink inside the compound. These acts were considered too much for the monks to bear, and they left to continue their religious lives outside Angkor Thom. The monks of Banteay Kdei temple were also said to have been moved by the French from the southern side of the front colonnaded hall to the west side—that is, the rear of the temple—while some went to live at Wat Preah Dak (Arahi 2001, 168) in Preah Dak village.

Since the establishment of APSARA, the monks of the monasteries in Angkor Wat and those in Angkor Thom have had various conflicts with the Authority, which has tried to deter them from constructing new buildings and from renovating or extending the existing structures without authorization. Both the construction and reconstruction of buildings for monasteries is based on the Theravāda Buddhist tradition that renders merits to donors. In addition, in 2001 APSARA forbade lay people to ride motorbikes into the Angkor Wat compound to visit the monasteries; this inhibited their frequent visits for religious ceremonies, though the ban was later repealed. The ordination of monks within these monasteries was also forbidden, as was meditation at key locations like the main sanctuaries at Angkor Wat (cf. Warrack 2013) or the Bayon temple in the centre of Angkor Thom. In addition, pilgrims were not allowed to stay overnight at the Angkor Wat monasteries, even though it is permitted in Article 18 b-zone 1 of the Royal Decree establishing *Protected Cultural Zones in the Siem Reap/Angkor Region and Guidelines for their Management* (hereinafter referred to as the Zoning Decree) (Fig. 3) (Ang et al. 1998, 218).

It was an old tradition for pilgrims to stay at monasteries free of charge (Baillie 2005, 127). However, all this changed in March 2002 when the monasteries in Angkor Thom, which had been reconstructed mainly in the 1980s, were nearly destroyed, and the monks expelled by Venerable Tep Vong, the supreme patriarch of the Mohānikāy sect followed by most Buddhist Cambodians (Cambodge Soir

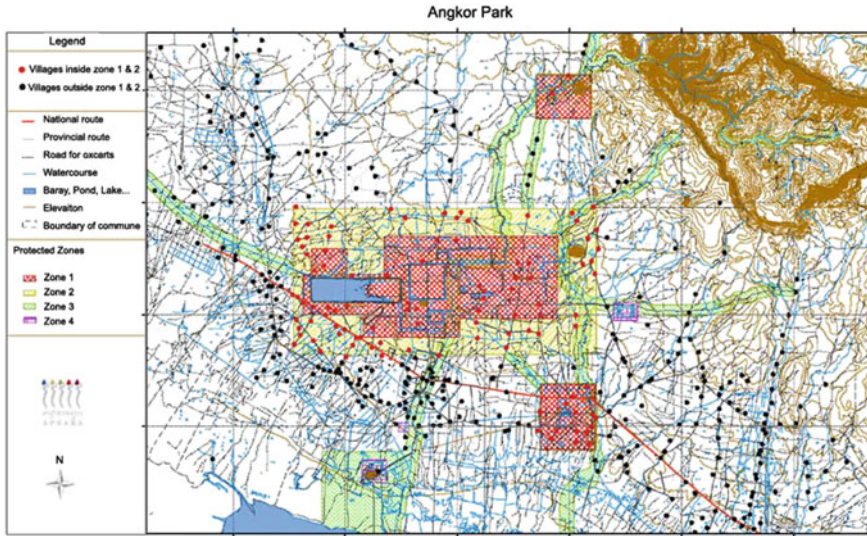


Fig. 3 Zoning of Angkor World Heritage Site (Source: APSARA Authority 2006)

2002, 1 and, 7). It was reported that Tep Vong believed that the monks there had decayed morals, were provoking disorder, and would reorganize the religion in order “not to lose face” before tourists. The presence of a large number of tourists in the sacred World Heritage Site created tensions with the *sangha*. Some monks were apparently too weak to resist the temptations of touching young female tourists, while the poor backgrounds of others compelled them to ask visitors for donations for their own personal needs (cf. ABC Radio Australia News 2002). However, the implementation of the order was suddenly cancelled when the monks jointly demanded the government alternative land for their living and for continuing religious practice (Miura 2004, 193).

Interestingly, Edwards (2004, 76) writes that, in 1930 when the *Institut Indigène d'Études Bouddhiques de Petit Véhicule* was inaugurated, it was described as “‘a house of Franco-Buddhist friendship’ for French, Lao, and Cambodian intellectuals,” and “[t]he founding mandate of the institute was to rescue Cambodian Buddhism from ‘degeneration.’”

In Angkor Thom there are several places that the local population considers to be powerful. One such site is the Preah Pithu temple. There was a meditation centre containing several monks and lay people from other districts and provinces located next to the pond of Preah Pithu. These people were expelled by the Cambodian authorities in late 2000 (Miura 2004, 69–70). With regard to lay people, the French tried to make an “exemption of indigenous peoples or other foreign Asians visiting Angkor ‘for a religious manner’ from paying entrance fees” (Lloyd 2009, 153). It is interesting to note that at the time the French imagined that only Asians would visit Angkor for religious purposes, not Europeans or people from other continents. While Cambodian nationals today still enjoy an exemption from paying entrance

fees to Angkor, regardless of their presence as pilgrims or as tourists, foreigners, regardless of whether they are pilgrims or tourists, are obliged to pay, with the exception of those involved in research, restoration, or conservation projects, or projects involving all three. One British Buddhist monk requested an Angkor pass valid for one year from APSARA and was even willing to pay for it, but his request was turned down. Instead, he went to Angkor Wat or the Bayon temple earlier than the staff of the *Sokha Hotel Corporation*, one of the major private companies in Cambodia that collects entrance fees to the Angkor Park from visitors. He was eventually found praying at the top of the main tower of Angkor Wat early one morning without a valid pass; he was thrown out of the compound by the heritage police together with an APSARA staff member. He later decided to buy a week ticket to the park (i.e. US\$60) every month and at other times he tried to pray outside the perimeter.¹

Since 1979 some of the local villagers, who are mostly religious and follow the eight precepts, have looked after the Buddha or Hindu figures in the Angkor temples. They received donations from tourists, a large portion of which was periodically confiscated by the heritage policemen stationed in the Bayon temple for their personal profit, causing controversy (Miura 2004, 192). Later, APSARA deemed the act of receiving a donation in the sacred sites an inappropriate conduct and the caretakers in the Bayon temple who were caught doing so were subject to expulsion. However, caretakers of religious statues were allowed in Angkor Wat, and later in the Bayon temple new people were hired to work as caretakers and were also allowed to receive donations. Some say that the donations are all taken to a monastery nearby, while others say that the caretakers are allowed to keep the gifts because of their poverty. APSARA's imposition of rules and regulations is clearly arbitrary. Furthermore, this stance against using the sacred site for profit-making is highly contradictory, since large dinner shows are occasionally set up for tourists beside the Bayon and other temples by some of the local hotels.

World Heritage-making in Angkor has also involved a more complicated partitioning of space than in the French period. Including the original Angkor Park (ZEMP Expert Team 1993, 2 [Chap. VII]), the World Heritage Site is composed of five zones based on the required level of protecting monuments (as shown in Fig. 3). It also consists of three separate groups, most of which are now covered by the core zone as Zone 1 and the buffer zone as Zone 2. The restrictions mentioned above were imposed in both Zones 1 and 2 more severely than in the pre-war period.

Following in the footsteps of the earlier French "civilizing mission" in Cambodia, Cambodian authorities—in particular, the heritage police established in 1997 and APSARA—in the process of re-contextualizing Angkor as an ideal World Heritage Site have also inherited a mission to civilize the local inhabitants and the Buddhist monks. Many of APSARA's directors and senior staff members were educated in French, if not in France, and tend to take on French attitudes towards

¹ I met him at the Bayon temple and interviewed him in Siem Reap in March 2010.

the “local,” although some French conservators, notably Henri Marchal and Bernard-Philippe Groslier (son of George Groslier), were respected and loved by the restoration labourers recruited from the local communities (cf. Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin 2007, 96–8 and 100–1).² The philosophy and attitudes of the individual staff and the directors of APSARA differ greatly, and APSARA has undergone several structural transformations and staff changes, most notably in 2001, 2004, and 2008, each time resulting in an expansion of the organization. The imposition of stricter rules and regulations on the local inhabitants than those imposed by the French may also be explained as the result of new Cambodian elites feeling that the country’s honour was at stake in representing and managing Angkor before the international gaze.

Discourses on Heritage and Traditions

What is considered to be “heritage” differs in time and among different groups of people, even within the same society. Both the notion of heritage and that of tradition are negotiated and redefined to suit the particular needs or environment of particular groups of people. Discourses on heritage, customs, and traditions are therefore most often discussed in reference to heritage protection and management. The terms *custom* and *tradition* are even used interchangeably at times.

UNESCO definition of heritage

UNESCO’s 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.”³ Based on the *World Heritage Convention* adopted in 1972, UNESCO defines cultural heritage in reference to monuments, groups of buildings, and sites with historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological, or anthropological values (UNESCO 1983, 80). UNESCO’s definition is broad and abstract, including the insistence on “outstanding universal value” in order to be nominated as World Heritage. This might have led some heritage managers to consider local heritage as something that must be subjugated to World Heritage. From the outset, however, UNESCO has emphasized the importance of involving the community in its heritage protection, as described in the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1983, 81)

² Luco also reports on the two French conservators as the great personalities of the EFEO, as remembered by the older people, see Luco 2006, 120.

³ Cf. Parsons 2000, 351.

Although UNESCO's visions are idealistic, the reality on the ground is often contrary to the ideals that UNESCO and other cultural organizations propagate. Many World Heritage Sites have failed to realize the involvement of the community in heritage protection or to integrate the interactions between the heritage and the community in comprehensive planning programmes. This is partly because UNESCO experts on the World Heritage programme tend to be archaeologists, architects, and legal experts who are trained in the West, predominantly in Europe, whose goal is to give priority to the protection, restoration, and conservation of a built environment or cultural property over the life of the local community. They tend to consider monumental heritage and other tangible heritage as the essence of high culture, while local communities are often seen as the carriers of popular, if not, "low culture." At the same time, UNESCO itself is neither institutionally nor legally able to manage the sites; it is entrusted to the state to designate a particular heritage managing body, which is often governmental. The managing agencies are inclined to prioritize their own concerns, such as tourism development, and the everyday practice of local people is often interpreted as a hindrance to these objectives. This can be seen as setting a normative hierarchy of values as economic rather than cultural: monumental before intangible culture, royal before popular traditions.

That said, over the last decade UNESCO and one of its partners, the *International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property* (ICCROM), have begun to emphasize the importance of linking heritage with local people. When the *First Strategy Meeting of ICCROM Living Heritage Sites Programme in South East Asia* was launched in Bangkok in September 2003, in co-operation with UNESCO, ICCROM declared that:

Heritage does not belong to experts, or to governments, and even well-meaning conservation efforts developed by experts or governments which leave the public out of the process of defining their heritage and the most appropriate means to care for that heritage risk failure. Heritage belongs to the members of society whose values are reflected in the definition of heritage. This is more than rhetoric and is reflected in many of the initiatives and activity focuses developed in the conservation movement over the last two decades. (ICCROM 2003, 1).

How heritage is defined logically influences the vision of who the rightful owners and guardians of that heritage is. The debates on heritage over the last two decades have also led intangible heritage closer to tangible heritage, in particular by paying attention to the interactions between the two and by significantly broadening the notion of heritage. (UNESCO 2003)

While UNESCO and the general international understanding of heritage is broadening to incorporate intangible culture, the Khmer understanding of heritage is becoming increasingly narrow, as we shall see.

Khmer definition of heritage

The Khmer terms for heritage are *ker morodâk* and *ker dâmael*,⁴ which include both a personal and collective inheritance of tangible nature passed down from generation to generation. These include land, trees, houses, oxcarts, jewellery, boats, and silver bowls in the “traditional context” (Miura 2004, 27). A newer term, *petekaphoan*, apparently began to be used in the 1970s, which distinguishes personal or family inheritance from public heritage. A Cambodian anthropologist trained in France, who was also the director of the *Department of Culture and Heritage* of APSARA, emphasized that he would still use the terms *ker morodâk* and *ker dâmael* to refer to the Angkor heritage, but would be obliged to use the term *petekaphoan* in official speeches and writings. This has great significance in view of what to safeguard and in view of who has the right to own and manage heritage (Miura 2004, 32). If heritage is *petekaphoan ciet*, or national heritage, the owner of the heritage is the nation, not individual persons, and thus a government institution should manage it. In the case of *petekaphoan pipopulok*, or world heritage, the heritage literally belongs to the world, but is actually managed by a governmental body; this is exactly the case with Angkor and APSARA.

In the official Cambodian definition “[c]ultural heritage means the body of tangible cultural property with the exclusion of intangible cultural property” as stipulated in Article 2 of Chap. II in the sub-decree of 1998 (No. 98), entitled “Respecting Implementation of Cultural Heritage Protection.” In the discourse on heritage, however, customs and traditions (important features of intangible heritage) are often mentioned in relation to heritage and tend to enhance the value of heritage, as we shall see.

Discourses on heritage, customs, and traditions after the World Heritage nomination

After the nomination of Angkor as a World Heritage Site in 1992, the local inhabitants who used to own land, trees, and houses in the villages or near the ancient monument sites, or both, were told by government officials that they would no longer be allowed to own the land or trees as these were now considered public property to be protected. This was applied to the ponds and lakes in Angkor Thom

⁴ “ker” is derived from a Sanskrit term ‘kīrti’ meaning “fame, renown; speech, and report.” It can also mean heritage and inheritance such as in “ker dâmael” (Headley and Rath 1977, 44). “Morodâk” means heritage, legacy, and inheritance, which is also derived from a Sanskrit word “mṛtaka,” which means a dead person (Headley and Rath 1977, 722). According to Michel Antelme, a Khmer language teacher at INALCO, France, “dâmael” is derived from the Khmer word “dael” and “dael kee”—something used by someone else first, or leftovers (personal communication) (Miura 2004, 27).

that were traditionally owned and cultivated as rice fields by several families living in villages close to Angkor Thom and whose ancestors had lived inside the ancient city. By living in the World Heritage Site the local community is thus deprived of its traditional cultural rights. The heritage police chief declared that these historical lakes must be protected, and that they were not part of the local heritage of rice fields to be cultivated. In his view, local heritage needed to be subordinated to a higher cause, that is, to World Heritage (Miura 2004, 165).

In Angkor, a meeting was held at the Ta Nei temple on July 20, 2000 to discuss the problems caused by the restrictions imposed on the local communities by the heritage police without consulting APSARA. These restrictions created a highly tense situation between the heritage police and the local inhabitants. Heterogeneous actors, including representatives of the various levels of governmental agencies and local villages, international researchers, and national NGO staffs, exchanged discourses on heritage, customs, and traditions (Miura 2004, 153–71). The above-mentioned director of APSARA, who is from Siem Reap province, argued the following:

When I was a boy, during the Khmer New Year I heard the sound of the *trot*⁵ performance in Angkor Wat. That was the custom, but nowadays they splash water at the New Year, which is not our custom.⁶ The customs that have existed since the past are the maintenance of Buddhism and Khmer society in which *to act as a Khmer* means not to be arrogant. The exploitation of natural resources in the Angkor historical park was among the customs inherited from the ancestors. The practice did not start yesterday, so it has to be considered because there have been problems with the authorities, especially the heritage police which has a heavy duty in being responsible for security and safeguarding of artifacts. Angkor is a *living* heritage site: it has not only ancient temples, but also villages that have existed from the past until the present. The Angkor heritage is not only the temples, but includes monks, rich people and poor people. . . I would not actually move villagers from the site where they have been living. I just wish them to live in balance with the environment. . . When I was a boy, I saw people riding bicycles in front of Angkor Wat, taking off their hats. But nowadays some tourist guides nearly stepped on the head of the Buddha. *Khmer culture has declined*. Some parents have allowed their children to fan tourists [to cool the down, KM]. That is considered improper behaviour. [italics KM] (Miura 2004, 159)

Keiko Miura (2004) *Contested Heritage: People of Angkor*

The heritage police chief (who is also from one of the local villages in Angkor) talked about the problem of illegal logging, which was mostly blamed on the local inhabitants, and about family traditions without ever using the term “tradition.” His emphasis was that the local people would have to abandon their old cultural rights

⁵ The *trot* is a ritualized dance procession performed from house to house on the Khmer New Year. It is performed for purification, to call for rain at the beginning of the rainy season, and for exorcism (cf. Porée-Maspero 1962, 207–32).

⁶ They say that Cambodian refugees who had returned from various border camps introduced this Thai custom.

or tradition of cutting trees because Angkor became no longer theirs, but of the entire people of the World (cf. Miura 2004, 157 and 165).

Concerning the issue of logging, the dominant discourse, represented by that of the heritage police chief, carefully avoided mentioning the extensive logging conducted by the military in the Angkor area, including the local villages, during the Vietnamese occupation of the country from 1979 to 1989 (compare the contribution of Falser in this volume). It was also argued that the local ownership of trees and rice fields as a family inheritance and the customary rights of resin tapping and rice cultivation were against national and world interests (Miura 2004, 164). The World Heritage nomination was understood by the heritage police and by APSARA as a new form of “civilization” that could be demonstrated to the world, and meant that existing local socio-cultural practices were regarded as inadequate and requiring control. Civilizing identity is often ascribed from outside, and it serves to connote superiority before others. Cambodia, after several decades of war and the destruction of its socio-cultural foundation, especially after the Pol Pot regime, lost its prestige in the region and has been desperate to show the world that it has a significant symbol of civilization—Angkor—which can be restructured to suit today’s paradigm for “civilization.” The concerns of the local inhabitants are more practical: they are struggling to make a living in the face of the enormous challenges that this new “civilizing mission” brings. One villager tried to negotiate with the authorities regarding the rules and regulations imposed on rice cultivation, and even asked questions about compensation (Miura 2004, 162–163).

Three village representatives made appeals to the authorities enumerating the villagers who had lost rice fields in Angkor Thom. It was pointed out that some villagers had no other rice fields to cultivate or other sources of income with which to buy food (Miura 2004, 162).

Discourses on heritage, customs, and traditions in relation to heritage management have changed direction since 2004, when the policy priority shifted from the first ten years of emergency conservation to the new phase of sustainable development. Angkor was also removed from the list of *World Heritage Sites in Danger* this year. Discourses are now focused on preserving old villages, customs, and traditions for the sake of the sustainable development of tourism and the local communities. As we shall see, “Sustainable development” has become another ideal or buzzword used by UNESCO, along with other international organizations, and one that was going to be applied to Angkor by the Cambodian authorities as part of their civilizing visions and goals.

Discourse changes after 2004

The year 2004 marked a great change in the Angkor World Heritage Site, not just in terms of the policy priority, but also in the number of departments within APSARA, in addition to the recruitments of new directors and staff. One of the deputy prime

ministers of Cambodia and the president of the Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO, Sok An, was also officially appointed as the chairman of APSARA (ICC 2004, 11).⁷ The heritage police and other kinds of police forces were also incorporated into the Authority. While APSARA was steadily assuming an almost absolute power over matters on Angkor, and overriding traditional heterogeneous local authorities, the discourses on heritage and traditions were subsequently changed in reference to sustainable development.

One of the main challenges in this phase is said to be the rapid population increase in Angkor,⁸ which is “causing additional stress to the ecosystem and the cultural environment as well as impacting on the lifestyle of the original villagers,” according to Khuon (Khuon 2006b, 2). Subsequently, APSARA established Run Ta-Ek—an eco-village for sustainable development—as a relocation site outside the Angkor Park for the local inhabitants. Khuon states that

[W]hile 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 was 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 forest (his own emphasis). (Khuon 2006b, 2)

In the brochure for Run Ta-Ek (Khuon 2008) one of the principles of establishing Run Ta-Ek was described as “[t]o improve the population’s living conditions in all its aspects: social, economic and cultural so the settlement would be only operating in a new location and not changing social values and traditional ways of life.” Brochures with model traditional houses made of wood and with fences were distributed, while a real model house with a water-filtering system and solar energy was established in Run Ta-Ek with windmills and in one of the local villages in Angkor. Thus, the emphasis of the official discourse has shifted away from the safeguarding of Angkor monuments and sites, to the preservation of the “traditional ways of life” of the old inhabitants. Are we then heading towards preserving “traditions” or can it be called rather World Heritage-making through selected traditions?

⁷ He has also been the chairman of the Council of Ministers and remains so today (2012).

⁸ The population in 1992 was reported to be approximately 22,000 persons, but in 2011 more than 130,000 persons was the estimate made by Khuon of APSARA at the 2nd International Workshop about Angkor/Cambodia called ‘*Rebirthing*’ Angkor? *Heritage Between Decadence, Decay, Revival and the Mission to Civilize*, Heidelberg University, May 8–10, 2011. Online accessed 10 January 2015. <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/d-historicities-heritage/d12/angkor-workshops/2011.html>

Practices between “Traditions” and World Heritage Making

Having discussed the discourses on heritage and traditions on and in Angkor, I would now like to analyse the practices conducted under the rhetorical umbrella of preserving traditions and old villages, but which function in reality for the sake of World Heritage making. This entails the selection of particular traditions deemed suitable for a World Heritage Site and the discarding or restricting of others that are deemed unsuitable.

What are considered “traditions” by some groups of people often do not have specific or known origins; they are nonetheless often recognized by the surrounding communities and related to the customary rights of practice, use, and ownership. When the authorities use the term “tradition”, there is a selection that has been made for specific purposes. Cultural activities that were banned in addition to the aforementioned bans and restrictions of traditional socio-economic practices after 2000, included the performance of traditional New Year games at Angkor Wat: a tug-of-war, singing matches, and a game of throwing a scarf filled with kapok cotton by local villagers, which were all competed in by two teams. The reason given by the authorities for banning or restricting the traditional socio-economic or cultural practices of the local inhabitants was that they were a disturbance to tourists visiting the Angkor Park.

Religious practices such as staying overnight at Angkor Wat monasteries, organizing rituals, praying at certain locations, and reconstructing buildings in monasteries as the symbol of merit-making were also subject to some restrictions in the major heritage areas. Other restrictions included the accusation levelled at some older people who were taking care of religious statues at the Bayon temple (Figs. 4 and 5) and receiving donations from visitors that they were making profits in the sacred site. Meanwhile, dinner shows for the guests of high-end hotels have been allowed to take place on the site (Fig. 6), though these are also clearly staged for commercial purposes. The latter can be seen as the creation of a “new tradition” in an era of tourism development that is considered suitable or acceptable for a World Heritage Site. It is clear then that the decisions about which traditions are to be discarded and which are to be promoted are arbitrary and subject to the vision of a powerful individual or governmental body.

The most serious issue involving the local communities in recent years is the APSARA’s strict imposition of construction rules and regulations. The background for this is the rapid increase of the local population caused largely by the settlement of domestic economic migrants from other areas, often from other provinces, as well as a natural population increase that has occurred as the result of an improvement of socio-economic conditions since the 1990s. Under the political rhetoric of “preserving old villages,” APSARA aims to arrest the number of houses, designs, and lifestyles in the area. Requests for construction must now meet the criteria set by APSARA whose strategy to counter the problem is two-pronged; first, establishing a site of relocation outside the Park, as mentioned earlier, and second, stopping the growth of the village population. APSARA seems to believe that these

Fig. 4 A caretaker from a local village at Bayon (Miura 2006)



Fig. 5 After her removal (Miura 2011)



Fig. 6 An open-air dinner show in preparation at Bayon (Miura 2014)





Fig. 7 Construction halted for a young family (Miura 2010)

aims can be achieved in two ways; first, by encouraging local inhabitants, especially young reproductive couples, to move to Run Ta-Ek; and second, by limiting the construction of houses to “old” inhabitants only, thus limiting the expansion of households to the minimum level in the villages. “Old” inhabitants are allowed to renovate their houses if they are damaged and to rebuild new ones in the same size as the previous one or make the extension of their old houses, all of this must be done with the authorization of APSARA (cf. Khuon 2006b, 4). New inhabitants, including the children of registered “old inhabitants” — the heads of the households — are not allowed to build houses (Fig. 7).

Where then does APSARA draw the line between “old” and “new” inhabitants? According to local informants, in some villages APSARA considers those people who were living in the site before the year 2000 to be “old,” but in other villages the cut-off year is 2004. This discrepancy in the year marking “old” and “new” inhabitants may stem from the year of the survey made by APSARA in the villages. In order to implement the building rules and regulations to preserve “old villages,” APSARA is unintentionally destroying the very essence of traditional family organization: particularly its characteristic matri-locality and the custom of children living near their parents in order to better support each other. Run Ta-Ek, located in the distance, makes it difficult for many villagers to leave their native or married-in villages, despite the fact that the first 100 families are provided with building materials for their new houses, as well as free land allocated for living and agriculture. The new families who moved there complained that they were unable to make a living because of its isolation and distance from market towns, despite the fact that some families began to gain some income by receiving eco-tourists to stay overnight. Many of the husbands and wives without children would therefore travel

to Siem Reap or near the Thai border to find work, mainly at construction sites. This is because there are only a few job opportunities available nearby, these include becoming APSARA workers, school teachers, and small shop owners; furthermore, as of my last visit in August 2013 farmers have been slow to return to rice planting after the disastrous floods in 2012/13. As for the construction of houses, this traditionally required authorization from the village and the commune chiefs.⁹ After the World Heritage nomination, however, the rule changed in Angkor to make APSARA the sole authority needed for house construction. After a decade of emergency conservation had been conducted, Angkor's management policy shifted in 2004 to its sustainable management phase. The imposition of strict rules came about in 2005 after the decision of the Royal Government of Cambodia (No.70/SSR) was issued on September 16, 2004 (APSARA Authority 2005). Some local authorities, as well as local villagers, are nonetheless confused about these new rules and regulations, considering that building small huts for poor families is based on the former practice and may not require APSARA's authorization but only that of the local authorities. To further complicate matters, individual members of APSARA staff have said different things at different times. There were also reports of corruption whereby those who managed to bribe relevant APSARA officials were able to avoid demolition; this even included some who built modern concrete houses. This situation, where more vulnerable people are subject to the demolition of their houses by APSARA policemen with guns or forced to destroy them by themselves, is considered unfair by the local villagers on the whole. Moreover, in the process of demolition there have been reports of some valuables such as money, gold, mobile phones, construction materials, and equipment being taken away by APSARA staff and even the use of violence by APSARA policemen in some villages (Miura 2011a, 133–43; Reuy 2010a, b).

In 2004, APSARA was reorganized and expanded with the establishment of the *Mixed Intervention Unit* (hereinafter referred to as MIU), which incorporated Military Police, Provincial Police, Heritage Police, the Provincial Department of Land Registration, and the Provincial Department of Forestry (Khun 2006b). In 2008, APSARA became a huge bureaucratic organization comprising fourteen departments, and MIU was converted to a full-fledged *Department of Public Order and Cooperation* (hereinafter referred to as DPOC) (Royal Government 2008). Since 2008, APSARA's demolition of local houses by DPOC has intensified. In one commune nearest to the city of Siem Reap, the rate of demolition is approximately forty houses per year. The intimidation tactics used by APSARA's "demolition team" has created an atmosphere at the Angkor site such that some local villagers refer to APSARA management as the return of the Pol Pot regime or even worse. During the Pol Pot regime, people were also divided roughly between "old or primary people" (rural peasants who were liberated longest), "new people" (military, civil servants, and the educated under the Lon Nol regimes), and the

⁹The commune is an administrative unit consisting of several villages and is smaller than the district.

ordinary (Chandler 1992, 211; Ponchaud 1978, 53–4). Another similarity with the Pol Pot regime is that the APSARA authority encourages the villagers to spy on each other and to inform on any illegal constructions in their villages, which fermented mistrust amongst the inhabitants, and seriously impaired their unity and solidarity (Miura 2011a, 136). APSARA is at a turning point here and must decide whether or not it will bring the local people back to the “tradition” of the authoritarian and merciless past in the name of “preserving old villages,” or redirect their management approaches in order to take into consideration these people’s lives and concerns. Although they have publicly stated that they wish to make the management of Angkor more participatory, the emphasis on the authorization of APSARA in the name of “preserving old villages” can be seen as a twisted version of the older civilizing missions. Nonetheless, Khuon stated the following at the Phnom Bakheng Workshop in 2006: “To ensure that these populations (local inhabitants)¹⁰ can continue to live in accordance with their religious practices 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). In other areas, APSARA has made efforts to assist some local villagers with organic farming to produce vegetables and fruits for hotels and restaurants, to provide harvestable forests, and to provide employment as temple or forest guards, restoration or maintenance workers and toilet cleaners, and to issue permits to run stalls at the temple sites or initiate ox-cart tourism in some villages (Khuon 2006a, b). It is also true that some locals have started to feel the benefits of tourism development, but the majority of people are still struggling every day to make a living.

Siem Reap province earns more money than any other province in Cambodia; however, in 2007 it was the third poorest, with about 52 per cent of its population living below the poverty line—that is, on less than 50 US cents a day. The lion’s share of profits from tourism development in Angkor-Siem Reap leaves the country, while only a minimum remains in the local communities, not to mention the rural communities outside the Angkor Park.¹¹

Hand-in-hand with the destruction of traditions and the introduction of new employment for the local population, new traditions have been invented. The strategies of APSARA regarding the restrictions of house constructions or modifications were later loosened for approximately a month during the Commune Election in 2012. The old system requiring that requests for building permits be submitted to the local authorities was reintroduced, although ultimately these lists of requests from the respective villages were required to be submitted to APSARA. The electoral “generosity” of the ruling party, desperate to gather as many votes as possible, gave the local communities unexpected opportunities to build houses. As a result, a number of new houses, including those for young couples and concrete

¹⁰ The author’s addition.

¹¹ Cf. ADI Team et al. 2002, 2; Khuon 2006a, 116; Hing and Sokphally 2007, 27 and 39; De Lopez et al. 2006, 6; Esposito and Nam 2008, III–36.



Fig. 8 An elephant ride beside Bayon (Miura 2010)

ones, appeared. But the constructions during the electoral period were not subject to demolition. The Prime Minister Hun Sen received a number of complaints from the residents on the Angkor World Heritage Site, which had to be taken care of well before and during the elections. The inhabitants of the World Heritage Site quickly learned the game, which was repeated in an even more extensive way during the national elections a year later. This has become a new tradition—the *détente* of the election period between the government and the local population. There is evidently no solid policy of sustainable development or heritage management in situ, but the practical needs of the government seem to take precedence over any other principles.

Under normal situations, some “old traditions” have been reintroduced and others re-contextualized to suit what the authorities consider appropriate to their civilized visions for a World Heritage Site. The old traditions from the French colonial period that have been reintroduced include elephant rides for tourists (Fig. 8), dance and theatrical performances, and an illumination of Angkor Wat (Falser 2013a, 10).

The illumination was used to promote night tours, though they were abruptly discontinued after controversies developed between APSARA and international heritage conservators and concerned Cambodians over the possible damage to the temple and the atmosphere of excessive commoditization (Palatino 2009). A re-contextualized tradition from the colonial period can be exemplified by the



Fig. 9 Photograph models posing at Bayon (Miura 2011)

group of youngsters clad in traditional theatrical costumes who began to appear at the Bayon temple, Angkor Wat and other prominent temples, and who pose for photos with tourists who will pay their US\$10 fee (Fig. 9). Similarly, a group of musicians who are land mine victims are often found playing traditional music in other prominent sites for tourists. In this case, voluntary donations are expected.

Apart from old traditions that have been reintroduced or re-contextualized, there are completely new traditions that have been introduced entirely for tourism purposes. For instance, in Angkor Wat one may have a photo taken to commemorate a pony ride wearing a cowboy hat and carrying a long sword with a sheath in front of the northern pond, with the mass of the buildings in the background (Fig. 10). Electric cars have also been introduced as a means of entering Angkor Thom and in order to protect the environment. A yellow balloon was also installed in the west of Angkor Wat for visitors to enjoy the views of the temple and its environs from above; one may also venture a helicopter ride over the site.

Boat rides for tourists were also arranged in the moat of Angkor Thom and Baray Reach Dak (Jayatataka) with the temple of Neak Pean at the centre. The latter is specifically devised to provide the local communities (i.e. Phlong and Leang Dai) with opportunities to plan and profit directly from tourism development as one of the showcase projects of the Angkor Heritage Management Framework that began in 2009. This scheme was developed by APSARA in co-operation with Australian experts, with Australian and Cambodian funds-in-trusts with UNESCO.



Fig. 10 A pony ride with a cowboy hat and a sword (Source: Miura 2008)

In order to implement the project, APSARA has recreated the Angkorian landscape filled with water (Logan 2010). In the process, however, Phlong villagers lost some rice fields to the canals that were created; they have stated that the compensation provided by APSARA was insufficient. The creation of the canals also caused the flooding of other rice fields belonging to some villagers, damaging the plants. Affected villagers apparently received no apologies or compensation from APSARA, despite their repeated requests.

Something similar occurred in Angkor Krau village, close to the north gate of Angkor Thom. In order to fill the West Baray with water and prevent flooding in Siem Reap, APSARA rehabilitated a canal cutting through the village north to south. The water flow into the reservoir, however, has to be controlled to a low level until such time that the excavation and restoration of the temple (West Mabon) on the island is complete. Because of this, severe flooding occurred in the village and rice fields in the moat of Angkor Thom and damaged rice plants and prevented villagers from rice cultivation there during the rainy season of 2012 and 2013. The flooding of 2013 also caused the village to be flooded to knee-deep level twice in September and October. According to one villager, APSARA provided only small compensation for this disaster, while an NGO offered relief goods in the form of rice for the families who were victims of flooding.

The recent project of recreating Angkor landscapes has required considerable sacrifice of the local ways of living. The present is often the target of denials, while

the recreation of the past landscapes is a recurring scheme devised by the authorities. APSARA's civilizing visions and missions also affect the sustenance of the "traditional" lives of the legitimate "old" inhabitants, which APSARA has publicly stated requires protection.

It appears that the Cambodian authorities' use of the term "tradition" is completely arbitrary, and used more as a tool with which to control the local population and their traditional activities, rather than to "preserve old villages" or protect the rights of the old inhabitants. The landscapes of Angkor have changed enormously, but this is not due to the activities of the local inhabitants, but to a far greater extent to the development of tourism. All these changes have been made to form an ideal World Heritage Site as conceived of by Cambodian elites and authorities. It is not UNESCO that has tried to promote its civilizing visions on World Heritage Sites, though they are intrinsic to the concept, but rather the Cambodian elites who were stimulated by the notion of developing civilizing visions and of promoting the recognition of new Cambodian "civilization" by the outside world. As a result, the traditional vision of Angkor as a religious site and the socio-cultural and economic values of the local population have been largely overshadowed.

Conclusions

Discourses and practices on heritage and traditions were strongly affected by the post-conflict situation in Cambodia and by the subsequent nomination of Angkor as a World Heritage Site. As discussed in this paper, there are overlapping issues and similar patterns found between the colonial civilizing mission and the post-conflict one. Civilizing missions require that poor and incompetent citizens are saved and that some of their practices controlled, at the same time particular cultural manifestations are selected as "original," "authentic," or "ancient" by the civilizing party and are safeguarded. In the process, Angkor heritage has served to promote civilizing visions, as well as to provide tangible benefits to both the French administration and Cambodian elites at different times (Miura 2011b). Discourses on heritage, customs, and traditions are closely interrelated. Which heritage, customs, and traditions to preserve is a continuing matter of dispute amongst the diverse actors in this drama; however, those amongst the authorities do tend to impose their own visions on subordinates rather than listen to their voices. As a consequence, the managing authorities have increasingly restricted many of the "traditional" practices of the local inhabitants. "Traditions" are examined and selected by the managing authorities to suit their visions; some have been discarded and others promoted. The question remains: in the name of preserving the Angkor World Heritage Site, are we not merely seeing the idealized, frozen "traditional" landscape that has been manufactured for the tourists' gaze at the expense of social dynamism and diverse landscapes?

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Epilogue: Clearing the Path towards Civilization – 150 Years of “Saving Angkor”

Michael Falser

Abstract This epilogue to the edited volume intends to highlight the astonishing continuity of “civilizing projects,” from colonial through to post-colonial and globalized eras, in the same object of built cultural heritage in Cambodia. Using a historic photograph as our point of departure, this epilogue will take the reader on a transcultural journey through the different pathways of cultural heritage constructions that developed around the famous temple of Angkor Wat between 1860 and 2010. The temple’s central causeway will be used as a motif and metaphor for the “civilizing path” taken by the mission to “Save Angkor,” which has been declared by varying cultural brokers and political regimes in and between Asia and Europe through the past 150 years.

The Context: Cultural Visions, Civilizing Missions, and Cultural Heritage Politics in and between Europe and Asia

As largely explored in the introduction, the colonial “civilizing mission” drew upon a certain reservoir of ideological topoi or cultural visions: the most prominent of these was the stereotype of a colonized culture that was marked by political crises or cultural decadence and was lacking the competence to conserve its own heritage from falling into decay. This was particularly true for many European-colonial contexts in Asia, especially in the ninety years of French-colonial *Cambodge* (1863–1953), as explored by **Gabrielle Abbe**’s contribution in this volume. However, as **Werner Telesko** has revealed in his examination of the relationship between the Habsburg Empire and its neighbouring “colonies” (crown lands), the situation was different for the missions to civilize within Europe where annexed states were believed to have attained a level of cultural achievement comparable to

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those of the colonizing power. Likewise, **Winfried Speitkamp**'s paper in this volume outlines the different situation in context of African states, where the "state of primitivism" ascribed to the colonies was accompanied by the imposition of cultural hegemony by the colonizer. However—and this observation is highlighted through the great majority of the papers in this book (**Krishna Menon** on India; **Marieke Bloembergen/Martijn Eickhoff** on Indonesia; **Helen Grant Ross**, **Henri Locard**, and **Michael Falser** on post-colonial Cambodia; and **Juliane Noth** on China), these argumentations are not exclusive to colonial projects; they can also be detected in the formation processes of independent nation-states, nation-states gaining independence, and in the present-day globalized networks of supra-national institutions (**Keiko Miura** on UNESCO's mission in Angkor). In this volume we have differentiated how *civilizing visions*—the visually demonstrated, written, or vocalized ways to legitimate individual, collective, institutional and/or state-dictated normative ideas—turned into motivations of action to civilize, or *civilizing missions* and became concrete physical operations in a culturo-political action programme. However, how did this programme look like in the concrete case of the temple of Angkor Wat when its often cited causeway became a metaphor of "civilizing the heritage of Angkor"? This started with Henri Mouhot's famous missionary vision in 1863 and has reached into the present day commodification of Angkor as UNESCO World Heritage.

One pair of photographs, three citations, and four observations

In this photo three European protagonists—a lady dressed in white, an elegant gentleman in a tailcoat and top hat, and a white-bearded gentleman in military uniform—are seen walking together along a paved pathway towards the foreground (Fig. 1a). A crowd of (mostly) men is gathered around them; almost all are dressed in black and, some are wearing tailcoats—the mark of an "Occidental" gentleman. Because of their Asian facial features, their black-and-white uniforms, and their cone-shaped hats, as well as the fact that they are holding flat round umbrellas over the couple dressed in white, others in the group are roughly identified as "Oriental." To the left, in the middle ground, a cluster of Asian guards carrying shields and swords delimit the distinguished group on the pathway from the background where vegetation, a tower, a laterally stretched risalith, a snake-headed railing, and a hidden staircase containing spectators (an impressive architectural structure probably constructed in stone and in a style that an amateur might identify as twelfth-century Angkorian) frame the scene.

There are a number of ways that one might interpret this image. For instance, were it not for the lack of Cambodian hosts, officials, and spectators, it could easily pass as a press photograph of a sight-seeing visit paid to the temples of Angkor during the official state visit of a high-ranking European general and his wife. But because of the missing Cambodian representative on the Cambodian temple site, another interpretation seems more appropriate: the figure of the older, respected

a



Fig. 1 (a) Angkor Wat in a transcultural setting, 1931. (Source: Parisienne de Photographie, © Roger-Viollet). (continued)

general (the only Western person in heavily decorated military uniform and with a distinctly aristocratic air) acts as host and appears to guide the elegant, plain-clothed couple through the (well-staged and certainly not accidental) architectural *parcours*, which seems to be under both his power and control. Taking into consideration both the “Asian” crowd (forming more of a group around than with the general and therefore fulfilling a more subordinate role) and the “Asian” architecture in the background, the highly asymmetric character of the scenario is striking and suggests that this is a typically colonial scene in front of the famous temples of Angkor. In this interpretation, the central figure enters into a very specific relation with the framing architecture and represents the French-colonial regime as the “owner” of the temple, which is transformed from a site of religious worship into a “cultural heritage feature,” particularly for visitors from another imperial power.

However, a closer look at the scene raises more questions: First, the asphalt paving and straight, concrete road curbs in front of the temple look more like a Western streetscape; second, the temple itself looks “too restored” and contains no ruined areas, and no traces of decay or weathered patina; and third, the vegetation behind the temple is not tropical but of a “coniferous type” that is typical of colder climates. Taken together these clues indicate that the scene is actually an “Occidental staging” of Angkor placed within a colonial power structure. And indeed, the

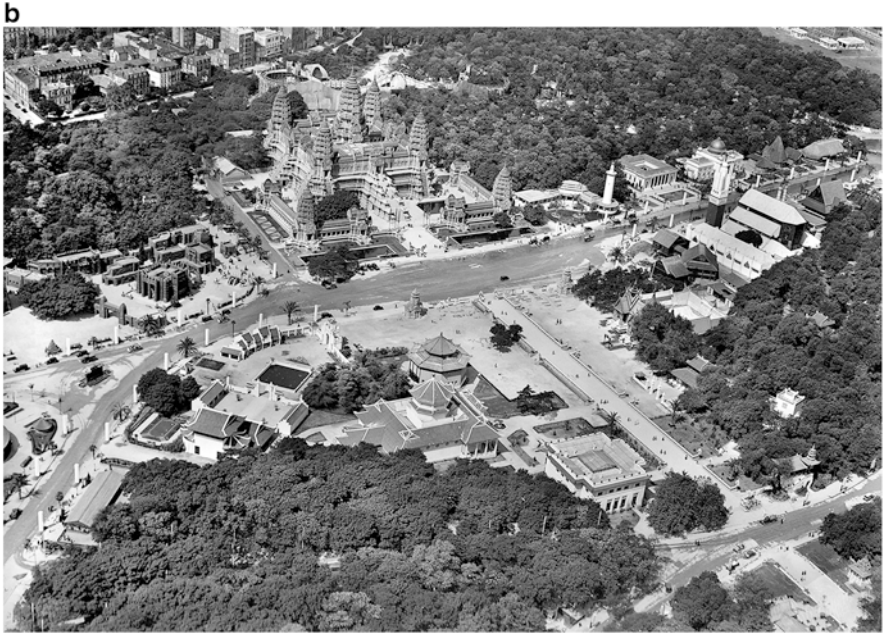


Fig. 1 (b) The Indochinese section and its 1:1 replica of Angkor Wat in an aerial photograph over the *Avenue des colonies* at the 1931 International Colonial Exhibition in the Parisian Parc de Vincennes (Source: Parisienne de Photographie, © Roger-Viollet)

caption reads: “Le maréchal Lyautey fait visiter l’Exposition coloniale au duc et à la duchesse d’York. Au fond, le temple d’Angkor. [The Marshal Lyautey takes the Duke and the Duchess of York around the Colonial Exhibition. In the background the temple of Angkor]”. The *Exposition Coloniale Internationale* of 1931 took place in the *Parc de Vincennes* in the eastern Parisian suburb and lasted only a few months; afterwards the area was, with few exceptions, entirely cleared of its ephemeral structures (Fig. 1b) (Norindr 1996; Morton 2000; Falser 2011, 2015a). Hubert Lyautey—a French *militaire* officer during the colonial wars in Africa, the first *Résident général* of the French protectorate of Morocco in 1912, the war minister during World War I, and *Maréchal de France* in 1921—was the official representative at this French-colonial event. The guest depicted in the photograph was the future King George VI of England with his wife, Elizabeth.

This image did not appear in a historic guidebook, exhibition brochure, or another French-colonial propaganda medium related to the 1931 event, but as a reprint in the first volume of the *Lieux de mémoire* (officially translated as “Sites of [French] Memory,” or “Realms of Memory”) series by Pierre Nora, published since 1984 (Nora 1984–1992, cf. Nora 1989). In this publication project, Nora used a large number of themed articles written by different historians to generate renewed pride in France’s history, including France’s colonial past from a post-colonial

perspective. This was “deliberately created” (Nora 1989, 12) through commemorative evocations of famous French personalities, symbolically charged sites, and events of a re-imagined collective identity, in this case the “Exposition Coloniale de 1931” (this event was covered by Charles-Robert Ageron in Nora’s first volume, see Ageron 1984). Nora’s “writ[ing of] a history of France through the medium of its memories,” in which “the notion of heritage [was supposedly] enveloped in a consensual notion of patrimony” has been heavily criticized from a transcultural perspective in recent years (Juneja 2009, 12 and 18).

In order to recall this volume’s observations and interpretations for different civilizing projects within the medium of cultural heritage, it may be useful to contextualize this image using excerpts from the French-colonial discourses that were published in the May 1931 special edition *Exposition Coloniale* in the popular journal *L’Illustration*. The following quotations are from article contributions written by Marcel Olivier (*rapporteur général* of the whole exhibition), Pierre Deloncle (*secrétaire général* of the exhibition and *rapporteur général* of Group I *Politique coloniale*), and Claude Farrère, (an academic journalist who wrote about the reconstitution of the Angkor temple as the *Palais d’Indochine*).

At this very moment, when somewhere on this planet diverse intellectuals and certain political parties speak so easily about a failure [of the colonial project, MF] or a supposed “Decline of the West,” the International Colonial Exhibition in the Vincennes Park strongly affirms that none of the great European nations (including the USA) are willing to admit any failure or to renounce the *civilizing mission* upon which they [have] embarked. [This exhibition] is a brilliant manifestation [...] of the legitimacy of the participating nation’s pride in their colonial past. In this vast comparison of their applied methods, the colonizers will also gain an equally precious double lesson: *of the legitimacy of their mission and of the solidarity that unites them in their on-going effort to propagate and defend a civilization from which humanity will receive so many benefits.* [italics MF] (Deloncle 1931)

Pierre Deloncle: “La continuité de l’action coloniale française,”
in *L’Illustration*, May 1931

The inauguration of the Colonial Exhibition was a global event [...] *Our custodian role [rôle tuteur]* is vital [...] To agitate the Orient against the Occident is a dangerous and fruitless undertaking. For those who doubt the possibility of living side-by-side and even uniting, for the benefit of all, the thinking of the Occident with that of the Orient, *I simply advise meditating for some hours in the halls of the Indochinese or the Dutch Indies sections!* [italics MF] (Olivier 1931)

Marcel Olivier: “L’exposition coloniale – Oeuvre de paix,”
in *L’Illustration*, May 1931

This reconstitution of Angkor is the star attraction of the Colonial Exhibition, and Angkor itself is the masterpiece of the entire Indochina [section]. [...] *For those who gaze at this splendid reconstitution of Angkor [...] I wish the discretion to understand that it is us, the French in Asia [Français d’Asie], us, the Occidental pacifiers of the Far East, who are the legitimate inheritors of this antique Khmer civilization, us, certainly better than all who followed this old civilization until our arrival in these far away and holy regions.* It is us there, where we are now, who banned further violence, killing, and the destruction of the past, which is the natural teacher of the future. This, our oeuvre, is beneficial. We shall continue! [italics MF] (Farrère 1931)

Claude Farrère: “Angkor et l’Indochine,” in *L’Illustration*, May 1931

The following four points sum up our preliminary findings and allow us to formulate a few rough definitions:

1) Translatability and mobility of monumental architecture

In contrast with the current concept of architecture as an immobile, static, and territorially fixed entity, the Angkor pavilion in the Paris exhibition of 1931 made clear that even monumental architecture can be physically transferred (translated) for use in ephemeral exhibitions, and exploited as propaganda through photography and print media. This process was and still is most often embedded in political and ideological (colonial, post-colonial, and universalist) motivations, where the physical substitution of architecture was and is part of its symbolic appropriation for and transfer to new meaning. In other words, architecture can be transferred from its original context and function (in this case the temple of Angkor Wat as a religiously venerated twelfth-century Shivaist, now Buddhist temple in Cambodia) into a Western and globally accepted concept known as “cultural heritage.”

2) The role of “cultural heritage” in (post)colonial politics between East and West

With this epilogue’s thematic focus on Angkor Wat, we shall see that in the asymmetrical power relations of French Indochina from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, architecture played a crucial role in the formation and justification of a civilizing mandate in which the colonial Western power staged itself as the symbolic custodian, legitimate inheritor, legal owner, institutionalized preserver, and conservator-restorer of the salvaged pasts identified as cultural heritage. This notion was perfectly suited to the nineteenth-century European self-appointed conquest to civilize, uplift, improve, and develop the colonial world by salvaging its ancient relics and sites. As a consequence, the local stakeholders (in this case communities neighboring the Angkor site, including caretaker monks, religious pilgrims, and even the Cambodian king within a real or re-established lineage of patronage) were drastically downgraded and either put under foreign tutelage or entirely left out of the re-presenting narrative and picture (compare with the image and quotations discussed above). This is a process that we have termed the “archaeologizing of heritage” (Falser and Juneja 2013a). As the most visible, overtly plausible, communicable, and exploitable form of the secularized but semi-religious concept of “cultural heritage” (French: *patrimoine culturel* incorporating *héritage*), architecture served colonial discourses for the legitimization of political hegemonies and their ideological dogmata. However, this process cannot be reduced to colonialism alone; as we have seen in many studies in this volume, it was also used in the self-civilizing efforts of independent states all around the world and continued in the “national heritage” narratives of post-colonial, independent nation-states or as a means of reaffirming the collective commemoration of past colonial glory (see, for instance, the use of the 1931 image of Angkor in Nora’s publication in France’s postcolonial 1980s). Lastly, it continues to be a strong presence in the discourses around “universal heritage” that exist today in the form of inter- or transnational institutions under the self-appointed

authority of (inter)national and global elites within UNESCO’s World Heritage dogma, as **Keiko Miura** has convincingly explored in the case of Angkor.

3) Cultural heritage, civilization, humanity, and the mission to civilize

As we have discussed in greater detail in the introduction, the hegemonic, legitimizing discourses around the term “cultural heritage” are strongly embedded in the omniscient and universal narrative of “civilization.” Its assigned cultural conditions, values, and moral attributes—along an imposed, progress-oriented scale or taxonomic system—range from “low” (defined as “primitive, decadent, and ignorant” societies and cultures) to “intermediate” (either high but extinct or “re-discovered” civilizations of classical or Oriental antiquity) or developing (“awakening”) cultures, through to the top level (modern colonial empires), which are seen as the leaders of all other Western nation-states. Following this narrative, the leading colonial power is understood to “naturally” inherit the (self-appointed) burden and duty of tutor, protector, and enhancer of cultures on a lower level; this was/is a mission that—prominently in French modern history, as we have seen—was known as the *mission civilisatrice* or civilizing mission. Prominent architectures in societies “full of decadence and decline” were described as either decaying ruins or as completely lost and forgotten. But once they were declared part of cultural heritage and within the remit of a colonial empire’s overseas possessions, their archaeological rediscovery, preservation, restoration, or full-scale reconstruction in situ and/or temporary reconstitution and representation in Western museums and exhibitions became the new owner’s task and duty, which was to be fulfilled with caring devotion, altruistic care, financial and human sacrifice, and, of course, a purely scientific interest that would ultimately benefit and further civilized humanity.

4) Cultural heritage as a multi-centered/-sited concept: from a colonial and national to a transcultural enquiry

As was briefly indicated using the illustration of “Angkor in Paris” and the accompanying quotations, the old-fashioned “area studies” on colonial and post-colonial heritage politics with their focus on fixed territorial entities (such as “Cambodia”/“Southeast Asia”/Asia or France/Europe) and the one-way direction of action from the active Western colonial power *into* the passive and “re-active” East, are insufficient to explain the more complex, highly entangled, and reciprocal relationship of this power relation. Not only has the West re-invented Asian antiquity, but the image of the Orient has also served as a mirror and source through which the Occident has tested its own civilizing visions and formulated, explained, propagated, and defended the status of its own civilization. Furthermore, it is not enough to limit the story to a discussion of the transfer of heritage politics from the Western colonial *empire* to the post-colonial Asian *nation*, since both concepts were and are still being discussed and even assessed within the exalted categories of

“civilization” and “humanity.” For example, both area- and nation-based approaches are central to *Cambodge: The Cultivation of a Nation, 1860–1945*, an invaluable study written by Penny Edwards. Her final conclusion that the colonial government, with the *École française d’Extrême-Orient* acting as the leading archaeological and conservationist institution for the Angkor temple, “forged a new past for Cambodia” and that the “colonial rule indelibly stained the mystery of Angkor’s making and meaning, repackaging old lore into a new story of *national* glory, *national* neglect, *national* decline, and *national* renaissance” (Edwards 2007, 248), is only one possible interpretation. Bernard Philippe Groslier, the leading archaeologist at Angkor until the early 1970s, took a more pessimistic view of things. In his 1986 article “L’image d’Angkor dans la conscience khmère” he came to the conclusion that colonial impact had had a disastrous effect on the Cambodian population’s direct link to Angkor and that the French “not deliberately, but in a very concrete way dispossessed the Khmer from their past” and created a “dichotomy in the thought of the Khmer on their past” (Groslier 1986, 26–27).

Building on this side effect of transmission from colonial to post-colonial and national rule, this volume’s contributions took Groslier’s notion of a dichotomy one step further and followed this problematic construction of Khmer cultural heritage through the events of Cambodia’s recent history: through the national experiment of the 1960s (Helen Grant Ross), the “dark ages” of the 1970s and 1980s (Henri Locard), up to the point when Angkor was merged into the Cold War internationalist discourse (Michael Falser) and became a part of UNESCO’s World Heritage of Humanity-discourse in the 1990s where it has remained to this day (Keiko Miura). At this point, fragmentary elements of colonial, nationalist, essentialist, and universalist discourses were merged into this new and hybrid heritage construction called Angkor. Only from this perspective can the recent ruptures and (dis)continuities of Angkor’s cultural heritage construction be judged sufficiently. Because half of Angkor’s modern heritage-making history happened in France’s universal and colonial exhibitions and museums (Falser 2011, 2013a–g), and with the emigration and later return of Khmer elites to the French capital, our *transcultural approach towards cultural heritage*—an approach which was theoretically formulated by the Heidelberg Chair of Global Art History with a book publication in 2013 (Falser and Juneja 2013b)—will not limit itself to the single territorial entity called Cambodia, nor to its transformation from colony to independent nation alone.

Instead, this volume took a multi-centered and -sited, indeed a transcultural, position on the role of cultural heritage within various civilizing visions and missions. It touched upon colonial, post-colonial, and globalized contexts across different—subsequent or simultaneous—regimes, borders, and timeframes. In order to highlight these transcultural trajectories of civilizing visions/missions through the medium of cultural heritage, we will summarize here in six steps—using quotations and illustrations as combined sources of historic discourses—the specific French colonial, French-Cambodian, national-Cambodian, and “universal” histories of the past 150 years (1866–2012) in the heritage construction of Angkor (cf. with Falser 2015a). Special attention will be paid to the twelfth-century temple

of Angkor Wat whose central causeway has always served as a symbolic *pars pro toto* for the various civilizing efforts.

Transcultural Paths of Angkor Wat as a Medium of Civilizing Missions

Inventing Angkor’s past civilization during the French colonial impact in Indochina: From Mouhot in 1860 to the Mekong Explorative Mission in 1866

There were, of course, many accounts of the glorious temples of Angkor before direct French-colonial contact in Indochina. These included the famous report of the Chinese delegate Zhou Daguan from around 1300 (Abel-Rémusat 1819; Pelliot 1951), the post-Angkorian court chronicles (Vickery 1977), the Portuguese reports from 1600 onwards (Groslier 1958), a first plan of Angkor Wat made by a Japanese visitor in the 1630s (Peri 1923), the era before the French impact (Chandler 1973, 1983a), and various short visits up to 1850 made by Father Bouillevaux (1858, 1879). However, it is the report based on the 1860 visit of the French amateur naturalist and anthropologically inclined explorer Henri Mouhot that was considered the first and was developed into a large-scale, strategically exploited document telling Europe about Angkor and “using Angkor to popularize the French presence within Indochina in the Metropolitan opinion” (Dagens 2005, 279, cf. Dagens 1989). Ironically, especially as regards the extreme pride France later took in Angkor, Mouhot’s travels to the Upper Cambodian temples of Angkor (from 1794 to 1907 part of British-influenced Siam) and to the Laotian border zone was, after many fruitless petitions to uninterested French ministries, financed by London’s Royal Geographic Society. The colonial-expansionist movement towards Southern China via the Mekong River first gained momentum with the British in India and Burma to the southwest and the French in Cochinchina with Saigon in the southeast of the Indochinese peninsula. Mouhot’s report on his three-week stay at Angkor in January 1860 was first published in French in the popular *Tour du Monde* in 1863, in English in 1864 in a revised version, re-edited in French in 1868, commented on in 1966 (Pym 1966), and, finally, republished in both languages in 1989 when Cambodia was reborn as the youngest Asian nation-state under UN supervision and French leadership. Overlooking for the moment the extremely interesting variations in the different publications, the significance for this study lies in the fact that Mouhot (who died in Laos near Luang Prabang on November 10, 1861) was not only constructed posthumously as the “discoverer of Angkor” and as a hero by the French-colonial propaganda and mass media, but more importantly and most often overlooked, that he also formulated his architectural hymn to Angkor using a unique blend of French colonialist and missionary rhetoric:

Ongcor [. . .] 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 [Ongcor Wat]—a rival to that of Solomon, and erected by some ancient [Oriental, in Mouhot 1863, 299] Michel Angelo—might take an honorable 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 this [Cambodian] nation is now plunged. [. . .] European conquest, abolition of slavery, wise and protecting laws, and experience, fidelity, and scrupulous rectitude to those who administer them, alone would bring the *regeneration* of this state. It lies near to Cochin China, the subjection of which France is now aiming, and in which she will doubtless succeed: under her sway it will become a land of plenty. I wish her to possess this land [of Angkor], which would add a magnificent jewel to her crown. [. . .] *The temple of Ongcor [Wat] is the most beautiful and best preserved of all the remains, and which is also the first which presents itself to the eye of the traveler [. . .] Suddenly [while standing on the causeway of Angkor Wat, MF], and as if by enchantment, he seems to be transported from barbarism to civilization, from profound darkness to light.* [italic MF] (Mouhot 1864, 277–9, 275, 282)

Henri Mouhot (1864) *Travels in the central parts of Indochina*

In his “vision” from Angkor Wat’s central causeway towards its central and elevated tower-structure (Fig. 2), Mouhot’s aesthetic and moral notion of transformation from “barbarism to civilization, from profound darkness to light”—or in the earlier 1863 French version “On se croit transporté de la barbarie à la civilisation, des profondes ténèbres à la lumière” (Mouhot 1863, 298)—called for French-colonial action in favour of the “regeneration” of Cambodia as a “nation,” the



Classée et entrée principale d'Angkor-Wat. — Dessin de Guisard d'après M. Mouhot.

Fig. 2 Mouhot’s 1863 depiction of the central massif of Angkor Wat seen from its central causeway with two staffage figures (Source: Mouhot 1863, 297)

present degenerated status of which had become visible in the supposedly decayed condition of its past architectural *grandeur*.

Mouhot’s 1863 French version was appropriated only a few months later to serve Francis Garnier’s more political, colonial-expansionist point of view:

Above others, considering the question [of colonial conquest] from a higher viewpoint, should a country like France, when she puts her feet on an alien and barbarian soil, limit and content herself to the mere goal and motivation of the extension of her commerce? *This generous nation, whose opinion reigns [over] the whole of civilized Europe and whose ideas have conquered the world, has received by Providence a much higher mission: a mission for the emancipation and the call to light and liberty of these races and people which are still enslaved by ignorance and despotism.* Should France turn out the flame of civilization in her hands as regards the profound darkness of Annam? [...] Should it turn away from the most beautiful part of her oeuvre? [...] Cochinchine [...] a new empire of the East-Indies [*Indes-Orientales*] emerges in the shadow of our national pavilion. [italics MF] (Garnier 1864, 44, 45)

Francis Garnier (1864) *La Cochinchine française en 1864*

Raised in the naval college at Brest and in 1863 made *inspecteur des affaires indigènes* in Saigon’s twin city Cholon in the French colony of Cochinchina, Garnier was one of the first leading political figures to formulate a version of the French *mission civilisatrice* in Indochina. He saw this mission as a French “East Indies” that would be equivalent compensation for the French possessions of Canada and India, which had been lost to Great Britain (Osborne 1995); he died on a military mission to Hanoi in 1873 defending this vision. Although this first French expansionist movement into Indochina was propagated to a certain extent by the hesitant central French government of the Second Empire (1852–1870), the militant doctrine of colonization that was developing amongst single admirals and officers in the French navy and in the geographical movement around the Paris-based *Société de la Géographie* (since 1821 in Paris) was the leading advocate of expansionism. Its supporters ranged from the Marquis de Chasseloup-Laubat, minister of the navy, to Vice-Admiral Bonard, *gouverneur commandant* in Cochinchina, who had negotiated a treaty for a French Protectorate over lower Cambodia with the new King Norodom. In 1862 Bonard had already undertaken a journey to Angkor on Siamese territory. In his 1863 report in the *Revue maritime et coloniale* he used his observations as a cultural argument for the restoration of the decayed Cambodian past, as a monument to the *grand empire*, and for French expansionist intensions (Bonard 1863; cf. Dagens 2008).

However, the dual character of the French colonial mission to (a) propagate and (re)introduce civilization to Far East Indochina on a universal scale, and (b) to position the French modern nation as the re-discoverer, protector, and ultimately, the inheritor and continuer of the far-distant and extinct high civilization of Angkor, has its roots, as we explored in this volume’s introduction, in a specifically French Republican desire to defend humanist principles universally and bring France’s nationalist vocation as a *grande nation* and a superior civilization into the colonial arena. A differently embedded transfer situation, one hundred years after Napoleon’s culturo-political mission to Egypt around 1800 (compare introduction), seemed to have been realized in Cambodia, when the archaeological resurrection,

architectural preservation, technological and aesthetic mastery, and touristic propagation of Angkor through the efforts of a *mise en valeur* became the central culturo-political task of the French in “their” Indochina after the temples had been “retroceded” from Siam in 1907. As a Far-Eastern version of Napoleon’s crusade to co-opt Egypt’s antiquity as “heritage” (despite the fact that the Far East was not considered the European cradle of civilization), Garnier convinced the governor of the colony, Admiral de la Grandière, the co-negotiator of the French-Cambodian treaty, of the expansionist and commercial importance of the Mekong river into the Southern-Chinese province of Yunnan. At this time, de Lagrée had already undertaken preliminary archaeological investigations at the Angkorian temple sites located just a few kilometres north on Siamese territory in order to anticipate France’s political claim on the territory. The Mekong Exploratory Mission took place between 1866 and 1868, but was, in terms of its political-commercial goal, a complete failure. What is more important for the purposes of this study is the fact that the Mekong mission around de Lagrée and Garnier made a stop-over between June 23 and July 1, 1866 at Angkor on Siamese territory. This stay at a cultural site off the main itinerary should serve as a symbolic “consecration” of both de Lagrée’s prior archaeological investigations and, in a wider sense, of the mission’s scientific and commercial purpose (Garnier 1873/I, 22; cf. Falser 2013a). Mouhot had depicted the central causeway of Angkor Wat in 1863 as a heavily overgrown site (Fig. 2) quite the opposite of the very first photograph of the temple ever taken, by the British photographer John Thomson in early 1866, which depicted a well-preserved temple and an active Buddhist monastery (Fig. 3).

The belated 1873 publication of the Mekong Explorative Mission with Francis Garnier as editor was—besides the first and last group photograph of the mission on the central staircase of Angkor Wat taken by the Saigon-based photographer Émile Gsell a few months after Thomson (Fig. 4)—visualized with the help of the gifted draughtsman and naval captain Louis Delaporte. Delaporte’s drawings and detailed plans formed another crucial element in the notion “of the heavily overgrown and ruined temple” of Angkor Wat and its indifferent stakeholders who were considered to be ignorant of their own great history, antiquity, and cultural heritage (Fig. 5).



Fig. 3 The first photograph of Angkor Wat’s magnificent perspective taken by the Scottish photographer John Thomson in 1866 and published in 1867 in *The Antiquities of Cambodia—a Series of Photographs taken on the Spot, with Letterpress Descriptions* (Source: St. Andrews Library, UK)



Fig. 4 The main protagonists of the 1866–8 Mekong Mission, from *left to right*: De Lagrée, de Carné, Thorel, Joubert, Delaporte, Garnier. Photographed by Émile Gsell in 1866, a few months after Thomson (*Source*: Gsell n.d. (1867?))



Fig. 5 “Locals” on the causeway of Angkor Wat as they were depicted in the 1873 Garnier publication *Voyage d’exploration en Indo-Chine effectué pendant les années 1866, 1867 et 1868 par une commission française* (*Source*: Garnier 1873, vol. 1, plate VI)

The Universal Exhibitions of 1878 and 1889, Louis Delaporte, and the first reconstitutions of Angkor in Paris

In this discussion of the role of cultural heritage in civilizing visions, Angkor before 1900 is a particularly useful case exemplifying our multi-sited and transcultural approach. The physical remains of Angkor's "grand, but vanished civilization" were already included in the civilizing mission of French-colonial Indochina when they were physically still—*de iure* until 1907—on Siamese territory. This unique constellation facilitated the peculiar development that Angkor was to a certain degree made visible, staged, and propagated not on its "real" spot in Cambodia, but in the very centre of French power—Paris. And the media that were used to incorporate Angkor into and visualize it within the emerging nineteenth-century narrative of "nation-progress-civilization-humanity" were indeed Western inventions—the museum and the universal exhibition. Both were part of the "historiographical" and "museological modalities" through which colonial powers—France and Great Britain leading the pack—could "form a legitimizing discourse of their civilizing [patronizing] mission in the colonies" by "defining the [colonies'] nature of the past, establish[ing] priorities in the creation of a monumental record of [their] civilization and propounding canons of taste" as well as the cultural values for the metropolitan public. In this process—and the temples of Angkor were no exception—"objects were transformed into artefacts, antiquities and art" (Cohn 1996, 10 and 76). All of this was inscribed into the ideology of the Third French Republic before 1900. Its first major formulation in the context of Indochina was attained during Jules Ferry's years as the minister of public instruction (1879–1883), but—after the first two French exhibitions of 1855 and 1867—had already been triggered by the Parisian Universal Exhibition of 1878. Here, the emerging disciplines of archaeology, ethnography, anthropology, and geography played a crucial role in establishing a Eurocentric taxonomy and classification of world civilization in general and of France's own cultural self-concept in particular (Dias 1991). A test run of one section, which was to be institutionalized after the universal exhibition as a *Muséum ethnographique des missions scientifiques*, opened in January of the same year in the *Palais de l'Industrie*. In his opening speech, the acting minister of public instruction, Agénor Bardoux, praised the French researchers' archaeological studies of extinct high civilizations and their ethnographic enquiries into contemporary "primitive" societies in the Americas, Africa, and the Near and Far East (Edward B. Tylor's 1871 book *Primitive Culture* was translated into French only in 1877) and called them "missionaries [*missionnaires*] for the advancement of Enlightenment":

Every object will be used to form this ensemble of material, which will allow us to establish unlimited comparisons between the primitive civilizations of all still existing and already vanished populations on this planet. [...] Inseparable from prehistoric archaeology, auxiliary tool of anthropology, and at the same time commentary on the geographic sciences, ethnography will help to solve what is still one of the most obscure problems: our origins. It is up to us to find the means of bringing this problem *out of the darkness* where it vegetates to powerful recovery [...]. The Museum of Ethnography [and Scientific Missions] [...] will *open a new gate for the study of the progress and the decadence of the*

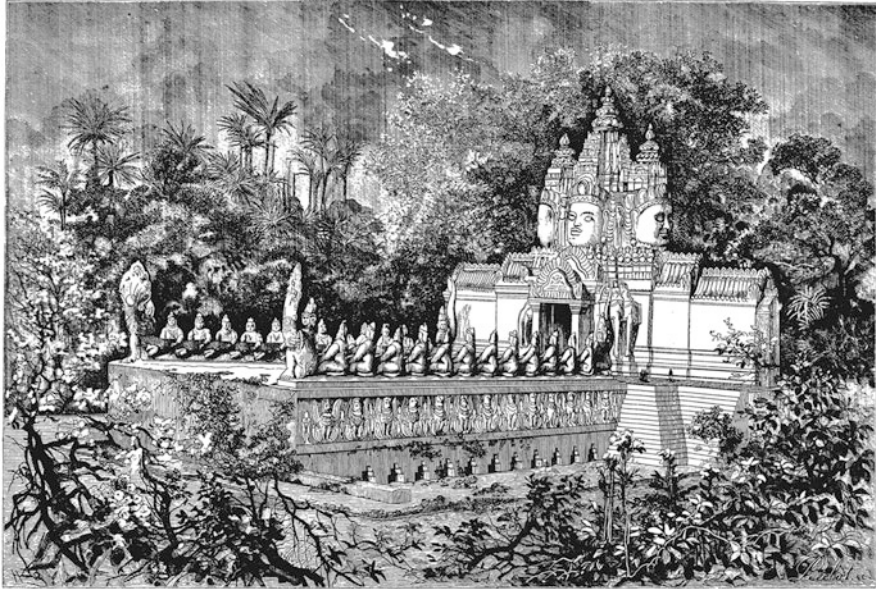
human race, and it will grow everyday due to the altruism of the missionaries of public instruction [...] interested in the advancement of Enlightenment. It is the love for the sciences and for France that has inspired and still inspires, everyday, our traveling explorers [who toil] in exhaustion, surrounded by solitude, often facing the largest threats. It is this double flame which centuples their moral forces [...]. [italics MF] (Notice 1878, 5–8)

Agénor Bardoux, *ministre de l'instruction publique, des cultes et des beaux-arts.* Opening speech for the temporary *Museum ethnographique des missions scientifiques* in the *Palais de l'Industrie*, January 23, 1878)

As **Werner Telesko** on the inner-Habsburgian context and **Winfried Speitkamp** on the German-African colonial situation around 1900 have discussed in this volume, ethnography provided, along with archaeology, an important disciplinary tool with which to establish taxonomies of culture and civilization in colonial contexts and to formulate civilizing visions of a caring (European) centre of power and/or *métropole* in contrast to constructed peripheries and/or established colonies.

When the Parisian test exhibition in the *Palais de l'Industrie* was finally transferred to the main building of the 1878 Universal Exhibition on the *Champ de Mars* and christened the “Hall of the [French] scientific missions,” it was placed in a position of prominence directly on the left-hand side of the main entrance. One of its centerpieces was the first three-dimensional representation of Angkorian architecture in Europe (Falser 2013b). This took the form of a 1:10-scaled plaster cast model of the southern entry gate to the ancient city of Angkor Thom located just north of the temple of Angkor Wat. Here Bardoux’s above-quoted “*porte nouvelle* for the study of the progress and decadence of the human race” had finally materialized via the disciplinary tools of ethnography and archaeology. It had been executed under the supervision of Louis Delaporte, the former “artistic” participant of the Mekong Mission of 1866–68. An ardent defender of the French-colonial mission in Indochina who was actively pursuing his own vision to propagate Khmer architecture in the French *métropole*, Delaporte had returned to Angkor in 1873–4 to obtain original and plaster cast versions of Angkorian sculptures and architectural fragments for his *Musée Khmer*, which had opened in 1874 and was located in the castle of Compiègne to the northeast of Paris (Falser 2013a). Émile Soldi-Colbert de Beaulieu was the creator of the 1878 plaster cast model; he had also propagated the, then quite unknown, art and architecture of Angkor in his 1881-publication *Les arts méconnus* where he depicted the 1:10-scale model against supposedly Oriental, Cambodian scenery (Fig. 6).

Soldi-Colbert de Beaulieu also outlined a larger political goal for the execution of the gate within the Paris exhibition *parcours*: Originally planned as a giant 1:1-scaled reconstitution for display on the left side of the exhibition’s main entrance and as a (much desired) architectural masterpiece from French-Indochina, it was meant as a three-dimensional rejoinder to the cultural holdings of the British-colonial empire, which were equally well-represented at the exhibition by an life-sized “hundred-and-one-night-Indian-palace” located on the other side of the main entrance of the exhibition (Soldi-Colbert de Beaulieu 1881, 283). Shortly after this event in 1878, Delaporte published his impressive book *Voyage au Cambodge. L'architecture Khmer* in 1880. In it he pondered the French desideratum of display



LA PORTE D'ANGKOR
Modèle au dixième. Reconstitution par M. Delaporte d'après ses relevés des restes encore existants
(Voir la gravure p. 284). Sculpture par Louis-Soldi. — Musée ethnographique du Trocadéro.

Fig. 6 *La porte d'Angkor* as a 1:10 scale model being re-translated into a setting of exotic vegetation in Soldi-Colbert de Beaulieu's 1881 publication *Les arts méconnus* (Source: Soldi-Colbert de Beaulieu 1881, 288–9)

for the French-colonial possessions of Indochinese cultural heritage in the French *métropole*. He made direct comparisons with the colonial governments of the Dutch East Indies and British India, which, as the contributions of **Krishna Menon** and **Marieke Bloembergen/Martijn Eickhoff** have demonstrated, also had a strong interest in formulating “salvage missions” for cultural heritage in their colonies and in the European *métropole*:

The era of decadence [. . .] ended with the arrival of the French in Indochina. Civilization does not exist anymore in this privileged country where it once strongly flourished, but the soil preserved its incomparable fertility. Since we put our [French] flag into this region, it seems that [this civilization] starts to live and breathe again. It is to us to tear these people from their sad condition, [. . .] cease despotism which weighs heavily upon them and stop exploitation which paralyses them [. . .] but we should not limit ourselves to this single task: isn't it to us to revive the marvellous past of this people, to reconstitute the admirable oeuvres which their [long past] genius has created; in a word: to enrich the history of art and the annals of humanity with a new page? [. . .] Masters of the most fertile parts of Indochina with their magnificent souvenirs, aren't we called to play in this region the same role as the Dutch in Java and the British in India? In London, Hindu, Barmans, and Malayan sculptures have found a place in the British Museum next to Assyrian antiquities. And whole monuments of the architecture from India were reconstituted in the South Kensington Museum. [italics MF] (Delaporte 1880, 377–8 and 251)

Louis Delaporte (1880) *Voyage au Cambodge*

And Delaporte was right; the architectural heritage of British-India was symbolically appropriated for and transcribed into the British metropolitan heritage

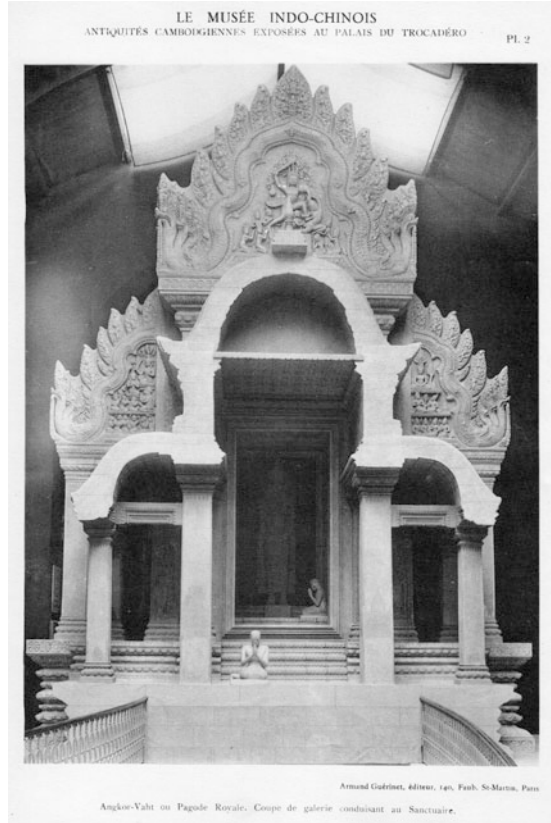
canon through the physical substitution of a 1:1 replica of the entry gate from the early Buddhist stupa on the Indian monastic site of Sanchi. Forming the centerpiece of the Oriental hall in the *South Kensington Museum*’s twin “Architectural [or Cast] Courts,” which was described as a “three-dimensional imperial archive” of architectural heritage (Barringer 1998, 11)—it represented the British civilizing (in this particular case archaeological) salvage mission in India. The Sanchi Gate corresponded to the replica of Trajan’s Column in the “European hall” of the courts, which symbolized the British inheritance of Ancient Rome’s colonial mission on the European continent.

Although Delaporte had been restricted (besides the 1:10-scale model) to the display of only a few original sculptures in the ethnographic *parcours* of the *Palais de Trocadéro* at the 1878 Universal Exhibition, he finally realized his vision of a three-dimensional staging of Angkor’s architecture in his *Musée indo-chinois*, which opened in the mid-1880s (Falser 2013c, f, g; Baptiste and Zéphir 2013). Within the large museum complex, Delaporte’s museum formed a small exotic French-colonial, Far-Eastern counterpart to Viollet-Le-Duc’s *Musée de Sculpture Comparée* with its life-size plaster cast reconstitutions of France’s “own” salvaged cultural heritage in the form of medieval/Gothic sacred architecture. In a scenario that was very similar to Mouhot’s French civilizing vision, which moved “from barbarism to civilisation, from darkness to light” and which he had formulated whilst walking on the slowly ascending path through Angkor Wat’s entry gates towards the temple’s central architectural massif, the visitor to Delaporte’s museum entered the *parcours* on the lower entry level and ascended a stairway to the upper floor to approach the free-standing plaster cast replicas of the Bayon temple and Angkor Wat (Fig. 7).

From this point of view, the salvaged, perfectly restored, and properly presented icon of the anticipated French *patrimoine culturel* of Angkor had already appeared in Paris before France’s self-declared task to restore the “real” temples had even been initiated. It was visual proof of France’s “sacrifice” in bringing forgotten and rediscovered cultural heritage to a “safe museum” (Pomian 1988, 70). Delaporte’s growing plaster cast collection served as a basis for the first open-air reconstitutions of the highly fantastical *pagode d’Angkor* during the 1889 Universal Exhibition in Paris (Fig. 8) and the *pavillon du Cambodge* at the 1906 National Colonial Exhibition in Marseille. It was also the basis for the more “authentic” Angkor Wat replicas in exhibitions at Marseille in 1922 and Paris in 1931 after the “real” Cambodian site of Angkor had finally “retroceded” in 1907 from Siam to French-colonial *Cambodge* (Falser 2011).

Apart from the 1889 *pagode d’Angkor*, France’s colonial *mission civilisatrice* was also brought to the fore through various scientific conferences that were held alongside the popular exhibition. The most important of these, which formulated for the first time a common duty of “all civilized nations” to care for their own (and their colonized) cultural heritage, was the *Congrès international pour la protection des oeuvres d’art et des monuments*. Applying this new trend to the 1889 Colonial Exhibition meant that the staged pavilions of France’s colonial possessions (or in the case of Angkor, the longed for possessions) played a double role: First, as

Fig. 7 The lower-eastern section of the central tower of Angkor Wat in an installation in the *Musée indo-chinois* around 1900 (Source: Guérinet, Armand (ed.). n.d. *Le Musée indo-chinois. Antiquités Cambodgiennes exposées du Palais du Trocadéro*. Paris: Éditions Guérinet, pl. 2)



materialized borrowings or specimens of existing monumental sites in the colonies, they stood for France’s imperial claim to incorporate these architectural entities into her enlarged canon of national cultural heritage. Second, they prefigured and predefined, in their perfect, complete, and exact appearance in Paris, the result of the efforts which France—simultaneously a civilized nation and the caring mother in outre-mer—had to fulfil by rediscovering, clearing, mapping, restoring, and/or reconstructing the decaying ruins on the “real” spot.

“Disinterested research” at the peak of colonial rule: The École Française d’Extrême-Orient and its “burden”—saving Angkor

In the two decades before and after 1900 a French theory of association emerged, which “meant in essence that the colony was to become an integral, if non-continuous part of the mother country, which its society and population



Fig. 8 The *Pagode d'Angkor* for the Universal Exhibition in Paris 1889 (Source: Ministère de la Culture (France)—Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine—diffusion RMN)

made over—to whatever possible extent—in her own image” (Betts 1961, 8). This also meant that institutions like those established in metropolitan France should also be established in the colonies in order to narrow the social and cultural gap between the two; Indochina was considered a showcase example for the implementation of this theoretical concept. Besides national events like the National Colonial Congress and the foundation of the *École Coloniale* in 1889, a branch of theories emerged that transferred Herbert Spencer’s theory of social evolutionism, a supposedly universal law of a biologically explained, quasi “natural” struggle for existence, into the colonial expansionist arena and were discussed in publications like Arthur Girault’s *Principes de colonisation et de législation coloniale* (1895)

and Jules Harmand's *Domination et colonisation* (1910). The latter, an anthropologically oriented naturalist (compare with Mouhot) and medical doctor, was also a member of Delaporte's 1874 mission to Cambodia where he had not only collected archaeological data and species of plants, but had also made crane measurements and photographs of native populations. These were displayed in the 1878 Exhibition next to Delaporte's Angkor exhibition. The constant need to justify the French-colonial enterprise brought with it a vast range of comparative studies on the colonial politics and colonial institutions of France's imperialist rivals. For archaeology and architectural preservation in (post)colonial contexts, France's major reference was almost certainly British India (Harmand translated John Strachey's 1894 publication *India, its Administration and Progress* and added his own methodological framework in the preface) where the French had traumatically lost "their" colonial possessions to the English and where the salvage mission of the *Archaeological Survey of India* (established in 1861) reached as far as Burma's temple site of Pagan and even into anglophile Siam, which was still in possession of Angkor.

It was in this competitive atmosphere that the *Mission archéologique permanente d'Indochine* was founded in Saigon in December 1898. Although the mission was placed under the scientific control of the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* in Paris, it was decreed by the *Gouverneur Général de l'Indochine*, Paul Doumer (1897–1902), who made it part of a wider network of institutions that were meant to bring Indochina closer to a Western standard of civilization, and that included the services for geology and geography (1898), meteorology (1899), bacteriology and medicine (1902), and a *Mission d'exploration scientifique permanente* (1902). The name of the Archaeological Mission changed in 1900 to *École Française d'Extrême-Orient* (EFEO) with its base in Hanoi and was officially decreed as an institution in 1901. As part of a wider range of applied colonial sciences, but also based on the *École Française d'Athènes* (1846) and *de Rome* (1875), the EFEO's task was focused on developing archaeological and philological studies in the Indochinese peninsula. This work comprised the mapping, listing, and protection of the rich remains of historic temple architecture in Cambodia, which were then incorporated into the—colonially enlarged—French metropolitan canon of an exclusive *patrimoine culturel*. Few other publications around 1900 situated the EFEO's self-appointed protective mission more explicitly into the general French-colonial politics in Indochina than the 1903 publication *L'Indochine* by Doumer's political collaborator, Louis Salaun. In his introduction, Salaun invoked a typically French civilizing discourse by directly applying statements like "Humanité, c'est mon pays" to a supposedly benevolent "encounter of the protector and the protégé" in Indochina (Salaun 1903, viii and xvii):

The Occident is a less harmful and more productive soil. It ventures today, for the benefit of the people of the Orient, on the progressive organization with Occidental methods which lets them gradually step out of medieval anarchy and guide them to modern peace [. . .] It is the trademark of France in the world to be, above all, the philanthropic nation [*la nation humaine*]" (Salaun 1903, xvii and xx)

Louis Salaun (1903) *Indochine*



Fig. 9 Angkor Wat as a heavily overgrown site with the first wooden houses along its central causeway, depicted in Salaun’s 1903 publication *L’Indochine* (Source: Salaun 1903, 321–322)

Interestingly, the central causeway of Angkor Wat, still on Siamese territory at this time, overgrown with dense vegetation, but already occupied by a few wooden houses, served as a suggestive introductory illustration for the author’s highly ideological chapter on Indochina’s social organization, hygiene, moral and intellectual condition, and its scientific institutions including the EFEO (Fig. 9).

The author repeatedly claimed a “rapprochement between the protector and the protected” (Salaun 1903, 350), and this institution’s supposedly “altruistic, disinterested research” was, quite ambiguously, placed between its self-ascribed function as the “protective authority for Indochina, [. . .] its tutelage [*tutelle*] in the name of a superior civilization [. . .] and guidance of the destiny of the people of the Orient,” and its status as “an immediate collaborator with the [colonial] government” (Salaun 1903, 352–5). The EFEO’s scientific adjustment was, as the author stated himself, strongly influenced by comparable projects in other colonial territories in South and Southeast Asia. In fact, at the very beginning of the institution’s foundation, the EFEO’s director Louis Finot went to Java in the Dutch-Indies, and his adjunct, Foucher, informed himself about developments in the *Indes Britanniques*, while researchers like Charles Carpeaux even sacrificed their young lives while clearing the temples of Angkor from overgrown vegetation for the



Fig. 10 Charles Carpeaux inside the Bayon temple in his “last portrait” before his death after taking ill. Published posthumously in *Les ruines d'Angkor* of 1908 by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (Source: Carpeaux 1908, 234)

EFE0 (Fig. 10); all this was done—of course—“for the sake of science, art and the good reputation of the motherland” (Salaun 1903, 358).

When Siam finally had to “retrocede” the provinces of Siem Reap and Battambang to Cambodia in 1907, under considerable pressure from France, the EFE0’s archaeological mission began to focus its attention completely on Angkor. Its self-proclaimed and supposedly inherited task, burden, and responsibility turned—and this aspect remained a persistent myth in the institution’s historiography through publications like *Un siècle pour l'Asie* (Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin 2001; cf. Musée Cernuschi 2010)—into (a) a French archaeological interpretation of Rudyard Kipling’s “White Man’s Burden.” Additionally, it became (b) an inseparable scientific device used in France’s justification for its colonial rule in Indochina. Etienne Lunet de Lajonquière, the mastermind behind the French-colonial mapping of Indochina’s archaeological past, put it this way in 1910:

[. . .] Angkor. The great ruins of the old Cambodian capital do not belong to Siam any more, *they belong to us now*, as part of the Treaty of March 1907. Everyone [*tout le monde*] is full of a great zeal: The *Société d'Angkor* is founded in Paris to look after them; the *École française d'Extrême-Orient* will be in charge of their conservation [. . .] The Treaty of 1907, *giving us back the custody of these masterpieces* from a lost architectural tradition, charged us with an immense responsibility and duty [*des grandes obligations*]: to preserve them, to

make them better known, to make them accessible to everybody: It will be the *École française d'Extrême-Orient*, protector of the archaeological treasures of French Indochina, that will be trusted with the mission to fulfil these obligations. [italics MF] (Lunet de Lajonquière 1910, 386 and 396).

Lunet de Lajonquière (1910) *De Saigon à Singapour, par Angkor, autour du Golfe de Siam*

In the years to come, with France finally owning and showcasing a worthy equivalent to the Javanese temple of Borobudur in the Dutch-Indies and Pagan in British Burma, the reclamation of Angkor was frequently termed “Indochina’s Alsace-Lorraine” in reference to the territorial loss sustained in 1871 during the Franco-Prussian war. Its most important temple, Angkor Wat, was systematically turned into a French-colonial icon of cultural heritage in direct reference to British-India’s Taj Mahal. Angkor became France’s colonial counterpart, and functioned as tool and transcultural mirror for France’s evaluation of its own (lately even self-criticized) status as civilization. As Penny Edwards put it:

The colonial drive to return Angkor to a state of past perfection ensured that what was billed as a rehabilitation was in fact a recreation. In film, literature, art, architecture and archaeology, Angkor was remade as both the embodiment of Khmer national essence and an irretrievable, unachievable and impossible moment of cultural perfection. The flipside to the colonial propagandists’ constant chorus of Cambodia’s “need” for French protection, was that France “needed” Cambodia to assert its own stakes in the global hegemony of colonial scholarship. While France boasted the success of its policies of reconstruction in Indochina, Angkor, as a symbol of borrowed glory, provided its own uplift to the French national psyche, providing an antidote to fears of national decline and cultural decadence. (Edwards 2005, 23)

Penny Edwards (2005) *Taj Angkor: Enshrining l’Inde in le Cambodge*

A few months after the French took possession of Angkor, Jean Commaille, a trained soldier in the Cambodian militia and a devoted civil servant for the French protectorate, was installed in the position of Conservator General of Angkor in 1908. Unsurprisingly, his first and most pressing task was the clearing of the main perspective towards the central massif of Angkor Wat¹: this not only entailed the cutting of vegetation and the structural repair of the central passageway where Commaille himself established his own hut—which he even documented in the his first touristic *Guide aux ruines d’Angkor* of 1912 (Fig. 11a, b)—it also comprised the “archaeologizing” of the active Buddhist temple site into a Shivaist ruin through the removal of Buddhist statuary inside the temple’s sanctuary and the relocation of the active Buddhist monastery in front of the temple (Falser 2013d). This was done because the monastery supposedly “blocked the *vue générale*”² from the passageway as it had been iconized in Mouhot’s publication fifty years earlier. The newly founded *Société d’Angkor pour la conservation des monuments anciens de l’Indochine* (Société d’Angkor 1908)—honorarily presided over by the king of

¹“Chronique (Cambodge).” 1907/8. *Bulletin de l’École française d’Extrême-Orient* 7: 419–23; 8: 287–92 and 591–5; 9: 413–4.

²“Chronique (Cambodge).” 1908. *Bulletin de l’École française d’Extrême-Orient* 8: 593.

a

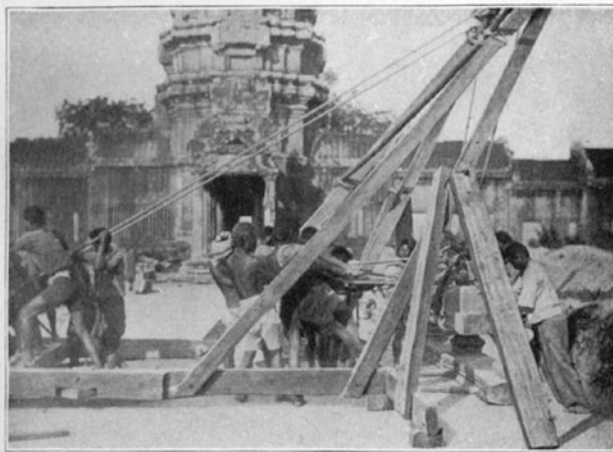


CHAUSSÉE DALLÉE D'ANGKOR-VAT. — VUE PRISE DU PORCHE CENTRAL DES ENTRÉES OCCIDENTALES.



VUE SUR L'ENTRÉE OCCIDENTALE D'ANGKOR-VAT PRISE DU PORCHE CENTRAL DE LA PREMIÈRE GALERIE.

b



ANGKOR-VAT. — INDIGÈNES TRAVAILLANT À LA RESTAURATION DE LA BALUSTRADE DE LA CHAUSSÉE DALLÉE.

Fig. 11 (a, b) The cleared causeway and the work on its pavement in Jean Commaillé's first *Guide aux ruines d'Angkor* of 1912. (Source: Commaillé 1912, plates 2, 7). (continued)

Cambodia and supported by previously mentioned protagonists like Finot, Delaporte, Doumer, Harmand and others—financed the clearing of Angkor Wat (Société 1908), which Commaillé had sketched in his unpublished *journaux des fouilles* (digging reports) and monthly *rapports d'activité* (Fig. 11c, d).

At this time the geodesist Buat and the topographer Ducret had already established the first detailed map of the whole Angkor region. But the late 1920s

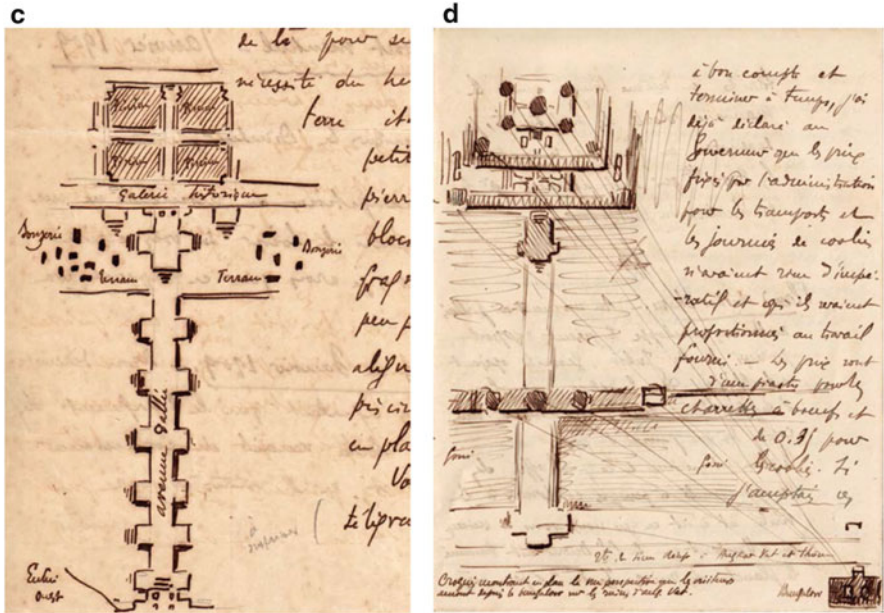


Fig. 11 (c, d) Commaille’s notes in his personal *Journaux des fouilles* for the official *rapports d’activités* at Angkor of 1908 with his sketches of the structures of the Buddhist monastery in front of the central massif of Angkor Wat and his proposal to clear the vegetation in the surroundings of the central causeway for a view towards the temple from the planned tourist bungalow just outside the moat of the temple site (Source: EFEO, Paris)

and 1930s were the first real heyday of conservation work in Angkor. On October 30, 1925, the *Parc archéologique d’Angkor* was finally established by decree (*arrêté*) of the *Gouverneur général de l’Indochine*, Maurice Monguillot, and incorporated into the *Législation relative au classement, à la protection et à la conservation des monuments historiques et des objets d’art de l’Indochine française*. The limits of the Archaeological Park of Angkor were fixed in 1926 by decree of the *Résident supérieur au Cambodge*, François-Marius Baudoin. In 1930 a map of the protected zone was published, which included the invention of a tourist circulation system in the form of the “Petit” and “Grand circuit (Fig. 12) by Henri Marchal, then the acting Conservator General at Angkor; in addition, a hotel was built in front of the western entrance to Angkor Wat (Falser 2013d).

By this time Jean Commaille had already been added to the growing list of French explorers and researchers who had sacrificed their lives for the motherland during their mission to save the cultural heritage of Angkor. The official story goes that he was mugged and assassinated in 1916 by bandits in the Angkor Park for the salary he was carrying to his coolies. Afterwards, the position of the Conservator

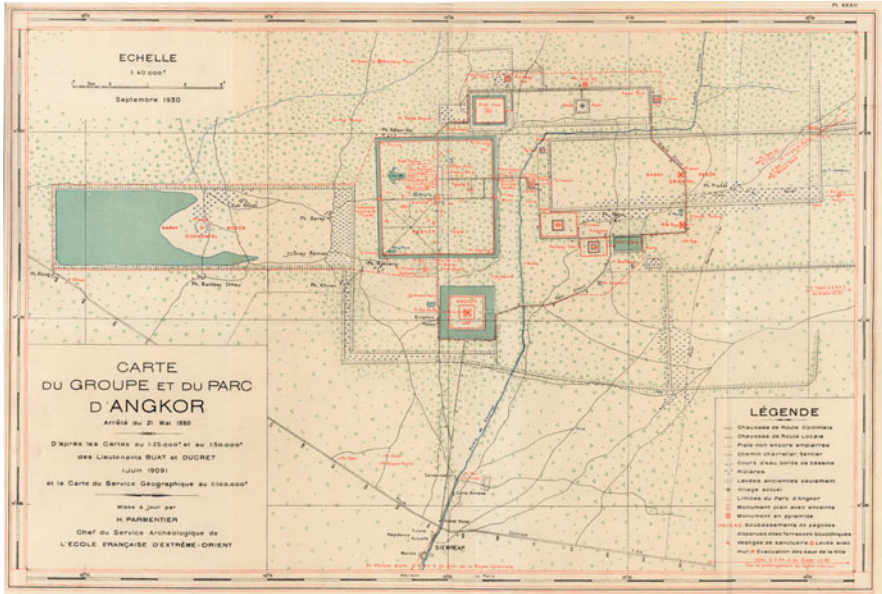


Fig. 12 The first exact *Carte du Groupe et du Parc d'Angkor* (decreed in 1925/1930) on the basis of a map by Buat/Ducet of June 1909 (Source: Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient 30 (1930), plate 32)

General of the Angkor Park and the installed *Conservation d'Angkor* in the nearby town of Siem Reap was handed over to a series of trained Parisian *École des Beaux-Arts* architects including Henri Marchal and Maurice Glaize. As a result, the EFEO, along with its archaeologists, produced what Édouard de Martonne termed in his 1930 book the “savant colonial,” whom, besides “patronizing satellite civilizations, [...] served his immediate superiors [of the French-colonial administration], the colony, France, and humanity at large” (Pyenson 1993, 335). Interestingly, Martonne’s book was published in a series edited by Georges Hardy, the director of the *École coloniale* in Paris, who had propagated in his own book *La Politique coloniale et le partage de la terre aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles* (once the first colonial phase with aggressive expansionist theories of assimilation, including biological-racist analogies, was brought into a second phase with an emerging theory of cultural association) the colonial enterprise as an “expansion civilisée” (Hardy 1937, 4). When leftist theories of French colonization grew stronger after 1900, it was Albert Sarraut, member of the Colonial Party and multiple *Gouverneur Général de l’Indochine* and *Ministre des colonies*, who supported Europe’s altruistic attempt to “create humanity” in the colonies as part of “scientific progress” (Sarraut 1931, 106). This also included a systematic regeneration of the supposedly degenerated art practices in Cambodia, a highly ideological task that was discussed by **Gabrielle Abbe** in relation to the artist and Cambodian art reformer George

Groslier. When Sarraut’s popular book *Grandeur et servitude coloniales* was published during the 1931 Colonial Exhibition in Paris, the EFEO proved that its restoration work in Angkor was an important Cambodian aspect of the French-colonial “Mise en valeur des colonies françaises” (also the name of a book by Sarraut of 1923): a section, decorated *à la Angkorienne*, formed part of the exhibition parcours inside (!) the reconstituted Angkor Wat temple of the 1931 Exhibition and visualized (re-materialized) this colonial institution’s claim of reviving Cambodia’s built cultural heritage (Fig. 13).

In the final years of the First Indochinese War, which was to culminate in France’s humiliating defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, Cambodia’s independence was inescapably at hand and the EFEO had, for the last time in its French-colonial history, an opportunity to officially commemorate its 50th anniversary as an *oeuvre civilisatrice*, which critics have called a mere “alibi for French colonization” (Singaravélou 1999, 283). In the 1951 Saigon publication *Hommage à l’École*



Fig. 13 The *salle de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient au palais d'Angkor* of the 1931 Exhibition in Paris as depicted in *l'Illustration* of July 1931, in the centre a plaster cast reconstitution of the Cham (today South-Vietnamese) ruins of Mi-son, with an Angkor-style decoration of the whole hall (Source: *L'Illustration*, no. 4612, July 25, 1931: cover)

La salle de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient au palais d'Angkor.
 Substratum et chapiteaux provenant des ruines de Mi-son (art cham).
 (R. et G. Blanchet, archts.) — Phot. Illustration.

Française d'Extrême-Orient and in the 1953 edition of the EFEO's *Cérémonie commémorative du cinquantenaire* held at the Sorbonne in 1952, the congratulatory addresses ranged from high political officials to distinguished researchers, members like Bernard Philippe Groslier, the son of George Groslier, as well as various artists and journalists. Most used the already well-known discourses from the 1930s and 1940s: Sylvain Lévi's 1931 invocation of "the caring mother France" and the EFEO's "gigantic task [with] heroic and martyred researchers" of which "Angkor was the exact symbol" (Lévy 1931, preface), was not far removed from a similar word choice used by George Coedès (EFEO's director from 1929 until 1946) in 1948. In an address to the *Académie des sciences coloniales*, he declared that the "EFEO had given back the Cambodian people [...]—suffering from a minority complex [...]—the feeling of their continuity in time, [that] it had re-attached them to their ancestors of forgotten *grandeur*, and had them restituted Angkor [...] against France's own colonialist interest [...] following her [altruist] politics of association" (Malleret 1951, 31).³ However, the most striking of the contributions made around 1950 came from the *Général de l'Armée*, Jean de Lattre de Tassigny, *Haut Commissaire de France*, who honoured the institution's protective "programme of universality [...] to revive dead civilizations"—now within a slightly, but essentially changed connotation of the EFEO as the "path clearer" towards independence, and not just the "re-discoverer" but even the *inventor* and *builder* of Angkor's past *grandeur*:

50 years of the EFEO, 50 years of effort in the service of the countries of Indochina helping them to raise their profile in the world, and to know themselves. The science of the EFEO has magnified, like a poem, the glory of these countries. *If—to give only one example—the name of Cambodia is henceforward associated universally with the grandeur of Angkor, then it is the EFEO that has made this connection.* And if Angkor itself is liberated today from the shackle of the forest and *the spirit of the stones has prevailed, then it is by the exertion of these savants who, under the humble name of "conservators," knew how to be, in reality, the inventors and even the builders* [of Angkor]. Placed within the forgotten kingdoms, which owe their reconstitution in the memory [*leur reconstitution dans la mémoire*] to the EFEO, the countries of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, now well and alive, have found in these studies their oldest references of nobility [*leurs quartiers de noblesse les plus anciens*]. They have rediscovered these treasures of ancestral glory, which allow the new generation to look confidently into the future and which obliges them to regard this future within the *grandeur* of the past. Thus, through the plenitude of their past, these three countries knew how to follow the call for independence and the capable voices which guide them to a new destiny. *What these countries found in their cultural heritage [patrimoine], is the sense of a nation [sens de l'Etat], the sense of a people [sens du peuple].* In reviving this heritage [*revivre cet héritage*] and by enriching the same with its own example of genuine truth [*sens de la Vérité*], *the EFEO has anticipated* [and therefore prefigured, MF] *the recognition of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.* [italics MF] (Malleret 1951, 7)

Jean de Lattre de Tassigny in his 1951 address in honour of the EFEO

³ In his 1948 address, re-published in Malleret 1953, Coedès made an important reference to an article where he had discussed the switch from French science on Angkor to Khmer heritage nationalism: "La science historique française et la conscience nationale khmère," *Chemin du Monde* 5 (July 23–31, 1948): 117.

Albert Sarraut, speaking as the president of the recently installed *Assemblée de l'Union française*, opened the ceremony at the Sorbonne University on March 19, 1952. He declared that around 1900 France had revealed an ideal of human civilization to the colonized people. In 1952 this march towards the civilizing of the colonized was seen as having been realized, but France and the EFEO were still playing the “rôle d'éclarateur” for the young Oriental nations (Saraut in 1952, quoted in Singaravélou 1999, 286–7). However, times had changed and the hegemonic colonial discourse about France's claim to have rediscovered Cambodia's cultural heritage was decisively corrected when, just a few months before complete independence, the “subaltern Oriental other” was, for the first time, allowed to speak for itself in the voice of Princess Yukanthor, Cambodia's then minister of national education. Invoking France's claim to have brought an appreciation for the ancient Khmer civilization not only to the Cambodians, but also to the world, the path had been opened for what would later be called Angkor as UNESCO World Heritage of Humanity:

The Khmer, dear gentlemen, have always kept a souvenir of their glorious past in their memory; there are too many traces remaining on our land for us to have ever forgotten it. [...] but the savants of the EFEO [...] have shown all the grandeur of our past to the modern civilized world and they have enforced our national pride [...] thanks to them, our past revives; thanks to their work, our art became known to the whole world. [italics MF] (Singaravélou 1999, 288–9)

Princess Yukanthor of Cambodia during the EFEO commemoration of 1952 at the Sorbonne

Cambodian independence, Sihanouk as a new Jayavarman VII, and the French as the continuing protectors of Angkor

On November 9, 1953 France granted full national independence to Cambodia, and the Geneva Conference of 1954 codified the treaty. At this point, Angkor Wat had already become a “temple complex” for the Cambodian psyche (Edwards 2007, 242): ninety years of colonial on-site interventions into the quality of its physical remains on the one hand, and the manifold symbolic associations with the temple as a symbol of glorious antiquity and high civilization on the other, had transformed the temple into a multi-faceted object of vital national pride and post-colonial self-manifestation under the leadership of Norodom Sihanouk, a Francophile king (1941–1955) and later prime minister and head of state (1955–1970). Like the preceding colonial regime, the national flag of the new nation was emblazoned with the three-tower silhouette of Angkor Wat. Interestingly, the continuity of the French on-site architectural restoration work, which turned the temple—now with the aid of re-enforced concrete—gradually into a picture-perfect and ageless



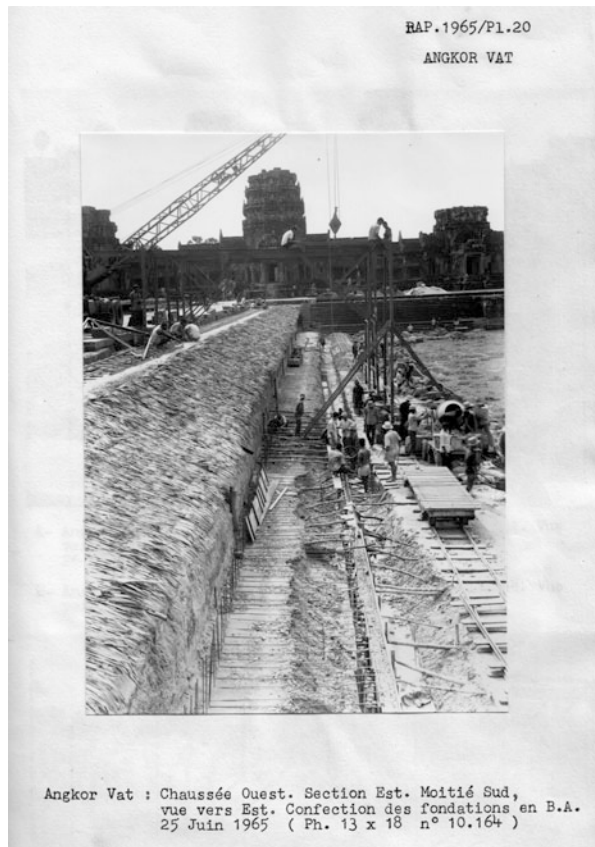
Fig. 14 (a) The photographers Blanc and Moride in 1952 on the causeway of Angkor with “indigenous” boys watching the action. (EFEQ, Paris). (continued)

heritage icon (Fig. 14a, b), was not only legally fixed by the *Bilateral Accords of 23 October 1956 between the Royal Government of Cambodia and the EFEQ*, but was even propagated officially by the new Cambodian government. Archaeology showed, as in so many other cases in Southeast Asia, its vital function in the building of nation-states.

In the 1962 publication *Cambodge*, issued by the Cambodian Ministry of Information, the final chapter “*Connaissance du Cambodge ancien*” was constructed as a continued French success story using the old word choice of *patrimoine culturel*. The EFEQ, “in a most harmoniously achieved agreement,” had obtained the exclusive “scientific and technical management of Angkor and the National Museum [...] to guarantee the safeguarding of Cambodia’s artistic heritage by the best specialists and without interruption, [...] within the French vocation of unselfish scholarship” (Ministère de l’Information 1962, 298–304). From the very onset of Cambodia’s independence, Sihanouk appropriated Angkor Wat as part of his own national vision to bring Cambodia back to the days of Angkorian glory.

From his “Royal Crusade for Independence” (1952–53) to his more staged than real military intervention as *Commandant en Chef des Forces Armées* against the Viet Minh enemy on the northeastern border zone of Cambodia (called *Opération*

Fig. 14 (b) The 1965 restoration campaign of the central causeway of Angkor Wat by the General Conservator of the EFEO, Bernard Philippe Groslier, with a new lateral foundation in re-enforced concrete. Illustration of Groslier’s conservation reports for the Royal Cambodian Government and the EFEO in Paris (EFEO Paris)



Samakki from December 17–30, 1953), Angkor Wat’s iconized causeway appeared regularly in the propaganda press, which was mostly in French and under Sihanouk’s direct editorial control (Fig. 15).

This included not only brochures and books issued by the government itself, but also a wide variety of journals such as *Le Sangkum—Revue politique illustrée*, *Etudes Cambodgiennes*; *Cambodge aujourd’hui*, and *Réalités Cambodgiennes*. In contrast to most Western reflections on Sihanouk’s ambiguous god-king position whilst serving as a modern politician (e.g. Osborne 1966; Lacouture 1969; Meyer 1971), there was probably no other foreign comment that more deliberately essentialized Sihanouk’s own civilizing vision in his reincarnation of the twelfth-century Angkorian king, Jayavarman VII, than that of Robert Garry (a Canadian professor of Far Eastern geography). Today we might see Sihanouk’s strategy as a perfect case of the Hobsbawmian “[re]invention of tradition,” which embeds the new fragile reality of national independence in a secure network of highly selective

Fig. 15 Norodom Sihanouk depicted as military leader in the context of Cambodia’s young national independence movement in the early 1950s. Behind him the Cambodian flag with the stylized silhouette of Angkor Wat with by a “shining” perspective towards Angkor Wat can be seen (National Archives of Cambodia, Phnom Penh)



references to past glory.⁴ Garry’s presentation in 1964 at the 16th International Congress of Orientalists in New Delhi was more than happily reprinted by Sihanouk’s *Department de l’Information* under the title *La renaissance du Cambodge de Jayavarman VII, roi d’Angkor à Norodom Sihanouk Varman*. What Garry introduced as “the theatre of a profound transformation” was in fact a thirteen-page long homage to Sihanouk’s “energetic impulse for an extraordinary

⁴In the introduction of his seminal publication, Hobsbawm gave a series of definitions for the process of invention of tradition, which can also be applied quite well in this case: “The term ‘invented tradition’ includes [...] a set of practices [which] attempt to *establish continuity with a suitable historic past*. [...] In short, they are responses to novel situations which take or reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetitions.” Hobsbawm identified three overlapping inventions of traditions, all of which fit partially in this case: “those establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities” (in this case the new Cambodian nation and its citizens); “those establishing or legalizing institutions, status or relations of authority” (here the king himself as inheritor of a quasi-Angkorian authority); and “those whose main purpose was socialization, the inculcation of beliefs, value systems and conventions of behaviour” (in this case the re-enforced collective self-image of cultural grandeur *à la angkoriennne*). [italics MF] (Hobsbawm and Rangereds 1983, 1–2 and 9).

rebirth [*renouveau*] in all the domains of agriculture, irrigation, industry, instruction, public health, and communication” within supposedly “direct links to the activity and politics of his illustrious predecessors [and] powerful royal builders [*puissants rois bâtisseurs*], particularly Suryavarman II and Jayavarman VII.” By adopting the Angkorian god-king suffix *varman* Sihanouk seemed “to forget the dark centuries of decadence and to recreate the grand Angkorian tradition.” By proscribing Buddhism as the state-religion under a political guise of “international neutrality, peaceful coexistence and charity” his newly founded *Sangkum Reastr Niyum* (People’s Socialist Community) was made the para-religious inheritor of Cambodia’s Buddhist foundation (Garry 1964, 1–6). In the section “La renaissance nationale et la tradition historique,” Garry cites Sihanouk’s civilizing vision (the exhaustive, but often criticized building programme, which the Cambodian leader had felt obliged to defend) as having been executed in the name of the cultural heritage of Angkor:

“Plunged into this long night which has lasted for several centuries, we have only just emerged in the last few years.” [...] In every moment of his action as *chef de gouvernement*, Sihanouk evokes the past, as he intends to relink himself with the lineage of great kings who reigned over Angkor. He does not miss emphasizing in front of the younger generation the grandeur of the ancient Khmer Empire “the lustrous civilization [*lumineuse civilisation*] that was shining over the whole Indochinese peninsula.” He exalts the *renouveau* of the Khmer kingdom through the “rebirth [*re-né*] through independence,” a veritable liberation that constitutes for Cambodia the dawn of a new existence. Prince Sihanouk also repeatedly wanted to rehabilitate the grand kings on which he relied; he stood up to the widespread belief that the Khmer kings had only been capable of building monuments that served their own vainglory and pride. In a discourse given at Dey Eth on March 28, 1960 to officially inaugurate the *Collège Jayavarman VII* he declared: “[...] *Certain incorrect savants even add that royal mania to build was the reason for the ruin and the decadence of the Khmer nation and for the misery of its people. Nothing is more incorrect and unjust as regards our kings. These monuments, which are admired by the whole world, are not the reason for the decline. They are simply irrefutable testimony to the grandeur and prosperity of their era. Angkor is not different from the comparable [architectural] wonders of Greece and ancient Rome.*” [...] There is not the slightest doubt that prince Norodom Sihanouk is inspired in his daily action by these *rois soleil* who governed Cambodia in the fabulous era of Angkor [...] under Jayavarman VII, [...] *there is a striking similarity between both rules* [...] *Sihanouk strikingly demonstrates to the world that the Cambodians are worthy of their prestigious past, their grand ancestors, and their magnificent heritage* [*héritage*]. [italics MF] (Garry 1964, 10, 11, 12)

Robert Garry (1964) *La renaissance du Cambodge de Jayavarman VII, roi d’Angkor à Norodom Sihanouk Varman*

The truly astonishing building programme of Sihanouk, the “enlightened dictator,” has been highlighted in this volume by **Helen Grant Ross** and is commented on here with a view to the king’s larger strategy of cultural diplomacy (cf. Falser 2015b). With the concrete architectural preservation and restoration of the temples and the touristic presentation of the Angkor Park in the hands of the EFEO under Bernard Philippe Groslier, an archaeologist historian and close friend to the king, Sihanouk shrewdly positioned his vast infrastructural renovation programme for Cambodia as the symbolic inheritor of Angkor. He oriented the vision of a new

Khmer architecture (compare Grant Ross and Collins 2006)—by replacing the French-colonial style with designs by his own state architect, Vann Molyvann—towards an innovative re-interpretation of the legacy of Angkor’s temple architecture. Despite the fact that the project was financed by the United States (a declared enemy of Cambodia in the years to come), Sihanouk’s public address at the inauguration of the new water management system of Angkor’s ancient West Baray [the giant western water tank] on February 4, 1960, praised the “creative genius” of the new dam as the direct “inheritance of the country’s grandeur” and a reflection of the “astonishing unity of the actual Royal Government with the great builders of Angkor” (Sihanouk 1961, 35). The first prominent project in Phnom Penh to draw on the legacy of Angkor’s glory and symbolism was the Independence Memorial (1959/60). It was created by Vann and the sculptor Teng Voeuth and it interpreted the Angkorian visual language of the ninth/tenth-century Bakong and Banteay Srei temples; the enlightening causeway towards Angkor Wat’s sacred Mount Meru had found in this monument its secular counterpart, which served as a collective focal point for national ceremonies in the capital of independent Cambodia (Fig. 16).



Des délégations des différentes Provinces du Royaume clôturaient le défilé.

Fig. 16 “The delegation of the different provinces of the Cambodian kingdom participating in the closing ceremony” of the anniversary celebrations of Cambodia’s independence, driving towards the Independence Memorial in Phnom Penh, as depicted in *Cambodge d’aujourd’hui* in its November–December issue of 1964 (Source: *Cambodge d’aujourd’hui* 72 (November–December 1964): 12)

However, it was certainly the National Sports Complex by Vann Molyvann (1963/64), the largest, most prestigious and costly building project of its time, that was most exploited for Sihanouk’s propaganda. As the architect himself explained in his 1969 article “La nouvelle architecture Khmère. Le complexe sportif national à l’école des maîtres angkoriens” (Vann 1969) he had based the whole spatial composition of the complex directly on Cambodia’s most important temple—Angkor Wat (cf. with Fig. 12 in Helen Grant Ross’s contribution). The official 1964 brochure also placed the new complex on its cover and described it as being “in the grand tradition of Angkor.” Inside the publication, Prince Sihanouk, defence and sports minister Lon Nol (who would carry out the *coup d’état* against Sihanouk six years later in 1970), and architect Vann (also serving as minister of national education and fine arts at the time) were depicted standing “in the tradition of the builders of Angkor” (Royaume du Cambodge 1964, 14). Sihanouk reconfirmed this notion in a side remark made during his inauguration address on November 12, 1964. He suggested that the realization of this complex by the “young minister and architect Vann Molyvann, assisted by his young collaborators” had produced evidence “that the blood of the builders of Angkor had undoubtedly not degenerated” (Sihanouk 1964, 11). The new stadium and old Angkor were merged into one symbolic unity when, for the second *Games of the New Emerging Forces* (GANEFO) in 1966, the flame of the Non-aligned Olympic Games was lit inside Angkor Wat and, after passing a crowd of enthusiastic military, was carried down the temple’s iconized causeway en route to the capital (Fig. 17).



Fig. 17 Running the flame for the GANEFO games of 1966 down the central passageway of Angkor Wat, as depicted in *Kambuja*, December 15, 1966 (Source: *Kambuja* 21 (December 15, 1966): 42)

In 1968, when the 15th anniversary of independence was celebrated inside the stadium, the usual invocation of Angkor’s grandeur as part of Sihanouk’s political mission assumed physical form in front of 70,000 spectators. Under the rousing slogan “The Khmer nation will never die” [*La nation khmère jamais ne périra*], an actor dressed as Jayavarman VII riding in his chariot (supposedly remodeled from the bas-reliefs of Angkor Wat) entered the stadium followed by a spatial arrangement of portable Bayon-towers rendered in *papier mâché* (Fig. 18, cf. with Fig. 12 in Ross’s contribution). In his 1968 article “XV^e anniversaire de l’indépendance. Une expérience de théâtre total,” the journalist Alain Daniel indicated the imminent “danger” that “the great power of evocation in this spectacle appealed much more to the emotions than to intelligence, smothered the critical mind and would require [all the more] rigorous [examination of] the content of the message”(Daniel 1968, 5). His observation of this “total theatre” was certainly also true for Sihanouk’s cultural propaganda enactments during diplomatic visits when important political guests passed through a kind of performative heritage *parcours*: it started with a tour of the most important buildings in the new–old Cambodian capital, continued with a “traditional” Khmer ballet show, and ended with a site visit to the picture-perfect cultural heritage reserve known as *Parc archéologique d’Angkor* (Falser 2013d).

However, two of the most distinguished guests to the country towards the end of Cambodia’s independence witnessed the true promise of Sihanouk’s contemporary



Fig. 18 The ceremony for the 1968 celebration of the 15th anniversary of Cambodia’s national independence in the national stadium of Phnom Penh, with portable models of the towers of the Angkorian Bayon temple, a smoking factory, and a water wheel (Source: Sangkum Reastr Niyum 1993, vol. 3, 349–350)

and revived vision of Angkor’s civilization. After his famous speech at Phnom Penh on the eve of the Vietnam War, General Charles de Gaulle, president of the French Fifth Republic, was brought to Angkor Wat for a nocturnal *son et lumière* show on September 1, 1966 where an “historical re-enactment” took place. With Sihanouk’s invocation of Angkor’s past grandeur in light of Cambodia’s revitalized civilization “temporalities collapsed” and the recreation of a “historical continuity was exploited for ideological ends” (Agnew 2007, 309): The prince and leader of a post-colonial nation permitted the pre-colonial ancient and authentic past of his own ancestors to be theatrically re-enacted at the original site in front of the head of the former colonial power, which was still paying for the temple’s restoration (Fig. 19). In a “reconstitution historique grandiose” (Sangkum 1993, vol. 7, 167),⁵ 900 laymen and 600 monks in historical and religious costumes participated in the “historic” royal coronation ceremony and procession of an Angkorian king. Closing the gap between historic facts and civilizing fiction Prince Naradipo and Princess Botum Bopha, the actual son and daughter of King Sihanouk, played



Fig. 19 The nocturnal *son et lumière* show for General Charles de Gaulle on September 1, 1966 in front of Angkor Wat, as depicted on a double page of Sihanouk’s 1993 *Photo-Souvenirs du Cambodge* (vol. 7: *Le prestige au plan international du Cambodge*) (Source: Sangkum Reastr Niyum 1993, vol. 7, 167–8)

⁵ Cf. “General de Gaulle’s State visit to Cambodia,” *Kambuja*, 2nd year, 18 (September 15, 1966): 1–89.

the historic royal couple; the gigantic illumination of Angkor Wat had been designed, of course, by Vann Molyvann, and was supplied by *Siemens Germany*.⁶

Bernard Philippe Groslier, the acting conservator general of Angkor, had written the impressive script for this retro-travel experience, which was called *The voices of one night in Angkor*. Here, finally, two (colonial and post-colonial) nations met at the very site of their supposedly altruistic interest in and “conjoint effort” for the unique, colonial, post-colonial, and universal cultural heritage called Angkor Wat. At this unique moment, the old-fashioned colonizer-colonized or Orient-Occident divide seemed dissolved, and Cambodia’s most glorious temple was envisioned as standing side-by-side with France’s famous cathedrals:

My General, grandeur itself befits grandeur [Mon Général, la grandeur seule sied à la grandeur]. So it is appropriate that you are welcomed by Cambodia which, in the fold of its people and next to the Prince who represents it, shows you, in this nocturnal setting, the most beautiful and most perfect temple of Asia: Angkor Wat. [...] This [Angkor Wat] is the pillar of the last thousand years of our time, the zenith of our first thousand years of glory. [...] When the first emperor of the Occident came to the throne, the first king of Angkor was crowned in the Kulen Mountains, oriented towards the rising sun. His successors built, on the conquered and evergreen plain below, the symbolic stone mountain from where the Orient would send out its rays. This was the time when France would build the naves of her cathedrals [...] If Cambodia knew enough to rise itself in front of the other nations, than it is due to the profound and indispensable union of the people and their kings [...] nothing demonstrates this better than the almighty Angkor Wat and its thousand figures which come to life now this night, this moment [...] It is this unique moment where a people marvels at the miracle of its own genius. [...] Jayavarman VII, [...] the builder of the gigantic temples, [...] prayers out of stone. He came too late to save Angkor, but he knew how to show his Cambodia the right way towards the future [...] long centuries of humiliation followed and large trees grew right next to the temples, [...] a forest threw its shadow over the imprints of the god-kings. [...] it is for the sake of peace that Cambodia came back to life [...] this trust of a nation in its fortune [...], these immense lithic books to teach a whole people, France have known them, too. [...] Is it really only by chance that both our countries met? So many affinities might have brought us together. [...] Two old countries, too rich in humanity not to be tolerant of each other, too little importance do we attach to passed triumphs of ideas and materialistic force. Two young nations, too much alive not to be generous, we both know that one owns only what one gives from the heart of amity. And it is a good that we both meet right here [at Angkor Wat], exactly where our common love and our conjoint efforts made Angkor come back to life. [italics MF] (Groslier 1986)

Bernard Philippe Groslier: *Les Voix d'une nuit d'Angkor*. Text of the *son et lumière* show in honour of General De Gaulle on the causeway of Angkor Wat, September 1, 1966

On January 19, 1968, when Josip Boroz Tito, president of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the great non-aligned European partner of King Sihanouk, visited Cambodia, his ideological brother country, a slightly reduced re-enactment

⁶ Personal interview with Vann Molyvann, March 15, 2010 in Phnom Penh.

of the version for de Gaulle’s visit was performed. Groslier’s impressive 1966 text was only slightly modified to contain a more socialist undertone. In this new version, of course, the Cambodian and the Yugoslavian nations were not united through the efforts to safeguard cultural heritage, but instead “united in a common history of battles” against imperial politics (Sihanouk 1968, 16 and 20). In 1969 Sihanouk, who was also a passionate filmmaker, staged one of his last movies, *Crépuscule* [Twilight], in front of Angkor Wat. He cast himself in the role of an aging general who explains—by reading from Groslier’s groundbreaking 1956 monograph *Angkor, hommes et pierres*—Angkor’s civilization to a beautiful Indian woman, played by his real wife Monique. Only a few months later Cambodia would be plunged indeed into a twenty-year “twilight” of violence, which would begin with the Khmer Republic and later witness the Maoist terror regime of the Khmer Rouge and Vietnamese occupation.

“Civilizing” experiments 1970–1990, or: The visual battle over the cultural heritage of Angkor

Sihanouk was deposed as head of state in March 1970 and the Khmer Republic—a nationalist, right-wing, and pro-US military-led government under General Lon Nol and Prince Sisowath Sirik Matak—was installed under a new constitution. In the context of the Vietnam War, Sihanouk’s former tolerance of the North Vietnamese Viet Cong on Cambodian territory cooperating with the National Front of Kampuchea and the Communist Party of Kampuchea was turned by Lon Nol into a pro-Western alignment with South Vietnam and a civil war against pro-Sihanouk and communist troops. Within a mere five years of its existence, the Khmer Republic’s ideology in the medium of cultural heritage took only a very loose form. However, Cambodia did engage with a larger Southeast-Asian heritage protection network, and although a branch of *Applied Research Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts* (ARCAFA) was planned for Phnom Penh it was finally installed in Bangkok. Because of the war, concrete physical interventions at Angkor’s temple site were rare in these years; however, the French conservation team around Groslier managed to work at Angkor Wat until 1972 and gained politically neutral status under the Hague Convention when the area was between the military lines. When Groslier was finally forced to leave, his adjunct, Pich Keo—a Cambodian for the first time in the modern history of Angkor’s conservation history—took his place as the chief, responsible for Angkor.⁷

⁷ After he and parts of his staff in the *Conservation d’Angkor* were liberated from their deportation by the Khmer Rouge to the nearby village of Roluos, Mr. Pich Keo continued his work through the 1980s with very little support. Personal interview in Phnom Penh, February 2010.

But even Lon Nol could not avoid formulating his own culturo-political vision without reference to Angkor. His 250 page-long pamphlet *Le Néo-Khmérisme* appeared only in 1974 and redefined the ancient Khmer civilization (the author's parallel fight against North Vietnam was more than evident) as a peace-and-progress oriented, however militaristic, society constantly resisting invading enemies. As he mentioned in the introductory section "Aperçu sur l'histoire de la civilisation khmère" and in the final "Conclusion": "Following the concept of a revolutionary and progressive *Néo-Khmérisme* [is] a fusion of the European [French!] spirit of *liberté, égalité, and fraternité*, Buddhist discipline, egalitarianism, and charity, and the latest global intellectual currents [...]. The new Cambodian generation has to knead with its own hands a new, rich, independent, and peaceful Khmer state [... in order to] restore the historic glory of a peace-loving island and *Tchenla le riche* [the mythical and historical pre-Angkorian empire, MF]" (Lon 1973, 235 and 25). Jayavarman VII, the king of the "Golden Age of Cambodia," was now praised as a hero "fighting back invading Champa, to finally annex it" (Lon 1973, 57) and the link between the glorious heritage of Angkor and Lon Nol's republican vision of civilization was clearly formulated when he spoke of the "Khmer path towards national welfare [*La voie khmère de salut national*]"

Since the beginning of our history, we have been consanguineously related to the *Khmer-Mon* people, which excel in the military arts [*art militaire*]. With this instrument, we already hold the miraculous key to victory. The Mon Khmer are not frightened of invasions, they have a glorious tradition of resistance [...] We are Buddhists, but we also adhere to the collaborative spirit in the economic and social domains, to discipline and philosophical meditation [...] *All this has enabled our race to be victorious ever since the distant past when the Angkorian culture constituted the height of our glory.* All this shows that the Khmer people not only have a creative power in meditation, but also a spirit of mutual help and cooperation in self-discipline. *Thanks to these virtues we could give birth to the glorious history of Angkor, and there is no reason to think that we will not be able to found a free, coequal, and prosperous Republic.* [italics MF] (Lon 1973, 36)

Lon Nol (1973) *Le Neo-Khmérisme*

The early 1970s was the first heyday of truly global politics in the medium of cultural heritage and Angkor played an important, however tragic, role. In 1972, when UNESCO was about to release its *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* with its definition of heritage's "outstanding universal value" and the attached World Heritage List of Humanity, the military battles in Cambodia were making global headlines. Despite having been a member of UNESCO since 1951 and having ratified the 1954 *Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* in 1961, the clashing fronts ran directly through the Angkor Park. The Khmer Republic's image-making campaign as the "protector of Angkor" started early with its June 1970 appeal to UNESCO to protest against the "destruction, profanation, and pillage of Angkor by the barbaric occupation by the Vietcong/North-Vietnamese."

This was mirrored globally in the *UNESCO Courier* in December 1971 with a special issue called “S.O.S. Angkor” depicting the sculpted head of “Cambodia’s pacifier” Jayavarman VII on the cover page. The introductory text with the same title by Hiroshi Daifuku, a Japanese-American, co-author of the famous *Venice Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites* of 1964, and UNESCO’s cultural heritage expert who visited Phnom Penh and Siem Reap in a special mission in February 1972, was partly reprinted in the Khmer National Commission for UNESCO’s own *UNESCO Bulletin* in March 1972. Daifuku’s eye-catching title was appropriated in the journal *New Cambodia* on November 1972. Here, not surprisingly, a photograph of the iconized passageway of Angkor Wat was used—once again—to serve a new propagandistic goal (Fig. 20a).

While the cover page of the March 3, 1972 issue of the republican *Réalités Cambodgiennes* depicted fighting soldiers with the caption “Around the temples of Angkor the Khmer troops fight heavy [battles] to chase away the North Vietnamese who [hid] themselves in their fortifications” and propagated the imminent decline of the cultural heritage of Angkor, the other side circulated images that conveyed firm control and stability. However, hundreds of people in the Angkor region were taking refuge inside the protecting walls of Angkor Wat, which now provided a shelter from warfare, and has remained, through all ideological regime changes, a supra-regional, social-religious reference point ever since (Fig. 20b).

As **Henri Locard** has discussed in greater detail, Sihanouk and his wife Monique, both exiled to Beijing at this moment, paid a secret, symbolic visit to the Angkor region in March 1973. As appointed Chairman of the National United Front of Cambodia he contacted “his” fighting units in the northeastern parts of Cambodia, which had joined what he would later call the *Khmer Rouge*. Published in the book *Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Head of State of Cambodia, in the liberated zone 1973*, his trip was documented at every step by photographs recording the journey from Hanoi along the *Ho Chi Minh Trail* to the Preah Vihear and Siem Reap Provinces where he joyfully met with leading Khmer Rouge figures like Khieu Samphan, Hou Youn, Ieng Sary, Son Sen, Noun Chea, and Saloth Sar.⁸ A real, or rather a manipulated, photograph on the causeway of Angkor Wat finally legitimated Sihanouk’s political and symbolic mission of liberating Cambodia through his quasi-religious and cultural pilgrimage to the famous temple site⁹ (Fig. 21).

⁸This is the notorious leader of the Khmer Rouge who would later be known as Pol Pot. He was mentioned only once in a caption in the book, but is hardly identifiable in the corresponding photograph.

⁹Compare with Fig. 1 in Henri Locard’s contribution to this volume, and Fig. 8a, b in my contribution regarding the exiled Khmer Rouge in Paris.

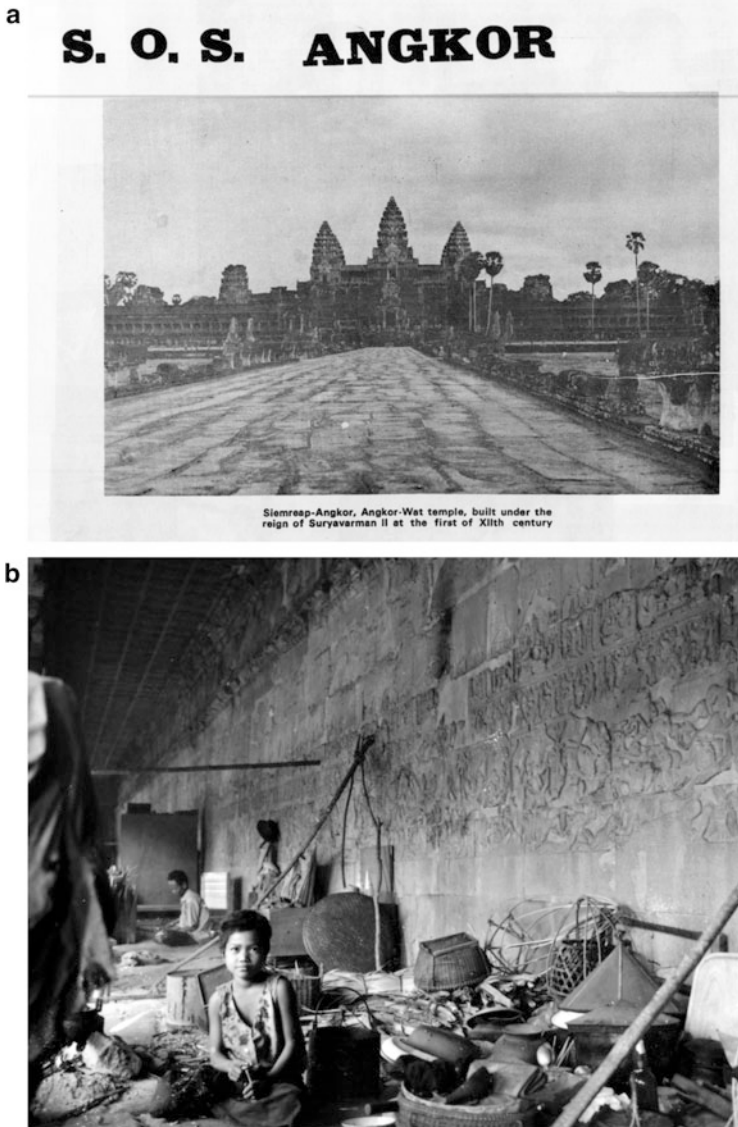


Fig. 20 (a) *S.O.S. Angkor* with the iconized view towards Angkor Wat in the November 1972 issue of the republican journal *New Cambodge*. (Source: *New Cambodge* 21 (November 1972): 22) (b) Refugees in the inner galleries of Angkor Wat during the civil war in the early 1970s (EFEO Paris, Fonds Jean Boulbet)

When the Khmer Rouge finally conquered Phnom Penh on April 17, 1975, Cambodia's capital was emptied in only a few days. A Maoist ideology was quickly implemented, which foresaw a "re-civilizing" of the country through the genocidal purification of Cambodia's population and infrastructure from the supposedly

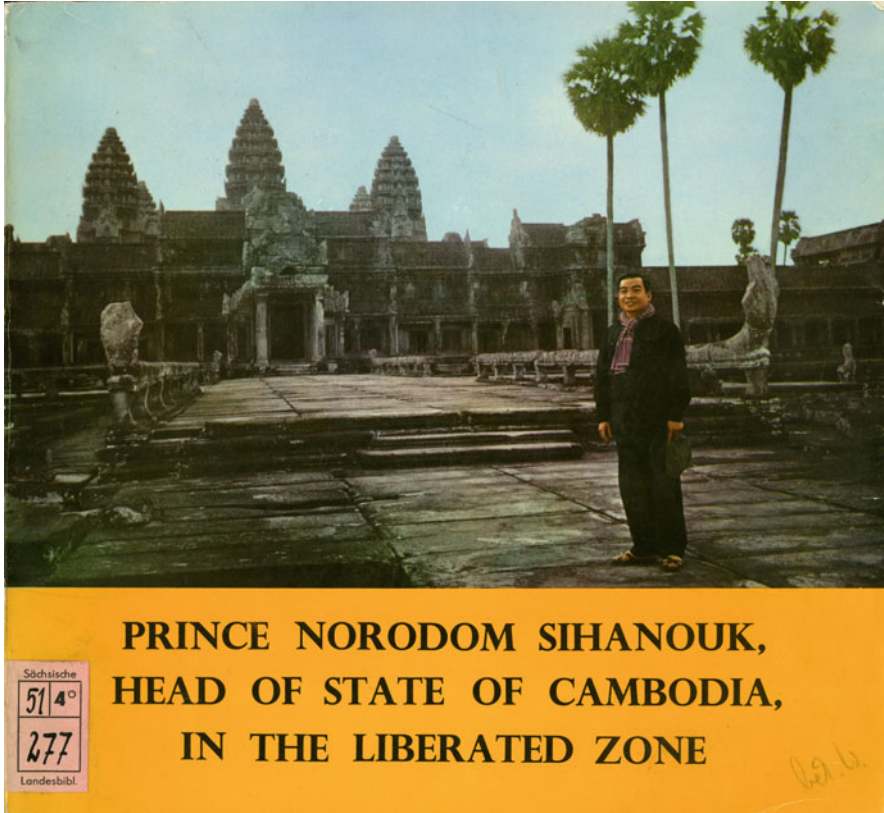


Fig. 21 Norodom Sihanouk depicted in front of Angkor Wat, on the cover page of the 1973 publication *Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Head of State of Cambodia, in the liberated zone 1973* (Source: People’s Armed Forces 1973, cover)

degenerating influences of both Western modernity and Cambodia’s feudal history. What was true for Nazi Germany and other terror regimes around the globe found its perverse apogee with the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia: the self-declared “civilizer himself had turned barbarian” (Osterhammel 2006, 32). The four-year period of Khmer Rouge terror did not result in any larger direct damage (besides “natural” decay through negligence) or any new repair work to the cultural heritage of Angkor. However—as I have mentioned in my own paper in this volume—its symbolic appropriation through the new regime resulted in (a) a dramatic ideological downgrade of Angkor’s status as an ancient high civilization, and a provincialization of the site to mere national dimensions. However, a “parallel between the revolutionary *Angkar* [the Khmer Rouge’s central organization of power] and Angkor’ should not be established without reservations” (Sher 2003; cf. Chandler 1983b). In 1976 when a high-ranking official delivered an address (most probably written by Pol Pot and then published in the party’s official Khmer language journal

Revolutionary flag) celebrating the first anniversary of the official Khmer Rouge rule in Cambodia, the achievement of the Angkor were ranked only third after the “Glorious Revolution of April 17, 1975” and the new project to transform the whole country “into a farm garden” (compare similar quotations in this volume’s contribution of **Henri Locard**):

The previous generation preferred the magnificent masterpieces of the Angkorian period. *Our people built Angkor, but we are not proud of that because the people at that time lived in a slave-agriculture regime and were seriously exploited by the feudal lords of that generation.* Another matter even more wonderful than Angkor is the great victory of 17 April 1975, which the whole world admires, studies, respects, and praises. And now there is a new story, one that we are creating and that we believe is a *masterpiece greater than Angkor and even more magnificent than 17 April: the great revolutionary movement is transforming the Kampuchean countryside into a farm garden!* Not a flower garden, but a garden of rice crops and various strategic crops, transforming it in a great magnificent leap forward so that our country will be abundant, the livelihood of the people will make rapid progress, and the defense of our country will be even mightier [. . .] new paddy dikes and new feeder canals in the flatlands and rice fields throughout the entire country. This plan was realized through the collective forces of our peasant class, our Revolutionary Army, and our Party in each base area [. . .] Today, the changes are huge. This movement is strengthening and expanding. *This is the third story that has the dimensions of a magnificent victory similar to the Angkorian period and to April 17, 1975.* This force is mighty. Just look at the paddy dike systems and the new feeder canals and you will have faith in our people, be proud of our people, and *trust that our people can do everything* [. . .] All this makes it clear that the soul of the nation has been reborn. The soul of a nation that believes in its nation, its people, believes in the concrete movement, believes because it sees the actual situation. This is a major victory of our nation. *We have the mission of strengthening it further in order to transform our nation, our land, into abundance and real freshness, freshness in views and stances.* [italics MF] (Pol Pot 1976, 14–15)

Pol Pot in *Revolutionary flag* (April 4, 1976)

Pol Pot’s confidence in the phrase “our people can do everything” (compare with the French-colonial narrative of the decadent Cambodian race after the fall of Angkor) had to be rooted in a proof from Cambodia’s past; despite the fact that the feudalist element in Angkor’s ancient glory was judged as unworthy for and a shameful blot within the Khmer Rouge utopia, it was at least evidence of the enormous collective labour force of the Khmer population. In 1977 it was this detail that encouraged Pol Pot to declare:

Long ago there was Angkor. Angkor was built during the era of slavery. Slaves like us built Angkor under the yoke of the exploiting classes for the pleasures of the king. [If] *Our people were able to built Angkor,* [then] *they can built everything.* (Pol Pot 1977, 50).

However, evoking the heroic collectivity of a re-imagined past through enhancing archaeological remains was also an important issue in the Khmer Rouge’s great ideological role model—the Maoist *Great Cultural Revolution* in China. As **Juliane Noth** has explained in her contribution to this volume, archaeology was an important tool in the Chinese regime’s ideology of class struggle and the collective will to build a new revolutionary society.

The Cambodian 5 Riel banknote that was produced in 1975 (but never used) demonstrates how the cultural heritage of Angkor was embedded in the Janus-faced



Fig. 22 (a, b) The 5 Riel banknote of the Khmer Rouge government (which was never used) depicting Angkor Wat on one side and the population working on rice fields and/or water irrigation projects on the other (Source: Private archive Michael Falser 2011)

and ambiguous ideology of the Khmer Rouge (Fig. 22a, b, cf. with Fig. 2 in Locard’s contribution): one side of the note depicted the now well-known perspective towards Angkor Wat, which seemed to prelude and justify the scene on the backside of the bill of a uniformly dressed crowd working the land into geometric patterns of rice fields and irrigation systems.

Henri Locard’s contribution to this volume argues that the Khmer Rouge’s megalomaniacal vision was founded on Bernard Philippe Groslier’s hypothesis of 1967 that Angkor’s glorious civilization was based on the mastery of water achieved through a gigantic irrigation system.¹⁰ What needs to be added to this is

¹⁰ Compare Groslier’s short remarks on this topic in his 1956 book *Angkor: hommes et pierres*, and his much more detailed 1967 paper “La civilisation angkorienne et la maîtrise de l’eau,” published in French and Khmer (Groslier 1967).



Fig. 23 Group photo of leading Khmer Rouge in front of Angkor Wat; Pol Pot in the center (Kathleen O’Keeffe Collection, Bophana Archive, Phnom Penh)

the fact that Groslier’s ideas were directly influenced by Karl August Wittfogel’s 1957 publication *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power*. In a number of articles from 1955 onwards and especially in this book the phenomenon of “hydraulic societies” and “hydraulic empires” in Asia with their large-scale irrigation works was expounded in relation to state-organized and -enforced collective labour (Wittfogel 1957).

Discussing the contested status of Angkor’s glory in terms of class exploitation, however, did not hinder the Khmer Rouge elite from gathering around Pol Pot, Khieu Samphan, and Ieng Sary to stage a harmonious group photo in front of Angkor Wat (Fig. 23, cf. Fig. 1 in Locard’s contribution) or from using the tower skyline of Angkor Wat for foreign publications like *Le Cambodge en lutte* (published in 1975 in Beijing) with the caption “Combatants of the popular armed forces vigilantly protect Angkor.” (Fig. 24).

The mass killing programme of the Khmer Rouge forced thousands of people to leave the country. If they survived, they lived in refugee camps along the Thai-Cambodian border, or emigrated to Europe or the United States where they founded exile communities and published small periodicals. Now, Angkor Wat was being used as a standard to represent their questions about the rapidly “de-civilizing” status of Cambodia, as a title page of *Conscience* put it in 1976: “Are two thousand years of Khmer culture to be extinguished?” (Fig. 25).

The Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1978/79 drove the Khmer Rouge out of the country into the guerrilla strongholds along the Cambodian-Thai border zone.

Fig. 24 Cover page of the 1975 Beijing publication *Le Cambodge en lutte* with Khmer Rouge soldiers in front of Angkor Wat
(Source: *Le Cambodge en lutte* 1975, cover)



The *People’s Republic of Kampuchea* (PRK)—strongly backed by the neighbouring Socialist Republic of Vietnam and its ally, Russia—was established on January 10, 1979 under Heng Samrin, a former Khmer Rouge commander and deserter. For the next ten years, between 1979 until 1989, the role of Angkor’s cultural heritage in the competing culturo-political rhetoric underwent—as I have analysed in greater detail in this volume—a curious mutation that pre-constituted its future status as a truly *global* heritage icon. Whereas the PRK was busy forming its mission to “re-civilize” Cambodia from its “de-civilized” status under the former Khmer Rouge regime, the latter had transformed from an internationally mistrusted regime to UN-recognized representatives outside their own territory. Now, the exiled Khmer Rouge used images of Angkor—which they declared to be “occupied and pillaged by the Vietnamese enemy”—for their international campaign to regain power, and in doing so they invented the notion of Angkor as a cultural heritage for humanity.

The PRK’s 1981 constitution referred explicitly to the five towers of the Angkor Wat temple, and in the bilingual 1979 French-English publication entitled *The Birth of New Kampuchea*, President Heng Samrin outlined the PRK’s revolutionary mission using metaphors of decayed cultural heritage. Vice-President Pen Sovann’s speech drew parallels between ancient Angkorian civilization and the tradition of a revolutionary and socialist mission in order to mandate the protection of this glorious heritage; but the parallels with the rhetoric of the Khmer Republic were striking:

Comrades, you have fought valiantly, braved all difficulties, torments and sufferings. You have *shunned no sacrifice for the salvation* of the nation and people and the cause of socialism. [...] Our armed forces were born in the just struggles against the French colonialists and US imperialists. They came out of the blood shed by millions of our

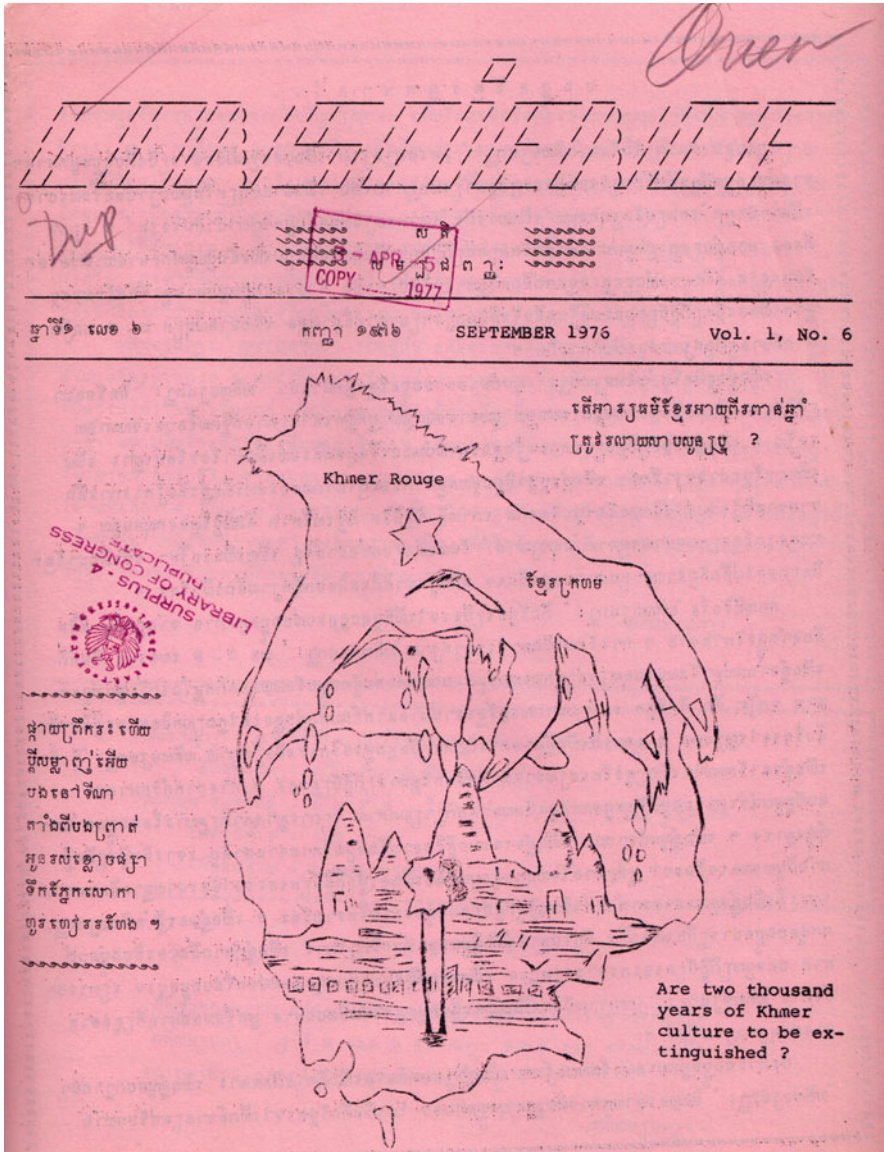


Fig. 25 Cover of September 1976 issue of *Conscience*, a Khmer refugee magazine, edited in the town of Ellicott, Maryland, depicting a bloody hand of the Khmer Rouge grabbing Angkor Wat on the map of Cambodia (Source: *Conscience*, edited in Ellicott City (MD) USA, September 1976, vol. 1, no. 6: cover (Centre of Khmer Studies, Siem Reap, Cambodia))

compatriots, in the atrocious sufferings inflicted by the criminal hands of the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique, zealous henchmen of expansionists, counter-revolutionaries, and betrayers of Marxism-Leninism, the ruling circle in Peking. [...] *Our armed forces are also true outstanding sons and daughters of the heroic Kampuchean people living in this glorious land of Angkor, authentic heirs to the revolution and traditions of struggle of our fathers who laid down their lives for the cause of the nation, the people and socialism, authentic heirs of millions of cadres, fighters and compatriots tragically massacred by the foolish and ferocious Pol Pot-Ieng Sary murderers. [...] Our red flag with five golden towers which flies over our beloved Fatherland is already known all over the world.* (Ministry of Information 1979, 84–7)

Ministry of Information (1979) *The Birth of New Kampuchea*

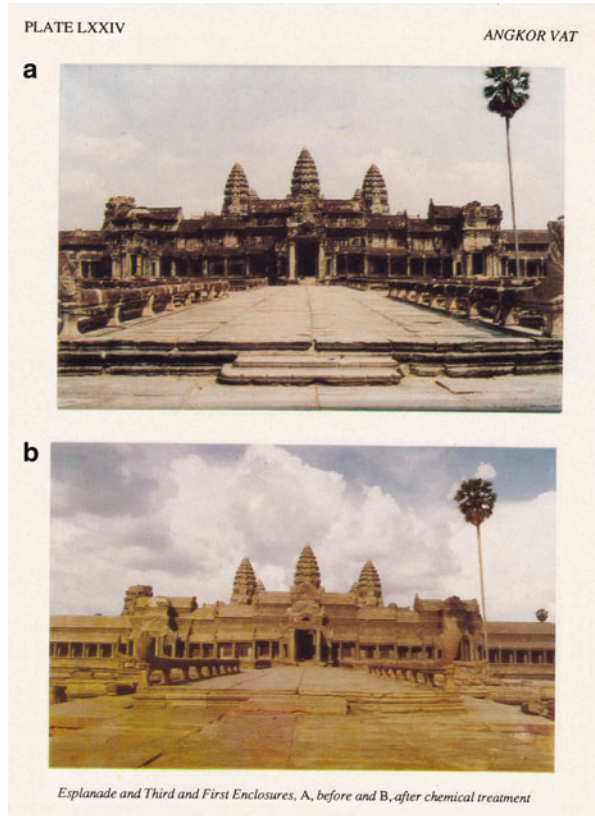
What was most astonishing about this self-appointed mission to salvage the nation and its heritage from the previous terror regime was the fact that in the cultural heritage sector it was not the PRK but the *Archaeological Survey of India* (ASI) that established a restoration campaign of Angkor Wat in 1986. **Krishna Menon** has explored the relevance of this campaign from the Indian side in his contribution. Within this globally entangled political world of obligations and diplomatic gifts (**Bloembergen/Eickhoff** discussed this phenomenon in the context of the Javanese temple of Borobudur), “saving Angkor Wat” functioned as a reward granted by the new Cambodian regime to India for their diplomatic recognition in 1980 (Chakraborti 1985, 82–9). When Achala Moulik, the director general of the ASI wrote the foreword to the 1994 book *Angkor Vat. India’s Contribution in Conservation 1986–1993*, India’s own civilizing mission within a revived notion of the “Greater India Movement” (not that far removed from the French-colonial *tâche* to restore Angkor for the *Plus Grande France*, see Bayly 2004) was made abundantly clear:

Travelling on the “Magic Ship” in 1926, Rabindranath Tagore saw the grandeur of the vast culture of south-eastern and eastern Asia. *At Borobudur, Bali, Java, Thailand and Cambodia, he was struck by the deep and enduring affinity that these countries had with India.* In mellifluous verse, Tagore captured in his poem “Sagarika” the rich and vibrant past which bound these nations together [...] Cambodia had emerged from colonial and civil wars and wanted this temple complex to be restored since this monument is the national symbol of Cambodia. Responding to this appeal, the then Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi offered to send experts to assist in the effort to preserve Angkor Vat. [...] Cambodia had barely recovered from the turmoil of the 1970s when the first Indian team, led by the late Shri K.P. Gupta, reached Cambodia. Conditions were unsettled and living conditions were austere. Nevertheless, the archaeologists [...] who were part of the team responded in the spirit of adventure as they set about the stupendous task of restoring Angkor Vat to its pristine glory [...] What will remain is the standing and eloquent testimony of the concern of the Government of India and the care of the ASI to restore a monument which is a great symbol of Cambodian culture as well as being a part of the larger heritage of India and the world. [italics MF] (Narasimhaiah 1994, viii–xii)

Achala Moulik, Director general of the ASI in his foreword from June 18, 1994, New Delhi for the 1994 publication *Angkor Vat. India’s Contribution in Conservation 1986–1993*

In the publication’s long series of photographic “before and after” restoration images, Angkor Wat’s central causeway was once again the most significant image (compare with similar Fig. 3a, b in **Falser**). It was used as one of the visual proofs of

Fig. 26 “Esplanade and Third and First Enclosures. (a) Before and (b) after chemical treatment” as depicted the Archaeological Survey of India’s 1994 publication *Angkor Vat. India’s Contribution in Conservation 1986–1993* (Source: Narasimhaiah 1994, plate LXXIV)



India’s care for Cambodia’s greatest cultural icon, which—not incidentally—was also clearly seen as being part of India’s wider heritage canon (Fig. 26).

The exiled Khmer Rouge elites (clustered around the new leader Khieu Samphan and his “good old friend” Sihanouk) used another political strategy, and once again Angkor Wat’s image was harnessed to gain global attention and sympathy. Now officially called *Democratic Kampuchea*, its *Permanent Delegation at UNESCO* under Ok Sakun, as well as Ieng Sary as “Vice-Premier Ministre, Chargé des Affaires Etrangères du Kampuchéa Démocratique,” continued to reference the iconic central pathway leading up to Angkor Wat’s central massif. This can be seen in the revolutionary Khmer Rouge signature, which depicted a path leading through geometrically organized rice fields toward a smoking factory, instead of the temple¹¹ (Fig. 27).

Democratic Kampuchea at UNESCO in Paris also used the classic version of this icon in order to promulgate their hastily invented mission to save Angkor; its representatives simply mimicked UNESCO’s Cold War rhetoric by propagating a

¹¹ Compare with Fig. 3 in Locard’s contribution, and Fig. 4a, b in my paper in this volume.

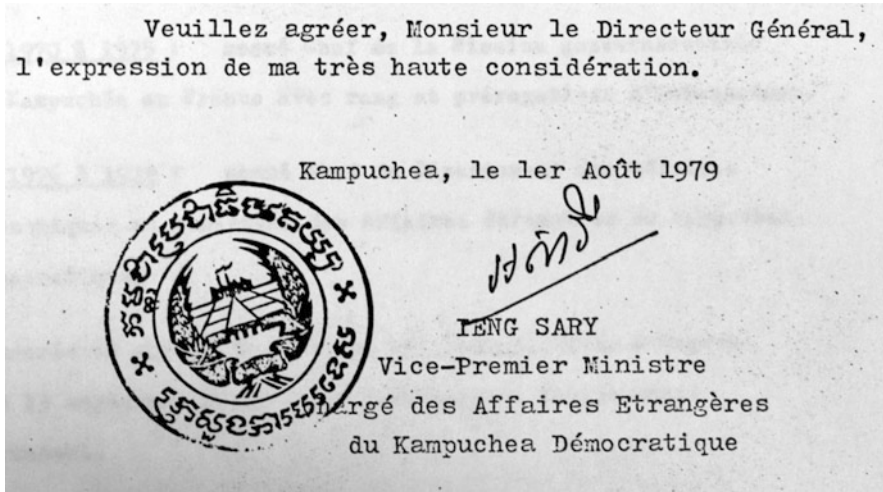


Fig. 27 Letter stamp of Ieng Sary from August 1, 1979 in official correspondence for UNESCO affairs in Paris (UNESCO Archive Paris)

universal task to save the world’s cultural heritage in the name of humanity. When the 1982 *Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea*, with Norodom Sihanouk as its president, the Khmer Rouge Khieu Samphan as vice-president, and the republican Son Sann as prime minister, moved towards a political solution for Cambodia, an internationally praised plan to declare Angkor a “neutral zone” was initially rejected because it would indirectly acknowledge the Vietnamese regime in Cambodia. The second *Angkor Dossier* of 1983 (see Fig. 9a, b in my contribution), published by the *Délégation permanente du Kampuchea Démocratique auprès de l’UNESCO*, circulated an ambiguously translated statement made by Norodom Sihanouk in a 1982 interview conducted in New York while he was president of Democratic Kampuchea:

The monuments of Angkor are not only the heritage of the people of Kampuchea but equally constitute the heritage of Humanity as a whole. We are seriously affected to see that our monuments of Angkor suffer from the destructions caused by Vietnamese aggression. After the recall of the Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, we will strongly need international assistance from the International Community, from UNESCO, Japan, and all friend countries to restore and preserve the monuments of Angkor. It is regrettable that at this very moment, such an eventual project of UNESCO’s help to restore Angkor cannot be dissociated from the overall situation which prevails in Kampuchea. In the given circumstances, such a project would bring UNESCO into the situation to de facto acknowledge the Heng Samrin regime. This is why we cannot accept such a project. [italics MF] (Délégation permanente 1983, 3)

Sihanouk in the *Angkor Dossier* of 1983, published by the *Délégation permanente du Kampuchea Démocratique auprès de l’UNESCO*

The April 5, 1982 special issue of a Press release of the *Permanent Mission of Democratic Kampuchea to the United Nations*, entitled *The Marvellous Monuments*

Fig. 28 The cover of the 1982 Press Release of the *Permanent Mission of Democratic Kampuchea to the United Nations* in New York, under the title *The Marvellous Monuments of Angkor and their Tragedy* and with an illustration of Angkor Wat’s iconized silhouette (Source: Permanent Mission 1982, cover)



of Angkor and their Tragedy, once again summoned the famous view of Angkor Wat in denouncing the PRK’s pillaging of Angkor (Fig. 28).

Studying the UNESCO-correspondence on Angkor from the 1980s (as I did in my contribution to this volume) reveals that the Khmer Rouge in Paris—acknowledged as *Democratic Kampuchea* by the United Nations and spreading their hastily adopted “save Angkor-mission” through the UNESCO circles around its director M’Bow—invented the notion of Angkor as “world heritage of humanity” and used it as a diplomatic trick in their attempts to regain territorial control of Cambodia. In a global chain reaction before and after the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Cold War, China and Russia were willing to suspend their direct support for all parties in the Cambodia conflict. In 1986 Sihanouk presented an 8-point plan in Beijing for a quadripartite government *with* the PRK and himself installed as president. Son Sann’s official letter dated to June 15, 1987 argued for a “cultural zone of peace” (again, using a stamp depicting Angkor Wat’s three-tower elevation). Although the PRK rejected this proposal as one of the DK’s political tricks to penetrate deeper into the country, it gave UNESCO its first official political mandate and cultural mission to provide international assistance to Angkor. There is no other moment in the modern history of Angkor Wat where the transculturally entangled nature of local, national,

international, and supranational civilizing missions around one and the same object of cultural heritage was more visible.

“Civilizing Angkor” after 1990: Going Global—Triggering the National and the Local

With UNESCO’s official mandate from the PRK, the leading voice for a civilizing mission to safeguard Angkor became—for the first time in its modern history—a truly global affair. After many different political steps taken on both national and international levels, UNESCO’s new director general, Frederico Mayor Zaragoza, *asked* Sihanouk, during his visit to Paris on September 1, 1989,¹² to consent to UNESCO’s leadership in a supposedly “depoliticized” approach to Angkor, and, more importantly, to arrange the famous “Appeal for Angkor” that was made on September 30, 1989. In a seemingly diplomatic appeasement of the outlawed PRK who were governing Cambodia at the time (under Hun Sen’s new leadership it was officially called the State of Cambodia and had been since April 1989), the “imminent threat” rhetoric was modified from “Vietnamese occupiers pillaging Angkor” to the more apolitical “natural storm disaster menacing a cultural heritage of all mankind and world wonder”:

An appeal for Angkor! During the night of 31 August to 1 September 1989, very strong winds with torrential rains swept over the Park of Angkor, pulling down more than 750 large trees, causing some damage to historical monuments within the perimeter of the Park. [...] These age-old trees both protected the monuments from wind erosion and enhanced the natural beauty of these historic sites. The Ministry of Culture of the State of Cambodia and the Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO feel it necessary and indeed urgent to mobilize important means both technical and financial, not only to repair the recent damages but also to restore and preserve other monuments which belong to the Cultural Heritage of all mankind. For these reasons, the Ministry of Culture of the State of Cambodia and the Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO would like to appeal to all men of good will, to the Organizations of Friends of Angkor, to other Non-Governmental Organizations, to countries and to specialized institutions such as UNESCO, to take urgent steps to help to repair, to restore and to preserve one of the world wonders. The Ministry of Culture of the State of Cambodia and the Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO welcome all kind of assistance, cooperation and suggestions aimed at preserving this common cultural heritage for future generations. [italics MF] (Ministry of Culture 1989)
Appeal for Angkor, September 30, 1989

After several important declarations, the UN installed a *Transitory Authority for Cambodia* (UNTAC) in 1992/3 that would supervise elections for a new state of Cambodia after the Paris Agreement in 1991, the year that Norodom Sihanouk also signed the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention. At this point, a series of missions involving international experts had already been launched. Under a

¹² Internal correspondence reveals that UNESCO asked Sihanouk and not vice versa, as the official history has it. See Falser’s contribution in this volume.



Fig. 29 UNESCO’s director general, Federico Mayor, launching his *Appeal for Angkor* on November 30 on the central causeway of Angkor Wat (Source: *Connaissance des Art*. 1992. *Cambodge* (special issue vol. 481): x (photographer Arnaud Carpentier)

culturo-political triumvirate that was made up of France, Japan, and UNESCO, the *Round Table Conferences* in Bangkok 1990 and Paris 1991 helped to pave the way for a global salvage campaign of Angkor (UNESCO 1990a, b, 1991a–d). As regards the focus of this book, Federico Mayor’s symbolic “Appeal for the protection, preservation, restoration and presentation of the site of Angkor,” launched—where else?—on the causeway of Angkor Wat on November 30, 1991, was a milestone in the modern history of Angkor’s civilizing visions through the medium of cultural heritage (Fig. 29).

The messianic character of this truly neo-colonial, but now universally embedded belief in UNESCO’s leading role and duty to “save Angkor in the name of humanity,” along with the continued essentialization of Angkor as the civilizing focal point of the Khmer *nation*, is hard to miss. The United Nations—which kept silent while US bombing devastated entire areas of Cambodia during the Vietnam War and stood by while 2 million Cambodians fell victim to the genocidal terror of the Khmer Rouge reign from 1975 until 1979, and even acknowledged this very regime as the legal and moral representatives of Cambodia between 1979 and 1991—called for the *rebirth* of Angkor’s heritage in a self-appointed mission “to give back the [again passive?] Khmer people their civilization, pride, and memory of their ancestor’s glory.” In a globalized sense, Mayor’s official vision was not far removed from Mouhot’s pre-colonial statement made 150 years earlier:

There are times in the history of humanity when both history and humanity keep silence. Thus it is that tragic, unfathomable periods go unrecorded, too fearsome, too distressing to enter the annals. As such times, it only remains to wait for the awakening of history and with it humanity at that moment when tragedy, beauty and hope reappear together. Today in Cambodia, tragedy withdraws, hope is reborn and the beauty of Angkor reaffirms its permanence in history. Buildings, stones, temples, statuary and bas-reliefs silent under the depredations of man and nature, are one again preparing to speak of that great civilisation to which they bear witness. Angkor, city of the Khmer kings, is waiting to become once more the symbol of its country. Vestiges, which bear witness to a rich and glorious past, reflect all those values that are a source for the Khmer people of hope reborn and identity recovered. Yes, this symbol is in peril. The ravages of time, the assaults of nature and the pillaging of man further its decline with every passing day. It must be saved! For over a thousand years, Angkor has bewitched humanity and nurtured our dreams. Its influence has reached for beyond frontiers and centuries. The mystery of the gods and the genius of the human race shine forth from those stones where human beings used all their talents to create a profound union between nature and civilisation. The site of Angkor is here in Cambodia, yet it belongs to the whole of humanity. For this reason, UNESCO is proposing, with the Cambodian people, to co-ordinate a safeguarding operation to be carried out with the very highest criteria of expertise. Directed by the Cambodians under international management, the operation for the preservation and restoration of the monuments of Angkor, and the natural surroundings which enhance them, will be part of an integrated development strategy for the region as a whole. We cannot, we must consign our heritage to silence. Angkor is not only the melting-pot of Khmer culture: it is also a milestone in the history of civilisation and in the very memory of mankind in which we must search for the roots of our future. Angkor must be saved! This challenge, in which UNESCO proposes to stand beside the people of Cambodia, extends far beyond a mere restoration of relics of the past. For the saving of Angkor will allow an entire people to regain its pride, its will to live and a renewed vigor with which to rebuilt its country. I therefore appeal to the international community as a whole to put the stamp of universal solidarity on the rebirth of Angkor. May the help of each and every one of us be forthcoming so that the Khmer people may see the capital of their ancestors radiant once again. [italics MF] (Mayor 1991a)

UNESCO's Director general, Federico Mayor's *Appeal for the protection, preservation, restoration and presentation of the site of Angkor* of November 30, 1991, launched on the causeway of Angkor Wat

The French version of Mayor's text (a draft text provided by the French UNESCO consultant Claude Jacques, is an unpublished French version that is translated here for the first time), has some different and more emotional connotations:

Appeal for Angkor! Coming to Cambodia it is first the children, the women, and men that I have in mind. Few other people in modern and contemporary history have been through more suffering, undergone more humiliation [*on subi un calvaire aussi long, ont bu la coupe jusqu'à la lie*]. Without the eyes of these people, the rising ensemble of monuments here on 200 km² wouldn't make much sense. But *maybe it is the permanence of Angkor with all the values in its temples that gave the Khmer people the power and the energy to survive. This is why, today more than ever, Angkor must be reborn!* [*C'est pourquoi, aujourd'hui plus que jamais, Angkor doit renaître!*] For a thousand years, Angkor has fascinated the people and nourished their dreams. Once more, emerging from a long nightmare, the city of the Khmer kings will open itself to the world! The world has to respond to these smiles of hope, which are engraved in the stone, to help *Angkor to dress its wounds inflicted by time and the people, and to progressively regain its splendor. For*

Angkor is not a sunken city or a relic of a defunct civilization, on the contrary, it is the symbol and standard [étendard] of a living nation, united by the will to reconstruct its country. It is here, on this immense site where the towers of stone and the trunks of giant trees become wedged together, where the past joins the future as a sign of hope and of a renaissance. [...] Today, Angkor is in danger! The assaults from time and nature and the human pillage helped, day after day, to bring about its degradation. Can the world abandon this part of its heritage [héritage]? Angkor is not just the melting-pot of Khmer culture, it is equally one of the milestones in the history of civilizations, on the memory of humanity—this common memory that we have to preserve to ingrain our future. We should never forget that the settlements of the past arose from the dreams of mankind and took form under its work, watered by the blood and sweat of their anonymous builders, ancestors of these who live in their shadow. We must save Angkor! [Il faut sauver Angkor!] This challenge that we want to accept on the part of the Cambodian people, goes far beyond a simple restoration of the ruins of the past. *To save Angkor is also to give back a whole people its pride and its will to live, to instill in it a new energy necessary to reconstruct its country. Therefore, I appeal to the whole international community so that the renaissance of Angkor will be a symbol of universal solidarity. That the help of all would permit the Khmer people to see the capital of their ancestors shine resplendent again [Que l'aide de tous permette au peuple khmer de voir à nouveau resplendir la capital de ses ancêtres]!* [italics MF] (Mayor 1991b)

French draft version for *Appel pour Angkor* of UNESCO's director general, Federico Mayor

Only one year later, on December 14, 1992 in the Mexican city of Santa Fé, during UNESCO's annual World Heritage meeting (UNESCO 1992a), Angkor was officially inscribed to the UNESCO list of worldwide cultural masterpieces. As a reflection of the continued salvage paradigm that was applied to Angkor, the site was not only placed on UNESCO's World Heritage List, but also on the *UNESCO World Heritage List of Danger*, which defined, following UNESCO's checklist of *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, the following levels of "danger" for cultural sites: (1) An "ascertained, imminent danger" comprising (above others) "a serious deterioration of materials, a significant loss of historical authenticity and an important loss of cultural significance." And (2) "potential dangers (threats)" including (above others) a "lack of conservation policy" and "the outbreak of threat of armed conflict" (UNESCO 1992b, 17–8). In relation to Angkor, UNESCO's evaluation body ICOMOS listed the elements for a proper inscription that were still missing at this point and automatically necessitated international assistance. These included: an adequate protective legislation, a national protective agency, established boundaries and buffer zones for the site, and an international monitoring and coordination system.

For the next ten years emergency "safeguarding" was the term most employed during the enormous effort of international conservation and heritage management expertise, including declarations, recommendations, conference proceedings, scientific reports, and NGO-proposals, which poured into the Angkor Park. With a trajectory that has spanned use as a French-colonial heritage reserve (first conceived in 1907 and created in 1925), an exploited national icon of Cambodia's independence (1953–1970), and a propagandistic tool in clashing Hot and Cold War politics (1970–1990), it was now being turned into the most rapidly globalized cultural heritage site on the planet. As a result of the October 1993 *Inter-Governmental Conference on the Safeguarding and Development of the Historical*

Area of Angkor, the *Tokyo Declaration* was not only signed by thirty countries, including Cambodia, and ranging from Australia to the United States, from Japan to France, Great Britain, and Germany, from India, Indonesia, and China to Poland, but also by the EU, the Asian Development Bank, various UN-organizations and international and regional conservation networks (UNESCO 1993a, b). It recognized “the Angkor monuments as one of the world’s most valuable cultural heritages in Asia as well as the *national symbol* of Cambodia by its people,” and identified—with no Cambodian protection agency yet in place—the need for an international safeguarding mission “to prevent the Angkor monuments from further decay and destruction” as its highest priority (reprinted in UNESCO 2003b, 9). At this point, UNESCO was installed in Cambodia (UNESCO 1992–1994; UNESCO Cambodia 1994, 4) and Sihanouk’s former state architect Vann Molyvann (cf. with his role in **Helen Grant Ross**’s contribution in this volume) had already been appointed to draft an emergency plan for the Archaeological Park of Angkor, which proposed a protection perimeter that was developed on the basis of the former French zoning of the park of 1925/1930 (Vann et al. 1991; Vann 1993)¹³ (Fig. 30, cf. Fig. 12).

Ten years later in 2003, when the 2nd *Intergovernmental Conference for the Safeguarding and Development of Angkor* was hosted in Paris (UNESCO 2003a, b), France had more or less successfully perpetuated the validity of its image as the key player in Angkor (Fig. 31). Besides Japan, which had become a new conservation leader on the site, many other nations were given their “own” temple reconstruction site within the Angkor Archaeological Park. Ironically (or tragically) Cambodia, which was judged by the international heritage community as not yet skilled enough to fulfil this task in the name of humanity, was excluded from this privilege. The universalist slogan of the 1990s “save Angkor in the name of humanity” campaign triggered—now on a national level in Cambodia—the complete commercialization, commodification, and over-administration of Angkor in the guise of “sustainable development” (cf. Miura in Hauser-Schäublin 2011). Cambodia’s prime minister, Hun Sen, explained his vision with disarming honesty:

Angkor—symbol of the great Khmer civilisation and crowing jewel of mankind’s world heritage—is, thanks to tourism and the revenue generated by it, the hope of a balanced, sustainable development. Indeed, the Royal Government considers tourism to be a type of driver, capable, if properly manoeuvred, of pulling all the wagons, that is to say the various aspects of social and economic growth. [italics MF] (UNESCO 2003a, 3)

Hun Sen’s opening address of the 2nd *Intergovernmental Conference for the Safeguarding and Development of Angkor* in Paris in 2003

Since 1992, the efforts on the Cambodian side have been considerable. After the first meeting of the *International Coordination Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Site of Angkor* (ICC) in Phnom Penh in December 1993 (co-chaired by France and Japan with UNESCO as secretariat and Vann Molyvann as chef of the Cambodian delegation), in May 1994 the *Zoning and*

¹³ The author would like to thank Vann Molyvann for this information during a personal interview conducted in Phnom Penh on March 15 2010.

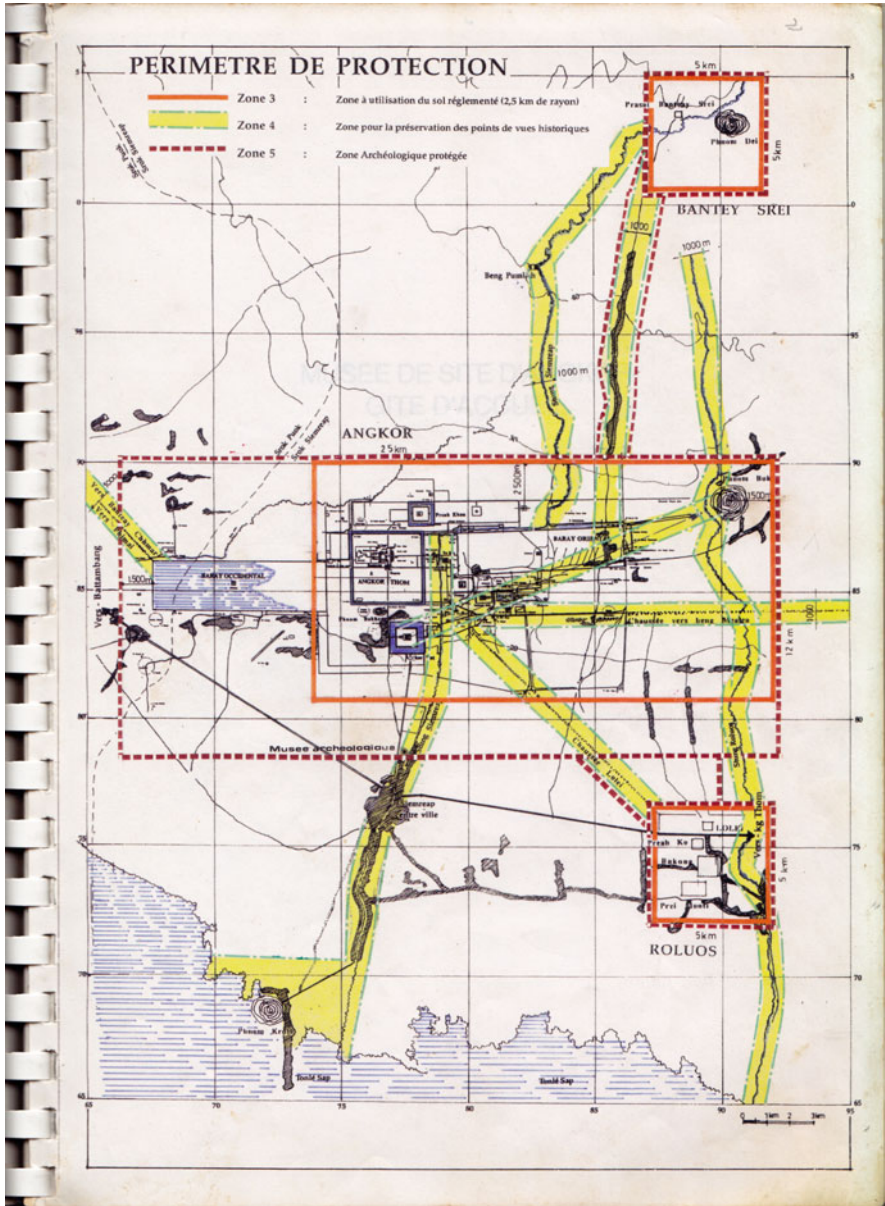


Fig. 30 Vann Molyvann’s proposed “perimètre de protection” as developed in his internal report *Parcs archéologiques d’Angkor* from August 1991 (Source: Vann et al. 1991)

Environmental Management Plan for Angkor (ZEMP) was royally decreed by Sihanouk (UNESCO et al. 1993; Sihanouk 1994). The plan divided the Siem Reap/Angkor region into five different protection and development zones. In February 1995 the *Authority for the Protection of the Site and Development of*

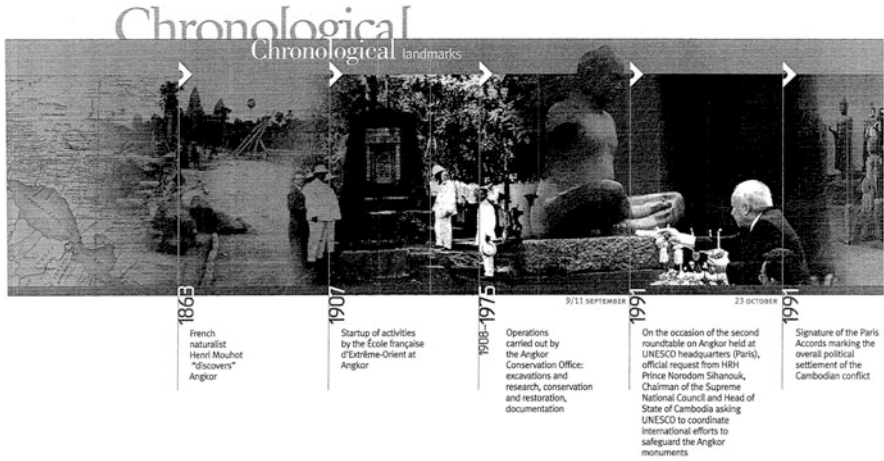


Fig. 31 “Chronological landmarks” of the safeguarding campaigns of Angkor as depicted in UNESCO’s 2003 publication *2nd Intergovernmental Conference for the Safeguarding & Development of Angkor* in Paris November 14–15, 2003. The timeline recreates the typically French transcendental notion of its *mission civilisatrice*, from left to right: Lajonquière’s map of Cambodia after 1907, Mouhot 1863, Commaillé’s work on the causeway of Angkor Wat after 1908, the French-colonial staff deploring Commaillé’s death in front of this Angkor-styled tombstone next to the Bayon temple, and, lastly, the aging Norodom Sihanouk offering flowers to his great historical predecessor and personal hero Jayavarman VII (Source: UNESCO 2003a, 13)

the Region of Angkor (APSARA) was created (Sihanouk 1995; cf. Kingdom of Cambodia et al. 1996), in 1996/2002 the *Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage* was enacted (Government and Sihanouk 1996), and in 1997 a *Special police corps for the protection of cultural heritage* was formed. With the *Land Law* of 2001, the lands in the Angkor Park and its more than 100,000 inhabitants became the public domain of the state. What is valid for both the first APSARA mandate, enacted between 1995 and 2004 under the term “emergency consolidation” with Vann Molyvann as its director, and for the second phase, which called for “sustainable development” and new staff (indeed the protagonists of both visions fought a hard battle against each other) is that the civilizing efforts at Angkor on APSARA’s national level were and still are led by returning Cambodian elites who left Cambodia during its darkest years.¹⁴

These elites passed or refined their formative years of professional work mostly in the West and currently operate(d) in Cambodia using an ambiguous mix of Western/globalized concepts of cultural heritage, a nationalist undertone, and personal contacts with incoming international experts. They are assisted and succeeded by a new, talented, and proud generation of young professional

¹⁴ I would like to thank Mr. Khun Khun-Neay, who has been deputy director general of APSARA since 2008, for his precious insights during several interviews in Siem Reap in 2010/11 and during his participation at the Heidelberg Conference in 2011.

Cambodians who nevertheless often lack—due to the tragic elimination of their parents’ generation during the Khmer Rouge genocide and the repressive current government—a deeper historical and critical insight into their applied values, norms, terms, and concepts of conservation. All this makes the Angkor conservation scene seemingly easy prey for (a) re-cooked cultural essentialisms about Angkor, (b) the government’s growing tendency toward neo-nationalism (as witnessed recently in the latest war-like confrontation with Thailand over the Preah Vihear temple) and short-sighted *non*-sustainable free market economy (with new partners from South Korea and China), and recently (c) a neo-regionalist approach under a strong international NGO-influence (some call it NGO-ization), which fosters postmodern and trendy conservation concepts like community/stakeholder involvement, traditional construction/living/farming, living heritage, eco-tourism, eco-villages etc. Recent research on the connection between Cambodia’s “post-conflict heritage and post-colonial tourism” provides important insight into these new dynamics (e.g. Winter 2007), just as **Keiko Miura**’s contribution in this volume discussed the institutional options for and the scientific critiques of the latest conservation trends at Angkor and beyond.

Adding to these observations the uncontrolled growth of the nearby hotel-hub Siem Reap for the nearby Angkor Park—2 million visitors a year is the goal (Fig. 32) the Disneyland-like marketing scheme for ancient Angkor Wat

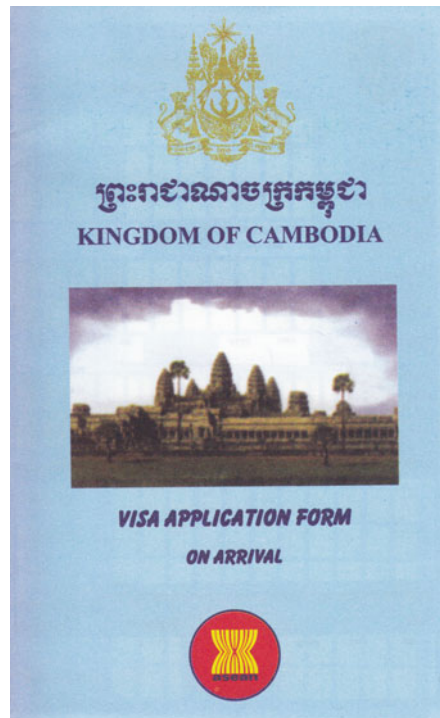


Fig. 32 Cover page of the visa application form for tourists at the airport of Siem Reap, with a photograph of Angkor Wat (2011) (Private archive Michael Falser 2011)

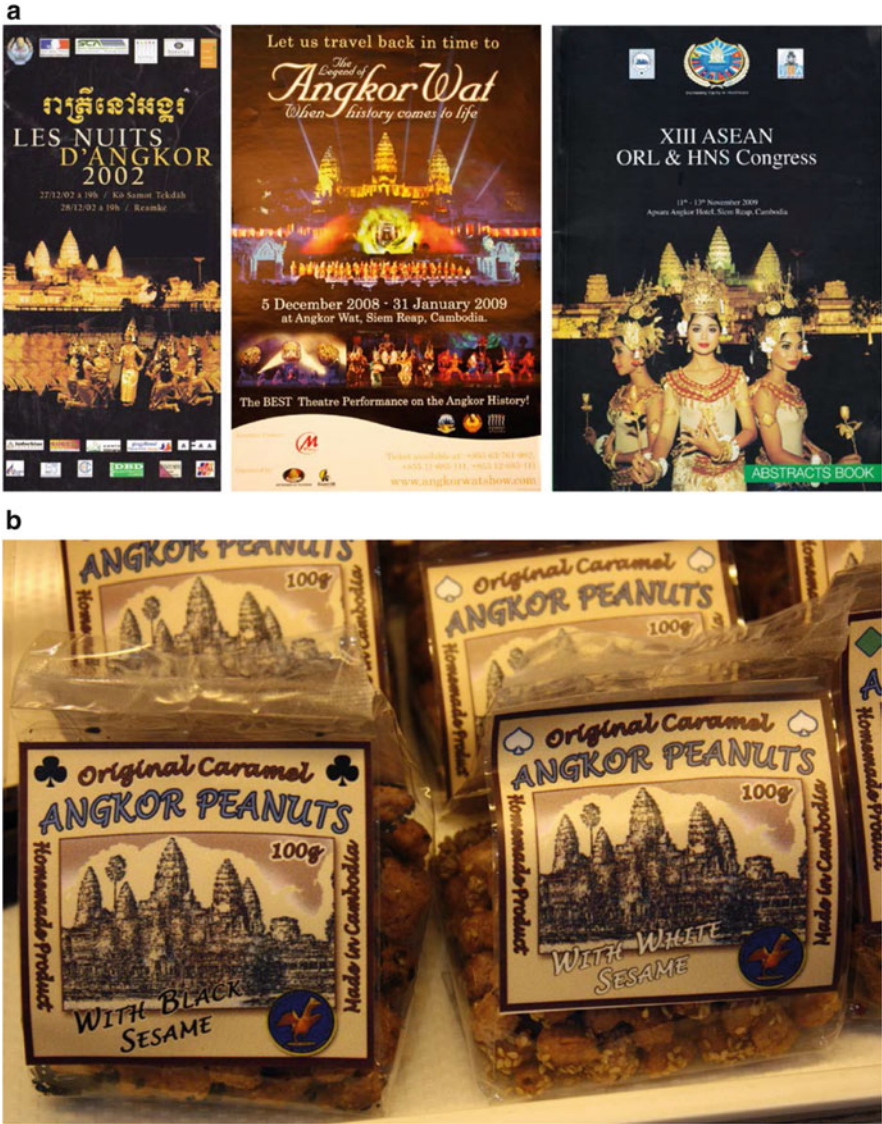


Fig. 33 (a, b) Collected flyers for Angkor Wat shows in 2002 and 2008, a conference volume from 2009 (above), and “Original Caramel Angkor Peanuts—made in Cambodia” with the silhouette of Angkor Wat (below) (Personal Archive Michael Falser)

(Fig. 33a, b), and the emerging touristic valorization of Cambodia’s recent Khmer Rouge history (Fig. 34), this overview of 150 years of heritage politics at Angkor concludes with a rather pessimistic undertone.



Fig. 34 Buddhist monks in 2011 visiting the house of the former Khmer Rouge Ta Mok who was responsible for the mass murder of the Cambodian population, and who decorated the inner walls of his house with painted depictions of the Angkor Wat and Preah Vihear temples. Along Veng, the last stronghold and headquarter of the Khmer Rouge until the late 1990s, was declared a major tourist spot by Cambodia’s prime-minister Hun Sen, himself an old Khmer Rouge, in 2001 (Michael Falser 2011)

Of course, what is true in the case of Angkor also applies to many other cultural heritage sites: only in-depth enquiries into the various civilizing (culturo-political) visions and applied (in our case conservationist and preservationist) missions through the various political regimes of the last two centuries can reveal these sites’ transculturally entangled formation histories and their highly contested status, of which the “pure and authentic” label imposed by *UNESCO Cultural Heritage List of the World’s Humanity* is only the last and perhaps the most ambiguous manifestation.

May this volume help to further develop this critical agenda.

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Erratum to: Chapters 7 and 12 in *Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission*

Erratum to: Chapter 7 in: *M. Falser (ed.), Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission, Transcultural Research – Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-13638-7_7

On page 156, 2nd paragraph, line 12, the citation of the reference (Falser 2015) is incorrect and has been deleted. The sentence should read:

By unearthing a strong sense of pride in Cambodia's heroic past, France would provide the new nation with an important historical reference and identity in the Angkorian era.

On page 168, line 7, state-lincensed is incorrect. The sentence should read:

Born on November 23, 1926 in Kampot, Cambodia (he was only four years younger than Sihanouk) Vann Molyvann, French architect dplg, was the first qualified Cambodian architect after independence to be trained at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts (ENSBA) in Paris from 1949 to 1956.

On page 178 the reference Falser 2015 has been deleted from the reference list.

The online versions of the original chapters can be found under
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Erratum to: Chapter 12 in: *M. Falser (ed.), Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission, Transcultural Research – Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-13638-7_12

The author's name Helen Grant Ross was corrected.

On page 312, line 1, the reference Ross and Collins 2006 is incorrect. It should read:
Grant Ross and Collins 2006

On page 313, line 7, the name Ross is incomplete. It should read:
cf. with Fig. 12 in Helen Grant Ross's contribution

On page 345 the citation of the reference Ross, Helen Grant, and Darryl Leon Collins. 2006 is incorrect. Correct is Grant Ross, Helen, and Collins, Darryl Leon. 2006. It should read:

Grant Ross, Helen, and Collins, Darryl Leon. 2006. *Building Cambodia: 'New Khmer Architecture' 1953–1970*. Bangkok: The Key Publisher.

About the Authors

Gabrielle Abbe is a PhD student in the History of International Relations under the supervision of Professor Hugues Tertrais at Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University, Institut Pierre Renouvin, CHAC—UMR IRICE. Thesis Subject: “France and Khmer arts, from the Protectorate to the Independence of Cambodia.” Her research focuses on themes such as culture and art in International Relations (nineteenth to twentieth century), heritage building and nation building (French Indochina), and museology. After graduating from the École du Louvre in 2006 (Archaeology and history of art, specialty Southeast Asian Art), she wrote a Master 1 and Master 2 in History of Contemporary International Relations on George Groslier and the Service des Arts, under the supervision of Professor Robert Frank at Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University. She works as an assistant at the photo library of the École française d’Extrême-Orient (2009–2011) and is currently lecturer at the Ecole du Louvre in Paris (First Cycle, specialty Southeast Asian Art).

Selected publications

- 2013. “Eléments pour l’histoire du Musée Albert Saurraut de Phnom Penh.” *Siksacakr, Journal of the Center for Khmer Studies* 12/13 (special issue *Cambodge: une rencontre coloniale (1856–1963)*, edited by Jean-François Klein): 219–34.
- 2011. “Donner à voir les arts khmers. La Direction des arts cambodgiens, organisme de propagande des arts khmers, 1920–1945.” *Bulletin de l’Institut Pierre Renouvin* 34. Accessed October 10, 2012. <http://www.cairn.info/revue-bulletin-de-l-institut-pierre-renouvin-2011-2-page-55.htm>
- 2008. “La ‘rénovation des arts cambodgiens.’ George Groslier et le Service des Arts, 1917–1945.” *Bulletin de l’Institut Pierre Renouvin* 27. Accessed October 10, 2012. <http://www.cairn.info/revue-bulletin-de-l-institut-pierre-renouvin-2008-1-page-61.htm>

Marieke Bloembergen is a cultural historian and senior researcher at the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies in Leiden (KITLV).

Her research interests concern the political dynamics of knowledge production, policing, and heritage practices in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia, understood in their local and inter-Asian and global dimensions. She holds a PhD from the University of Amsterdam; and as a postdoctoral researcher at Utrecht University, she completed a monograph on policing and perceptions of security in the Dutch East Indies (published in 2009, Indonesian translation in 2011). Together with Martijn Eickhoff (NIOD), she is currently finalizing a book manuscript on archaeological sites and the dynamics of heritage formation in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia, in the framework of the NWO-funded Cultural Dynamics research program “Sites, Bodies and Stories; the dynamics of cultural heritage formation in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia.” Her coauthored article with Eickhoff in this edited volume is one of the results of that project.

Selected publications

- with Eickhoff, Martijn. 2013. “Exchange and the protection of Java’s antiquities. A transnational approach to the problem of heritage in colonial Java.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 72,4: 893–916.
- with Eickhoff, Martijn. 2012. “Travelling far on ‘rather short legs.’ Company-furniture on the move and the problem of shared heritage.” *IIAS Newsletter* 59: 30–1.
- with Eickhoff, Martijn. 2011. “Conserving the past, mobilizing the Indonesian future. Archaeological sites, regime change and heritage politics in Indonesia in the 1950s.” *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI)* 167,4 (December): 405–36.
- 2009. “De kunsten van Groter Nederland. Indische kunst en schoonheidszin ter discussie op de wereldtentoonstellingen, 1880–1931.” In *Beyond the Dutch. Indonesië, Nederland en de beeldende kunsten van 1900 tot nu*. Edited by Meta Knol et al., 38–46. Utrecht: Centraal Museum.
- 2006. *Colonial Spectacles. The Netherlands and the Netherlands-Indies at the world exhibitions, 1880–1931*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- 2005. “Amsterdam. Het Van Heutszmonument. Het Nederlandse koloniale geheugen.” In *Lieux des Mémoires. Deel 4: Nederland sedert de eerste wereldoorlog*. Edited by Hubrecht Willem van den Doel, 72–87. Amsterdam: Prometheus/Bert Bakker.

Martijn Eickhoff is a cultural historian who specializes in the historical culture of times of war, regime change, and mass violence. He works as a Senior Researcher at the Institute for War, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies (NIOD) in Amsterdam and is an Assistant Professor of Cultural History at Radboud University Nijmegen (RUN). He studied history at the University of Amsterdam and wrote his PhD (2003) on Dutch pre- and protohistory during the Nazi occupation. In 2005/6, he was an NWO fellow at FSU Jena where he conducted research on SS excavations in occupied Ukraine and Czechoslovakia. In collaboration with Marieke Bloembergen (KITLV), he is conducting a project on (post)-colonial archaeology and heritage formation in Indonesia, in the framework of the NWO-funded Cultural Dynamics research program “Sites, Bodies and Stories; the dynamics of cultural heritage

formation in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia.” His coauthored article with Bloembergen in this edited volume is one of the results of that project.

Selected publications

- with Bloembergen, Marieke. 2013. “Exchange and the protection of Java’s antiquities. A transnational approach to the problem of heritage in colonial Java.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 72,4: 893–916.
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- 2008. *In the name of science? P. J. W. Debye and his career in Nazi Germany*. Studies of the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation, vol. 2. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- 2005. “German Archaeology and National Socialism: some historiographical remarks.” *Archaeological Dialogues* 12,1: 73–90.
- 2003. *De Oorsprong van het ‘Eigene.’ Nederlands vroegste verleden, archeologie en nationaal-socialisme*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Boom.

Michael Falser studied architecture at the Vienna University of Technology and at the École d’Architecture Paris La Villette and art history at University of Vienna. He wrote his dissertation on the political history of historic preservation in Germany as DFG fellow in the Graduate Program “Building Research–Art History–Historic Preservation” at the Berlin University of Technology. After practical experience as a preservation architect in San Francisco and with the Austrian UNESCO-Commission in Vienna, he worked as scientific assistant at the Institute of Building Research and Conservation at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich and at the art history department at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich. Since 2009, he has been project leader at the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context” at Heidelberg University. In June 2014, he passed his “Habilitation” at Heidelberg University with a thesis under the title “Heritage as a Transcultural Concept. From Plaster Casts to Exhibition Pavilions—Translating Angkor Wat for the French Colonial *métropole* (1867–1937)” which will be published in 2015 at De Gruyter (see below). He organized two Angkor workshops in 2010 (published 2013) and 2011 at Heidelberg University and is the editor of this publication.

Selected publications

- 2015. *Angkor Wat. From Jungle Find to Global Icon. A Transcultural History of Heritage*. De Gruyter: Berlin. (forthcoming)
- 2015. “Cultural Heritage as Performance—Re-Enacting Angkorian Grandeur in Postcolonial Cambodia (1953–1970).” In: *Cultures of Decolonisation*. Edited by Ruth Craggs and Claire Wintle. Manchester: Manchester University Press. (in press)

- 2014. “From a Colonial Reinvention to a Postcolonial Heritage and Global Commodity. Performing and Re-enacting Angkor Wat and the ‘Royal Khmer Ballet.’” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* (special issue on ‘Reenacting the Past’, 20/7–8): 702–723. Online accessed October 12, 2014. doi:[10.1080/13527258.2013.794746](https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2013.794746).
- 2014. “The first Plaster Casts of Angkor for the French *métropole*: From the Mekong Mission 1866–68, and the Universal Exhibition of 1867, to the Musée Khmer of 1874.” *Bulletin de l’Ecole française d’Extrême-Orient* 99 (2012–2013), 49–92.
- with Monica Juneja, eds. 2013 (a). “Archaeologizing” *Heritage? Transcultural Entanglements between Local Practices and Global Virtual Realities. Proceedings of the 1st International Workshop on Cultural Heritage and the Temples of Angkor, 2–4 May 2010, Heidelberg University*. Heidelberg: Springer.
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Henri Locard After working as an English teacher in Phnom Penh, Henri Locard held fellowships at Oxford University in England and the University of New South Wales, Canberra, and was a lecturer at the Université Lumière-Lyon 2 between 1967 and 2000. He finished his PhD thesis on “Aspects of extermination and ideology under Democratic Kampuchea” in 2000. Between 2000 and 2011, he was lecturer at the Royal Academy of Cambodia for the pilot MA program in Cultural Studies at the Buddhist Institute in Phnom Penh and the History Department at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) on Cambodian Colonial History and Cambodia since Independence. In 2007, he contributed to and co-organized, with financial and material help from the Association de Défense des Droits de l’Homme au Cambodge (ADHOC), a public forum on Khmer Rouge History from Stalin to Pol Pot—towards a description of the Khmer Rouge Regime. Henri Locard has been a consultant with the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).

Selected publications

- 2013. *Pourquoi les Khmers rouges*. Paris: Vendémiaire.
- with SUONG Sikœun. 2013. *Itinéraire d'un intellectuel khmer rouge*. Collection Cerf Politique. Paris: Cerf.
- 2013. "Le Procès de Duch, 30 mars 2009—26 juillet 2010". In: *Communisme, Vietnam, de l'insurrection à la dictature, 1920–2012*. Edited by Stéphane Courtois, 361–409. Paris: Vendémiaire.
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- 2005. "State violence in Democratic Kampuchea (1975–1979) and retribution (1979–2004)." *The European Review of History* 12,1: 121–43.
- 1996. *Le 'Petit Livre rouge' de Pol Pot, ou les Paroles de l'Angkar, entendues dans le Kampuchéa Démocratique du 17 avril 1975 au 7 janvier 1979*. Paris: Harmattan. (English edition: 2004. *Pol Pot's Little Red Book: The Sayings of Angkar*. Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books).
- 1996. "Le goulag khmer rouge." *Revue Communisme* 47–48: 127–61.
- with Moeung, Sonn. 1993. *Prisonnier de l'Angkar*. Paris: Fayard. (English edition: 2006. *Prisoner of the Khmer Rouge*. Phnom Penh: Editions Funan).

Krishna Menon is an architect, urban planner, and conservation consultant who has practiced in Delhi for over thirty years. While teaching in Delhi, in 1990 he cofounded the TVB School of Habitat Studies in New Delhi. In 2007, this private school became the teaching department of the Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi. He is actively engaged in research and has contributed extensively to professional journals and several academic books. He has also been actively involved in urban conservation and in 2004 drafted the INTACH Charter for the Conservation of Unprotected Architectural Heritage and Sites in India. Recently, he has been associated with the formulation of The Delhi Master Plan—2021 and The National Capital Region Master Plan—2021, and he is a member of several statutory committees set up by the government. Currently, in addition to his professional consultancy work, as the Convenor of INTACH's Delhi Chapter, he is advocating the case for inscribing Delhi as a World Heritage City. This project seeks to transform the urban landscape of Delhi and align it with the architectural heritage of the city.

Selected publications

- 2010. *Delhi A Living Heritage*. New Delhi: IGNC and INTACH.
- 2009. "Afterlife of the Venice Charter in Postcolonial India." In *Venice Charter Revisited: Modernism and Conservation in the Post-War World*. Edited by Matthew Hardy, 16–23. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press.
- 2005. "Inventive Mimesis in New Delhi: The Temples of Chhatarpur." In *Architectural Imitation, Reproductions and Pastiche in East and West*. Edited by Wim Denslagen and Niels Gutschow, 98–123. Maastricht: Shaker Publishing.

- 2001. “Thinking ‘Indian’ Architecture.” In *The Discipline of Architecture*. Edited by Andrzej Piotrowski and Julia Williams Robinson, 208–234. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- 2000. “The Contemporary Architecture of Delhi: The Role of the State as Middleman.” In *Delhi: Urban Space and Human Destinies*. Edited by Veronique Dupont, Emma Tarlow and Denis Vidal, 143–156. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers.

Keiko Miura worked in the Culture Unit of the UNESCO Office in Cambodia from 1992 to 1998. From 1998 to 2004, she was engaged in PhD research on social anthropology at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, concerning the issues surrounding Angkor heritage and the local communities. Since 2004, she has taught in Japanese universities including Waseda University while conducting follow-up research on Angkor and on the wet-rice culture and rites in Bali, Indonesia. As a research fellow of the Interdisciplinary Cultural Property Research Group of Göttingen University from 2009 to 2011, she researched on the management issues of Angkor World Heritage Site and local communities and on “The illicit traffic of Cambodian artifacts and restitution” from 2011 to 2014.

Selected publications

- 2011. In *World Heritage Angkor and Beyond: Circumstances and Implications of UNESCO Listings in Cambodia*. Edited by Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin. Göttingen: Göttingen University Press.
 - “World Heritage Making in Angkor. Global, Regional, National and Local Actors, Interplays and Implications,” 9–31.
 - “From Property to Heritage. Different Notions, Rules of Ownership and Practices of New and Old Actors in the Angkor World Heritage Site,” 97–119.
 - “Sustainable Development in Angkor. Conservation Regime of the Old Villagescape and Development,” 121–144.
- 2011. *Angkor Isan to Tomoni Ikiru (Living with the Angkor Heritage)*. Tokyo: Mekong. (in Japanese)
- 2010. “World Heritage Sites in South-East Asia: Angkor and Beyond.” In *Heritage Tourism in South East Asia*. Edited by Michael Hitchcock, Victor T. King and Michael Parnwell, 103–129. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press.
- 2008. “Needs for Anthropological Approaches to Conservation and Management of Living Heritage Sites: From a Case Study of Angkor, Cambodia.” In *Interpreting Southeast Asia’s Past: Monument, Image and Text*. Edited by Elizabeth A. Bacus, Ian C. Glover and Peter D. Sharrock, 377–390. Singapore: National University of Singapore.
- 2005. “Conservation of a ‘Living Heritage Site’: A Contradiction in Terms? A Case Study of Angkor World Heritage Site.” *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites (CMAS)* 7,1: 3–18.
- 2004. “Contested Heritage: People of Angkor.” PhD diss., University of London, SOAS.

Juliane Noth is Principal Investigator of the DFG (German Research Foundation) research project *Landscape, Canon, and Intermediality in Chinese Painting of the 1930s and 1940s* at the Institute of Art History, Freie Universität Berlin. From 2008 to 2012, she worked as an Assistant Professor of East Asian Art History at the same institute and during the 2010/2011 academic year served as Visiting Professor of Chinese Art History at Heidelberg University. Her main research interest is in Chinese landscape painting in the twentieth century; in her current project, she investigates how traditions and concepts, and the materiality and visuality of landscape painting in ink were conceived and reconfigured during the Republican period.

Selected publications

- with Gludovatz, Karin, and Joachim Rees, eds. 2015. *The Itineraries of Art. Topographies of Artistic Mobility in Europe and Asia, Berliner Schriften zur Kunst (Berlin Studies on Art)*. Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink Verlag. (forthcoming)
- with Kong Lingwei, eds. 2014. *Huang Binhong yu xiandai yishu sixiangshi guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji. Huang Binhong and the Evolution of Modern Ideas in Art: An International Forum*. Hangzhou: Zhongguo Meishu Xueyuan Chubanshe.
- 2014. “Zhouzhong suo jian—Dili, wenhuashi he geren ganshou” [Seen from a Boat: Geography, Cultural History and Perception]. In *Huang Binhong yu xiandai yishu sixiangshi guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji. Huang Binhong and the Evolution of Modern Ideas in Art: An International Forum*. Edited by Kong Lingwei and Juliane Noth, 217–238. Hangzhou: Zhongguo Meishu Xueyuan Chubanshe.
- with Hopfener, Birgit, Franziska Koch, and Jeong-hee Lee-Kalisch, eds. 2012. *Negotiating Difference. Chinese Contemporary Art in the Global Context*. Weimar: VDG.
- 2012. “Landscapes of Exclusion. The No Name Group and the Multiple Modernities in Chinese Art around 1979.” In *Negotiating Difference. Chinese Contemporary Art in the Global Context*. Edited by Birgit Hopfener et al., 49–62. Weimar: VDG.
- 2010. “Abstraktion als Tradition. Fu Baoshis ‘Einsamer Wanderer im Gebirge’ in der Ostasiatischen Kunstsammlung Berlin.” *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift, N.S.* 19: 23–31.
- 2009. *Landschaft und Revolution. Die Malerei von Shi Lu*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag.

Helen Grant Ross is a French/British chartered architect, urban planner (d.p.l.g.), and historian of modern architecture (D.E.A.) who was a practicing professional and university lecturer in France until she moved to Bangkok in 1995 as a member of the MRTA subway design team. She lived and worked in Southeast Asia until 2009 designing buildings and urban developments, working as a consultant, teaching architecture, and writing. She is best known for her book *Building Cambodia ‘New Khmer Architecture’: 1953–1970* which was awarded Time Magazine’s “one of the ten best Asian book’s of the year awards” in 2006, written with Darryl Collins. Now based in Europe, she continues to publish research about Cambodia’s post-independence Sangkum Reastr Niyum political experiment.

Selected publications

- 2007. “The House that Vann Molyvann built.” *Journal of South East Asian Architecture* 9: 1–12.
- with Collins, Darryl Leon. 2006. *Building Cambodia: ‘New Khmer Architecture’ 1953–1970*. Bangkok: The Key Publisher.
- 2005. “Tradition Transcended.” *Journal of South East Asian Architecture* 8: 27–39.
- 2005. “The South-East Asian water-bound tradition versus a colonial earth-bound society.” In *The Annals of the conference Re-thinking and Re-constructing Modern Asian Architecture* (mAAN—modern Asian Architecture Network Conference, *Re-thinking and Re-constructing Modern Asian Architecture*, June 27–30, Istanbul), 283–292.
- 2004. “Cambodia after Independence in 1953—Nationalism, Buddhism and the Sangkum Reastr Niyum—A Unique Experiment in Territorial Development and Architecture.” In *The Annals of the conference Examining 20th Century Modern Heritage* (mAAN—modern Asian Architecture Network Conference “Re-thinking and Re-constructing Modern Asian Architecture,” October 28–30, Shanghai), 312–321.
- 2003. *Battambang Bad Dambaung—le Bâton Perdu—Histoire d’une Ville*. Phnom Penh: 3D Graphics Pub.

Winfried Speitkamp was born in 1958. He is currently Chair of Modern and Contemporary History in the Department of Social Sciences at the University of Kassel/Germany. His main fields of research include constitutional and regional history, memory cultures, youth history, and African and colonial history. He is speaker of the research group “Communities of Violence,” a project that is funded by the German Research Council DFG, and he is speaker of the interdisciplinary research centre on “Humans—Animals—Society.”

Selected publications

- 2014. *Deutsche Kolonialgeschichte*. Stuttgart: Reclam. First edition 2005.
- with Zehnle, Stephanie, eds. 2014. *Afrikanische Terräume. Historische Verortungen*. Topics of Interdisciplinary African Studies 32. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe.
- ed. 2013. *Europäisches Kulturerbe. Bilder, Traditionen, Konfigurationen*. Stuttgart: Theiss.
- ed. 2013. *Gewaltgemeinschaften. Von der Spätantike bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: V&R Unipress.
- 2013. “Kolonialdenkmäler.” In *Kein Platz an der Sonne. Erinnerungsorte der deutschen Kolonialgeschichte*. Edited by Jürgen Zimmerer, 409–23. Frankfurt, New York: Campus.
- 2013. “‘Heimatschutz’ und ‘Kulturkreislehre’ von Afrika bis in die Südsee: Kulturerbe und Kulturtransfer.” In *Kulturerbe und Denkmalpflege transkulturell. Grenzgänge zwischen Theorie und Praxis*. Edited by Michael Falser and Monica Juneja, 263–79. Bielefeld: Transcript.

- 2011 “Flussfahrt ins Grauen. *Heart of Darkness* von Joseph Conrad (1902).” In *Literatur, die Geschichte schrieb*. Edited by Dirk van Laak, 118–33. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- 2009². *Kleine Geschichte Afrikas*. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung.
- ed. 2008. *Erinnerungsräume und Wissenstransfer. Beiträge zur afrikanischen Geschichte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- ed. 2005. *Kommunikationsräume—Erinnerungsräume. Beiträge zur transkulturellen Begegnung in Afrika*. Munich: Meidenbauer.

Werner Telesko studied history of art in Vienna and finalized his master’s thesis in 1988 on the iconography of high medieval reliquaries. Between 1988 and 1990, he worked for the Historical Institute at the Austrian Cultural Institute in Rome, and between 1990 and 1993, he was scientific assistant to the curator of the art collections in the Benedictine Abbey of Göttweig (Lower Austria). In 1993, he finalized his PhD on twelfth-century book illuminations in Göttweig Abbey (published 1995). Since 1993, he has held the position of scientific collaborator on the Commission for Art History at the Austrian Academy of Sciences with, among others, a project on art of historicism in Europe, and editorial work on the publication series *Geschichte der bildenden Kunst in Österreich* (History of the fine arts in Austria). His Habilitation thesis was entitled *Napoleon Bonaparte. The modern hero and the fine arts from 1799 to 1815* (2000). He has held teaching positions at the universities of Vienna, Linz, and Graz. Since 2013, he is director of the Institute for History of Art and Musicology (IKM) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences with a research focus on the history of the Habsburg Monarchy.

Selected publications

- 2011. “Nationalhistoriografie und Geschichtskultur—Kunsthistorische Erinnerungskulturen in der Habsburgermonarchie und nach 1989.” In *Paradigmenwechsel. Ost- und Mitteleuropa im 20. Jahrhundert. Kunstgeschichte im Wandel der politischen Verhältnisse*. Edited by Peter Bogner, 6–10. Hohenems Vienna: Bucher.
- 2010. “Kunst und Geschichtsforschung. Zum Anteil der Historiker an den malerischen und plastischen Ausstattungsprogrammen der Wiener Hofburg in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts.” In *Die Wiener Hofburg und der europäische Residenzbau in Mitteleuropa im 19. Jahrhundert. Monarchische Repräsentation zwischen Ideal und Wirklichkeit*. Edited by Werner Telesko, Richard Kurdiovsky and Andreas Nierhaus, 143–65. Vienna: Böhlau.
- with Tammen, Björn R., eds. 2010. *Zitieren—gedenken—erinnern. Beiträge aus dem Zentrum Kulturforschungen der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*. Vienna: Praesens.
- 2008. *Kulturraum Österreich. Die Identität der Regionen in der bildenden Kunst des 19. Jahrhunderts*. Vienna: Böhlau.
- 2006. *Geschichtsraum Österreich. Die Habsburger und ihre Geschichte in der bildenden Kunst des 19. Jahrhunderts*. Vienna: Böhlau.

‘Archaeologizing’ Heritage?

Transcultural Entanglements between Local Social Practices and Global Virtual Realities

Michael Falser · Monica Juneja *Editors*

