

សង្រួសសង្រួតខ្មែរ DISCOVER CAMBODIA

VOLUME 10— 2017

នាគ១០

Celebrating Khmer Heritage



ប្រាសាទភ្នំដា

PHNOM DA TEMPLE, AT ANGKOR BOREY, TAKEO



ឈ្លានយានសាតាំង រឿង ទិព្វសង្ខារ

CAMBODIAN COMMUNITY DAY

Sunday September 10th 2017 at Cambodian Buddhist Temple

13800 New Hampshire Ave, Silver Spring MD 20904

Promoting Khmer Culture | Celebrating Khmer Achievements | Strengthening Khmer Voice

Bridging Distances | Healing Rifts | Building Bonds



The Cambodian Community Day, in collaboration with the Cambodian Buddhist Society, Inc. and the volunteers from the Cambodian communities around

Washington DC Metro area, presents the 2017 Cambodian Festival featuring classical/folklore dances, Lakhon Bassac entitled "Tip Sangva", and much more.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Cambodian Community Day (CCD) and Cambodian Buddhist Society, Inc. wish to thank all Lakhon Bassac “Tip Sangva” casts, CCD volunteers and their families, the Burmese Dance Troupe, the Philippines Dance Troupe, individual and group sponsoring organizations, business advertisers, professional and non-profit communities, all artistic performers and musicians, all Cambodians, Americans who come to support us today. The performance of Khmer traditional Dance Opera (Lakhon Bassac) and other CCD activities are the results of hard work of many dedicated people, without whom it may not be possible. They are all volunteers with an exemplary mindset to serve the Cambodian community and to promote, present and preserve Khmer culture. Many thanks to all volunteers and donors who have made the stage renovation project possible.



The happy family of CCD. There are more of them in the book.



Welcome to the Cambodian Cultural Festival 2017. On behalf of Cambodian Community Day (CCD) members and Board of Directors, thank you for coming and joining us today to celebrate our rich culture and heritage. It is my pleasure to serve the community I love. 2017 progresses with many achievements with respect to fulfilling of our mission to promote, present, and preserve Cambodian culture. During the Khmer New year, we have produced a full-blown Yeekae Tum Teav from start to finish as written by Abbot Som. During the cultural festival this year, we perform a traditional Cambodian dance opera, the Lakhon Bassac, entitled "Tip Sangva". As you may have noticed, each year we choose a type of a traditional entertainment to present to the public, in particular, the young Cambodian-Americans so that they are aware of the Cambodian arts and culture. The type of entertainment we choose generally bears a cultural significant, the type we believe it will gradually disappear as a new wave of modern culture dominates the society.

I believe every Cambodian should appreciate our ancestors who left abundant heritage for us this generation and many generation to come. The glorious past of our native country did not happen by chances. It was due to the right mindset, dedication, and proper management. We should respect and learn from our ancestors' experiences and use them to make the future here in America and back home in Cambodia a better and peaceful place. Thank you for coming and enjoy the festival.

ជំរាបសួរប្រិយមិត្តជាទីមេត្រី,

ថ្ងៃនេះខ្ញុំសូមស្វាគមន៍ដល់ប្រិយមិត្តដែលបានអញ្ជើញមកចូលរួមអបអរសាទរក្នុងពិធីបុណ្យវប្បធម៌ខ្មែរ។ តាងនាមសមាជិកសមាជិការនិងក្រុមអភិបាលនៃសមាគមទិវាសហគមន៍ខ្មែរ ខ្ញុំសូមអរគុណយ៉ាងជ្រាលជ្រៅបំផុតដល់វត្តមានអស់លោកលោកស្រីនិងប្រិយមិត្តទាំងអស់។ ជាកិត្តិយសមួយដ៏ធំ ដែលខ្ញុំមានឱកាសបានចូលបំរើសហគមន៍ខ្មែរ។ ឆ្នាំ ២០១៧ ជាឆ្នាំមួយដែលមានការរីកចម្រើនខាងការលើកដំកើង បង្ហាញជូន និងការរក្សាទុកនូវវប្បធម៌ខ្មែរ។ នៅក្នុងឱកាសចូលឆ្នាំខ្មែរ យើងបានសំដែងយីកេទុំទារពីដើមដល់ចប់ ដូចនៅក្នុងសៀវភៅរបស់ព្រះបទុមត្ថេរ សោម។ ឆ្នាំនេះ យើងមានសេចក្តីរីករាយនឹងសម្តែងជូនល្ខោនបាសាក់រឿងទិព្វសង្វារ។ ជារៀងរាល់ឆ្នាំ យើងតែងតែផលិតនូវសិល្បៈមួយបែបជាលក្ខណៈខ្មែរបូរាណដែលបង្កប់នូវអត្ថន័យវប្បធម៌ខ្មែរ ហើយដូចជានឹងត្រូវសាបសូន្យនៅថ្ងៃណាមួយនាពេលអនាគត តាមប៉ាវនេះ។ យើងជាខ្មែរម្នាក់ៗត្រូវទទួលស្គាល់នូវស្នាដៃរបស់បុព្វបុរសយើងដែលបានទុកកេរ្តិ៍ដ៏ណែលដល់យើងជំនាន់នេះ និងជំនាន់ក្រោយជាបន្តបន្ទាប់។ សម័យរុងរឿងជំនាន់ដើមមិនមែនកើតឡើងដោយឯកឯងតាមព្រេងវាសនានោះទេ។ គឺកើតឡើងដោយសារបុព្វបុរសយើងមានគំនិតឈ្លៀសវៃ ស្រឡាញ់ជាតិ បូជាពលកម្ម និងភាពដឹកនាំល្អកម្រិតខ្ពស់។ យើងគួរតែយកបទជំនាញរបស់ជូនតាយើងជំនាន់មុន មករៀនសូត្រហើយបំរើសង្គមនៅសហរដ្ឋក៏ដូចជានៅស្រុកខ្មែរដែរ ដើម្បីអោយប្រទេសទាំងនេះក្លាយទៅជាទឹកដីនៃមួយល្អប្រកបដោយសន្តិភាព។

សូមអរគុណ! សូមអញ្ជើញកំសាន្តសប្បាយជាមួយយើងខ្ញុំថ្ងៃនេះ។

Sincerely,
Rea Rea



ពុទ្ធិកសហគមន៍ខ្មែរ, ឥណ្ឌូ

The Cambodian Buddhist Society, Inc.
13800 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20904
Tel: (301) 622_6544

សេចក្តីស្វាគមន៍អំពីប្រធាន
មណ្ឌិត និង សុខន្ត

ក្នុងនាមនៃព្រះសង្ឃប្រចាំវត្តពុទ្ធិកាវាម និងក្នុងនាមនៃសមាជិកក្រុមអភិបាលនៃ ពុទ្ធិកសហគមន៍ខ្មែរ, ឥណ្ឌូ ខ្ញុំសូមស្វាគមន៍ចំពោះលោកអ្នកទាំងអស់ដែលបានអញ្ជើញមកចូលរួមក្នុងបុណ្យទិវាសហគមន៍ខ្មែរ នៅទីវត្តពុទ្ធិកាវាម ។ យើងខ្ញុំសង្ឃឹមយ៉ាងមាំមួន អ្នកទាំងអស់គ្នានឹងបានសប្បាយជាមិនខាន ។

វត្តពុទ្ធិកាវាមតែងតែធ្វើសហការជាគ្រប់សមាគមខ្មែរនានា នៅតំបន់ វ៉ាស៊ីនតុន ឌី.ស៊ី. ដើម្បីថែរក្សានិងពង្រឹងពុទ្ធសាសនានិងវប្បធម៌ខ្មែរនៅសហរដ្ឋអាមេរិក ។ វត្តមានសំណាងដ៏ខ្ពង់ខ្ពស់ដោយបានសមាគមទិវាសហគមន៍ខ្មែរ យកវត្តខ្មែរនេះ ជាកន្លែងធ្វើពិធីបុណ្យរបស់គេផ្សាយវប្បធម៌ខ្មែរជារៀងរាល់ឆ្នាំ ជាឆ្នាំទី ៤ ហើយ ។ ដោយមានកិច្ចសហប្រតិបត្តិការជាមួយគ្នា ទិវាសហគមន៍ខ្មែរនិងវត្តខ្មែរបានរៀបចំកម្មវិធីកំសាន្តជាច្រើន មានជាអាទិ៍ល្ខោនបាសាក់រឿង ទិព្វសង្វារ ជាដើមក្នុងឆ្នាំនេះ ។ កម្មវិធីបន្ថែមមាន ភ្លេងខ្មែរ របាំខ្មែរ និងក្រុមតន្ត្រីប្រគំសម្រាប់រំលែង ។

ខ្ញុំសូមឆ្លៀតឱកាសនេះ សូមថ្លែងអំណរគុណដ៏ជ្រៅជ្រះចំពោះគណៈមេដឹកនាំសហគមន៍ទិវាសហគមន៍ខ្មែរ និងចំពោះអ្នកសម្តែងទាំងឡាយដែលបានស្ម័គ្រចិត្តមកហ្វឹកហ្វឺនរៀនសម្តែងនៅទីវត្តរៀងរាល់អាទិត្យ ដោយឥតគិតកម្រៃអ្វីឡើយ ។ ជាទីចេញខ្ញុំសូមជូនពរជ័យសិរីមង្គល សូមឲ្យប្រកបតែសេចក្តីសុខ សេចក្តីចម្រើន អាយុយីងយូរ ជៀសវាងនូវរោគាព្យាធិ គរៀងទៅ ។ សូមអរគុណ ។

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT
DR. SOVAN TUN

WELCOME!!
On behalf of the resident monks of Vatt Buddhikarama and of the Board of Directors of the Cambodian Buddhist Society, Inc., I wish to warmly welcome to this celebration of Cambodian Community Day. I trust that you will enjoy the entertainment program that we have planned for you.
Vatt Buddhikarama always works with other khmer associations in the Washington DC area to preserve and consolidate Khmer Buddhism and Khmer culture in America. The Temple is fortunate to have the Cambodian Community Day (CCD) to conduct its annual festival at this location for many years, making this year the 4th year. CCD in cooperation with the Temple plans a variety of entertainment activities, such as Lakhon Bassac musical entitle "Tip Sangvar," Khmer music, Khmer dance, and live band for dancing.
I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to leaders of CCD and to the performers who tirelessly learned the art of acting at the Temple every week without any remunerations.
Thank you for joining us at this festival. May you all be well, happy, and peaceful.

Thank you.



THE CAMBODIAN BUDDHIST SOCIETY, INC.

The Cambodian Buddhist Society, Inc. (CBS) was organized in 1976 and incorporated in the State of Maryland in 1978 as a non-profit, religious and educational organization. It is the first Cambodian Buddhist temple to be established in the United States. Its headquarters, Vatt Buddhikarama or Cambodian Buddhist Temple, was located first in Oxon Hill, then in New Carrollton, Maryland. It moved to the present Silver Spring location in 1986. The Cambodian Buddhist Society, Inc. has four-fold objectives:

1. To conduct Buddhist services;
2. To conserve Cambodian culture;
3. To provide training; and
4. To provide humanitarian assistance.

CBS is governed by a Board of Directors of 15 members. The Board consists of 3 Buddhist monks automatically selected without vote and 12 members elected bi-annually by members of the Cambodian Buddhist Society. Also, two internal auditors are elected. Four standing committees are created to perform different tasks:

- Committee in charge of ceremonies,
- Committee in charge of cultural affairs,
- Committee in charge of security and public relations,
- Committee in charge of construction and maintenance.

CBS presently has 2 major buildings: residential building with Ceremony Hall and Vihara or Buddha Hall. A Stupa is under late stage construction. When finished, it will store Buddha Relic and people's ash. Vatt Buddhikarama holds in its collection many Khmer and Buddhist texts. Its facilities have been used on several occasions by other Buddhist traditions for Buddha teaching and meditation.

The Cambodian Buddhist Temple is not only a place of worship, but also serves as a Cambodian American community center. It is the main contact for government agencies to reach out to Cambodian Americans. It is a temporary shelter for the homeless and a feeding place for the hungry.

The Cambodian Buddhist Temple conducts religious services on all Buddhist days, Buddhist holidays, and traditional holidays. It performs services at the Temple or at private homes for private ceremonies, such as memorial services for departed ancestors or birthday celebrations. Daily chanting takes place every morning and evening at the Temple.

Under its youth program, CBS conduct a Sunday school comprising Khmer language, dance and music classes. The school is open to all young people ranging from ages 6 to 20. Two kinds of dances (classical and traditional dances) are taught by former teachers and dancers in Cambodia. Khmer music is taught by Master teacher who has received award from the National Endowment for the Arts.



About Cambodian community day ទិវាសហគមន៍ខ្មែរ

Our Mission

Cambodian Community Day (CCD) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization established to promote, present and preserve our rich Cambodian culture. CCD seeks to integrate Khmer culture into American society to ensure the continuation of Cambodian cultural heritage, especially among Cambodian-American youth. We also work to strengthen Cambodian voices, empower Cambodian communities, bridge distances, heal rifts and build bonds among Khmers and other ethnic groups.

Our Vision

We seek to increase the awareness of Cambodian culture and heritage, to erase any negative perception about Cambodia as a killing field, and to nurture young Cambodian-Americans the Khmer values, pride, traditions, self-esteem, self-confidence, intelligence and compassion.

What We Do

We operate solely on a volunteer basis, with a small operating fund raised from the local Washington, DC metro community. Neither the board members nor the officers receive any financial compensation for their work related to CCD. CCD focuses on showcasing art exhibitions, raising the awareness of Khmer culture and heritage to all Americans, preserving and nurturing Khmer values and traditions to young Cambodian-Americans. Over the past 16 years, we have been utilizing different venues to encourage the world to recognize the Khmer civilization as one of the oldest and most prestigious cultures of all time. The Khmer New Year Cultural Show and the Annual Cambodian Cultural Festival are among the CCD's most notable achievements year after year. Our goal is to bring Cambodian and American communities from all walks of life together in recognition of Khmer achievements that strengthen the Khmer voice and exhibit Cambodian heritage. In addition to the Festival and Khmer New Year, we have participated in many cultural events as Cambodian representatives, including the Asian Festival in DC and in Northern Virginia, Asian Pacific American Heritage month in Prince William County Virginia, and Catholic Cultural Heritage month, just to name a few. We are taking pride in producing various types of Khmer traditional entertainment such as Lakhon Bassac, Yeekae drama and traditional clothing shows that involves almost all children. To name a few: in 2013, we produced the Yeekae show *Mak Theung*; in 2014 we produced Lakhon Bassac entitled *Preah Chinavong*; in 2015, we produced Yeekae *Mear Yeung*; in 2016 and 2017, we have produced another Yeekae entitled *Tum Teav*. In addition, we also produce Lakhon Bassac entitled "Tip Sangva" to be performed during the annual Cambodian festival on September 10, 2017. These types of Khmer traditional entertainment are presently almost forgotten in Cambodia due to widespread of foreign pop culture. Visit our website today at <http://www.cambodiancommunityday.org> to learn more about what we have done and what we will do.

www.CambodianCommunityDay.org.

Our Achievements



ANNUAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL



Mak Theung Show
September 2013 Alexandria VA



Khmer New Year 2014
Cambodian Buddhist Temple
Silver Spring, MD



Annual Cultural Festival 2015
Cambodian Buddhist Temple
Silver Spring, MD

ANNUAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL 2016



Ieng Sithul and Miss Asian American Kira Omans at Cultural Festival 2016

Cambodian Buddhist Temple Silver Spring, MD



ANNUAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL 2016



TUM TEAV Show PART 1
at Cultural Festival September 11, 2016
Cambodian Buddhist Temple
Silver Spring, MD





TUM TEAV Show at Khmer New Year April 15, 2017



Cambodian Buddhist Temple
Silver Spring, MD



CCD Members, Supporters, and Volunteers



ORGANIZING COMMITTEE



Ben Bao



Salang Bao



Ithara Phlong



Sophia Tep



Chathary Koch

Lakhon Bassac Master

Mistress of Ceremony

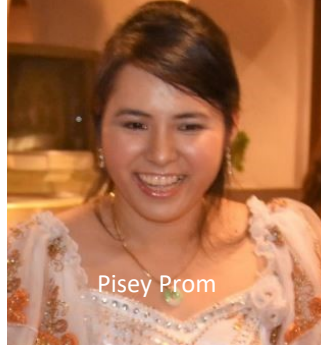
Face Painting Artist



Socheatah Ung



Paula Chea



Pisey Prom



Heng Chao

Stage and Logistics



Marong Kuy



Sokito Chan



Khieng Teav



Chandavuth Kim



Khuy Lim

Costume, Wardrobe, Hairdressers and Make-up



San Yos



Sophiny Biv



Chandy Say



Bunna Sin



Lowell Cole

Musicians

Senior Advisors



Soeum Kim



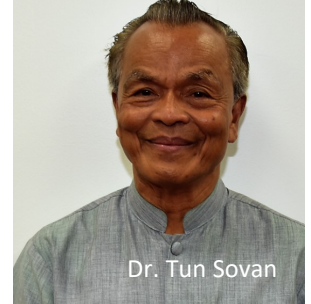
Sok Nou



Kimmie Daly



Thet Bounchan Srey



Dr. Tun Sovan



What is Lakhon Bassac

Overview

Lakhon Bassac is a traditional opera play, a Cambodian type of entertainment. It is one of the most popular play in Cambodia in the old day, especially in a rural countryside, performed in dry season (summer) after harvesting crops during a festival.

The performers consist of skillful actors, beautiful voice vocalists, wardrobe specialists, make-up artists, skillful musicians, and more. They form their own group and give themselves a name (a business name). At a countryside, villagers hire them to perform for their guests' pleasure during a special occasion or festivity. It is always outdoor performance and during nighttime. Prior to 1970 (before the Cambodian civil war), it is almost always that the festival organizer builds a makeshift opera stage and the performance group brings their own stage materials and equipment. Today, the performance group has their own mobile stage unit. They will take care of everything so that the organizers can sit back and enjoy the show.

In the city, mainly Phnom Penh and some provincial towns, there are commercial opera houses or theaters with a published schedule of performance.

Prior to 1976, there were two famous opera houses in Phnom Penh, Lakhon Phsa Tuoul Tumpoung and Lakhon Phsa Silep. Also, Cambodians are still memorializing two iconic Lakhon Bassac stars even though they already passed away: Mr Saing Sarun and Mrs. Chek Mach.

Origin

Lakhon Bassac originates from Lakhon Treoung Klok', a type of an opera show performed in the Bassac region of Kampuchea Krom, a Cambodia lowland region that is now part of South Vietnam that was given to Vietnam during a century-old French Protectorate era. Lakhon Bassac made debut into Cambodia in the 1930s. Quite often, Mr. Ly Suon, known as Merchant Chha Kruon, brought a Lakhon performing troupe from Kampuchea Krom to Phnom Penh and have them performed in Cambodian high-land provinces along the Bassac River. The performances became very popular and people began to call it "Lakhon Bassac". Lakhon Bassac is also influenced by Chinese opera, known to be the original root of this kind of opera, and the Vietnamese opera as Cambodian low-landers have been living under the Vietnamese rule.

In the 1960s, Lakhon Bassac was strong-

ly promoted by well-known actors such as Mr. Sang Sarun and Ms. Chek Mach. Today, Cambodians still consider them as legendary performers. Their unparalleled voice is so beautiful that no one today can be a match-up to such a high caliber of singing and performing art. In 1993 the Ministry of Culture of Fine Arts officially recognized Mrs. Chek Mach as Virak Selapakarini (Grand Master of Artist). She died in 2011. Not much is known about Mr. Saing Sarun's biography. He is no longer on earth. We do not know how and when he died. Most of us presume that he died during the Khmer Rouge Rouge era during which almost all of highly skilled performers were killed. Saing Sarun and Chek Mach voices remain with us on taped recordings.

Presently, this form of Cambodian entertainment is on the brink of collapse due to the influence of modern cultures. Very few performing troupes exist for hire and we do not even know if there is any opera house or theatre in Phnom Penh or elsewhere.

Characteristics

Lakhon Bassac is a performing art that tells a complete story or a legend. The legend always consists of a story about Kingdom reigned by a King and a Queen. They have a prince who has to endure an adventurous journey from the luxurious royal palace to a deep jungle searching for knowledges, wisdoms, warrior skills and magic power from a legendary master called Ta Eisey (a character as an old wise man, wearing white clothes, a funny-looking walking stick, and a long white beard) who seems to live in a secluded, mountainous area. The prince 's journey is usually accompanied by a personal servant, a comic character with spectacular gestures that move audiences into laughing. At the Asrom (house) of Ta Eisey, there is a servant called AKeang, also a comic character.

The king, the queen and the prince represent a good spirit, a good guy. The Yeak (a giant character sometimes called Asura) reigned a Norkor Yeak (Yeak 's Kingdom). Despite the ugly-looking appearance, not to mention the size, the Yeak sometimes has a wife also a Yeak, sometimes a beautiful wife woman. However, the Yeak always has a very beautiful human daughter, most stories, she was born from a lotus flower. The Yeak found her by chance and raise her as a daughter.

While the prince learns his fighting skills and magic power from Ta Eisey, the Yeak acquires his similar skills from Ta Eiyso. Ta Eisey and Ta Eiyso are similar characters.

The Yeak is said to represent an evil spirit, a bad guy. But each story is complex and hardly judged. The beauty of the princess, the Yeak 's daughter, al-

ways caught the prince attention. He sneaks into the Princess palace and lure her into loving him. Once the Yeak finds out, the war breaks and the magical power fighting begins between the Prince, who just completes his training, with the Yeak.

The Lakhon Bassac is not characterized by how the story goes. Story can be told by other mean such as a motion picture which a producer could just take the story and shoot a movie out it. It has the following main characteristics:

Costume: The male stars, usually the prince is wearing a costume sewing with very complicate patterns. The costume and the crown are decorated



with beautiful jewelries. His weapon is an arch and bows or a stick.

Yeak: he/she always looks ugly.

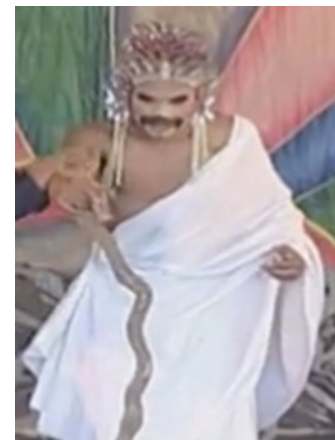


Performance (prince): jumping up and down, turning around, and waving his weapon according to the sound of a drum. He sings a song with a music that choreographed specifically for this type of entertainment.

Performance (Yeak): jumping up and down, turning around, and waving his weapon according to the sound of a drum. He sings a song too, but his voice is a yelling style as to scare people of.

Music: a scene is always preluded with a sound of a drum and a melodic sound of a low-pitch fiddle and a dulcimer.

Ta Eisey and Ta Eiso: Ta Eisey is a master of the prince. Ta Eiso is a master of the Yeak. They both wear similar clothes and live in a secluded hutch (Asrom).



Yeakaney (female giant): Some stories have a female giant, a comic character who almost always a single or a widow looking for a husband. Her presence make people laugh.





The Story: Lakhon Bassac "Tip Sangva"

By Ben Bao, edited by Chanthary Koch

There is no written version of "Tip Sangva" story. It is a legend or an artistic story by word of mouth, from generation to generation. The story has been re-told through many types of traditional Khmer entertainment, such as Yeekae, Lakhon Bassac, or by a vocalist of Chapei Dang Veng (a long-neck, two-string guitar). The following write-up is based on the account of some Cambodian people, including the master of a show that produced Lakhon Bassac. As always, our purpose is to turn a story (true or legendary) into a performing act for entertainment. So, there will be acts that may or may not be mentioned in the story. This is how the story goes.

Once upon a time, there was a kingdom ruled by a King and a Queen. They have one son, the Prince. One day, the King and Queen, along with their entourage and soldiers, took the young Prince to sightsee in a coastal area. While they were enjoying themselves, they had not noticed the gigantic eagle flying over in the sky with its eyes on the child Prince. In a flash, the eagle dove down, and with his claws, grabbed the Prince and flew away toward the dense forest. The King and Queen cried for help while their entourage looked up to the sky helplessly.

Far from the coast and deep in a jungle, there lived a "Ta Eisey," an old hermit who lives in a remote and secluded place, inaccessible to most people. (Ta Eisey is a legendary person believed to possess magical powers and martial arts skills.) While enlightening his magic and fighting skills in the area, he saw the eagle with the child. He recited a magic spell causing the eagle to lose its grip on the child, who then fell from the sky into Ta Eisey's arms. He brought the child to his cottage, named him Chao Phirun. Through his magical powers, Ta Eisey knew who the child's parents were, and could also foresee the child's future. Instead of returning the Prince to his parents (at least not at this time), he decided to raise him and to teach him magical powers and fighting skills. Ta Eisey would not have done that if he could foresee that his student lacked the ability to become a good person in the future. To keep Chao Phirun from being too lonely, from his magical powers Ta Eisey created for Chao Phirun a servant/companion from cow waste (this humorous part is in most Cambodian legends), and, named him "Akaing," who will become the comic character in the story.

Chao Phirun grew up to be a fine, handsome young man.

He was very diligent. He had learned all virtues, magic, and fighting skills, and had reached the highest level possible. He began to ask his master about his origin. Ta Eisey thought that the time was finally right and began to tell him the true story. Chao Phirun felt great sadness and longed to see his parents. He asked Ta Eisey for permission to travel and search for them. Akaing also asked to accompany Chao Phirun. Ta Eisey agreed. After a blessing ceremony, Chao Phirun and Akaing set off on their journey through the dense forest in search of his country and his family.

There existed the Kingdom of Ketchampou Borey ruled by King Aphaisorya and Queen Phaisomaly. They had a beautiful daughter named Tip SangvaSangva. King Aphaisorya was a powerful king and a great warrior. Neighboring countries dared not challenge his power. Having no son, he proceeded to teach his only daughter, Tip Sangva, all the fighting skills until she became a skilled fighter, just like him. Unfortunately, there was one regulation in the Kingdom, passed down from their ancestors, that stated that a woman could not be a war general to lead any fighting, in case of war. The commanding general must be a man. Tip SangvaSangva, although as skilled and as powerful as her father, could only fight along with other soldiers, but could never be a commander.

Another kingdom was ruled by an ogre, called Yeak. In Cambodian myth and folk tales, Yeak is a half monster/half human, large, grotesque, predatory, and flesh-eating including human beings and animals. His name is Pinreach. He had one son named Veyroth. Both were powerful warriors. Yeak Pinreach had been a friend of King Aphaisorya's. When Tip Sangva reached adulthood, Yeak Pinreach asked permission for his son, Yeak Veyroth, to marry Tip Sangva, but the latter refused. This refusal made both Yeaks very unhappy and hostile toward King Aphaisorya. However, since they were not as powerful as King Aphaisorya, they were unwilling to wage war on the Kingdom of Ketchampou Borey. They must wait for the opportunity to take place.

One day, King Aphaisorya became severely ill. The Kingdom of Ketchampou Borey was now vulnerable to foreign attacks. Yeak Pinreach and his son Veyroth learned the situation at Ketchampou Borey. They waged war to capture Tip Sangva and to force her to marry Yeak Veyroth. King Aphaisorya was deeply troubled by the declaration, called for a special royal cabinet meeting in search of strategies to defend his country. Tip Sangva begged her father to allow

her to lead the fighting against the Yeaks. The King refused, because to do so would break the ancestors' rule that would result in severe unrest in war, famine, and diseases in the country. The King's officials were speechless and numb. The King then turned to his personal advisor, Preah Borohet, a high-ranking religious leader. Preah Borohet told him to conduct a prayer ceremony requesting the spirits of ancestors for help. The spirits heard the prayer and came down in a dream to Princess Tip Sangva, asking her to go and fetch a ring from a sacred place. The next day, Tip Sangva following an instruction in her dream, found a ring. When she wore it, she became man. When she took it off, she became a woman again. She told her father, her mother, and all warriors about the dream. They were all happy. They called Tip Sangva Prince Sangva Vong when she wore the ring and became a man.

The day of fighting arrived. Princess Tip Sangva wore the ring and became Prince Sangva Vong. He led an army from Ketchampou Borey to fight the Yeaks' army in the battlefield. When Yeak Pinreach saw Sangva Vong, he questioned his identity and looked down upon him as an inexperienced, unknown, unheard-off fighter who dared to fight with him. He ordered his son to fight and kill Sangva Vong. To his surprise, Yeak Veyroth was defeated. Yeak Pinreach became very angry. He began fighting Sangva Vong. The fighting went on for a while.

Yeak Pinreach, who was a powerful warrior, defeated Sangva Vong and attempted to kill him. Chao Phirun and his servant Akaing were travelling nearby and saw the fighting. He stopped yeak Pinreach from killing Sangva Vong. He asked both parties the reason for the fighting. Sangva Vong explained to Chao Phirun that Yeak Pinreach had intended to invade the Kingdom of Ketchampou Borey, capture Princess Tip Sangva, and force her to marry his son. Chao Phirun asked for a response to this accusation from Yeak Pinreach who angrily confirmed that this was true. Wanting to defend a good cause, Chao Phirun got involved, fought, and defeated Yeak Pinreach.

Sangva Vong thanked Chao Phirun for saving his life. Chao Phirun developed an affection toward Sangva Vong, asked him if he would like to be his adopted brother. Sangva Vong accepted. They led the army back to the city. Along the way, they got tired, stopped and rested near a river. Sangva Vong sneaked out to bathe in the river. Chao Phirun woke up,

did not see Sangva Vong, and went to look for him. He saw Tip Sangva bathing in the river. Tip Sangva realized that Chao Phirun was around, ran away, and wore the ring which turned her back into Sangva Vong. Chao Phirun chased the beautiful young woman whom he had just seen and disappeared, only to find Sangva Vong. He asked if Sangva Vong had seen a young woman running by. Sangva Vong denied having seen one. Falling in love, Chao Phirun was determined to go and look for her. He asked Sangva Vong to help him, but the latter refused, citing that he must hurry up to see his ill father. Disappointed by this refusal, and in attempt to convince Sangva Vong that he must help him find the beautiful lady, he grabbed Sangva Vong's arms and begged him. In doing so, the ring came off from Sangva Vong's finger, and appearing before him was the beautiful lady Chao Phirun was looking for. Tip Sangva told Chao Phirun the truth. They both fell in love. They could not wait to reach to the royal palace and to ask her parents for marriage.

Again, along the way, they stopped and rested. There was a female giant (in Khmer, we pronounce "Yeakhney", another fictional character in Khmer legends that has the look and behavior similar to the "Yeak") nearby. She saw Chao Phirun and fell in love. She cast a spell on Tip Sangva and dragged her away. Yeakhney then disguised as Tip Sangva and laid down beside him. After waking up, they continued their trip. Chao Phirun noticed a different behavior by Tip Sangva. He suspected that something had happened. He tricked her and uncovered her true identity. He fought and scared Yeakhney away. Later, Chao Phirun and Tip Sangva were reunited and continued their trip until they reached the palace where they both were happily greeted by King Aphasorya and Queen Phaisomaly. The King and Queen realized that Chao Phirun was the ill-fated son of their good friends. So, he sent his messenger to the kingdom of Chao Phirun's parents who were very happy to receive the news. They came to Ketchampou Borey. The Kings and Queens of both kingdoms married their son and daughter and they all lived happily ever after.



18 Lakhon Bassac Performers



Phon Bun
as Yeak Pinreach

Sokanya Bou Shelko
as Tip Sangva

Sen K. Sin
as Chao Phirun

Phouham Pin
as Sangva Vong

Arnold Nhim
as Yeak Veyroth



Kunthary de Gaiffier
as real Yeakaney



Mealy Chhim
as disguised Yeakaney



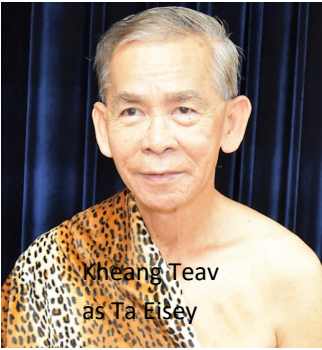
Samoeuk Man
as King Aphy Soriya



Proeung Sou
as Queen Phay Somaly



Soeum Kim
as Preah Borohet



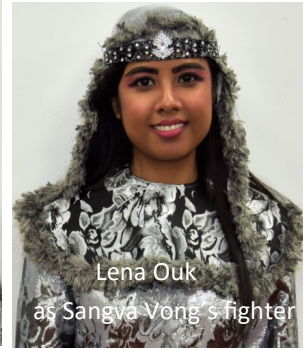
Kheang Teav
as Ta Eisey



Sok Nou
as Akaing



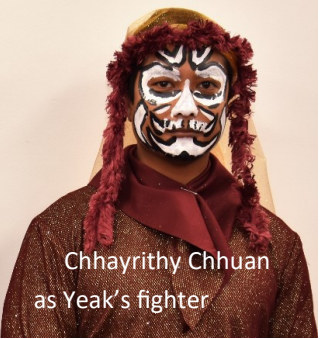
Sky Bloomer
as Sangva Vong's fighter



Lena Ouk
as Sangva Vong's fighter



Everest Bloomer
as Yeak's fighter



Chhayrithy Chhuan
as Yeak's fighter



Sophiny Biv
Queen Entourage



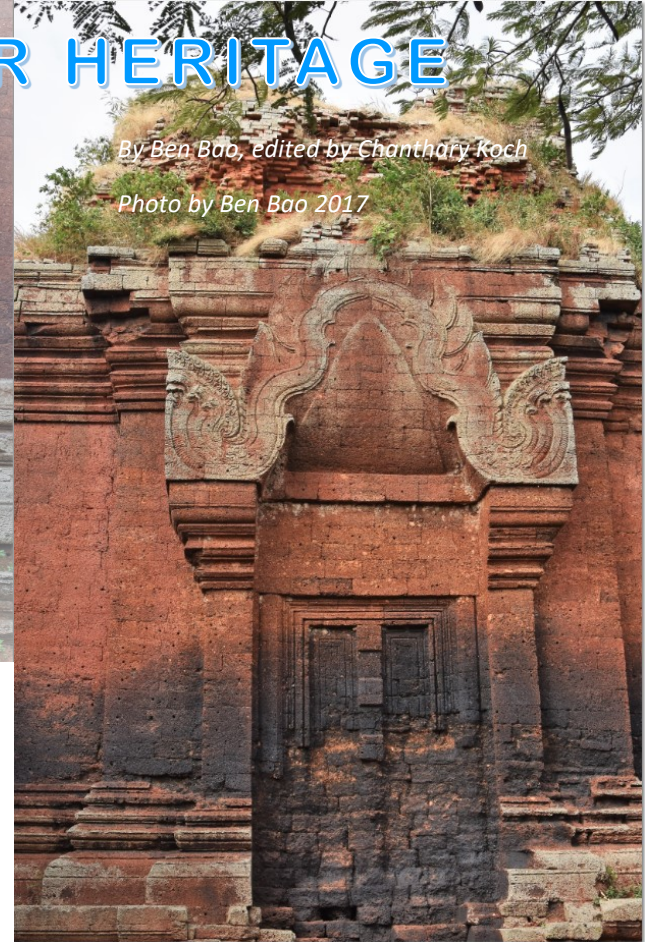
Dalin Prom
Queen Entourage





Rehearsal Pictures





By Ben Bao, edited by Chanthary Koch

Photo by Ben Bao 2017

Phnom Da & Angkor Borei

The First Capital City

Discover the history of Cambodia in Angkor Borei, the area of several ruins and archaeological digs

The ancient Funan site of Phnom Da is located in Angkor Borei district in the Takeo province, which is often referred to as the cradle of Cambodian civilization. It is about 24 kilometers east of the town of Takeo and is about 102 kilometers south of Phnom Penh. To visit Phnom Da site, one may come by road from Phnom Penh or the town of Takeo, or by boat from Takeo via a water channel during the dry season. During the rainy season, the channel is flooded covering a massive water area that makes a boat ride more difficult and dangerous. The Angkor Borei area is flooded six months a year during the rainy season. The water recedes the rest of the year creating a vast water basin and rice farmland stretching as far as eyes can see.

History

Presently, Phnom Da is a hill that attracts tourists wanting to know more about the history of Cambodia. However, it is a cultural and historical site that has been renovated to provide visitors a place to relax or to expand their researches on Cambodian history. Angkor Borei was the

first capital city of Cambodia during the Norkor Phnom era (1st-6th centuries), literally translated into Khmer as mountain country era. It is also known as Funan epoch, the name that was given by Chinese cartographers, geographers and writers to an ancient Indianized state of Southeast Asia that centered on the Mekong Delta region. According to modern scholars drawing primarily on Chinese literary sources, a foreigner named "Huntian"—known by Cambodians as King Hun Tien—established the Kingdom of Funan around the 1st century AD in the Mekong Delta region. But archeological evidence shows that extensive human settlement in the region may go back as far as the 4th century BC. There are several archaeological materials from these sites roughly dating back to 400 BC. They contain the earliest known, dated Khmer inscriptions and sculptures as well as the earliest tradition and Khmer culture.

The area has been continuously inhabited for at least 2,500 years and has yielded artifacts dating from the Neolithic period (aka, the last stage of the Stone Age), the Funan period (1st to 6th centu-

ries AD) and the Chenla period (a successor kingdom of Funan that ended at the end of the 6th century AD), and the pre-Angkorian era (9th to 15th centuries AD). Nowadays, Angkor Borei is just a small district town. Most visitors come to visit the Angkor Borei region where two ancient temples remain.

The First Temple

The first temple is Phnom Da temple, built from brick, laterites, and sandstones in 6th century AD under the reign of King Ruravarman who reigned during the Norkor Phnom period, according to the French historian Mibreno. The rooftop of the temple is in disrepair. But the tower structure still remain standing. The temple is open to the north and has a door through which visitors can enter and make a sacrifice at the altar where a trace of yoni still remains, but the linga is nowhere to be seen, possibly removed by looters. The linga and yoni represent Hinduism's belief in the continuation of life. It is a symbol of reproduction. At the time of the temple's erection, Khmer people practiced the religion of Hinduism and this temple was a Brahma temple.

For reasons that have yet to be determined, the temple also has false doors on the three other sides. Similar structures are found at many other ancient Khmer temples. All doors, real or false, are constructed of laterite and brick. There are displays of carving that are still in good condition. The present look of the temple may be an upgraded version of the 11th century during the Angkor era.

The Hun Tien Temple

The second temple is known as Asrom Moha Eisey temple (the great hermit's hut). Built at the end of the 6th century in Chenla Period, during the reign of King Pavavarman I, the temple has five windows and two doors. It is 5.5 meters square and 7 meters high, it is built in the Indian style and features a double wall of basalt that faces north. Local people said it was King Hun Tien's temple. Hun Tien was the first Cambodian king. The temple is located about 300 meters southwest of and downhill from Phnom Da. It is slightly up from the foot of the hill and is visible from the road nearby. It is a small temple with magnificent artwork from the pre-Angkorian era. Compared to the tower of Phnom Da temple, the temple of Asrom Moha Eisey is still in good condition. There are no signs of any touch-up. Inside, there is a small alley or walkway, 1 to 1 ½ meters wide, circling an inner enclosed chamber. There is rampant superstition at the site. Local people tell visitors that if they walk around Asrom Moha Eisey temple three times and make a wish, their wish would come true.



How To Get There

Once arriving to the area, visitors start their journey walking up the hill via a cemented stairway that curves upward alongside the hill from the northwest side to the top where Phnom Da temple is located. There are five man-made caves at Phnom Da, one of them situated near the path that leads to the top of the hill. Also, along the path, there are a couple of spirit houses where people stop by, light incense sticks, and pray. To reach Hun Tien temple, visitors descend from the top via partly ce-

mented stairway, partly dirt path. There is a very interesting little museum at Angkor Borey displaying artifacts from the area and providing information on recent archaeological digs. Doctor Chathourn Thuy, a Cambodian archaeologist has done some researches on ancient medicine that Khmer ancestors had been practicing. He wrote a book in Khmer entitled "Health and Herbs in Ancient Cambodia". The book was translated into English by Ben Bao. The following paragraphs are an excerpt from the book related to Angkor Borey.



History of health administration during the Mountain Country (Norkor Phnom) era and the medicinal grinding tools

Angkor Borei is an ancient Khmer capital from the 1st to the 6th centuries. Many researchers state that it was a glorious city encircled by a 6-kilometer brick wall. There are still many remnants of the temple built from brick and sandstone, many antiques such as jewelries, ironwork, and various wooden objects within its vicinity. The civilization of the Norkor Phnom era was well developed. There were many man-made waterways connecting the city to the seaport of O-Keo, through which merchants transported goods for trading and exchanged culture and religion. There were also a tax system on expensive imported goods and usage of Hindu alphabet.

The architecture of the city includes a city wall, crisscrossing man-made waterways, and many temples. Hinduism was the practiced religion. There are remnants of Shiva linga and yoni (both symbols of fertility) almost everywhere in the southern part of current day Cambodia, where worship places can still be found. Local people call it "Ank," a small island land surrounded by a water channel symbolizing linga and yoni. The ancient city of the Norkor Phnom era still leaves behind many traces of commercial artifacts such as currency in the form of

silver coins (some researchers believe they are Greek and/or Roman coins), and the seaport of O-Keo (professor Sorn Samnang 2008). Many ancient man-made rivers running on north-south axis, and along the coastal area presently known as Mount Bathae. There are evidences that ancient ships had passed through the areas.

The civilization of the Norkor Phnom era has also left traces of objects such as ceramics, roasting pot (evidence of fragments scattered around the city), brick production (bricks were used to build temples, city walls, and other construction). The ancient Khmers also produced valuable metal artifacts such gold jewelry, which local villagers have dug up and still pan for them within the vicinity of the city. In the domain of agriculture, there are vast rice fields and an irrigation system in a checkerboard pattern left until today (the author has participated in a restoration effort in 1998). Furthermore, there were many crowned kings who reigned in the country from the 1st through the mid-6th century AD, according to many stone inscriptions found in the city. There are many other artifacts that are currently exhibited in the antique museum, which was established in May 1999.



The remnant of Yoni inside Phnom Da Temple. The Linga is missing.

In Hindu iconography, the linga is the absolute Shiva Godhead. It is accompanied by a symbol (like this one) called Yoni representing the feminine, creative force of god. The linga represents the all-pervading, formless, male aspect of god.

The Stone grinder of Angkor Borey, Takeo Province

A rare antique that is the subject of a discussion in Dr. Thuy's book is the medicine stone grinder or table used for grinding medicine. Villagers have discovered eight grinders—five of them in good shape and three fragmented. They are exhibited at the Angkor Borei Museum. Of all the medicine grinding tables found, one table is in the shape of an elephant and another, a rhinoceros (see photos). Most of the medicine grinding tables were discovered around the village of Prek Phtol and the Buddhist monastery of Kum Nou. These stone grinders are remnants of antiquities from the 1st to the 6th centuries. They serve as evidence that the ancient Khmers employed a scientific approach to extract substances from plants and used them as medicine to cure illnesses during the Norkor Phnom era. The techniques and instruments were most likely imported through the port of O-Keo, which was the first Khmer port that served as a center for cultural exchange mostly with Brah-

mans from India. An Indian sociologist researcher, Dr. Rajen Singh Laishram confirms that scriptures describing traditional treatments using stone grinder and pestle existed since 1,200 BC in the Indian civilization. The Indian civilization then spread into the Southeast Asia region via ships that were sailed across the Pacific Ocean and called at ports along the coastal areas. Dr. Zuliskandar, a researcher at a Malaysian University, has confirmed that there are medicine stone grinding instruments at many archaeological sites, especially at Kedas, a state closely resembling that of the Norkor Phnom era. Most importantly, the Malaysians continued to use those instruments until the 20th century. Dr. Agus Aris Munanda (Indonesia) states that there is a similarity between Cambodian and Indonesian stone grinding instruments of the early era of Christianity. The same is true within the ancient civilization of the Philippines. Professor Eusebio Z. Dixon said that those ancient stone grinders are currently exhibited at the National Museum of the Philippines.



Photo by Dr. Chanthoun Thuy 2014 Khmer Angkor Borey.



Photo by Dr. Chanthoun Thuy 2015
National Museum of Malaysia



photo by Dr. Zuliskandar 2016 Malaysia



photo by Dr. Agus Aris Munanda, Indonesia

The influence of Indian Hinduism civilization not only brought to Southeast Asia culture and religion, but also an early scientific domain of health, drug, and pharmacy via a method of grinding plants on stoned instruments to prepare for medicines.



photo by Dr. Agus Aris Munanda, Indonesia

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Prasat Tonle Bati

24

Tonle Bati is a tourist location near a lake about 30 km south of Phnom Penh and about 5 km off from national Route 2. It is a popular weekend escape from a busy life in Phnom Penh. The lake is adorned with 12th to 13th century temples--among them are Ta Prom and Yeay Peuv temples, small in size but well-preserved.

They were built during the reign of King Jayavarman VII's and, unlike many other Angkorian temples which were usually dedicated to Hindu gods, they were dedicated to Buddhism. They were constructed mainly of bricks and laterite stones. The inner enclosure of Ta Prom is 42 m long and 36 m wide. Despite the fact that the temple was dedicated to Buddhism, its wall was decorated with bas-reliefs illustrating Hindu myths. There are five rooms inside the temple perimeter and each room has a Lingam indicating that Cambodians were still worshipping the Hindu god Shiva. Many locals, mostly children, sell lotus flowers, candles and incense sticks to visitors wishing to pray there at the temple. Yeay Peuv temple, named after a female protecting spirit, can be seen 200 m north of Ta Prom.



Photo by Ben Bao 2016

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Photo by Ben Bao 2016

People come to Tonle Bati, not only to witness Cambodian history, arts and culture, but also to enjoy and relax at a lake nearby. There are bamboo shacks on stilts and floating cottages built picturesquely over the shallow water of the lake which visitors can rent by the hour or for the day. Food is available for purchase or made to order. Check and negotiate the price first before ordering. Boat ride can be arranged for a fee. The lake shows signs of erosion and dry-up, especially during the dry season. It is a large water basin during the rainy season. Although the water is murky, swimming is allowed.



Photo by Ben Bao 2016

Sambor Prei Kuk



Photo by Ben Bao 2016

“Sambor Prei Kuk, despite being dedicated to a Hindu god Shiva, was the start of the creation of what has become the Khmer culture.”

Chen Chanratana, Archaeologist and founder of the Khmer Heritage Foundation

By Lowell D. Cole

“Hidden in the forests and overgrown by weeds and trees about 40 km from Kampong Thom city lies the cradle of Khmer culture: the ancient city and temples of Sambor Prei Kuk archaeological group, the capital of vast Zhenla (Chenla) kingdom in the late 6th early 7th century. This site is identified with Isanapura mentioned in the Khmer epigraphic corpus and in Chinese historical documents. At the height of their power, the kings of Zhenla ruled over most of modern Cambodia, southern Lao, and Thailand.”

Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project

Sambor Prei Kuk (*Prasat Sambor Prei Kuk*), now in ruins, is an archaeological site in Cambodia located in Kampong Thom Province, north of Kampong Thom and, more specifically, on the Eastern bank of the Tonle Sap lake, close to the Sen River. The complex dates from the Pre-Angkorian period of the late 6th to 9th century, established by king Isanavarman I as the central royal sanctuary and the capital, known then as Isanapura. It is believed that he built the main temple Prasat Sambor, since an inscription on the site is dated 13 September 627 AD, which is attributed to his reign. Furthermore, Sambor presents the first of the

the pre-Angkorean style of architecture.

The central part of Sambor Prei Kuk is divided into three main groups. The structures of the overall archaeological area were constructed at variable times: the southern and north groups (7th century) by Isanavarman I, who is considered a possible founder of the city and the central group at a later date. The three clusters within the Sambor compound are classified as group C for *Central*, N for *North* and S for *South*. They are enclosed in a double-walled encircling 1,000 acres in which there were 150 Hindu temples, today mostly in ruins.

North Group: Prasat Sambor is considered the main temple and it dates from the 7th century. It was dedicated to one of incarnations of Shiva known as *Gambhiresvara* (from Sanskrit, *gambhir*, profound, deep, solemn and, *shvara*, Shiva, Śiva, The Auspicious One)

South Group: Prasat Yeah Puon includes 22 sanctuaries dated from the 7th century (600 - 635 AD) during the reign of Isanavarman I in dedication to Shiva.

Central Group: The Central Sanctuary, or Prasat Boram, displayed lion sculptures that inspired the popular name of *Prasat Tao* (The Lions' Temple). It is, however, the newest group dating the 9th century. The other main feature is the Tower of Ashram Issey; there were also other constructions (18 temples), now in ruins.

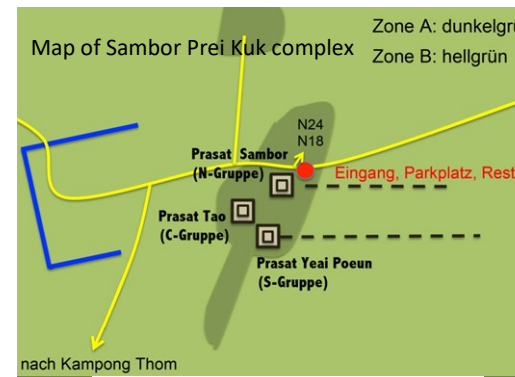
Shaivism was the religion of Chenla (ca. 550 - ca. 800 AD), including elements of Hinduism, Buddhism and indigenous ancestor cults. In the Sambor Prei Kuk temples, it is possible to contemplate stone inscriptions in both Sanskrit and Khmer, naming both Hindu and local ancestral deities with Shiva and several altars with the lingam.

Grasping elements of the emergence of the Khmer civilization is through examination of its architecture, as it now exists, mainly of temples

and other religious structures. As there are nonexistent writings of Khmer design rationale in earlier times, archaeologists appeal for guidance to temple contents, arrangements, patterns, and commonalities. Building materials include the easy-to-use brick, but sandstone, even with greater demands of skills and manpower, is used in some structures.

From Sambor Prei Kuk in the Seventh Century to the Twelfth Century of Angkor Wat conform to a precise format. Temples generally

are tall, tapered towers placed over rectangular enclosures as a palaces for gods. These spaces contain divine statues, or shrines of linga representing Shiva. The temple enclosures seem not intended for the faithful to gather for worship, as these are constrained spaces. Thus, Sambor Prei Kuk manifests how religion and architecture, as well as other features, lend insight to the blossoming of Khmer culture.



Sambor Prei Kuk (nicht massstabgetreu)



Photo by Ben Bao 2016



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Honoring Chum Ngek, Master of Cambodian Music

By Ben Bao



Chum Ngek is one of the finest Khmer musicians living in the United States. He is a native of Battambang Cambodia. Inspired by his grandfather Um Hieng, he began his interest in Khmer music at age of ten. He progressed well soon after and acquired skills of a whole range of Khmer music repertoire: pinpeat, Mohoree, and wedding music to name a few. Among the instruments he plays are high and low pitch fiddles, dulcimer, xylophone, gong, sralai (a kind of flute), different type of drums (Kong Thom, Sampho, Skor Dai), and others. Prior to 1975, he had been often selected to perform at many official ceremonies. In 1974, he was selected to be a representative of Battambang province in a national music contest. Later, he was accepted to an artist residency held at the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh. Unfortunately, his music career diminished during the Khmer era (1975-1979). Surviving a brutality of the regime, he immigrated to the United States in June 1982 and settled in a Maryland suburb near Washington DC. His passion for Khmer music greatly enhanced since then. He becomes very active in the Khmer community.

He associates with two Cambodian organizations: Cambodian American Heritage, Inc (CAHI) and Cambodian Buddhist Society Cultural Group (CBSGC). Every year at both places, he teaches countless students, young and old, to play various Khmer traditional instruments. His reputation extends beyond the associations. He have been often called upon to perform at public and private events throughout the United States.

Awards

- ◆ 2016: Maryland Traditions Heritage Award
- ◆ 2008: Montgomery County Executive's Award for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities, Outstanding Artist
- ◆ 2006: Creative Communities Fund Commissioning Circle Grant (In partnership with the Cambodian Buddhist Society, Inc.), Community Foundation for the National Capital Region.
- ◆ 2004: Bess Lomax Hawes, National Heritage Fellow, National Endowment for the Arts Individual Artist Award, Maryland State Arts Council Maryland Traditions Apprenticeship Master, Maryland State Arts Council

- ◆ 2003: Discretionary Grant, (In partnership with the Cambodian American Heritage, Inc.), Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy

Towson University World Music Ensemble Students



References:

<http://musicofcambodia.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/musicofcambodia/photos/a.437947813071475.1073741831.154336331432626/437947976404792/?type=3&theater>

BURMESE DANCE

Performers name: Phoo and Thiri
 Organization: BABA Mingalarama Vihara
 (Burmese Temple)
 Name of the dance: Timing Tune (San Daw Chaine)





The Philippines Dance

United American Pilipino Group of Northern Virginia or UAPG for short is a 501C3 non profit charitable organization which helps poor, needy and less fortunate people through medical missions in which volunteers of officers, members and board members get together doing a lot of support, time, help and care to achieve the goals and success of all the events, activities and medical missions.

United American Pilipino Group of Northern Virginia's Vibrant

Diamond Philippine Folk Dance Ensemble will perform Carinosa Philippine Folk Dance.

Cariñosa Folk Dance means the loving or affectionate one that is a Philippine dance of Hispanic origin from the Maria Clara suite of Philippine folk dances, where the handkerchief plays an instrumental role besides the graceful movements of the body, legs, feet and arms. The dance originated in Panay Island in the Visayan Islands and was introduced by the Spaniards during their colonization of the Philippines.

Carinosa performers are:

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Bambi Po Michael | 2. Rey Gan | 3. Imelda Fairchild |
| 4. Elsa Mostar | 5. Remy Lloren | 6. Amy Genayas |
| 7. Marydel Siervo | 8. Terrie Caberio | 9. Florence Valdez |
| 10. Nenita Villacortes | | |

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

KOH KONG POINTS OF INTERESTS

Koh Kong is a province in southwest Cambodia with a vast coastline and rugged terrains encompassing part of the Cardamom Mountains' rainforest. Though with paved road from Phnom Penh, the trip to Koh Kong is a bit bumpy. Parts of the road are up and down like a roller-coaster and have many sharp turns. But the best of Koh Kong can

offer is its natural beauty. The trip includes crossing bridges over many beautiful rivers. Once you get into town, you will enjoy the hilly Koh Kong Island that is lined with tropical beaches. South of the provincial capital, you will find mangroves and waterways of Peam Krasop Wildlife Sanctuary, home to many animals, birds, and fishing communities.

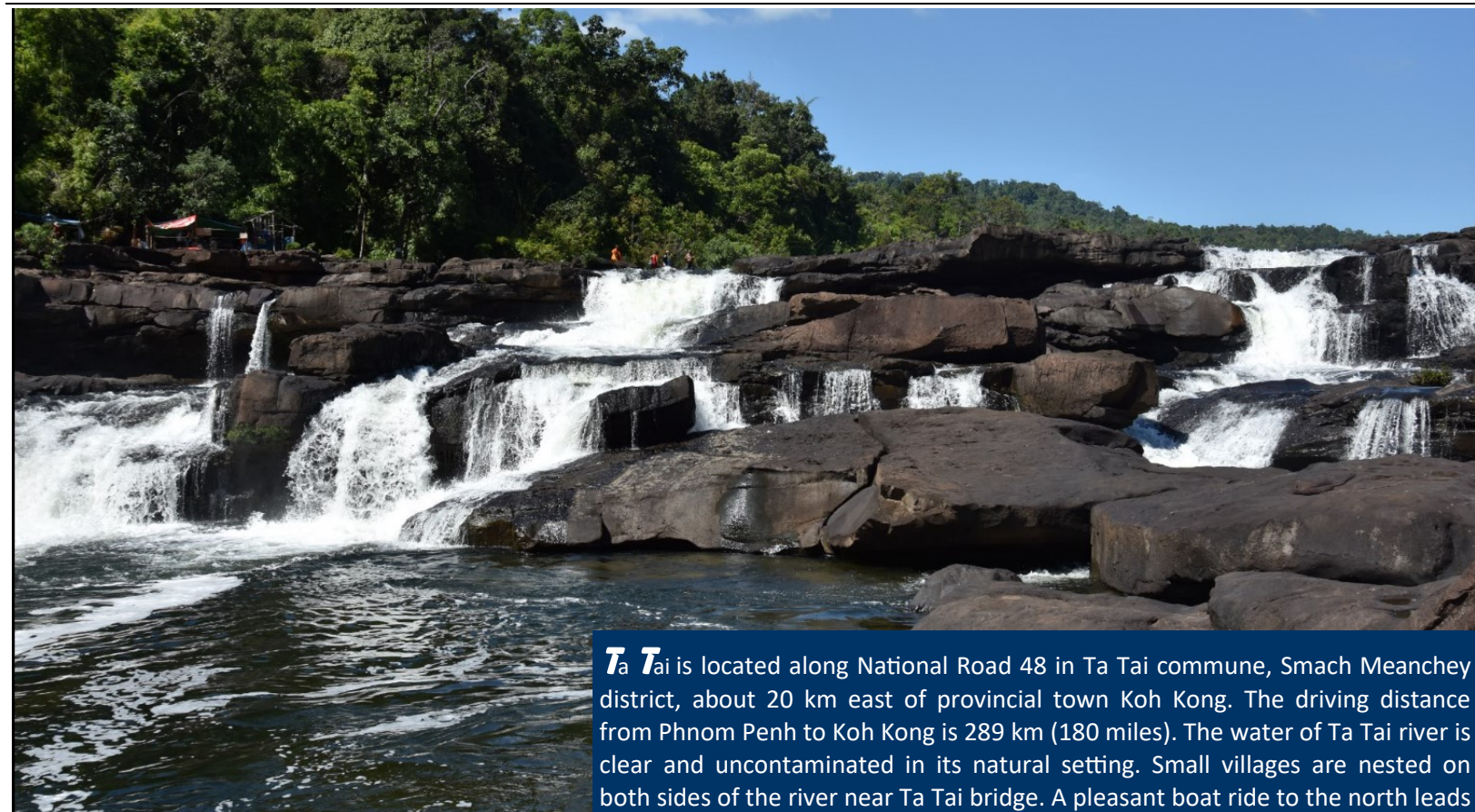


Places to Visit in Koh Kong

- * Ta Tai River and Waterfall
- * Khun Chhang Khun Phen Stupa
- * Chi Phat Waterfall
- * Veal Achaut Waterfall
- * Octopuses Garden Diving Center
- * Koh Kong Wonders & Excursions
- * Cham Yeam Resort
- * And more...



Photo by Ben Bao 2016



Ta Tai is located along National Road 48 in Ta Tai commune, Smach Meanchey district, about 20 km east of provincial town Koh Kong. The driving distance from Phnom Penh to Koh Kong is 289 km (180 miles). The water of Ta Tai river is clear and uncontaminated in its natural setting. Small villages are nested on both sides of the river near Ta Tai bridge. A pleasant boat ride to the north leads to the waterfall. No villages are found on either side on the northern part of the river. There is an old Buddhist Pagoda, a few kilometers to the south of the bridge. Across from it, the river is divided into two channels and rejoined about one kilometer later creating a sizeable island. There appears to be a kind of resort area on the east of the island.

The waterfall can be reached via a boat ride for a fee from Ta Tai bridge. There is no docking at the waterfall, so extra caution is needed when stepping out of the boat onto the rock. The waterfall has two stages. The first stage is 5 to 6 meters high; the second stage is 12 to 15 meters high. Ta Tai waterfall is also known as Ta Eisey waterfall, named after a legendary story by word of mouth that a boy washed away by a big storm while fishing at the fall with his father. Few days later, he came back and told his father that he was saved by a hermit (Ta Eisey).



Google Map



Photo by Ben Bao 2016

The Legend of Khun Chhang Khun Phen



Khun Chang Khun Phen Stupa

The Khun Chhang Khun Phen stupa sits on a rock in the middle of the sea tributary. It is in Mondul Seima bay across from the provincial town of Koh Kong where many hotels and restaurants exist. To get there, you need to drive or take a ride across a bridge that connects the town to the area. Then take

a dirt road that leads to the entrance to the stupa. The stupa appears like a small island or a gigantic rock that emerges from the water. There is a small bridge built to connect the shore to this small island.



Koh Kong bridge connecting Koh Kong city to Mondul Seima bay, home of many attractions including Khun Chang Khun Phen stupa, Koh Kong beaches, and others.



The stupa has its own tale. It was built to commemorate the soul of a beautiful young woman who was punished to death for betraying a husband whom she did not love. Once upon a time, there was a villager's daughter named Neang Thim. She was poor but very beautiful. There was a young man named Khun Chhang. He was bold-headed and not handsome, but his family was rich and well-connected. He was smitten by Neang Thim, but the latter did not return his love. Through an arrangement by their parents, they became engaged and were married. There was a handsome and in-

telligent young man named Khun Phen. He was an army commander who served the King. Neang Thim fell in love with commander Khun Phen and betrayed her husband. Later, Khun Chhang learned of his wife's affair and took his complaint to the King. The King punished her for her infidelity by sentencing her to death. Khun Chhang buried her on the site where she was killed. He loved her and wanted her to be reincarnated. He built a stupa and put up a flag pole to commemorate her soul and his love for her.



Mondulkiri, The Evergreen Land of Beauty

The road trip via Snuol, Kratie to Sen Monorom, provincial town of Mondulkiri, is breathtaking and is worth trying. Most of the roads are paved and flanked with beautiful sceneries. At one point, the road is bumpy as it climbs up and down the Mondulkiri mountain range, but the landscape view will be well worth the effort. The province of Mondulkiri is in the

northeastern part of Cambodia. It gets its fame for its distinctive hilly landscape, vast thick forests, thunderous waterfalls, hills stretching up and down towards misty and faraway horizons, and wildlife sanctuary corridors. Visitors will find themselves immersed in the beauty of nature.

First Stop: Oromis Resort

It is small resort just off the main road where it emerges from the dense forest. It is located about 5 km west of the town of Sen Monorom. In addition to a beautiful landscape, the resort offers a restaurant, a precious stone shop, and lodging in cottages. There is no entrance fee to visit, other than a small tip to the parking attendant.



The Town of Sen Monorom

Presently, Sen Monorom is a small town with a few hotels and guest-houses. Most restaurants close at the early evening hours. Nightlife activity is minimal. Visitors come to enjoy the beauty of nature that this town offers. There are marketplaces where the local indigenous people sell their produce.

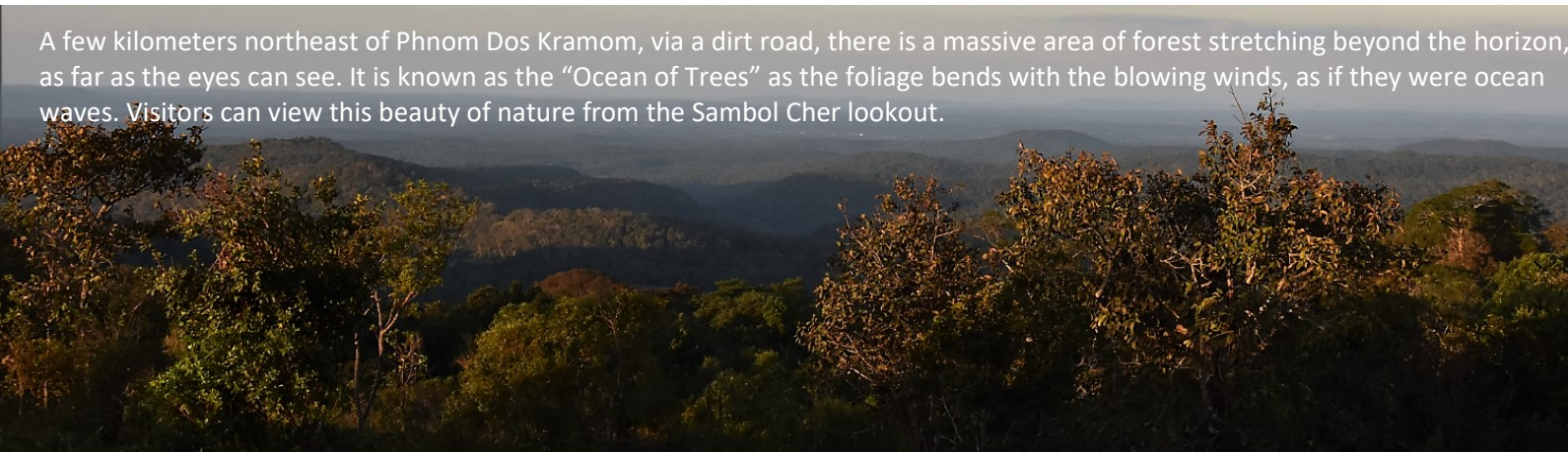


Phnom Dos Kramom



Phnom Dos Kramom literally means the "Virgin's Breast Hill." It gets its name from its natural form. It is about 3 km northeast of the town of Sen Monorom. A dirt road (a trail in the old days), running from north to south, passes through two small hills. From a distance, the two adjoining hills are shaped like human breasts. At the top of each hill is a small covered building that houses a large statue of the guardian matron. The one on the west has a deck overlooking the town of Sen Monorom and where visitors may enjoy the sunset at dusk.

A few kilometers northeast of Phnom Dos Kramom, via a dirt road, there is a massive area of forest stretching beyond the horizon, as far as the eyes can see. It is known as the “Ocean of Trees” as the foliage bends with the blowing winds, as if they were ocean waves. Visitors can view this beauty of nature from the Sambol Cher lookout.



Mondulkiri Coffee Plantation

The coffee plantation is a lush area and serves as a stopover on the way to or from Bou Sra Waterfall. While the world has tasted coffee from just about everywhere around the world, one would have not thought that their next cup of great coffee could be filled from an unfamiliar location, Mondulkiri, Cambodia, located in Mondulkiri Hill, 800 meters above sea level. The climate there makes it perfect for growing world-renowned Robusta

coffee beans. Coffee at Mondulkiri plantation is processed manually. The grains are dried under the sun, then roasted until they are almost black. Then they are grinded into fine grains. Mondulkiri coffee is rich in taste. Beside local consumption, it has been exported to Korea, Malaysia, Japan and some Khmer grocery stores in the US. Visitors can tour the plantation and walk on alleys flanked by coffee trees.



Photo by Ben Bao 2017



Bou Sra Waterfall

Bou Sra Waterfall is a world-renowned tourist attraction with multi-stage falls and a large swimming basin. The water continues to flow across a flat area, then onto a sudden sharp cliff.

HANG AROUND THE FALL

Bou Sra Waterfall is a magnificent waterfall, located in Pich Chenda district about 43 kilometers from Sen Monorom, the provincial town of Monduliri, a beautiful northeast province of Cambodia. Traveling from Sen Monorom to Bou Sra is now a lot easier than before, thanks to the paved roads. Currently, overnight lodging is not available at Bou Sra; however, you may rent a cottage by the hour or for a whole day, where cooked meals are available for purchase. You may spend a night in the town of Sen Monorom where you may find a variety hotels or guest houses. In the morning, spend some time visiting the town before heading to the waterfall. To add pleasure to your trip, stop by the Monduliri coffee plantation, which is on the way to Bou Sra. Monduliri coffee is one of the finest in the world.

There is an entrance fee for the park. On any given day, you can see many motorbikes, cars, vans, and tourist buses in a busy parking lot. The waterfall cannot be seen from the lot. Its pristine setting is in the heart of an evergreen jungle. The impressive waterfall is surrounded by dense majestic trees. On a quiet day, you can hear the sound of the

waterfall. After parking your car or once you get there through other means of transportation, walk on a concrete pathway, passing a visitor center and many souvenir shops. At the beginning, the pathway is somewhat flat; but as you approach the falls, the path become steeper and steeper. There are many food vendors along the way. You may also meet some indigenous people, the ethnic Phnorn, play their traditional music instruments for money at the pathway stop.

Bou Sra Waterfall is considered by many to be one of the most beautiful places on earth, and one that should not be missed. It is one of the major eco-tourist attractions in South East Asia. There are paved national highways and roads connecting major towns like Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, etc., to Monduliri.



When you reach the fall, you are actually at the second stage of the fall, a flat area where all visitors will stay and enjoy the scenic view. In a natural setting, the Bou Sra waterfall is divided in three stages. At the first stage, the fall can be up to 12 meters high and 15 meters wide. At the second stage, which is 150 meters from the first stage, the fall can be up to 20 meters high and 25 meters wide. It is very popular with local people and visitors as they frequently bathe or pose for photos there. At the third stage, the water speed increases. This stage cannot be reached, at least not by foot, because it is in the thick forest with steep slopes. There are no marked paths. Dangerous wildlife inhabits the area.

A visitor wrote in his diary that God has created a wonderful kingdom on earth, nothing but only a godly perfection of massive water cut itself through a gorge over millions of years without any help from man whatsoever. A story was told that in the old days, some visitors encountered a flock of wild elephants roaming across the area. This may not happen again as the logging has caused the area to be mostly cleared. Once, a group of visitors arrived late in the afternoon and wondered why no one was around, not even a single vendor. They later found out that earlier in the day, wild animals had come to quench their thirst at the fall. So be sure to check with local people before you are heading there.



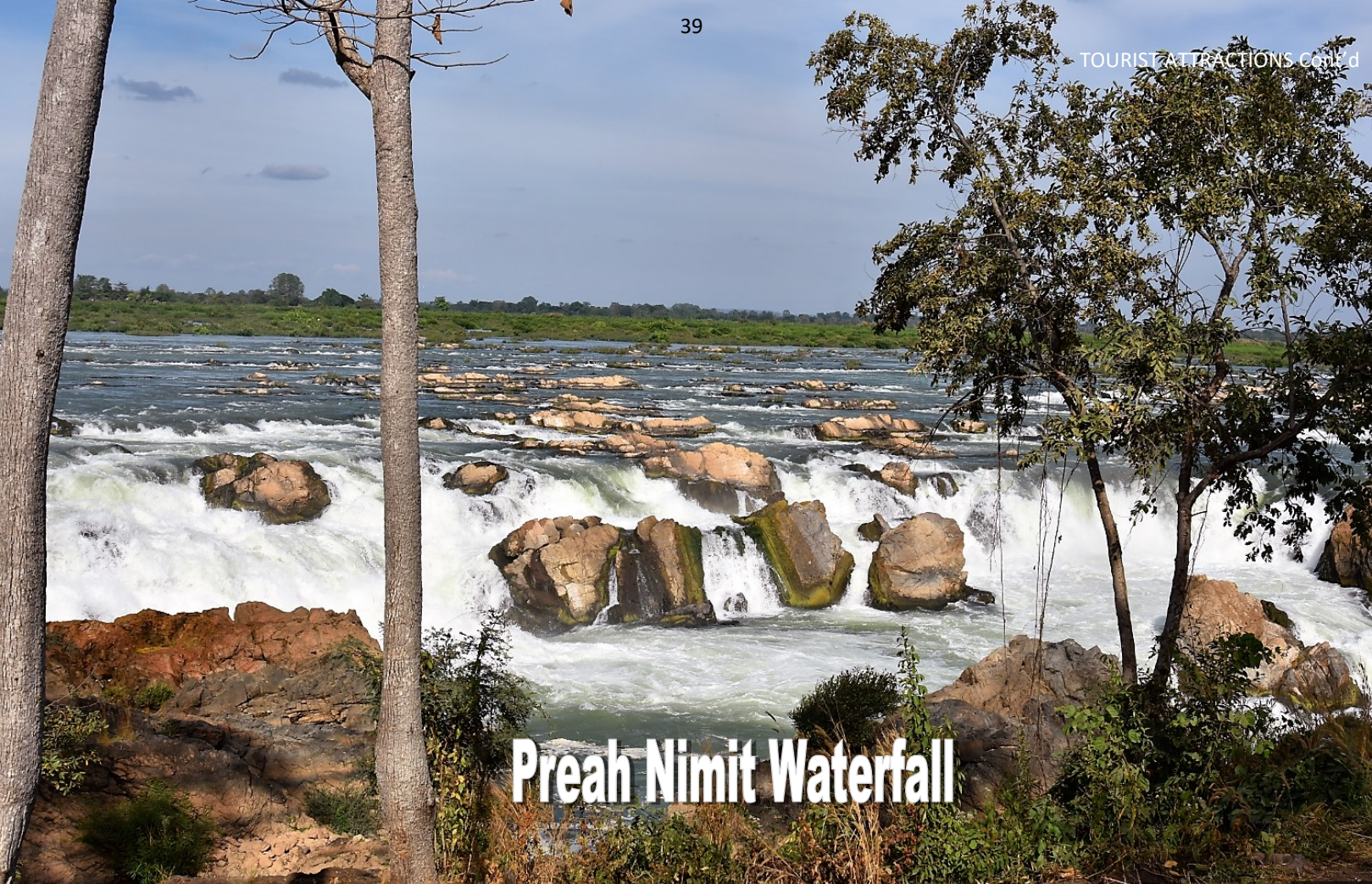
Bou Sra Waterfall



Photo by Ben Bao

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Preah Nimit Waterfall

The Mekong River runs across Lao and down to Cambodia. At one point, it forms a triangle region where Cambodia's provinces of Preah Vihear and Stung Treng meet at the border of Cambodia and Lao, creating a spectacular waterfall that nature can offer. For many years, the place is an eco-tourist center that local Cambodians greatly benefit from. Its natural beauty attracts many local and foreign visitors. Unfortunately, it is presently underdeveloped. With attention from the government and proper planning, the place could become a major tourist center that could spur economic growth of the region.

The Preah Nimit waterfall is located in the village of Kampong Samey, Kampong Sralav II commune, Chheb district, Preah Vihear province. It is about 140 km northwest of the provincial town of Preah Vihear by road, mostly paved. It can also be reached from the provincial town of Stung Treng, via a paved highway crossing the Mekong River with a newly built bridge. In either location a trip is originated from, the waterfall is off from the main road by a dirt but drivable road. In the rainy season, the water fills up to the bank and people bathe there with fun. During the dry season, the water recedes and many falls emerge. At any time of the

year, it is very dangerous to bathe or swim there because of the strong currents. Nevertheless, the site is breathtaking and best serves as photography landscape subjects.

According Mr Hang Savyouth, a Radio Free Asia reporter, a forest conservatory association of Kampong Samey has kept the place intact from any deforestation. In the past couple of years, their work has become insignificant as many Chinese investors have built hotels, restaurants, and even casinos in a town nearby. Unfortunately the conservatory association has not fairly benefited from these investments.



Photo by Ben Bao 2017



Preah Vihear



Srah Srang near Siem Reap



bas-relief at the wall of Angkor Wat



Prasat Thorminon and Chao Say Teveda



Siem Reap



Neak Leung Bridge, Prey Veng



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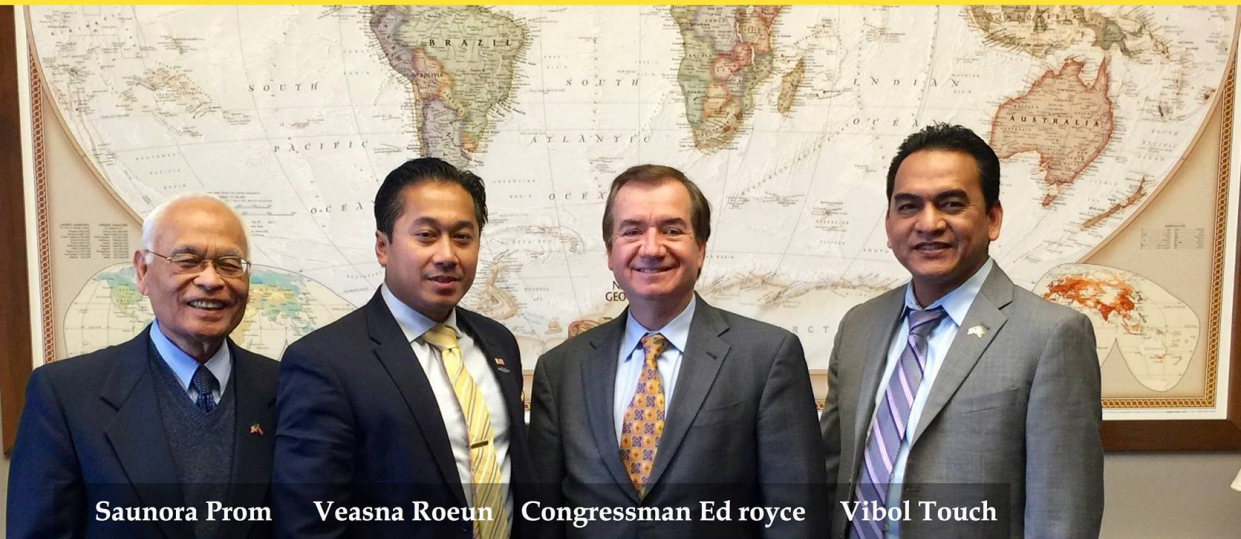
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