


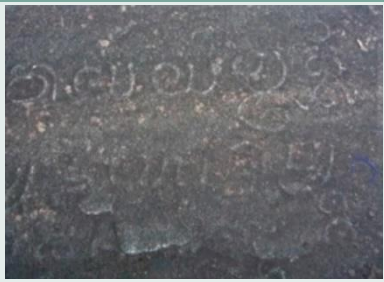
Vihear Phnom Bei

វិហារភ្នំបី

(Three-Mountains Monastery)

Kulen Area



Geography	<p>Southernmost part of the Phnom Tbeng mountain range, arching from Preah Vihear (Northeast of Cambodia) to form the foothills of Kulen Mountain.</p> <p>Nowadays, belongs in Svay Leu District, Siem Reap Province. The range delimits Siem Reap and Preah Vihear provinces.</p>
Archeology	<p>Part of a chain of spiritual retreats-monasteries (Vihear, in Khmer), often dedicated to the god Shiva. Mountains were sacred places.</p>
Remains & Buildings	<p>On the top of the highest hill, two inscriptions on sandstone boulders, believed to date back from Angkorean times and to be a dedication to Shiva. From what it is decipherable, it is supposed that the place was initially called "En Kukhea" (ឥន្ទកុខា), and then "Thmor Bei Dom" (ថ្មតំប៉ី), meaning "Three Stones".</p> <p>1st inscription: ten sentences in Old Khmer on a stone called "Thmor Kom Rerk" (ថ្មតំប៉ីត), size 1m12.</p> <p>2nd inscription: back of a large stone called "Thmor Kom Pi" (ថ្មតំប៉ីបី), size 1m14.</p> <p>The pagoda itself has been in existence for at least three generations (90 years). The frescoes depict several scenes from the Jataka, tales and stories related to the Buddha's former lives.</p>
Modern Times	<p>Also called Wat Phnom Bei (Three-Mountains Pagoda), the monastery is serviced by a small community of monks and nuns.</p> <p>Villagers from the area gather for prayer services for rain during drought and dry spells.</p> <p>Locals say that one of the Buddha's statues (2nd row, center) had two emerald gemstones in the eye sockets, robbed at some point in the 1960s.</p> <p>An ancient ceremonial drum (Skar Chey, ស្ការធីត) is kept on the eastern side of the esplanade.</p> <p>A list of donors is etched on a masonry panel at the entrance of the stairway. On the western wall of the gallery, donors' names are painted inside the frescoes, with the sum they contributed to the wall paintings.</p>
	 

angkor.database@templation.asia

www.templation.asia

Sources: ADB, khemeravidya.com. **Photos:** Hem Sophoan / Sites Cards 01

