Thesis for the Award of
Doctor of Philosophy in Arts

Department of Archaeology, University of Sydney

Cultural Connections amidst Heritage Conundrums:

A study of local Khmer values overshadowed by tangible archaeological remains in the Angkor World Heritage Site

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2011

ABSTRACT

All communities form attachments, both physical and metaphysical, and these define a community's cultural identity. The social phenomenon that connects people and places is as significant as the material heritage; at times more significant. The dominant disourse of heritage has long focused on the preservation and conservation of material remains, and as a consequence it has drawn attention away from the social and cultural contexts which are important. Originating from a set of Western elitist ideas, the ideas of *patrimoine* and *historic monument* directed the heritage conservation of the early French in Angkor. Since the rediscovery of the Angkor temples in 1862, early French research was concentrated solely on Angkor's monumental heritage. A systematic process of documentation, restoration and conservation was begun with the establishment of *Conservation d'Angkor* in Siem Reap in 1908. The interventions centred on the monuments paid very little attention to the social relevance to the small communities that lived in the region at the time. The local Khmer associations with Angkor Wat and some of the ruined temples through Animism and Buddhism went unnoticed and as a result there is a limited understanding of social values that may have previously existed. The political instability of the 1970s further contributed to this lacuna of knowledge. Authorised Heritage Discourse (after Smith 2006) is legitimised internationally through a series of recommendations, charters, conventions and documents; including the 1972 World Heritage Convention. The imposition of these hegemonic constructs of heritage exclude other notions of heritage, and the over-arching *outstanding universal value* negates the local social values, overshadows local communities and raises concerns about fundamental cultural rights. Angkor World Heritage Site (AWHS) was studied using case study methodology. Five study villages were chosen due to their proximity to significant heritage features, and sixty-three villagers were interviewed using semi-structured in-depth interview methods, along with thirteen experts. The findings from the interviews clearly establish that the local Khmers are *connected* to the Angkorian landscape, amidst the heritage conundrums. The study has helped reveal the complexity that exists at Angkor, and the tenuousness of cultural connections that link the local villagers with the Angkorian temples and archaeological remains. These delicate connections, currently threatened by heritage management restrictions, development and tourism need to be nurtured and strengthened. They are important in the assertion of the local community's cultural identity and an understanding of these connections will help facilitate a better management of the AWHS.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Appendix (CD attached)

GLOSSARY

Achar	one who officiates rituals, an intermediary between secular and spiritual world
Angkor	from Sanskrit, meaning city (*nagara*)
Arak	protector spirit—can be sometimes malicious
Baisei	ritual offering made with banana trunk and other ritual objects
Baray	water reservoir
Beng	large water body
Bhukman	land suitable for a dwelling
Boran	ancient
Devaraja	god-king
Jhamkaar	rice cultivation by 'slash and burn'
Khassan	moat
Khmoch	ghost
Khum	commune
Kouk	dry land
Kru	from Sanskrit *guru* meaning teacher
Lok ta	venerable term to address monks
Memot	spirit medium
Neak-ta	guardian spirit
Phnom	hill
Phum	from Sanskrit *Bhumi*, meaning village
Pralay	water channel
Prasat	from Sanskrit, refers to mainly Angkorian temple
Preah	sacred
Prey/prei	forest
Psar	market
Rup	from Sanskrit, means form
Sasana	religion
Sima	sacred boundary to demarcate ritual spaces
Sngout	dry
Srae	rice field
Sra/srah	artificial pond
Srok	district, country
Ta	grandfather, elderly man
Thnal	road/ embankment
Thngai Sel	holy day/ auspicious day
Trapeang	pond
Trot	Exorcism, dance
Undong	well (for water)
Wat	temple, monastery
Yeak	Demon
Yeay	Grandmother, Elderly woman

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACO	Angkor Conservation Office
AHD	Authorised Heritage Discourse
AHM	Archaeological Heritage Management
AMP	Angkor Management Plan
APNRMLP	Angkor Participatory Natural Resource Management and Livelihoods Programme
APSARA	Authority for the Protection and Management of Angkor and the Region of Siem Reap
AWHS	Angkor World Heritage Site
CHM	Cultural Heritage Management
CLM	Cultural Landscape Mapping
CRM	Cultural Resource Management
DACD	Department of Agriculture and Community Development
DDD	Department of Demography and Development
DLPHM	Department of Land Planning and Habitat Management
DMA	Department of Monuments and Archaeology
DOC	Department of Order and Cooperation
DW	Department of Water
DWF	Department of Water and Forests
EFEO	École Française d'Extrême-Orient
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GML	Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd
HMF	Heritage Management Framework
ICC	International Coordinating Committee
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICHC	Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
ICOM	International Council of Museums
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
WCCD	World Commission on Culture and Development
WHC	World Heritage Convention
WMF	World Monuments Fund
ZEMP	Zoning and Environmental Management Plan

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION—CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

The architectural elegance and mysteries of Angkor Wat and surrounding monuments captivated the imagination of the early European explorers from the time of their initial re-discovery in 1862. The monuments were equally an enigma for the local Khmer people, although they expressed it differently, as noted by Mouhot when he visited Angkor during 1858–1860 (Pym 1966: 83):

> It is the work of *Pra-Eun*, the King of the angels. It is the work of *yeak*. It was built by the leprous king. Or, it made itself.

Henri Mouhot's 'discovery' or rather 'rediscovery'[1] of Angkor in 1862 (Pym 1968: 186–191), led to the exploration, inventorying and documentation of the monuments (Dagens 1995). Their beauty fascinated the early explorers and they prescribed the ways in which Angkor was to be seen and experienced (Norindr 2006: 56). Following the removal of invasive vegetation and the creation of pathways and roads, some attempts at temple restoration began. Tourists began arriving in Angkor as early as 1907 (BEFEO 1907: 419), and the numbers steadily increased throughout the French occupation (1864–1953) up to the period of Cambodian independence[2]. The years of turmoil from the 1970s to the 1990s caused a serious setback to tourism, but the situation has improved since the reinstatement of peace in the early 1990s.

Angkor Wat and the monuments have proved to be a panacea for Cambodia as it emerged from decades of cold war, genocide and international exclusion. The temples, once part of the mighty Khmer empire and an expression of Khmer identity, were regarded as symbols of hope to improve the impoverished nation's economy. The global visibility of the monuments greatly increased after its adoption as World Heritage in 1992. Tourist numbers recorded as 20,000 in 1989 (Wager 1995a: 517) started rising steeply. The pro-tourism measures undertaken by the government encouraged the growth of tourism and 2,125,465 visitors arrived in 2008 (RGC 2008b). Along with the rise in tourist numbers, the local Khmer population within the Angkor World Heritage Site (AWHS) has continued to grow, largely due to the migration of people in the post-conflict society seeking employment. The local population, which is overshadowed by growing numbers of tourists, continues to maintain

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[1] Pym (1968: 186 – 191) refers to the rediscovery of Angkor, as it had never been forgotten and had always been recorded in the Cambodian royal chronicles between the mid 15th – 19th centuries, largely in the form of legends. Also see Coe (2003: 12) and Dagens (1995: 13 – 42)

[2] (Chandler 2008: 208) On 13 March 1945, towards the end of World War II, King Sihanouk declared Cambodia independent with the support of Japan—the independence was relative, because the Japanese forces remained. After the Japanese surrender, the French returned, signed a *modus vivendi* with Cambodia and continued to control finance, defence and foreign affairs. In October 1953, the French handed Cambodia over to its King.

cultural connections with the land and retains a tenuous connectivity with some of the significant Angkorian temples. Although tourism benefits the nation's economy, rural communities in Siem Reap continue to struggle for existence (Ballard 2005: 82)[3], their needs eclipsed by the World Heritage site and its associated heritage management policies.

> Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations (UNESCO 2006)

> 'Heritage' is the collective environment, traditions and assets that we inherit from the past and preserve for the use and inspiration of future generations. Heritage is linked with culture, which frames our understanding of the past and influences the decisions we make about what should be preserved. What is regarded as heritage can vary between different people and groups from different cultural backgrounds (DECCW 2010: chap 1.6)

'Our legacy from the past'; 'traditions and assets we inherit from the past': these definitions of heritage attributed by institutions such as UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) and DECCW (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water), clearly highlight the past connections on one hand, and the future generations on the other. The early definitions of heritage have now broadened from inheritance to include identity; from an item of possession to a heritage industry, and from instilling pride in some while at the same time causing conflict to others. Heritage is created, owned, commodified, exploited and also re-created (see for instance Edson 2004; Graham et al. 2000; Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). Heritage is invariably about people, their belongings and memories; from individual to collective, local to global, heritage includes both the physical and the metaphysical. The manifestations of heritage are undeniably a consequence of 'human' interactions.

These 'human' connections that are critical to the identification and understanding of cultural heritage, nevertheless, often change in relevance during the management of heritage places. Management strategies for heritage are drawn up by 'experts' who decide what is heritage and what needs to be valued, and accordingly, these experts direct preservation and conservation efforts. The values accepted by experts in many instances supersede or conflict with those values, assigned to heritage places by people and communities. Local communities continuously create, re-create and re-negotiate their associations and values, and often in the process create new values (Smith 2006). While on the one hand, heritage can cause dissonance between experts and communities due to conflicting values (Smith 1997; Smith and Waterton 2009b; Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996), on the other, fundamentally Eurocentric or Western elitist ideologies cause problems in the conceptualisation and management of heritage in non-Western contexts (Byrne 1991; Larsen et al. 1995). In

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[3] According to a CDRI (Cambodia Development Research Institute) report of 2005, despite receiving the second largest disbursement of donor funding in the country, the Siem Reap province was the second poorest province with a poverty index of 51.8.

addition, the universalisation of heritage or World Heritage causes significant dissonance which affects communities globally (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). Some causes of these problems relate to the non-inclusion of community values; in other words the sole focus on monumentally tangible heritage, neglecting local communities and their social values, causes conflicts in the management of heritage. Thus, the social values attributed by local communities to tangible heritage are important, although they impose considerable challenges, as discussed in Chapter 2.

This introductory chapter provides a background to the present research. The research questions, along with a brief background to the project and the researcher's background, are followed by the geographical, historical and political contexts of Angkor. An outline of the thesis chapters is provided at the end.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study investigates local community connections to tangible heritage, in the context of AWHS. In other words, using AWHS as a case study, and through semi-structured in-depth interviews, this study explores the ways in which the local Khmer community living around the monuments and archaeological remains of AWHS connect to or relate to the heritage of 'outstanding universal value' that surrounds them in the landscape.

The primary research questions guiding this research are:

> What are the cultural connections of a community? Why are the intangible links with the tangible heritage important?

> How can cultural connections, identified in the local Khmer context of the Angkor World Heritage Site, inform World Heritage conservation and management?

In order to understand the ways in which local communities interact with the landscape, it was critical to study their interactions at a micro level. Five study villages were therefore chosen, based on their proximity to significant Angkorian heritage features in the landscape. Sixty-three semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted amongst the villagers. The fieldwork conducted in Cambodia was guided by the following questions which aimed to answer the broader research questions stated above.

> In Angkor, do local Khmers have a cultural connection with the tangible heritage?
> If so, how are these connections manifested, and what are the social values attributed to the tangible heritage?

> What is the community understanding of heritage regulations? How do they deal with the heritage regulations impacting on their daily lives?

These questions helped elicit the subtle nuances of Khmer cultural connections. In addition to the villager interviews, thirteen expert interviews were conducted amongst the APSARA

(Authority for the Protection and Management of Angkor and the Region of Siem Reap) staff, Provincial government officials and two experts in Siem Reap. The expert interviews helped validate some of the villagers' responses and vice versa. Chapter 4 gives an account of the research methodology and field methods used and Chapter 5 gives a detailed account of the study villages, the study sample. Chapters 6, 7 and 8 present the findings.

When I first arrived in Angkor in 2006, I visited all the significant temples. Wandering around the magnificent architectural remains, the temples packed with tourists appeared unused with regards to the religious or ritual purposes for which they were intended—leading me to wonder how the local people related to these temples and what the temples meant to them. This appeared to be in direct contrast to the Buddhist Wat in the region, which were religiously venerated. A visit to any of the local Wat made the difference instantly apparent with local people in active attendance. While my first reaction to this contrast was that of a 'disconnection' between the locals and the Angkorian temples, on closer scrutiny I realised that there exist some tenuous connections, as the findings presented in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 indicate.

BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROJECT

This research, was supported by an Australian Postgraduate Award—Industry (APAI) scholarship, funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant titled, 'Living with Heritage: Integrating time, place and culture for World Heritage Conservation' (LWH). The project had a number of industry partners including APSARA, UNESCO, the Australian Federal Department of Environment and Heritage (now the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities—DSEWPC), EFEO (École Française d'Extrême-Orient), GML (Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd a Sydney-based Heritage Consultancy) and five other public and private sector organisations[4].

The aim of the 'Living with Heritage' project was to use spatial analysis and mapping approaches, along with other sources of data and information to identify:

- o   the key cultural and natural heritage values of greater Angkor;
- o   the issues and threats which will affect their conservation
- o   methods for monitoring cultural and natural landscape change and
- o   to develop the tools, including specific databases required to assist with managing the World Heritage Site, encouraging good governance, and ensuring effective ongoing conservation of the heritage values

(ARC grant application document)

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[4] These are the Horizon Geoscience Consulting P/L (HGC), Leica Geosystems, Finnish Environmental Institute (FEI), Friends of Khmer Culture and ESRI Australia.

The final report compiled at the end of the five-year research listed the various research contributions that were made as part of the LWH project (LWH 2009). These are:

o   Visitor Usage Modelling: Landscape approach—a prototype model designed to simulate patterns of visitor use in the Angkor Park study area was developed (Dr Eleanor Bruce, Dr Robert Itami).
o   Angkor Spatial Information Management System—an online catalogue of GIS datasets held by the University of Sydney for research undertaken at Angkor (Kevin Davies)
o   Archaeological Site Register—compilation of various inventories of Angkor. It provides the ability to search the various inventories, cross-reference archaeological sites and is a flexible tool to add and update site records. This register was developed to support the Angkor Archaeological Base Map based on the work of Evans (2007) and Pottier (1999) (Kevin Davies, Dr Damian Evans).
o   Cultural Landscape Mapping (CLM)—Historical maps and remote sensing data sources were used at Angkor to develop a cartographic representation of the landscape and its history. Cultural landscape mapping was undertaken at two scales. The first was a detailed analysis of the villages Sras Srang North and Rohal, and the second was a broader study that covered the entire commune of Nokor Thom. The results have been compiled as a Cultural Landscape Village Atlas (Dr Elizabeth Moylan).
o   Landscape Change Analysis—trialed the Multivariate Alteration Detection method to analyse landscape change at Angkor including field vegetation surveys and the development of a landscape change model (Dr Eleanor Bruce, Dr Richard Murphy).
o   Urban Growth Modelling of Siem Reap—to apply the SLEUTH urban growth model to the town of Siem Reap and predict future trends in urbanization. The projects aims to identify implications of this prediction on the AWHS and assess the applicability of the SLEUTH model to the site of Siem Reap (Dr Eleanor Bruce, Kevin Davies, Sally Pearce)
o   The role of scale in Heritage Management—this research investigated the relationship between heritage sites and their surrounding areas, by exploring the implications of an expanding spatial definition of heritage (Rowena Butland)

In addition, the industry partners have contributed to the project through their work on the Intangible cultural database (APSARA) and the Heritage Values and Issues summary (Sharon Sullivan, Richard Mackay), some aspects of which are discussed in Chapter 4. The present study and research by two other PhD students has also been funded as part of the LWH project. The two other PhD research topics are

o   'Monumental Challenges: World Heritage Landscape Regulation at Angkor Archaeological Park, Cambodia'. This research explores the impact of a World Heritage designation on the land-use rights of residents living in the shadow of Angkor's Roluos Group of monuments (Gillespie—submitted and accepted, 2010).
o   'Combining Remote Sensing Change Detection and Qualitative Data to Examine Landscape Change in the Context of World Heritage'. This research adopts a combination of remote-sensing based change detection, field botanical surveys and interviews with local communities and key informants to examine the influence of World Heritage on the subsistence use of forest resources (Nathan—expected submission, early 2011).

The present study aims to identify the social connections of the local community with the tangible heritage in the AWHS. These, referred to as 'cultural connections' in this study, will help in understanding an aspect of cultural heritage values that has not previously been considered for heritage management. The findings of this study will contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the AWHS and the study therefore fits within the broader objectives of the LWH project.

BACKGROUND TO RESEARCHER

I was drawn to study these cultural connections partly as a result of my professional background. Trained as a heritage conservation architect, the projects I was previously involved with in India, made me familiar with the ethics and practice of conservation, preservation and restoration of the built fabric. The ordinary people I came into contact with during these projects provided divergent views of heritage and conservation, making me at times question the basics of my training. The Western training in architectural conservation that I had did not include the living cultural practices in the non-West. In India, it is unacceptable to freeze or preserve 'living religious places', in particular where continuities in traditions demanded regular use and worship—despite the fact that this sometimes places stress on the built heritage. These contradictions often made me question the ethics of preservation and my training, which encouraged the compromise of local values, although I did not have the opportunity to consolidate these ideas.

This PhD research has greatly contributed to my personal journey in understanding local community contexts and their social values. My views regarding the conservation of built heritage, I believe, have now changed. The local contexts of communities and their values need to be understood and integrated as far as possible into the conservation of heritage and its management. If this is not done, I think we will be able to preserve only the skeletal vestiges of the past *sans* their social and cultural contexts.

A number of sources have been used in this study. They include a range of academic literature, journal articles and grey literature (government documents and institutional reports). The primary data informing the findings in this study are the transcribed semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted during 2006–2007 and 2008. University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee approval (ref. no. 08-2006/9417) was obtained for the duration of this project and all its conditions have been adopted. Cambodia's geographical location, history and political background are outlined in the sections below.

GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT: LOCATION

Cambodia, located in South East Asia, is almost completely land-locked; bordered to the west and north by Thailand, north-east by Laos, and east and south-east by Vietnam. A small coastline fronts the Gulf of Thailand to the southwest. Located in the tropics, the climate is controlled by seasonal monsoons (Zephir 1998). Figure 1.1 gives the location of Cambodia, and Figure 1.2 gives the location of AWHS.

Figure 1.1 Location of Cambodia (inset: Map of Southeast Asia showing Cambodia and its neighbouring countries)

Figure 1.2 Location of Angkor World Heritage Site (note: red line represents the World Heritage site boundary and the green line indicates the buffer zone around the World Heritage site)—APSARA zones overlaid on 2004 Spot5 imagery

AWHS is located to the north of Tonle Sap (Great Lake) in Siem Reap province and extends to the Angkor and Banteay Srei groups in the north and to the Roluos group in the east. The entire AWHS is situated within the province of Siem Reap, located in the north-west of the country. Figure 1.2 illustrates the boundary of AWHS. The red line indicates the World Heritage boundary, and the green line represents the buffer zone around the World Heritage Site.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The first king of the Angkorian era, King Jayavarman II arrived in the region around 802 AD, established a base somewhere to the east of Kompong Cham and gradually shifted to the area now referred to as Roluos. The historical proclamation of *Devaraja* or *Chakravarthin*, the universal monarch, atop Mahendra Parvata (Phnom Kulen) took place in 802 AD, marking the beginning of the Angkorian era (Coe 2003: 97–99; Dagens 1995: 170–171). The years that followed saw a series of capitals established in the region, the first of which was Hariharalaya (Roluos). Most of the works in Roluos are credited to King Indravarman I (877–889 AD) (Zephir 1998: 44–45). The capitals shifted under the different kings, who occupied the landscape with temples, *baray*[5] (reservoirs), ponds, roads and canals. The second capital was Yashodharapura (establishing Angkor) built around the mountain temple of Phnom Bakheng (Zephir 1998: 46), under the leadership of Yasovarman I (889–910 AD). The capital was briefly shifted to Koh Ker[6] by Jayavarman IV (921–941 AD). Harshavarman II succeeded his father, but the reign was of short duration, and Rajendravarman II (944–968 AD) acceded to the throne. According to some inscriptions, he had to fight his way to the throne (Briggs 1951a: 122–123), and he returned the capital to Yashodharapura (Briggs 1951a: 124). Following a succession of rulers, Suryavarman II (1113–1150 AD) acceded to the throne. The largest and most significant temples of the Khmer Empire, Angkor Wat, were begun by Suryavarman II at the start of his reign and not completed until after his death in approximately 1150 AD (Chandler 2008: 58; Coe 2003: 116).

Towards the end of the twelfth century, it was Jayavarman VII (relatively 1181–1218 AD), who brought the empire together once again after the anarchic period during 1177–1181 AD (Briggs 1951a: 207). He established his capital at Angkor Thom, which was described by

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[5] See glossary for a list of Khmer and Sanskrit terms used in this document

[6] (Briggs1999: 116) Briggs suggests that, Jayavarman IV abandoned or was driven out of Yasodharapura, and he established a capital at Koh Ker, while Yasodharapura was probably governed by Harshavarman I and Isanavarman II, who were the earlier King Yasovarman's sons.

Chou Ta-Kuan a century later (Coe 2003). Jayavarman VII constructed a number of temples[7]; Jayatataka (*baray*) and some 102 hospitals for the welfare of his people throughout the empire (Coe 2003: 122–128). The empire now covered a large part of mainland South East Asia; it extended north across the Khorat plateau to the area around Vientiane, to central Vietnam in the east and north-east, across Thailand to the Burmese border to the west and to the Malay Peninsula in the south (Briggs 1951a; Coe 2003: 128; Groslier 1998a). Although there are many theories on the demise of the Angkorian empire, the Khmer Empire ceased to exist sometime early in the fifteenth century and the capital shifted from Angkor (Coe 2003: 196).

The temples and the significant archaeological remains have been extensively researched and continue to be studied in-depth, adding to the wide knowledge-base in the fields of epigraphy, history, architecture, archaeology and iconography (e.g. Albanese 2002; Aymonier 1900-1904; Coe 2003; Coedès 1966; Dagens 1995; Dumarçay 1998; Dumarçay and Royère 2001b; Freeman and Jacques 1999; Giteau 1976; Groslier 1998b; Jacques and Freeman 1997; Lunet de Lajonquière 1902–1911; Mannikka 1997; Parmentier 1927, 1939; Roveda 1998; Vickery 1998). In other words, the physical remains of Angkor have been well-researched and well-established. At the time of the French 'rediscovery' of Angkor, the temples emerging from the forests were not maintained and appeared not to be in use, as a result of which the local communities' use of the temples has not been documented. Nevertheless, some scholarship has focused on the broader aspects of Khmer religion, associated rituals and traditions, including popular religion (Ang 1986, 1995, 2000a, 2004, 2007; Ang et al. 2007; Forest 1992; Leclère 1899, 1916; Marston and Guthrie 2004; Porée-Maspero 1962; Porée-Maspero et al. 1949a; 1949b; Porée and Maspero 1952; Thompson 2005). Whilst this growing literature has helped in understanding local customs and cultural values, it has not drawn out the active cultural connections with the heritage places. This research attempts to fill this gap by providing an understanding of the social connections with the tangible heritage of Angkor. The next section provides a brief summary of the research on the Angkor monuments, highlighting the predominant focus on the 'tangible' features.

RESEARCH AT ANGKOR: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Angkor, well known in Asia since the documented evidence of Chou Ta-Kuan's visit in the thirteenth century (Ta-Kuan 1993), was deemed to have been discovered by Henri Mouhot[8],

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[7] (Briggs 1951: 212 – 235) Ta Prohm, Banteay Kdei of Angkor, Ta Prohm of Bati, Preah Khan, Jayatataka, Neak Pean of Angkor, Walls and gates of Angkor Thom, Gate towers of Angkor Thom, Walls and Face Towers of Ta Prohm and Banteay Kdei, Preah Khan of Kampong Svay, Bayon, Banteay Chmar,

[8] Pym (1968) has provided a comprehensive summary of early European accounts, which includes accounts of a Portuguese missionary who visited Cambodia in 1556 along with Spanish and Dutch accounts of seventeenth century Angkor and a Japanese pilgrim drawing of the Angkor Wat in early seventeenth century. Chou Ta-Kuan, provided one of the earliest accounts of the Angkor Empire, but his accounts, translated into French in 1819, did

who arrived in Bangkok in 1858 to conduct a botanical expedition in Thailand. The second and longest of his journeys led him to Angkor (Dec 1858–April 1860). His accounts published posthumously as a French journal series and as an English book in 1864, did not make any claims to a 'discovery'. The foreword by Mouhot's brother however, referred to the discovery of the temples and this view persisted until it became an accepted fact that Angkor was indeed 'discovered' by Mouhot (Dagens 1995: 42). The mystery created by 'discovery', associated with European tales of a lost city, played an influential role in how Angkor was portrayed to the West and influenced the early preservation strategies that created an open-air museum of monuments, removed from their social context. These early influences have continued to play an influential role in the management and interpretation of AWHS to date (Winter 2007: 55).

Following the establishment of the French Protectorate in Cambodia in 1864, various missions were commissioned to explore the region. The most significant of these was the Mekong Exploration Commission, set up in 1866 and led by Doudart de Lagrée to explore access into China via the Mekong River (Dagens 1995: 48–49). Other expeditions and explorations were oriented towards a Western reconstruction of Cambodia's history (Pottier 2000a: 254). EFEO, set up in 1900 in Hanoi, was responsible for systematic archaeological and philological research in the region. Directed by Finot, a Sanskrit epigraphist, EFEO began a methodical documentation of the monuments and the inscriptions. A large volume of research was generated. The documentation of the temples in Siam and Cambodia by Parmentier, Aymonier[9] and Lunet de Lajonquière[10], the detailed drawings of the temples by Lucien Fournereau and the artist's impressions by Louis Delaporte generated sufficient interest in France in the popular media to lead to further scientific research (Pym 1968: 196). The studies motivated EFEO to set up a permanent office, the Conservation d'Angkor, in Siem Reap in 1908, to provide a platform to develop long-term strategies for research and the preservation of Angkor's temples (Pottier 2000a: 255). The map produced by Henri Mouhot, published in 1966, and the map prepared by Doudart De Lagreé and Francis Garnier are shown above.

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not attract much attention. Charles-Émile Bouillevaux's accounts, published in 1858, also failed to reach a wide audience (Dagens 1995; Pym 1968)

[9] Etienne Aymonier, an epigrapher started the task of inventorying temples

[10] Lunet de Lajonquière numbered all the monuments totalling around 910

Figure 1.3 1860 Map of Angkor Thom and Angkor Wat drawn by Henri Mouhot (published in 1966) (Dagens 1995: 38)

Figure 1.4 1866 map of Angkor and its surrounds, by Doudart De Lagreé and Francis Garnier © EFEO Archives

Figure 1.5 Lajonquière's survey in 1899–1901, 1903–1905, 1907–1909 © EFEO Archives

Figure 1.6 Detailed inset of Angkor monuments from Lajonquière's survey © EFEO Archives

Amongst the early studies of Angkor, the work of Lajonquière was highly significant as it established the high density of monuments and led to the French formalising long-term research in the region. Lajonquière was assigned to survey and inventory the entire extent of

the former Khmer Kingdom. He identified more than 900 structures including temples and other structures of significance (Lunet de Lajonquière 1902–1911).

The extensive inventorying did not shift the prime focus of the research, which remained centred on the central monuments around Angkor Wat for many years. Angkor's archaeological remains have been controlled since the early 1900s by formal legislation (Pym 1968: 193), and the term *Parc d'Angkor* was used to refer to the core monument area. The official declaration of the Park, however, occurred only in 1925 (Dagens 1995: 99) and is discussed in Chapter 3. The maps created over time by the various researchers at EFEO were focused on the central monuments around Angkor Wat and included some infrastructural aspects of the archaeological landscape. It took nearly a century for researchers to move beyond the Park and the monuments. B.P Groslier, son of George Groslier, who arrived in 1953, was the first archaeologist to take charge of *Conservation d'Angkor* in 1960. He introduced 'new archaeology' in the research of EFEO. Research became multi-disciplinary and extended to civilian aspects of the Angkorian civilisation (Dagens 1995: 118; Pottier 2000a: 259). Groslier, for the first time, attempted to provide a systematic overview of the hydrological aspects of the Angkor Park. He published a series of maps as part of his theory, *cité hydraulique*, highlighting many aspects previously not considered, and encouraged critical thinking regarding Angkor's demise (Groslier 1979). He incorporated the civilian or vernacular features in the landscape and attempted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the landscape (Pottier 2000a: 259). With the outbreak of war in the late 1960s, documentation, research and training of Khmers to take charge of activities concerning cultural heritage were suspended (Dagens 1995: 116). When the Khmer Rouge gained control over the Angkor Park, conservation slowed down and came to a complete halt in 1972 (Dagens 1995: 126–127).

Further research was possible after the restoration of peace in the early 1990s. EFEO re-opened in 1992 and contributed greatly to the World Heritage nomination process of Angkor (Pottier 2000a: 257). The most significant contribution to the understanding of Angkor and the region has been the work of Pottier, who has systematically surveyed and inventoried the entire Archaeological Park and the region to its south over a period of eight years. His research has brought to light the network and density of archaeological heritage, including water bodies, canals, embankments and archaeological mounds, and has helped to establish the vastness of the Angkor cultural region (Pottier 1999a). Figure 1.7 gives the extent of Pottier's survey, limited by the presence of extant landmines at the time. He had also documented the rice fields across a large region south of the Angkor Park. His research, brought to light the complex landscape and raised a number of questions with regards to the

Angkorian landscape, enabling the possibility of evaluating Groslier's theory on the 'Hydraulic city' (Pottier 2000b, 2006a).
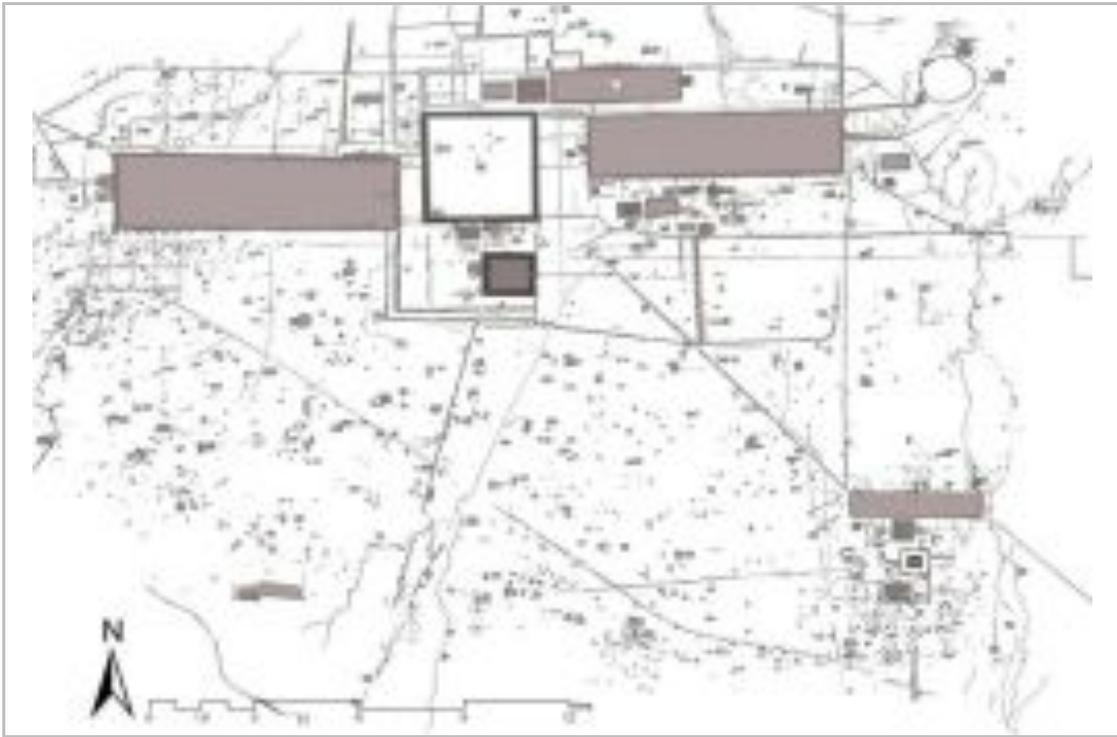
Figure 1.7 Mapping of archaeological features (Pottier 1999a)

The 1999 map of Pottier was supplemented by the work of Evans, where an analysis of the AIRSAR (RADAR) imagery resulted in a much more detailed understanding of Angkor and the larger archaeological region (Evans et al. 2007). AWHS, with its high density of monuments, was now understood to be a much larger cultural region, larger than the inscribed World Heritage site. Figure 1.8 is a representation of archaeological features[11] using digital mapping techniques (Evans 2002; Pottier 1999a). This, in combination with other scientific investigations may contribute to a better understanding of the landscape (e.g. Fletcher et al. 2003; Hua et al. 2007; Penny et al. 2005).

The map of Greater Angkor remarkably conveys the density of archaeological features; however, it conveys only the archaeological values. The World Heritage nomination of Angkor and the listing based solely on the tangible heritage was a result of the ZEMP (Zoning and Environmental Management Plan), discussed in Chapter 3. For the purposes of an integrated management of heritage, contemporary mapping of all the other values is essential. The archaeological map above indirectly directs the focus on tangible archaeological values alone and as a result, it is not suited for purposes of heritage management on its own; it is

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[11] The purpose of the map is to convey the archaeology of Angkor and it reveals the high density of archaeological features. The map does not indicate the settlements in the middle of the *baray* (East Baray and Lolei Baray) which are shown as filled with water.

essential to add contemporary land-use information in order to use this map effectively. The focus on archaeological values, without the inclusion of other values will perpetuate the present imbalance in the site management, and will exclude the local context and the cultural connections of the local population.

Figure 1.8 Map of Greater Angkor, mapping by Pottier (1999a) and Evans (2002)

POLITICAL CONTEXT

> For many years now Cambodia has been a battle zone for local as well as superpower interests. The consequences of these ongoing rivalries have had a devastating effect on the Khmer people, their ancient civilisation and culture (Szajkowski in Vickery 1986: v).

Cambodia has been the centre of political struggle for a very long time. The two powerful neighbours, Thailand and Vietnam, have long vied for control of Cambodia leading to a number of invasions from either side in the early nineteenth century (Chandler 1979: 298). Eventually, Cambodia sought help from the French and the protectorate was established in

1863. The French rule, however, came with a heavy price: Cambodia recorded the highest per-capita tax in Indo-China (Chandler 1979: 299; Kiernan 2007: vii). Cambodia has been governed by eight different powers since World War II. On 13 March 1945, King Sihanouk declared Cambodia independent with the support of Japan (Chandler 2008: 208). The independence, however, was relative because the Japanese forces remained. After the defeat of Japan, the French returned, signed a *modus vivendi* with Cambodia and reasserted control over finance, defence and foreign affairs; this instigated armed resistance from independence forces in both Cambodia (Khmer Issarak) and Vietnam (Viet Minh). The French defeat[12] was followed by the grant of Cambodia independence under King Norodom Sihanouk in October 1953 (Chandler 2008: 227), who soon adopted a foreign policy of 'cold war neutrality' (Chandler 2008: 240), which created political problems later. Sihanouk's political movement Sangkhum Reastr' Niyum[13] won him an overwhelming victory in 1951 (Chandler 1996c: 241).

As mentioned, Sihanouk's foreign policy faced growing resentment and his government was overthrown in a coup by US-backed General Lon Nol in 1970 (Ledgerwood et al. 1994: 11). Lon Nol's dictatorship in many ways set a precedent for what came later. Vietnamese residents were massacred and many fled across the border, and Cambodia was caught in the middle of a war between the US army, the Vietnamese and the growing revolutionary Khmer Rouge. Between 1965 and 1973, the US military dropped over two million[14] tons of bombs in the Cambodian countryside, killing more than 100,000 farmers (Kiernan 2007: ix; Owen and Kiernan 2006; Widyono 2008). The Cambodian tragedy that had now begun lasted for another two decades.

The military regime of Lon Nol was overthrown on 17 April 1975 when Khmer Rouge forces took Phnom Penh and established Democratic Kampuchea (Chandler 1996c; Kiernan 2007). In contrast to the personalised autocracy of Sihanouk and the military dictatorship of Lon Nol, Cambodia was now a collectivised regime; families were disintegrated, Buddhism disbanded and monks disrobed, schools and institutions closed and all able-bodied men, women and children were put to work (for more information on Khmer Rouge see Chandler 1996a; Kiernan 1996, 2008; Kiernan and Hughes 2007). In one of the biggest migration histories in the world, two million residents from the cities (*neak thmei* or new people) were dispersed amongst the villagers (*neak moultanh* or base people). The villagers were also moved around

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[12] The political history of this period is rather complex. Anti-colonial and nationalistic movements and French modernisation policies (e.g. romanisation of the Khmer alphabets) eventually led to the French granting Cambodia its independence (for additional details see Chandler 2008; Chandler 1996a; Kiernan and Hughes 2007).

[13] Many villagers referred to this period as a golden period (anecdotal evidence).

[14] (Owen and Kiernan 2006; Widyono 2008) New information on the bombing reveals that 2,756,941 tons of bombs were dropped in Cambodia on 113,716 sites. In comparison the allies dropped just over 2 million tons of bombs in all of World War II, making Cambodia the most heavily bombed country in the world.

in the country and everyone put to work on rice cultivation and large-scale irrigation projects. Self sufficiency in agriculture was not possible and many died due to starvation and tough working conditions. By early 1979, approximately 650,000 new people from the cities and 675,000 base people from the countryside had been executed, starved, overworked or killed due to disease or lack of medical attention. Over the four year period 1975-79, 250,000 ethnic Chinese, 100,000 Chams (Vietnamese Muslims) and other ethnic populations were killed (Kiernan 2007: x). By 1979, some 1.7 million of the total population of 8 million had died (Kiernan 2008: 268–276)[15]. Along with civilian deaths, nearly 100,000 Khmer Rouge soldiers were killed during May–July 1978, laying the ground for future conflicts (Widyono 2008: 27).

To escape being killed, many Khmer Rouge soldiers defected to Vietnam and formed rebel troops under Hun Sen[16] and Heng Samrin and, supported by Vietnamese troops, these troops took Phnom Penh on 7 January 1979 (Kiernan 2007). The Vietnam-led government of PRK (People's Republic of Kampuchea) lasted for the next decade until the UN intervention. Despite its atrocities, the Khmer Rouge was recognised as a legitimate representative of Cambodia, holding the UN seat during 1979–82 (Kiernan 2007: xii; Widyono 2008: 29).

The Vietnamese intervention was not accepted by most of the world including China, US and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Kiernan 2007) and by 1983, the UN declared that the Cambodian emergency had come to an end. The non-recognition of PRK led the UN to impose a period of economic isolation and political ostracism (Widyono 2008: 32). The decade of the 1980s was equally difficult; Cambodia struggled under foreign occupation, international isolation and constant conflicts. After the Khmer Rouge period many villagers returned to their original villages. New people had moved in, and taken over land, and the original inhabitants who returned demanded their land, resulting in an anarchic situation of land ownership (Luco 2002: 52, 71–76). Lack of valid property documentation[17] further complicated matters.

The UN peace process of the 1990s placed Cambodia under the observation of UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia) (Chandler 1996d), whose mandate was to help the nation rebuild, repatriate refugees from across borders and oversee fairly-conducted national elections (Roberts 2007). The period was far from peaceful, however, as the Khmer Rouge was still very strong in the province of Siem Reap in 1992. They also controlled Angkor Wat, which complicated issues for conservation (Widyono 2008: 5). The

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[15] Kiernan (2001, 2008) has provided a detailed analysis of the total killed, based on a census before Khmer Rouge, along with the numbers expelled, the declining growth rate and the number of deaths during the regime.
[16] The current Prime Minister of Cambodia.
[17] See 'Land law of Cambodia' 2003 for details regarding changing policies regarding land ownership

situation led to wide-spread looting and destruction of valuable heritage. The UN elections resulted in a coalition government, led by both FUNCINPEC (Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia) and CPP (Cambodian People's Party) (Roberts 2007: 28). Over the period, Hun Sen (of CPP) slowly asserted his power, becoming the Prime Minister after the 1998 elections.

In the 1990s, Cambodia was one of several nations undergoing a multidimensional transformation to peace, democracy and market economy (Billon 2007: 69). The UN operation in Cambodia that lasted from November 1991 to September 1993 was one of the largest and most expensive[18] of these. The operation was to reach a resolution of the political conflicts in accordance with the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement (Roberts 2007: 28). The regime that had terrorised Cambodia during 1975-79 was completely defeated only in 1999 (Kiernan 2007: xvii)

The long road to peace had proved very costly for Cambodia. The political trauma cost nearly 2 million lives, left indelible marks on the landscape as a result of landmines, and scarred the memories of people. In addition to the loss of precious tangible heritage, the loss of intangible heritage, cultural practices and people with specialised knowledge has been irreplaceable. The country continues to de-mine, operations which began nearly two decades ago. Many people in the countryside have lost lives and limbs to the extant mines. An appreciation of the tragic events of the recent past is important in order to contextualise the contemporary population and their present-day cultural connections. An overview of the thesis is provided below.

THESIS ORGANISATION

To understand the cultural links of the local Khmers with the monuments that surround them, the thesis is structured as follows.

CHAPTER 2 reviews the current theoretical considerations governing heritage and its management. It traces the philosophical influences that have defined heritage and influenced its management. Heritage now encompasses a wide variety of meanings and values and is also considered a cultural process. Global concerns for heritage conservation and management have led to the establishment of various institutions and the formulation of a number of charters, declarations and documents that prescribe the conservation and management of heritage. The differences between Western and non-Western approaches are outlined including concerns regarding authenticity, which resulted in the Nara Document. This and other studies that followed gave prominence to the intangible and social values. Alongside the

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[18] See Widyono (2008) for details

recognition of social values, measures to involve local and other communities with connections to their heritage resulted in integrated approaches that include both tangible and social values.

CHAPTER 3 provides an overview of the management of AWHS. The creation of *Parc d'Angkor* during the French protectorate, and the early management of the temples, focused solely on the tangible monumental heritage. The World Heritage nomination included the pre-conditions to be met and the ZEMP study proposed a framework for the management of the site. The Government of Cambodia, guided by the ICC fulfilled the pre-conditions set by WHC and translated the ZEMP recommendations, creating the APSARA Authority and formulating heritage legislation to manage the sites, true to the WHC. Nevertheless, a number of complexities exist, due to the existence of multiple authorities, plural legislation, zone boundaries and the restrictions imposed on local residents. In addition, tourism-induced development and land speculation have led to enormous pressures on the land in recent years.

CHAPTER 4 explains the research methodology. As qualitative approaches are most suited to the study of social values, case study methodology has been used to study heritage assessments which include social value assessments in order to understand the different contexts and research methods used. The selection of the study area based on the chosen heritage feature, field visits and the research procedures used have been described in detail to clarify the scope and limitations of this study.

CHAPTER 5 gives an account of the present case study of AWHS. The first part provides a background to the location, demography and administration of the study area. A detailed description of the heritage features chosen and the study villages are presented, followed by the social and cultural setting of the study area. The Angkorian villages and the social contexts of the villagers' family, society and occupation are presented. Khmer religion and the worship of spirits, along with the various ceremonies and festivals that take place are also outlined. Finally, a detailed analysis of the study sample is presented.

CHAPTERS 6, 7 and 8 present the findings of this study. Chapter 6 provides the cultural context of the local cultural connections. Detailed analysis of the transcribed interviews highlights the connections at the local level. This includes knowledge of the local landscape containing the archaeological remains, rituals and social practices, along with the animistic and Buddhist rituals and the villager relationships with the Angkorian temples. While the connections are manifest at both regional and local levels, it was the local level connections that were primarily explored in this chapter.

CHAPTER 7 examines the micro and macro governance contexts. The villager understanding of APSARA Authority's management of the Angkor Park was examined. Respondents detailed a number of restrictions on their lives. The APSARA Authority measures were understood through their signs, zone boundary markers and information sessions. In addition, new measures being undertaken to close the gap between the community and Authority are outlined. Governance issues also exist at the regional level and include the local understanding of World Heritage and increasing land pressures due to development.

CHAPTER 8 expands upon the analysis of Chapters 6 and 7, and analyses four cases in detail. Two examples from the cultural context and two examples from the governance context are presented to illustrate the cultural connections and inherent dissonance. The overarching significance of Angkor Wat from the perspective of villagers is presented to establish their connections with this temple. The celebration of Khmer New Year at both Angkor Wat and Bakong further reinforces these cultural practices. The examples from the governance context highlight the problems that exist in managing cultural heritage. One involved the bulldozing of a *prasat* site and the other, an owner trying to construct her residence on a *prasat* site. Both displayed divergent objectives, but in each case these were detrimental to the heritage site.

CHAPTER 9 concludes, drawing together the arguments presented throughout the thesis and establishing the need to understand local cultural connections. The findings demonstrate the tenuous cultural connections between the local villagers and the archaeological remains and in the process highlight the heritage conundrums that exist at Angkor. This understanding, it is hoped, will improve heritage management practices by including the values of the community.

CHAPTER 2: GLOBAL HERITAGE AND LOCAL VALUES

> [Heritage] Identity is not simply something 'produced' or represented by heritage places or heritage moments, but is something *actively and continually re-created* and negotiated as people, communities and institutions reinterpret, remember and re-assess the meaning of the past in terms of the social, cultural and political needs of the *present* (*my emphasis* Smith 2006: 83)

INTRODUCTION

Angkor, owing to its World Heritage status, is now a popular destination for a growing number of international and domestic tourists. Despite the large numbers of tourists travelling to the Angkor World Heritage Site (AWHS), the average villager living in the vicinity of the heritage monuments is often perplexed and laughs when asked anything about 'World Heritage' or heritage conservation. What *is* heritage to the locals? Do they relate to the World Heritage site of Angkor as *their* (as in a sense of belonging to them) heritage? How do the local villagers relate to the archaeological remains that surround them and what are the cultural practices that ritually and socially connect them to these tangible heritage remains? To reiterate the aims of this thesis; this research is about the cultural links with tangible heritage in the context of Angkor. In other words, it refers to the local Khmer community's perceptions of the Angkor Park and the ways in which they connect with the cultural heritage and archaeological remains in the Angkorian landscape.

In recent decades, a number of questions have been raised regarding some fundamental aspects of cultural heritage, such as who owns the heritage, who needs the past and who decides what is important (see for instance Cleere 1989a; Layton 1994; McBryde 1985b). It is important to address these questions in order to determine the cultural significance of a heritage place. Nonetheless, these questions are rather tough to address. In addition, global, national, regional and local politics— all play a decisive role in establishing the cultural heritage significance of places. Above all, societies and local communities are constantly changing and evolving and often their values change as well. As observed by Smith (2006: 48), in her role as part of the Waanyi Women's History Project, 'heritage was not static or frozen in time, as the conservation ethic tends to demand, but rather was a process that while it passed on established values and meanings was also creating new meanings and values'. This, and the opening quote of this chapter, are illustrative of the two key characteristics critical to the assessment of heritage. Heritage is continually changing and its meanings are assessed and interpreted in a contemporary context. These form the central ideas guiding this research in establishing the cultural links between the local Khmer people and the material heritage in AWHS.

To understand the links between the tangible (heritage places) and the intangible (social and cultural practices); it is necessary to situate the research within the larger literature of cultural heritage conservation and archaeological theory. This will help to clarify the philosophy behind heritage management practices and how it has changed over time. The period from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century witnessed wide-spread scientific and philosophical transformations that laid the foundations for a modern world (Jokilehto 1999: 16–17). The modern era, often classified as the early modern (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), the modern (eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) and the postmodern (twentieth century) reveals, fundamentally, a Eurocentric perspective (Graham et al. 2000: 11). Although the philosophies influencing heritage management originated in the European world, its values spread initially to some colonies and nations under the control or influence of European nations, and over time, to other parts of the world. These scientific and theoretical movements were instrumental in shaping the direction of various disciplines including those central to the practice of heritage conservation. An understanding of these influences is important to understand how some Western attitudes have shaped present-day global heritage conservation practices.

The beginning of the twentieth century is an important landmark in the history of architectural conservation and an appropriate starting point for a discussion of the theoretical context of heritage conservation. While the ideas of the 'Historic Monument' (Choay 1992: 82–95, 111–116) and 'Aesthetics' (Berenson 1996: 44–49; and Brandi 1996: 377–379) strongly influenced the direction of architectural conservation and restoration, archaeology, earlier influenced by Antiquarianism (Morrice 1996: 242) changed in the mid twentieth century due to influences from Positivism (Binford and Binford 1968; Preucel 1991c). Since the 1980s, Post-positivism has directed archaeological theory towards Post-processual and Interpretive archaeologies (Hodder et al. 1995).

Over time, changes to the understanding of heritage have influenced the ways in which cultural heritage is understood and managed. Initially viewed as a material or spiritual and intellectual inheritance, heritage is now viewed as a cultural process and includes both tangible and intangible heritage (Edson 2004; Harvey 2001; Smith 2006). In addition, heritage management processes in recent times have sought a greater degree of community consultation. Communities with direct or indirect connections are being increasingly recognised as key stakeholders in the process of heritage management. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) 'Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore' (1989), 'Living Human Treasure' system started in 1993 and the 'Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of

Humanity' in 1998 helped develop the concept of intangible heritage (Aikawa-Faure 2009: 13). The 'Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage' (ICHC) (UNESCO 2003a) adopted in 2003, entered into force on 20th April 2006 (UNESCO 2003a). All have played a significant role in the conflation of heritage values and intangible heritage in both heritage discourse and practice. Despite these developments, the practical management of cultural heritage in a holistic manner that includes both the tangible and the intangible heritage combined with community consultation is difficult to achieve due to conflicting values and inherent social, cultural and political factors. These factors are intrinsic to the understanding of heritage as they play a significant role in how heritage is identified and valued by individuals, groups or nations.

This chapter is organised in three sections. The first deals with heritage concepts and the philosophical influences that have resulted in changes to the meaning of the term heritage. The second is a discussion of heritage conservation and management, introducing the global agencies safeguarding heritage, the respective Western and non-Western perspectives, the changing attitudes to heritage conservation and the need for the inclusion of intangible heritage and social values. The third part elaborates on the social value and the concept of cultural connections.

HERITAGE: THE EARLY INFLUENCES

Most research on heritage conservation attributes the beginning of the architectural conservation and restoration movement in the West to the end of the nineteenth century in England, with John Ruskin and William Morris as the key thinkers (e.g. Earl 2003; Saunders 1996; Simpson 1996). Nevertheless, the philosophical influences in art, history, antiquity and architecture in the context of architectural conservation date back well before the 'Age of Enlightenment'. As Jokilehto[19] has illustrated, some of the earliest influences can be found in the first century BC in Vitruvius's manual *De Architectura* on the design of new constructions in Rome (Jokilehto 1999: 26). The Renaissance was also a particularly influential period for architectural conservation and the study of ancient monuments. Architectural history was guided by art history and archaeology, while archaeology was largely influenced by Antiquarianism (Morrice 1996: 240–242). Antiquarian studies and the acquisition and restoration of antiquities were promoted in Sweden from the sixteenth century onwards and in England, antiquarian interests led to the establishment of the Society of Antiquaries in London in 1717 and the Society of Dilettanti in 1734. This encouraged

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[19] Jokilehto's doctoral thesis titled: 'A History of Architectural Conservation; the Contribution of English, French, German and Italian Thought Towards an International Approach to the Conservation of Cultural Property' undertaken at the University of York, England 1978 – 86 later, revised and published as 'A History of Architectural Conservation' remains one of the most comprehensive publications on the subject

exploratory missions and travels in search of antiquities and resulted in the archaeological documentation of monuments in Greece and Rome (Jokilehto 1999: 48–50).

Restoration in the eighteenth century, influenced by Romanticism, highlighted the aesthetic qualities of design integrity and stylistic unity (Jokilehto 1999: 101), along with the role of the architect or artist (Jokilehto 1999: 110–112). Artists and their works were the main subjects in the appreciation of visual arts and the concept of aesthetics. The many aspects of aesthetics and art appreciation were analysed by various scholars in the early twentieth century (Price et al. 1996). Berenson[20] (1996: 46) demonstrated that art was 'tactile', creating an illusion of the third dimension (depth); whereas Wölfflin[21] (1996) analysed the notion of 'tactile' and established a methodology of visual analysis. However, it was Riegl's (1996) influential work on the cult of modern monuments written at the turn of the twentieth century that introduced the concepts of value in architectural conservation. These included age value, historical value, deliberate commemorative value and the use and newness values of monuments in the context of his period (1858–1905). The combinations of methodologies of visual analysis, the central role of the architect or artist, and the concepts of Aesthetics and Historic Monument meant that the tangible aspects of the monumental and the aesthetic became the prime elements in the conservation of material heritage (Riegl 1992, 1996)[22].

While these philosophies and disciplines guided the building conservation movement, formal protection was also required to protect built heritage. The earliest formal protection of heritage in Europe dates back to the 1666 Royal Proclamation of Sweden, protecting ancient monuments (Cleere 1989: 1; McBryde 1985: 3). As previously mentioned, the beginning of the modern conservation movement in England towards the end of the nineteenth century was primarily a critical response to the industrial movement, when Ruskin and Morris expressed strong concerns about the preservation of monuments and buildings of the time (Davison 1991a: 14). John Ruskin's (1819–1900) 'Seven Lamps of Architecture' introduced some key concepts in the move to preserve heritage buildings (1898). He pioneered the anti-restoration movement, arguing that restoration was 'destructive' to the original fabric and intent of the building (Pevsner 1976). He was instrumental in drawing both domestic architecture and the urban ensemble into the discussion of conservation. William Morris, influenced by Ruskin's ideas, established the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB 1877). Contemporaneously, Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879), a French architect practising excessive restoration and re-construction in the belief that he was giving a building 'completeness' that

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[20] First published in 1948.
[21] Excerpts from the original publication of 1915
[22] (Riegl 1996: 69 – 83) first published in 1903; refers to *Kunstwollen* (artistic volition) as that which defines the artistic value

did not exist before, represented the other end of the spectrum in the conservation discourse (Jokilehto 1999: 138–157). His work in France, and that of George Gilbert Scott in England, was perceived as symbolising destructive restoration (Jokilehto 1999: 159–163). It paved the way for 'interventionist conservation' in the use of modern materials in building restoration (Choay 1992: 102–106), which was practised in Europe earlier in the twentieth century and until recent times in colonies in other parts of the world (Fawcett 1976; McBryde 1985; Tyler 2000: 18–20).

One of the earliest attempts at preservation was expressed in the rebuilding of Canterbury Cathedral after the fire of 1174[23] (Boulting 1976: 10), and attempts to protect historic monuments of the medieval period resulted in Queen Elizabeth I's proclamation of 1560 'Agaynst breaking or defacing of Monumentes' (Boulting 1976: 11; Jokilehto 1999: 41). The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in England raised concerns for 'conservative repair' (Jokilehto 1999: 184–187), as did the Commission for the Protection of Artistic Monuments (1894) in Austria (Jokilehto 1999: 192). Such concerns led to formal legislation to protect built heritage; the Ancient Monuments Protection Act passed in England in 1882[24] (Boulting 1976: 17), the Historic Monuments Law of 1913[25] in France (Choay 1992: 98), and legislation in other parts of Europe[26] were significant milestones. All these pieces of legislation and the philosophies discussed above influenced the management of heritage monuments in Europe and associated colonies. Until the end of the nineteenth century, architectural heritage was a matter of national concern only and most laws that regulated protection of heritage buildings were first created in this period.

Archaeology that had earlier been influenced by Antiquarianism underwent radical changes in the 1960s, particularly in Anglo-American archaeology. Although Positivism had failed in the social sciences, theorists seeking to understand material culture in terms of human behaviour began to be influenced by Logical Positivism in the 1960s (Preucel 1991a, 1991c; Smith 2004: 34–43). Positivism was about authentic knowledge lacking ambiguous speculation and knowledge was considered positive when affirmed through scientific methods (Harrison 1895; Leledakis 1995). Binford applied Logical Positivism to provide a scientific understanding of the past as opposed to traditional archaeology which employed unstructured empiricism. This was referred to as the Processual or New archaeology (Preucel 1991b). Smith (2004) has analysed the influence of Processual archaeology on the practice of

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[23] (Boulting 1976: 10) In rebuilding the cathedral church of Canterbury, the architects were guided by conservatism rather than conservationism. The attempt at preserving the original fabric as far as possible was a result of sentiment rather than historical concern for the monuments.
[24] (Boulting 1976: 17–29) Amendments to and development of the legislation concerning heritage in England. Also see Carman (1996), for a complete list of legislation in England.
[25] The French law also was amended considerably.
[26] (Delafons 1997: 27–29) See for a summary of formal protection of heritage in other parts of Europe.

archaeological heritage management, noting that the discourse and methodologies of Processual archaeology directly influenced and informed the ways in which legislation and conservation policies were developed in the 1970s and 1980s.

Post-processual theory, developed in the 1980s, was largely pioneered by Ian Hodder and some of his students at Cambridge University (Hodder 1986, 1992; Hodder et al. 1995; Smith 1997). Guided by Post-positivism, the theory was primarily a response to Processual archaeology and attempted to break down all the norms set up by Processual archaeology (Chippindale 1993; Hodder 1992). Although it attempted to critically understand and engage with material culture and the archaeological past, integrated with self-reflexive practice, it tended to explain the consequences of archaeology with few or no references from beyond the discipline (Smith 2004: 43–57). The developments in Post-positivism and by association Post-processual archaeology have arguably influenced many of the innovations in heritage conservation practice in countries such as Australia. The inclusion of more reflexive and socially inclusive methodologies such as community-based approaches to research and conservation, the recognition and incorporation of Indigenous knowledge systems and practices, and the development of ideas about social value and cultural connections are all part of the move away from the rigid structures of Processual or Positivist approaches in heritage conservation.

Interestingly, the disciplines of architectural conservation and archaeology have existed in distinctly separate spheres, although both deal with material culture in parallel contexts. The focus on built heritage conservation led largely by architects and technicians (conservators and restorers) was ultimately responsible for the formulation of various charters, some of whose founding principles lay in the SPAB Manifesto of 1877 (Morris 1877). The building conservation principles developed, focused on minimum intervention maintaining authenticity and reversibility (Feilden and Jokilehto 1998: 59–75). The charters dictated the philosophy and practice of architectural conservation and heritage management and date back to the mid 1900s (Jokilehto 1999: 288–289). While the charters qualified heritage and stipulated how it was to be managed, the concept of 'heritage' itself has undergone phenomenal changes in recent decades, as will be discussed below. These changes are critical, as they have questioned the prevalent focus on tangible heritage in conservation practices, the ethics of these approaches and the need for a holistic understanding of heritage. It is a paradox that heritage is no longer about the past; rather, it makes use of the past to 'produce the present and shape the future' (Harrison et al. 2008: 1). Heritage is intangible (Byrne 2009b) and 'it is the performance and negotiation of identity, values and a sense of place' (Smith and Waterton 2009a: 292).

This mutation of the concept of heritage evidenced in recent research may seem inappropriate to those focused on tangible heritage; in reality however, it highlights the appropriate and inclusive directions the discourse has taken as a consequence of growing social concerns. These include the social values attributed by communities to places and their resultant cultural attachments. Social values expressed by communities are often outside heritage management frameworks, although continuing traditions and continuity of use have helped preserve these values (Johnston 1994: 4–6). In order to include such values, social significance assessments of heritage places should accommodate the meanings of not just the archaeological and architectural heritage, but also their relevance in the '*lived world* of ordinary people' (Byrne 2008: 152).

These social values are part of a community or group's intangible cultural heritage (ICH) that is continually re-created and passed down from one generation to another, providing them with a sense of identity and continuity while promoting cultural diversity (UNESCO 2003a: 2). In other words, it is the 'heritage that is embodied in people rather than inanimate objects' (Logan 2007: 33) and protection of this will invariably protect cultural rights as part of human rights (Silverman and Ruggles 2007a). 'Community' in relation to archaeology and heritage is not a homogeneous entity, however; rather it is heterogeneous adding complexities to the understanding of community, heritage and cultural attachments (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 18). As a result, the identification of heritage is fraught with difficulties as to who the community is and what the significant values are.

This raises a number of questions, including the ethical approaches of heritage practitioners to heritage protection (Meskell 2009b), rationality and the inclusion of popular religious culture in defining heritage (Byrne 2009a) and/or the commemoration of painful pasts (Logan and Reeves 2009). Defining and protecting cultural heritage is thus riddled with complexities (Bell and Paterson 2009; Fairclough et al. 2008; Ruggles and Silverman 2009; Smith and Akagawa 2009a). While cultural heritage appears to be a complex phenomenon, an attempt is made here to understand the notion of this multi-faceted heritage. To illustrate comprehensively the philosophies that govern heritage, multi-disciplinary aspects of heritage, the global institutions and charters that govern its management and the changes in attitudes to heritage conservation and management in recent years, a concept diagram is presented in Figure 2.1.

Philosophies guiding Heritage Conservation and Archaeology

Age of Enlightenment: Aesthetics, Romanticism, Picturesque Movement, Antiquarianism, Realism Positivism, Structuralism, Pragmatism, Modernism, Post-positivism, Post-modernism, Post-structuralism

Early Charters and Global Institutions:

SPAB Manifesto
UNESCO, ICOMOS: World Heritage Convention, International Charters, Declarations and Documents
Athens Charter, Venice Charter, Florence Charter…

Heritage

Notions, Ideas, Constructs, Values and Significance.
Tangible and intangible; cultural and natural; archaeological, architectural, artistic, aesthetic, scientific, historic, economic, social, cultural, political and tourist
A cultural process, constantly changing, creating new values; inherently dissonant
Heritage is fundamentally related to people

Disciplines and Theories

Architectural Conservation: Pragmatism, Romanticism, Realism;
Archaeology: Positivism, Post-positivism Processual & Post-processual, Interpretive, Structural & Post-structural;
Geography: Modernism, Post-modernism;
Anthropology and Cultural Studies: theories on Culture and Anthropology

Global Institutions and recent changes

UNESCO, ICOMOS: revision of definitions, conventions on Intangible cultural heritage, cultural diversity
Charters, Declarations including Social value, Indigenous interests and cultural contexts –e.g: Nara Document, Oaxaca declaration, China principles, Burra Charter, draft Indian charter

Key communities including those with direct physical connections and those with indirect social/cultural connections

Figure 2.1 Heritage: theories, disciplines, charters and global institutions

Heritage, juxtaposed within the various disciplines and guided by wide-ranging philosophies, is managed through a number of charters, documents, declarations, conventions and the respective national and regional legislation. These impact the ways in which heritage sites are governed. The local communities living around the heritage sites are often affected by these heritage management mechanisms, in some instances negatively. Heritage is complex (Graham and Howard 2008b), because both local and global communities continue to create and re-create their connections and values. These connections are not always coherent and can lead to friction, and heritage as defined by communities is 'not always consensual, good and safe' (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 55). These conflicts between heritage management ideologies and community needs often lead to dissonance in the management of heritage resources (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996).

The following section is a discussion of the understanding of 'heritage'; an old English word which originally meant 'inheritance', is now an extremely complex construct which plays a strong role in national, social and political agendas.

WHAT IS HERITAGE?

Heritage is today often expressed in many different ways, with varying expectations and implications. It occupies a significant position in the disciplines of geography, archaeology, architecture, anthropology, social studies, art history, history and ecology. Heritage as a legal term referred to 'all property and material wealth that may be inherited and or handed over from generation to generation' (Oxford English Dictionary 1971 cited in, Carman 1996: 152). The Concise Oxford Dictionary (2008) includes 'valued things such as historic buildings that have been passed down from previous generations'. The legal origin was probably one of the reasons why heritage management has tended to focus on landscapes, buildings and objects that are tangible entities and legally recognised as property capable of being passed on (Pearce 2000: 59). This precise legal term (Davison 1991b: 1) has undergone a phenomenal change in recent decades, embracing a wide variety of qualities including intergenerational exchange and relationships between cultures, societies and individuals (Graham et al.. 2000). Davison attributes intellectual and spiritual legacy in addition to material legacy in defining heritage (1991b). In recent years, heritage as interpreted by various scholars from diverse contexts, is essentially a concern for the past emerging from a period referred to as 'modernity' by geographers (Graham et al. 2000: 11). This notion of heritage as a contemporary phenomenon expressed by Lowenthal (1998) and as 'modern' according to Graham et al. (2000) is challenged by Harvey who has demonstrated that heritage concepts have always developed and changed according to power transformations in contemporary society. He reinforces heritage as a process that can be explored within a very long temporal framework, not limited to the contexts of post-modern economic and social tendencies (2001; see also Harvey 2008).

Heritage as described by Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996) refers to a relic surviving from the past, individual and collective memories of the past, accumulated cultural and artistic productivity, natural environment and the heritage industry. Heritage is seen as power and identity (Graham et al. 2000), as knowledge (Graham 2002), as a national ideology of 'belongingness' by Hall (Graham et al. 2000), and an asset or a liability as argued by Xavier (2004). Yet heritage has always been subject to invention, restoration or adaptation to meet the social, political, spiritual or financial requirements of the subject community. 'Heritage resources help to generate an environment where people can acquire an awareness of continuity… glimpse a past with admiration… and project the future of their own endeavours' (Edson 2004: 345). However, Edson cautions that assigning social or cultural values to a mythical or marginally defined past can result in 'cultural entropy' or social decline (2004: 345).

The idea of a created past (for past read synonymous with heritage here), on the other hand is reinforced by Lowenthal (1985) in his seminal work 'The past is a foreign country'. He expresses the various notions of wanting, knowing and changing the past—

> we remember things, read or hear stories and chronicles, and live among relics from previous times. The past surrounds and saturates us; every scene, every statement, every action retains residual content from earlier times… All present awareness is based on past perceptions and acts (Lowenthal 1985: 185)

The past according to Lowenthal cannot be kept segregated; it exists in continuity in the present and as such it is integral to all, both individually and collectively (1985: 185–412).

The notion of heritage as a tangible resource has been challenged by Harvey (2001), who advocates cultural process as an approach. Bender (1993: 3) argued that landscape [heritage] is active and constantly in a state of flux; people engage, re-work, appropriate, and contest it. This is partly how identities are created and disputed as individuals, groups or nations. Heritage as a cultural process was advocated by Smith (2006) who described heritage as being composed of a range of acts including memory, celebration, commemoration, communication through passing on the knowledge and assertion and expression of identity through social and cultural values and meanings. Accordingly, heritage and the process of engaging with heritage facilitate a sense of identity and belonging.

Heritage is now conceptualised as a cultural process and all heritage can be regarded as intangible (Byrne 2009b; Jokilehto 2006a; Smith and Waterton 2009a). The intangibility of heritage, the continual creation and re-creation of heritage identities and the manifestation of the past in the present are all significant attributes of contemporary approaches to heritage. While nurturing a marginally defined or mythical past may result in social decline in national contexts, not appreciating a local community's connections with heritage may also result in alienating societies and contribute to their deterioration which, as a consequence, may detrimentally impact on the conservation of heritage sites. Contemporary society's links with heritage places and their values are thus as important as global values. The universalisation of heritage invariably creates a conundrum, due to conflicting value

systems between different cultural groups. In addition, negative or difficult pasts such as the 'killing fields' of Cambodia, the World War II Holocaust or numerous bomb sites worldwide also imply dissonance (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 55–56). The 'multi-faceted, multi-sensual and multi-emotive' heritage creates social conflicts as the process of defining and ascribing meaning to heritage is not always consensual (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 55–76). The following section will address aspects of the many global influences and the factors that affect heritage conservation and management at both the global and local levels.

HERITAGE, ITS CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT: GLOBAL AND LOCAL

Concerns for the protection of heritage have developed in different ways to safeguard tangible cultural heritage. The conservation of heritage and applied archaeology are referred to as cultural heritage management (CHM), cultural resource management (CRM) or archaeological heritage management (AHM) (Clarke and Smith 1996: 3). CRM, a term largely used in the United States of America (USA), reflects the attitude of the approach towards conservation in the use of the term 'resource' which emphasises material heritage; it was used in Australia, when archaeological attitudes paralleled those of the Americans, but since the early 1990s it has been replaced by CHM (Smith 2004: 6) following Indigenous criticism (Smith 2004: 26–31). Carman (1996) also broadly discusses AHM and CRM.

> Cultural resource management (CRM) encompasses recognition, description, maintenance, security and the overall management of cultural resources. The objective of CRM is to ensure the protection of the cultural significance, integrity and authenticity of the resource for the present and future generations through conservation and sustainable resource utilization. (Box 1999: 3)

This definition of CRM from UNESCO's manual for heritage managers refers largely to the tangible attributes of heritage resources that can be spatially represented and fails to present a comprehensive notion of cultural heritage as discussed above. Nevertheless, this has been the working definition used in heritage management practice in AWHS and elsewhere until recently.

The earlier concepts and practice of heritage conservation have constantly evolved as global perceptions about heritage and its management have changed over the last century. The initial approaches that centred on monumental buildings, antiquities, exquisite arts, artefacts and designed landscapes have now broadened to include the contexts of associative, urban, rural, natural and vernacular settings. Along with this shift in the attitude towards monuments and tangible material culture, the intangible aspects are also slowly coming under consideration. As illustrated earlier, concepts of heritage have radically changed in recent decades to incorporate place, people and their attachments. Heritage is not just places, but the process of attaching meanings, remembering, celebrating, communicating and sharing knowledge, and in the process, claiming and declaring identities and social and cultural values. The heritage places and the process of creating and re-creating heritage are in themselves part of a cultural process that is continually changing and

responding to social, political and cultural changes. The focus is now on communities, both local and global, and growing attention is being paid in policy and practice towards personal and local heritage, termed 'small heritages' by Harvey (2008: 20). Although social needs and intangible heritage are now in focus, a number of issues relating to their understanding and management still remain unresolved. A primary issue is the 'Representative List of the ICH' proposed by the ICHC which entitles selection of heritage structured on the exclusion of others—a process that will inevitably de-contextualise heritage (Hafstein 2009). The safeguarding of the selected ICH is proposed as a national responsibility, which raises significant concerns for Indigenous and other local communities' intangible cultural heritage (Marrie 2009; for further discussion see Smith and Akagawa 2009a).

The next section focuses on the concerns regarding heritage management approaches at both the global and the local level. The global institutions for managing heritage, formal documents to manage heritage and the euro-centric heritage discourse in both the Western and non-Western contexts are addressed in the following sub-sections. While the complex nature of heritage was revealed in earlier sections, the complexities that exist in managing heritage are discussed here.

GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS FOR HERITAGE

The large scale destruction of monuments and historic buildings during World Wars I and II raised concerns about their protection. Consequently, UNESCO was established in 1945 to provide an international forum in which to consider these issues. Other international bodies also formed in this post-war period included The International Council of Museums (ICOM) in 1946, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1948, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) in 1959 and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 1964 (Jokilehto 1999: 287–288). As implied by their names, these institutions were all concerned with tangible material cultural and natural heritage.

UNESCO's World Heritage Convention (WHC) in 1972 established the concepts of universal heritage and 'outstanding universal value' (for a detailed analysis of OUV see Titchen 1995). The global significance of World Heritage is embodied in the UNESCO definition (UNESCO 2006):

> Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.

The definition therefore extends the non-limitation of time and cultures (Rodwell 2007), making World Heritage universal, that which 'belongs to all the peoples of the world' (UNESCO 2006). Regarded as one visible achievement of the modern heritage movement, a critical qualifying factor for World Heritage listing includes an outstanding universal value (OUV), which can be understood as 'an outstanding response to issues of universal nature' (from the report of the World Heritage global

strategy natural and cultural heritage expert meeting in Amsterdam 1998 cited in Jokilehto 2006b: 3). Article 49 of the WHC defines OUV as:

> Outstanding universal value means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole. (UNESCO 2005b, 2008b)

Besides OUV, World Heritage sites are also expected to satisfy the criteria of authenticity and integrity, emphasising a holistic approach in the definition of properties nominated to the World Heritage list (Jokilehto 2006a: 2). However, the OUV may not necessarily concur with the values of the local communities who inhabit the World Heritage site or its surroundings (Merode et al. 2003: 9).

ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN act as advisory bodies to UNESCO's World Heritage Committee (WHC) (UNESCO 2005b, 2008b). ICOMOS, a non-governmental group of professionals representing their respective national interests, has played a significant role in the listing of World Heritage sites. ICOMOS along with UNESCO has been responsible for the formulation of charters, declarations and documents that govern both tangible and intangible heritage management. IUCN, an advisory body to WHC on matters related to natural heritage sites (2008b) is also involved in protected area management for the World Commission on Protected Areas (2008a). The Western framework defining and protecting heritage, termed Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD) by Smith (2006), can be traced back to the nineteenth-century influences of Ruskin and Morris discussed earlier (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 27). AHD HAS strongly dictated the heritage conservation movements in both Western and non-Western contexts. The resultant rules and charters promoted a largely Western approach to the conservation of aesthetically pleasing material culture and the values of elite social classes while mapping out the authority of experts (Smith 2006: 29–34; Smith and Waterton 2009b: 27–30). Defining and ascribing values to heritage selectively in wider social and political contexts often caused imbalanced approaches and left room for dissonance (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 58).

The global institutions were established as agencies authorised to legitimately safeguard the universal heritage of humankind. The charters, declarations, conventions and documents guide the preservation, conservation and protection of heritage places and things. Before discussing these legitimised documents, it is important to understand how global institutions view heritage. The following sub-section is a concise discussion of the notion of 'cultural heritage' from the perspective of global institutions.

THE NOTION OF 'CULTURAL HERITAGE'

Cultural Heritage as described by UNESCO is now recognised as including both tangible and intangible heritage. The 'Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention' compiled by the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO defines cultural and natural heritage

in articles 1 and 2 of the Convention (UNESCO 2008b: 13). Cultural heritage includes monuments, monumental sculpture, architectural works, caves and a combination of features which have been recognised to have outstanding universal value from the point of view of art, science or history (Jokilehto 2006b: 3), or of social value, as in the re-nomination of the Uluru-Kata Tjuta national park (Calma and Liddle 2002; DSEWPC 2011). Heritage viewed as 'cultural heritage' encompasses socio-cultural aspects which in effect include the tangible and intangible aspects associated with monuments and places of heritage significance. The following excerpt sums up the concept of cultural heritage as defined by UNESCO in its medium-term programme of 1989 (cited in Jokilehto 1999).

> The Cultural heritage may be defined as the entire corpus of material signs—either artistic or symbolic—handed on by the past to each culture and, therefore, to the whole of humankind. As a constituent part of the affirmation and enrichment of cultural identities, as a legacy belonging to all humankind, the cultural heritage gives each particular place its recognizable features and is the storehouse of human experience. The preservation and presentation of the cultural heritage are therefore a corner-stone of any cultural policy.

Cultural heritage is thus a construct of the society which carries on its traditions and cultural practices and contributes to the living and continuing aspects of heritage. The term 'living heritage' derives from the idea that cultural traditions of societies have continued over time and are constantly changing and evolving. ICCROM's 'Living Heritage Sites Thematic Sub-programme' identified as part of its proposed strategic directions in 2005, was based on the understanding that:

> - heritage sites need to be understood as living places, where efforts to improve understanding and conservation of the sites must be linked to the values, interests and capacities of the populations that live within and around them and are their true long-term custodians of these sites; and
> - these sites must be seen as the embodiment of significant values, where effective site management requires that as much attention be given to the conditions for retaining these values as to those for preserving the material fabric that contains and supports the site's activities (ICCROM 2005: 23)

Through this programme, ICCROM aimed to promote awareness for a sensitive approach to managing living heritage sites and to the creation of tools for successfully engaging local populations in the heritage management process to ensure long-term conservation of heritage sites in addition to the preservation of material heritage. This is indeed a remarkable transformation for an institution whose sole mandate was the conservation and restoration of tangible material heritage.

The changes in the approaches to cultural heritage were reflected in the formulation of the various charters, declarations and documents intended to guide the practice of heritage conservation. These informal guidelines were soon legitimised by professional communities, and these in turn have influenced the heritage protection laws in various nations. The next section discusses these formal documents and the concerns related to their approaches to cultural heritage.

CHARTERS, DECLARATIONS AND DOCUMENTS

The philosophy and practice of architectural conservation dictated by the charters and declarations dates back to the mid twentieth century, and the basic principles were laid down in the SPAB

Manifesto of 1877 (Morris 1877). The damage to built heritage after World War I resulted in a meeting of concerned architects and technicians at a conference in Athens. The Athens Charter (1931) defined the basic principles for the first time, thus contributing towards the development of an extensive international movement in architectural and archaeological conservation (ICOMOS 2005). The Second International Congress of Architects and Specialists of Historic Buildings, which took place in Venice in 1964 adopted thirteen resolutions on restoration and also created the ICOMOS. The Florence Charter of 1981 paved the way for conserving historic gardens and landscapes and the built heritage conservation was considered along with its site and setting. The philosophies and charters were thus broadened to encompass a wider range of concepts, including historic towns, archaeological heritage and under-water cultural heritage, to name a few[27].

The evolution of ideologies and philosophies continued and led to the formulation of a number of charters, resolutions and declarations by the global institutions mentioned above. As previously stated, the initial focus was on monumental heritage buildings, and a great deal of emphasis was placed on their restoration and maintenance. Aesthetics, authenticity and integrity were the key words. The charters, primarily framed in a context of European culture and cities, had now broadened to address concerns from other parts of the world (e.g. Burra Charter, China Principles, Oaxaca Declaration, Hoi-An Protocol). These documents, accepted as authorising documents by expert communities dealing with heritage, have influenced national, regional and local legislation concerning heritage protection in a number of countries. Until relatively recently, the focus was on safeguarding tangible heritage only.

Deacon indicates the gradual international acceptance of intangible heritage (2004: 310):

> Gradual but tentative acceptance of the importance of intangible heritage internationally can be illustrated by three key moments of change: the acceptance of symbolic value as the prime reason for inscription of Auschwitz as a World Heritage Site in 1979; the acceptance of 'cultural landscapes' as heritage-worthy in the World Heritage Convention Guidelines in 1992; and the rethinking of UNESCO's 1989 'Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore' in the 1990s that resulted in the launching of a new Intangible Heritage Convention in 2003

The acceptance of the international significance of intangible heritage is a landmark in the history of heritage conservation, but the ICHC and its recommendations have raised a number of concerns regarding the protection of something that is fundamentally intangible (Byrne 2008, 2009b). This issue will be addressed below. Heritage discourse clearly highlights the inherent Western attitudes to heritage conservation that have guided heritage conservation globally, and while the concern to safeguard heritage for future generations was noble in its conception, the practice was largely governed by political and social influences. In Western countries, heritage management practice has been centred on tangible heritage, much to the concerns of Indigenous communities and their intangible links with their heritage (Smith 2004), whereas in some parts of the non-Western world, the

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[27] For a complete list of charters, declarations and documents see http://www.international.icomos.org/charters.htm

influence of the West is evident (Byrne 1991: 272), despite living cultures and continuing traditions. These Western and non-Western approaches to heritage conservation are presented below.

WESTERN ATTITUDES TO HERITAGE: AMERICA, AUSTRALIA & EUROPE

The term 'Western' in this context refers to cultures in North America, Australia and Europe and 'non-Western' refers to cultures in the rest of the world. The discussion above traced the beginnings of heritage conservation to its origins in Europe and England. Positivism, the perceived influence on New Archaeology and parallel concepts of Realism and Pragmatism, influenced the practice of heritage preservation, restoration and conservation. The philosophies followed in America (McManamon 2000; Smith and Wobst 2005b; Stipe 2003; Tomlan 1999; Tyler 2000) and those adopted in the Australian context (Davison and McConville 1991; Pearson and Sullivan 1995; Smith and Clarke 1996; Sullivan 1995) were largely similar. Despite this, the aspects of Americanisation of heritage conservation have been kept to a minimum in Australia, Canada and New Zealand (Pannekoek 1999: 32).

The first World Archaeological Congress in 1986 in Southampton, UK, started the debate about the political nature of archaeological practice and encouraged archaeologists to question their approaches. With attendance with representatives from seventy countries, twenty three volumes were published, of which five related to heritage management issues (Byrne 1991: 270–271). Byrne ponders that while heritage management in the West was derived from an Enlightenment shift in thinking, no rational explanation existed in the non-Western world (1991: 272), where it was often a case of remnant colonial legacy which the former colonies did not reject (Cleere 1989: 1–19). This paradox of Western notions of heritage in the non-Western world will be examined later.

Early community involvement to promote conservation in the USA dates back to the mid nineteenth century. The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, formed in 1853 to save President George Washington's homestead, was unsuccessful in its initial attempts. They subsequently chartered an association in 1856 and purchased the homestead through funds raised for the cause (Tyler 2000: 33–34). This set a precedent for saving many examples of elite historic heritage. The same was not true for the heritage of Indigenous Americans, however, because the practices of archaeological and historical heritage management are both political and colonial, perpetrating Western values. Conflict potential was at the core of Indigenous archaeology, since it involved working with a living culture, and the values and priorities of the Indigenous owners were diametrically opposite to those of the Western archaeologist 'doing' archaeology (Smith and Wobst 2005a: 5). Nevertheless, Indigenous protests and involvement have defined ways in which archaeology is conducted (Robinson and Taylor 2000: 115) resulting in changes to legislation, administrative and community support to allow Indigenous participation at all levels (Anyon et al. 2000). In the case of Arkansas archaeology, public

education was seen as the way forward in generating awareness amongst local communities and preventing looting (Green and Davis 2000).

In Australia, the move to include Indigenous people in the management process was not made until much later in the twentieth century (North 2006: 15). Indigenous voices and local communities were acknowledged to the extent that community consultation is now an integral part of any heritage research (e.g. GML 2001, 2005). The changes have also been possible due to the policies and the politics of the Australian Government. The 'Native Titles Act 1993', despite its limitations, was in some ways a positive step towards acknowledging Indigenous owners and their traditional links to their country (Sculthorpe 2005).

In addition, the Burra Charter (Marquis-Kyle and Walker 1999), adopted in 1979 and subsequently revised in 1981, 1988 and 1999, provided guidance for the conservation and management of places of cultural significance. According to Sullivan (1993: 17–18), the charter was a successful adaptation of the Venice Charter, and it provided a useful methodology for the assessment of cultural values. It offered flexibility to suit local needs, as demonstrated in the assessment of the Aboriginal rock art corpus in the Kimberly region, Western Australia (Sullivan 1993). Nevertheless, the Burra Charter was not without issues. Applying critical discourse analysis to the Burra Charter as a case study, Waterton et al. have demonstrated that 'the scope of the Charter is aimed explicitly at a tangible conception of heritage' (2006: 347) where heritage 'experts' are the deciding authority; 'the expert does not have to give ground on their sense of significance, as cultural significance becomes something non-experts have to understand rather than contribute to' (Waterton et al. 2006: 350). Community consultation, suggested by the charter, was essentially to be driven by the 'expert'.

The process of an ideal 'community-inclusive' approach incorporating social and cultural values superimposed on the tangible material value is very complex (Bumbaru 2004: 42). The complexity is enhanced by the fact that 'heritage' is also a cultural process and is largely influenced by politics, power structures and the economy (Graham et al. 2000; Smith 2006). Recent publications have addressed the issues of heritage conservation and society in the West, focusing on participatory attempts at heritage conservation and management (Jameson and Baugher 2007; McManamon and Hatton 2000; Merriman 2004) which will be discussed later. Although there were distinct differences between the Western and non-Western heritage contexts, there were no clear distinctions in the heritage management practice, some aspects of which are addressed below.

NON-WESTERN CONTEXT

One significant attempt to shift away from Western approaches was made thirty years after the Venice Charter, at a conference in Nara, Japan, organised by the Agency for Cultural Affairs and Nara

Prefecture. The term 'authenticity' specified in the European-oriented Venice Charter (Petzet 1994: 95) was revisited. There was a strong emphasis on a non-Western or a non-European context and the term 'authenticity' was redefined. The Nara Document stresses the need for truth in the assessment of authenticity and argues that diversity in heritage and cultures enriches the spiritual and intellectual being in a global context and is thus irreplaceable (Feilden and Jokilehto 1998: 17). It acknowledges cultural diversity and heritage diversity (articles 5–8), emphasises the specific cultural context (article 11)[28] and encourages multiple links to understanding authenticity (article 13)[29] (UNESCO 1994a). The Nara document acts as a voice of non-Western nations' heritage concerns (Silverman and Ruggles 2007a: 4) and appreciation of the differences in cultural and architectural expressions is emphasised (Droste and Bertilsson 1994; for detailed discussion see Larsen et al. 1995).

Another attempt to move away from earlier approaches materialised through 'Our Creative Diversity', a report of the World Commission on Culture and Development (WCCD) which acknowledges plural societies in the diverse world (UNESCO 1995b). The report was an urgent call for the widest democratic mobilisation, which would acknowledge all cultural groups, including minority groups and Indigenous societies, and also appreciate positive ritual practices while condemning negative ones. Inspired by an earlier Bruntland report, 'Our Common Future', which addressed environmental concerns (Margolin 1996), the WCCD report highlights the fact that intangible heritage continues to be neglected. This led to a World Forum to Protect Folklore in 1997 (Phuket) and the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (Marrakech) eventually leading to ICHC (Aikawa-Faure 2009). The recognition of cultural diversity, plural societies and Indigenous concerns helped to redefine heritage management approaches.

A number of other conferences followed the Nara conference and attempted to redefine approaches to specific contexts and local needs, resulting in additional guiding documents. The draft Hoi-An Protocol[30] for best conservation practice in Asia (UNESCO 2003c), Oaxaca Declaration[31] (UNESCO 1993) promoting cultural pluralism, China Principles (Agnew and Demas 2002) for the conservation of heritage sites in China, Yamato declaration[32] (UNESCO 2004d), Seoul charter on tourism and the

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[28] Article 11: All judgements about values attributed to cultural properties as well as the credibility of related information sources may differ from culture to culture, and even within the same culture. It is thus not possible to base judgements of values and authenticity within fixed criteria. On the contrary, the respect due to all cultures requires that heritage properties must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts to which they belong.

[29] Article 13 Depending on the nature of the cultural heritage, its cultural context, and its evolution through time, authenticity judgements may be linked to the worth of a great variety of sources of information. Aspects of the sources may include form and design, materials and substance, use and function, traditions and techniques, location and setting, and spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors. The use of these sources permits elaboration of the specific artistic, historic, social, and scientific dimensions of the cultural heritage being examined.

[30] Conserving the Past—An Asian Perspective of Authenticity in the Consolidation, Restoration and Reconstruction of Historic Monuments and Sites held in Hoi An, Vietnam (15 Feb – 3 Mar 2001)

[31] Seminar on Education, Work and Cultural Pluralism, convened by UNESCO and the Mexican National Commission for UNESCO, 1993

[32] International Conference on 'The Safeguarding of Tangible and Intangible Heritage'; organised by the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs and UNESCO, 20 – 23 October 2004, Nara, Japan

draft Indian charter (INTACH 2004) were some of the attempts made to redefine heritage management to suit diverse cultural contexts.

The fundamental differences between the cultural contexts of the Western and non-Western nations were attributed to living cultural traditions and continuing practices which rendered Euro-centric concepts of heritage preservation unsuitable. The tradition of rebuilding the Ise Shinto temple[33] in Japan (Ito 1994: 40; Lowenthal 1985: 384) and the return of the land authenticating the Maori cultural identity (Tamepo 1994: 170) are examples that highlight this difference. Despite the inherent differences in the perception of cultural heritage, heritage management practices in non-Western countries invariably followed a Western system (Byrne 1991: 273). The Venice Charter has been heavily criticised for representing solely European interests; nevertheless, it has formed the foundation for all subsequent charters, including the Nara Document (article 3) and the Burra Charter.

In the context of intangible cultural heritage, Japan set a precedent with regards to its identification and protection. The history of heritage legislation in Japan dates back as far as 1872 when the first laws to protect heritage were formulated (Ito 1994; for a history of conservation in Japan see Nishimura 1994). According to Choay, the 1870s also witnessed Japan's opening to the West and the assimilation of the 'Historic Monument' concept (1992: 3). The influence of the West was evident in the heritage identified for protection, which included elitist examples from the royal legacy. Japan's Cultural Properties Protection Law, passed in 1950, set an early precedent; however, it required a provision for change to not 'freeze' the intangible practices and to ensure cultural continuity (Thornbury 1994). Citizen movements working towards conservation were highlighted by Watanabe (2004), public support for protecting archaeology was outlined by Okamura (2000: 56–58) and a strong need for the protection of Indigenous rights was emphasised in the Ainu case study (Cheung 2005).

In justifying the need for a new Indian Charter34, two aspects unique to the Indian context that were not addressed by earlier European/Western charters were identified: namely, the continuing traditions of building craftsmanship and skills and the symbiotic relationships binding the tangible and intangible architectural heritage of India (INTACH 2004).

> [The] traditional craftspeople believe that buildings live, die and are rebuilt in an organic process and that its authenticity inheres in the continuously evolving integrity of the historic building for its intended use. In this view, the site is more venerated than the building built over it. This represents the putative 'cyclical' concept of time (Menon 2003)

In the East, priority is given to preserving the function and significance of a building rather than its material remains (Price 2000: 213). The Indian Charter refers to the Nara Document of authenticity in

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[33] The great Ise Shinto temple is dismantled every twenty years and replaced by an exact replica.

[34] The Charter for the Conservation of unprotected architectural heritage and sites in India.

defining 'authenticity' (article 3.1 INTACH 2004); however, this charter only addressed the concerns of unprotected heritage and sites and was by no means a nationally binding charter. Significant national heritage was protected by existing legislation, some of which dated back to colonial times.

While post-colonial nations have continued to retain the colonial legacies of heritage legislation (e.g. India, South Africa), even countries like Thailand that were never colonised practised heritage management modelled on the Western framework (Byrne 1991). 'Non-Western countries do have an appreciation of their past, but they are finding it difficult to develop appropriate mechanisms to implement it, beset, as they are, by the outside insistence on the Western model' (Byrne 1991: 273). Illustrating the radical difference in conservation approaches in non-Western societies through two examples, Byrne suggests that these alternative approaches may lead to a better 'socially integrated management' in contrast to the Western rational tradition leading to 'commodification' (1991: 275). Alternatively, Karlström has highlighted a similarity between the Western and the non-Western through an examination of preservation in Laos. While Western approaches sought to conserve heritage through minimal interventions, thereby inducing change and altering the heritage fabric definitively, for the Buddhists in Laos, the merit-making process involved the removal of an existing religious structure and replacing it with a completely new structure. As such, both Eastern and Western approaches sought 'change' of cultural material (2009: 214). Further, she illustrates that there are no obvious distinctions between the Western and non-Western cultures as 'heritage is both product and process' in both cultures (Karlström 2009: 215).

While it is debatable whether charters provide stability or sterility (Price 2000: 227–228), some have stressed the need for charters in Asia and specific national contexts (Menon 2003; Taylor 2004; Thakur et al. 2003). In fact, an Angkor charter was proposed by Durand (2002: 134) to establish development principles for controlled use of heritage. Along with the shifts in thinking towards heritage, its management and charters, recent decades have also fostered discussions on communities and the inclusion of their perspectives. Cultural heritage, an interaction of 'heritage' and 'culture', manifests in the present as a memory of the past and as a hope for the future and is a significant contribution to cultural divert by communities around the world. The definition of 'community', although controversial because it leads to conflicts and contestations, is in fact linked to the process of meaning-making in heritage and as such the process of engaging communities will always be conflict-ridden involving as it does either inclusion or exclusion, or one that defines who belongs and who does not (Smith and Waterton 2009b). The following section will address social value and cultural connections.

SOCIAL VALUE AND CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

The growing emphasis on social value, intangible heritage and cultural connections cannot be understated. The sixteenth ICOMOS general assembly and international scientific symposium titled 'Finding the spirit of place: between the tangible and the intangible' organised in Quebec, Canada in 2008, is a clear indicator. A number of recent volumes have focused on intangible heritage (Ruggles and Silverman 2009; Smith and Akagawa 2009a) and communities (Jameson and Baugher 2007; McManamon and Hatton 2000; Smith and Waterton 2009b). The growing scholarship is an indication of the need to clearly identify and clarify the understanding of intangible heritage and community needs. Article 2 of the ICHC states that:

> The "intangible cultural heritage" means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills—as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity (UNESCO 2003a: 2)

While intangible cultural heritage may not always be associated with a place, social value is often attributed as a collective attachment to heritage places, as demonstrated by Johnston in the discussion paper on 'What is Social Value?'

> Social value is about collective attachment to places that embody meanings important to a community. These places are usually community owned or publicly accessible or in some other ways 'appropriated' into people's daily lives. Such meanings are in addition to other values, such as the evidence of valued aspects of history or beauty, and these meanings may not be obvious in the fabric of the place and may not be apparent to the disinterested observer. (Johnston 1994: 10)

Socio-cultural values extend to the belief systems, rituals and practices in the social life of a community and they can also be attributed to tangible heritage. Encompassing the meanings imbued from the past, they are the continuing traditions, intangible values and also re-connections with the past. The tangible and intangible heritage of groups and communities are often inter-dependent and the values associated with monuments and sites are considered as ICH when they are a part of the living traditions of present-day communities (article 9, 10 UNESCO 2004d).

The recognition and acceptance of the social values and community linkages with heritage places have led to a better understanding and management of some heritage sites. Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in Australia is one significant example. Initially inscribed on the World Heritage List for natural values in 1987, it was subsequently re-inscribed for cultural values in 1994 (DSEWPC 2011; Sullivan 2003: 52–53) and is now listed as an associative cultural landscape. The park was handed back to Anangu, the traditional owners of the land, in a formal ceremony in 1985, thereby acknowledging the traditional custodians and accepting their cultural connections with the site (DSEWPC 2011). The laws were amended to designate the park as Aboriginal land and allow for its joint management by

Anangu and the Government (Sullivan 2003), highlighting the shift to recognition of the linkages of people, communities and their heritage (Rössler 2005).

The UNESCO conventions on safeguarding ICH (2003a) and Cultural Diversity (2005a) signify the beginning of an emerging trend towards looking at diverse cultures, social values and intangible cultural aspects. Socio-cultural values are regarded as fundamental to heritage conservation and management—they are the 'values attached to an object, building or place because it holds meaning for people or social groups… and contributes to processes of cultural affiliation' (Mason 2002: 11). While the acknowledgement of intangible cultural heritage by the international community through the ICHC is a milestone, it is yet far from ideal and is not without concerns, as explained below.

The ICHC is viewed as a counterpoint to WHC and an attempt to favour non-Western constructs of heritage (Smith and Akagawa 2009b: 1). Since it is unclear as to why intangible cultural forms remain, change or disappear altogether over time, intervention by government or other agencies may not be desirable and could even be damaging (Deacon et al. 2004: 10). Nevertheless, a serious criticism of the ICHC was the power it vested to national and sub-national governments and the authority it gave them to decide what to protect and who the relevant communities were (Deacon et al. 2004; Marrie 2009). This can often place communities in a disadvantageous position and they may be required to lobby governments through their own representative organisations to claim ownership of their ICH. It was no longer sufficient for people to know who they were; they also had to demonstrate their tangible links with the landscape as an exercise in heritage and identity building (Byrne 2008: 170). The global approach defined by the convention may cause serious problems for marginal communities, while a return to local interests can also result in the creation of 'culturally meaningful negotiations' (Kearney 2009: 215, 221–222). The tangible expressions of intangible heritage help in 'remembering' (Beazley 2006) and can often be subject to revival (Truscott 2003). The safeguarding of the ICH and social values is a fundamental cultural right as part of the human rights of every community (Silverman and Ruggles 2007b).

LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND SOCIAL VALUES

Cultural identity has been defined as the end product of human interaction with non-human nature and more poetically, 'the fragrance of the earth, the myths we live on and legends that sustain us, the ballads that we sing, the multi-layered idiom of our poetical tradition, or our concepts of heaven and hell' (Raza 1990: 92). Community cultural connections are those that imbue *life* into the heritage of an object or a place, and heritage managers now realise that physical heritage should not be managed in isolation from its 'custodians' (Hall and McArthur 1996: 3). Although 'community' has become synonymous with doing the right thing in achieving best practice in heritage projects, it emerged from a fundamentally challenging and uncomfortable context (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 13–14).

Some decades ago, archaeologists did not think twice about the practical ramifications of archaeological research for Indigenous people, in terms of dealing with their living cultural heritage and taking control of its management. These attitudes often had the likelihood of empowering or disempowering the people involved (Smith and Wobst 2005a: 6–7). Growing dissent amongst Indigenous traditional owners and post-processual thinking favoured the development of the notion of 'Indigenous archaeology' in the European-settled nations of Australia, America Canada and New Zealand. While this resulted in Indigenous community-inclusive approaches to heritage; it was not a simple process (for detailed discussions see Smith 1997). Nonetheless, the values attributed by local communities can be markedly different from those of the experts. Breglia demonstrates this through a case study of a Maya site in Mexico:

> For many (especially older) residents... the mounds are part of the natural landscape... for local Maya, mounds are not strictly "archaeological" features... Here, mounds are part of an integrated landscape valued not specifically as archaeological heritage, but as what they call ejido or federal land granted to rural communities in the 1930s... (2007: 90–91)

The connectedness of people and place and the need to recognise social units as well as architectural fabric in understanding heritage was advocated in a charter for the conservation of historic villages and rural areas prepared by the Sri Lanka ICOMOS in 1988 (in Johnston 1994: 6). In addition, community involvement in heritage management is now a significant feature of heritage studies, with the active participation of communities and experts having developed organically through consultation (Smith et al. 2003: 65). Community-based research as demonstrated by the Waanyi Women's Project (Smith et al. 2003) and the case studies presented by Greer et al. (2002) have challenged conventional approaches and reversed the roles of the community and professionals.

In order to illustrate the power of community involvement, an example from the author's professional experience is included. The involvement of a local community leading to the success of heritage management has recently been demonstrated by the small village community of Basgo in the Ladakh province of Kashmir, India. The village association called the 'Basgo Welfare Committee' has set an example globally with the help of a national NGO in the successful restoration of their Buddhist temples 'Chamba Lha-Khang' and 'Chamchung' (Photographs 2.1, 2.2). The village community showed dedication and commitment through their fund-raising ventures and contributions in cash and kind for the restoration project. The project received a 'matching grant' from the World Monuments Fund (WMF), which meant the villagers had to provide the matched grant. The funds raised by the village through their traditional 'mobile theatre', which performed through several winters to generate funds, along with donations and resources from villagers, donors and other agencies (as well as contributions of building materials and 'work' from villagers) added up enough to match the WMF grant. The project has recently been given the award of excellence by the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards for Culture Heritage Conservation for the year 2007:

> The Award of Excellence winner, the Maitreya Temples complex in Ladakh, India, sets a regional standard for conservation that combines grass-roots advocacy with the highest levels of technical excellence. The sustained efforts by the Basgo Welfare Committee to underpin development with heritage conservation have placed culture at the centre of community revitalization; while the contributions of the local community, in terms of both skills and resources, have allowed for the safeguarding of an iconic, but endangered part of the heritage of the Himalayan region (UNESCO 2007b)

Continuity of living traditions was also acknowledged in allowing the partial re-painting of a damaged mural. The face of the figure of a seated Buddha was completely damaged due to water seepage. The damaged parts, including the face, were repainted by a local monk who continues the mural-painting tradition in the Ladakhi temples. The village community stands proud today, as they have successfully restored their place of worship and set a positive example for other villages in the region. This was also a case in which roles were reversed in the empowering of heritage professionals involved in the project. The local villagers, the prime custodians of the temples, voluntarily strived for the continued conservation of the temples. Community values and local involvement are thus crucial to the safeguarding of heritage, and their continued use ensures the long-term protection of heritage.

Photograph 2.1 (above) Buddhist temples of Basgo in the background with the archaeological remains of the fortified citadel in the foreground

Photograph 2.2 (right) Basgo villagers moving a big pile of rocks from one end of the hill to the other and in the process contributing (in kind) to the restoration process

Communities and their connections with heritage have not always been as straightforward as illustrated in the example above. In fact, communities were both polysemic and polemic (Smith and Waterton 2009a; Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996), and concerns were raised from many quarters including Indigenous, non-Western and other groups regarding *whose* heritage was being conserved. This was particularly pronounced in culturally plural societies, in which divergent identities resulted in conservation becoming a political exercise (Tunbridge 2008: 236–238). In Australia, as in the North

Americas, Indigenous claims for recognition and identity were often centred on land rights and archaeological debates concerning re-burial and repatriation (Layton 2008; Smith and Waterton 2009a). Some communities have succeeded in establishing their heritage claims[35], while others have failed to establish their stakes[36].

Although there has been a big shift to include social values and to conserve intangible cultural heritage, the deep seated Western or European ideologies need considerable re-alignment to suit alternative cultural contexts and the cultural needs of local communities. Whilst the ICHC has endeavoured to appreciate the non-Western contexts, the global approach that prioritises state or global community concerns 'dis-empowers the majority of Indigenous groups by denying the authority, cultural rights and power' to define their intangible cultural heritage (Kearney 2009: 221–222) while popular religion and practices continue to be excluded (Byrne 2009a: 249). Holistic or integrated approaches to heritage conservation and management, while difficult to execute due to the inherent social, political and other conflicts, may well have the answers in linking community values to the tangible heritage and in acknowledging the different stakeholders and their varied and often conflicting interests.

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS: LINKING THE INTANGIBLE AND THE TANGIBLE

UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura in his speech at the opening ceremony of the international symposium 'Safeguarding of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage' in Nara, Japan said:

> that a new, inclusive and, where appropriate, unified vision of heritage… an integrated approach, which respects the diversity of cultures and which acknowledges the interdependencies of tangible and intangible heritages as well as their autonomy, will have to be studied and translated into concrete measures of implementation…(UNESCO 2004b: 12)

Article 6 of the Yamato Declaration which resulted from the above symposium states that:

> further recalling that intangible cultural heritage is defined in the 2003 Convention as "the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills—as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage [… and that …] this intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity" (UNESCO 2004c: 18)

While this sums up the growing consciousness of the need to view heritage holistically and understand communities and their connections, it is fraught with complexities (Meskell 2009a; Smith and Akagawa 2009a; Smith and Waterton 2009b). As stated elsewhere, communities are inherently

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[35] The case of Domboshava in Zimbabwe is a classic example in which access to the painted rock shelter site was initially denied, but later revoked due to the agitations and acts of vandalism by the local communities (for details see Chirikure and Pwiti 2008: 469 – 470)

[36] Native title claim by Yorta Yorta community in south-eastern Australia proved unsuccessful (for details see Ellemor 2003 in Smith and Waterton 2009a: 83 – 84)

dissonant, as the definition of belonging by one community invariably excludes another. The hegemonic 'authorised heritage discourse (AHD)' has privileged the expert and institutionalised opinions, while undermining the alternative notions of heritage (Smith 2006: 11).

Cultural connections are critical to the holistic understanding of a heritage site and its significance, while raising questions within heritage management as to who decides what is significant and who the custodians are. The 'hands-off' approach to built-heritage conservation—to do as much as needed, but as little as possible, developed in the Western context through the charters—is often not suited to cultural heritage in Asian or Indigenous contexts. Here, cultural continuity exists and the temples, buildings and other assets are in continuous use; as such, an approach that maintains the physical fabric alone (by restoration or renovation) is often not sufficient. Moreover, communities such as those involved in the Basgo Buddhist temple restoration described above, find it unacceptable when experts make decisions regarding their place of worship. If the original mural was not allowed to be repaired, the village community was prepared to repaint the entire panel. The heritage team acknowledged the villagers' cultural connections, responsibilities and sense of ownership in organising the re-painting of the mural to be done using traditional techniques. Aspects of cultural connections, the social and cultural values, including popular religious beliefs, have to be acknowledged and encouraged to maintain cultural continuity and encourage a holistic conservation of the place. In so doing, the custodians of the heritage place are acknowledged and accepted, which allows for a healthy dialogue to take place between the expert community and the other interested communities.

These issues mean that a number of existing approaches need to be altered. As Lee has demonstrated through her Canadian example, there is a need to encourage and involve local people in the management of their heritage assets and for their cultural understanding of the landscapes to be integrated into the identification, evaluation and management of protected areas (2008: 380). Lee refers to a new approach in terms of a cultural landscape that integrates cultural and natural values; to approach the landscape as a whole, rather than focusing on individual sites, whilst amending existing laws to suit local needs (2008). Though the amendment of laws may not be feasible in many instances, the need to integrate concepts and thinking early on in any heritage conservation or management project is clearly indicated. Another way forward was demonstrated through the possibility of re-connecting people with place through an understanding of intangible heritage practices recorded through oral history and traditions (Robertson 2009). The project proposed in the context of the Western Isles (off the West coast of Scotland) aimed to explore both the role of oral traditions in archaeology and the responsibilities of archaeologists to the communities under study, as well as the role of oral history and tradition in the construction of cultural identity (Robertson 2009: 160).

CONCLUSION

This chapter began by asking whether the villagers of the Angkor region related to the World Heritage in any way, drawing attention to the questions about who owns the past, who needs it and who decides what is important. In deciding what was heritage and what was important, influences from the late nineteenth century 'Age of Enlightenment' played a formative part. Positivism guiding processual archaeology emphasised a scientific understanding of the past, while post-processual archaeology challenged the prevailing thinking. Architectural conservation guided by pragmatism by contrast, was guided by science and truth. These parallel, but similar ideologies in archaeology and architectural conservation directed the management of cultural heritage, guided by charters written by experts. While early philosophies guided the way heritage was managed, the fundamental notion of heritage itself has undergone considerable transformations.

Heritage, a legacy of material inheritances, has broadened to include spiritual and intellectual legacies, including collective memories of the past. While on one hand heritage is exploited as a commodity and consumed as a product, on the other it is seen as power, identity and knowledge. All heritages are inherently intangible and are part of a cultural process. Heritage is continuously changing, being created/recreated, negotiated/renegotiated, connected and reconnected. In other words, the constant transformation of heritage, a cultural process, is also heritage. Although heritage is a cultural process, it is also inherently dissonant: 'all heritage is dissonant to someone and all dissonance is someone's heritage' (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996: 263). Dissonance is particularly obvious in the universalisation of heritage or World Heritage.

Concerns for the protection of heritage materialised through global institutions and national bodies established to manage heritage, guided by charters, conventions and relevant legislation. These formal documents all focused on the protection of tangible heritage until the 1990s. Their focus was solely on material heritage, and they were framed in elite European/Western contexts and were soon challenged. The Nara Document was a significant step in stressing the need to move away from Western/Eurocentric frames of reference. The need to redefine approaches to specific needs and contexts led to the drafting of many contextualised charters. These also incorporated the concern for intangible heritage, which resulted in the ICHC. While ICHC was heralded as a counterpoint to WHC and regarded as a voice of non-Western nations, the convention was not without concerns. While early Eurocentric approaches were criticised for freezing tangible cultural heritage, some aspects of the ICHC were similar in the approach to identifying intangible cultural heritage practices and people, which had the potential to enshrine some cultural practices at the expense of others.

Despite the problems with ICHC, it has highlighted the context of communities and their contributions. Relevant communities are accepted in some heritage contexts as custodians, but the use

of the term 'community' in heritage has also become synonymous with 'doing the right thing' (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 13). Although this shift to include local intangible heritage and values is commendable, heritage management practices entrenched in Western ideologies need considerable realignment to suit local cultural contexts, and to include popular religion and practices. An integrated or holistic approach, linking both tangible and intangible heritage, may result in a possible resolution of the issues, but there is no simple solution. A number of existing approaches need to be altered and there needs to be encouragement to include local people in heritage management. Inter-disciplinary approaches and a combination of methods are important. As Low explains:

> The ultimate aim of conservation is not to conserve material for its own sake but, rather, to maintain (and shape) the values embodied by the heritage—with physical intervention or treatment being one of many means toward that end. To achieve that end, such that the heritage is meaningful to those whom it is intended to benefit (i.e., future generations), it is necessary to examine *why* and *how* heritage is valued, and by *whom* (*my emphasis* 2002: 35)

At the turn of the twenty-first century, emerging trends in cultural heritage concepts have laid emphasis on a holistic approach to the inclusive management of both the tangible and the intangible heritage (Albert et al. 2007). The interests and values of local Cambodians in the context of Angkor are thus an important component of the equation which needs to be incorporated into the management of the Angkor cultural landscape. The next chapter outlines the heritage management framework governing the Angkor World Heritage Site.

CHAPTER 3 ANGKOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK MANAGEMENT

The introductory chapter set out briefly the physical, historical and socio-political context of Cambodia. Chapter 2 illustrated the progressive changes to the understanding of heritage, its underlying philosophies and its management. A holistic approach to heritage management, an integrated approach which includes both the tangible heritage and the associated social values that is fair and beneficial to all communities concerned is advocated by many (Lee 2008; Rudolff 2006). It is, however, far from reality due to socio-political influences and other complexities (also see Graham and Howard 2008a). Despite the unresolved debates and issues concerning the identification and management of intangible heritage (Smith and Akagawa 2009a), the local values of the contemporary population living around heritage sites are important and must be included in the heritage assessment of any site (Crooke 2008: 423; Logan 2008). This research stresses the need to understand the cultural connections of the local Khmers living within the Angkor World Heritage Site (AWHS) with the archaeological remains.

An understanding of the contemporary heritage management framework in practice will add to an understanding of AWHS. Following the nomination of Angkor for World Heritage listing, a number of international teams have been involved in the documentation, conservation and management of the monuments in the Angkor region. The APSARA Authority works with these foreign teams and the International Coordination Committee (ICC) that was set up to oversee the management of the World Heritage site. While the large numbers of players bring in a great deal of funding, and help in building up the knowledge base of Angkor, parallel projects with diverse approaches increase the complexity and add ambiguity to the management of AWHS. The management of AWHS will be discussed in detail in the following sections. A brief introduction to the Angkor Park of 1925 introduces the discussion, followed by a brief outline of the post-war conditions leading to the World Heritage nomination. The complexities of managing AWHS are illustrated through the description and discussion of the ICOMOS recommendations, the Zoning and Environmental Management Plan (ZEMP) and International Coordination Committee and APSARA, and the various legislation relevant to the park and its residents.

PARC D'ANGKOR, 1925

The French involvement in safeguarding the Angkor monuments began after the establishment of the protectorate in 1863. The Angkor Conservation Office (ACO) established in 1907 played a crucial role in the early conservation efforts (Wager 1995a: 516). In their attempts to document, photograph and restore temples, invasive vegetation was

cleared and as a result the image of the jungle began to be altered. Although the efforts were slow and painstaking, a map created in 1908 helped the French researchers to understand the territory and create routes for visitors (Dagens 1995: 99). Around 200 people visited Angkor in 1907, raising concerns amongst conservators that the general protection measures of the decree of 9 March 1900 were no longer adequate to manage tourism. Another concern raised was that of tourist accommodation; a comfortable bungalow was proposed outside the walls of Angkor Wat, because an existing *sala*[37] inside the Angkor Wat site was basic and could sleep only eight people (BEFEO 1907: 420; Loti 1999). This *sala* was meant for the stay of pilgrims and had been used by Garnier (1996) in 1866.
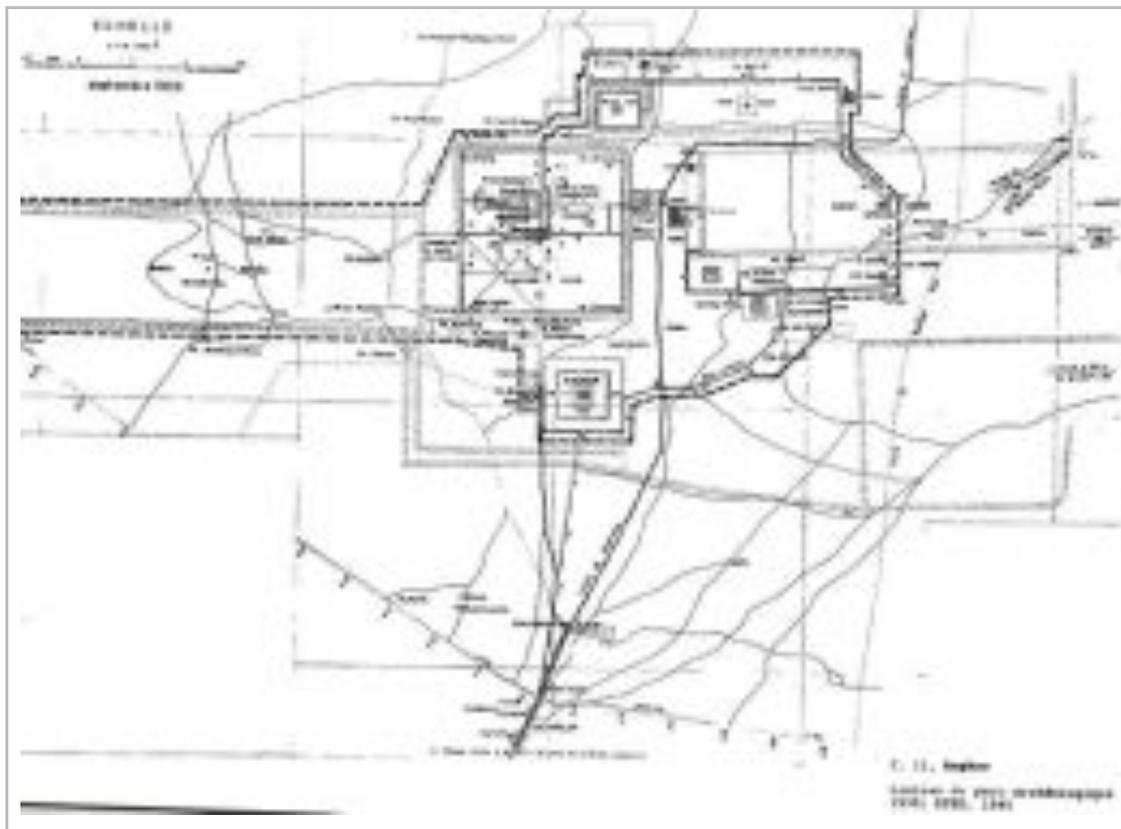
Figure 3.1 Angkor Archaeological Park, 1930 (UNESCO 1992b) (Note: dashed line indicates the limits of the archaeological park)

Angkor Park was officially acknowledged in 1925 (Dagens 1995: 96–100), its routes[38] and cleared temples marking the creation of a designated tourist zone (Edwards 2007: 155). A serious problem faced by French curators at this time was the vandalism of the temples and

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[37] (Loti 1999: 30 – 31) Pierre Loti visited Angkor Wat in 1901 and stayed in the *sala* for around 2 days: 'At the very foot of this crushing mass of sculptured stone [Angkor Wat], we come upon the village from where... chanted prayers arise. Overhung by a few tall, frail palm trees are little houses on piles, constructed very lightly of wood and mats… around 200 monks dedicated to the guardianship of the sacred ruins, live there in continual prayer, chanting day and night…

[38] (Dagens 1995: 99) The routes traced before this time included a 'long' and 'short' circuit. Interestingly, these routes are still used in the tour guides today, often leading to congestion in the monuments, as the same routes are followed by different tour groups.

theft of sculptures by tourists (Porée and Maspero 1952: 63). Although efforts were made to monitor the temples, it was difficult to maintain security. Motor traffic issues also needed to be dealt with and parking restrictions and speed limits of 30 kilometres per hour were imposed throughout the park in 1926 (Dagens 1995: 84). New laws helped improve the efficiency of Park management. On 30 October 1925 *Parc d'Angkor*, a reserved area comprising the major archaeological monuments of the Angkor group was established; on 16 December 1926 Park limits were fixed and later revised on 21 May 1930 (Figure 3.1), 30 September 1929, 20 January 1931 and on 31 December 1934 prescribed visitor fees were established (BEFEO 1935: 588–590).

The priorities of the French in their approach to managing the Angkor Park were evident. In keeping with the conservation ethics of the time, the monuments were cleared of vegetation to ensure visibility and easy access. They were restored as far as possible to their original state, focusing solely on monumentality and aesthetics. To improve visibility, some fifty huts[39] (BEFEO 1907: 421), housing monks to the west of Angkor Wat were removed by 1910 (Commaille 1909)[40]. According to the administrative documents:

> Due to the combined efforts of the government and the Society of Angkor, the monasteries that littered the terrace of the building earlier and hid the noble façade, were moved, troublesome trees cut down, and the monument now appears throughout the whole extent (BEFEO 1910: 742)

The monk huts[41] were relocated to the north of Angkor Wat (Thomson 1875: 136)[42]. While access and visibility were improved and tourist numbers were expected to increase, the need for adequate accommodation led to the opening in 1910[43] of a comfortable bungalow that housed twenty to thirty to the west of the external enclosure of Angkor Wat (BEFEO 1910: 743; Candee and Bigham 2008: 210–223). Horses, elephants and a twelve seater car were

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[39] (Kennedy 1867: 307) 'Our quarters... were in one of the numerous *salas*, erected from time to time by merit-making visitors in the spacious enclosure which surrounds the great temple [Angkor Wat]... About thirty or forty priests have fixed their habitations under the shelter of the ruins...

[40] (Commaille 1909; BEFEO 1909: 823) The monks' quarters were removed with the permission of the head monk in Phnom Penh, and the monks were given $1600 as indemnity, for the move. The monks moved willingly, to the west of the Buddhist Vihear which had existed for a while

[41] (Garnier 1996: 11) When Garnier visited Angkor Wat in 1866: '…under the walls of the edifice itself, are the quarters of the monks who tended the ancient sanctuary. Next to these quarters, on the same esplanade, there is another hut, constructed in bamboo like the others, where the pilgrims that are attracted to the holy place find shelter'. Garnier stayed here for the duration of his visit.

[42] (Thomson 1875) John Thomson, a photographer who travelled to Angkor in 1867, remarked: 'The secret of my emotion lay in the extreme contrast between Nakhon Wat—rising with all the power which magnitude of proportions can give, a sculpted giant pyramid amid forests and jungle-clad plains—and the grass-thatched huts, the rude primitive structures which are all that the present inhabitants have either wish or ability to set up'

[43] (Candee and Bigham 2008: 61, 210–223) Candee who travelled to Angkor in the early 1920s gives a vivid account of her stay in the Bungalow, described by her as luxurious. Her accounts also indicate the presence of a village to the west of the Angkor Wat moat (Trapeang Seh).

provided for tourists and an annexe was added to the bungalow in 1911. The monastery occupied by the monks to the north-west of Bayon was also evacuated[44] (BEFEO 1911: 475).

Figure 3.2 Photograph from the late 1860s showing monk huts around Angkor Wat—Photograph by Emile Gsell © Musée Guimet, dist RMN/Droits réservés

Figure 3.3 Monk huts to the north of Angkor Wat (Dieulefils and Finot 2001)

Figure 3.4 Monk huts at the base of the cruciform terrace (Dieulefils and Finot 2001)

Figure 3.5 First panoramic view of Angkor Wat's western front in 1866, photographed by John Thomson (Dagens 1995: 42–43) (note: *sala* to the left)[45]

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[44] (BEFEO 1911: 475) The monks evacuated on the condition that the pagoda housing the large statue of Buddha would be maintained and a *sala* for travellers would be developed.

[45] (Thomson 1867: 21) The hut on the left represents the dwelling of one of the priests attached to the temple.

Edwards (2007: 26), in her monograph on Cambodia, emphasised that the French attempted to establish Cambodia's continuity with its Angkorian past through restoration and presentation of the ruins in accordance with European aesthetic standards and by authenticating Angkor's status as a national monument. Further, she claimed that they ruptured the connections of the contemporary community by secularising the area, failed to acknowledge the local community's ritual connections with the landscape and altered the forest by clearing—thereby seriously altering their supernatural world of spirits (Edwards 2007: 126–127, 133, 136). The alteration to the landscape by the French is clearly evident; however it is impossible to understand the social impact of these changes on the local community, as they were not documented. An important factor to bear in mind in conjunction with this view is that the population in the region was much smaller than it is today. The shifting of the monks' quarters in front of Angkor Wat, the monastery near Bayon, and the monastery on top of Bakong[46], however, altered the Cambodian environment definitively and it is reasonable to assume that these actions might have impacted upon the local villagers and their cultural practices.

Early French reports do include brief accounts of royal celebrations and festivities at Angkor Wat (Klobukowski 1909; BEFEO 1909: 822–823) and the celebration of Khmer New Year in Angkor Wat (Carpeaux 1908: 226–227). Nevertheless, as the sole focus of the early French researchers lay in documenting the temples and not the cultural practices, it is difficult to understand the connections of the local people and the temples at the time.

The early philosophies governing archaeology and heritage management dictated the way heritage was managed at Angkor (Edwards 2007: 27–39). Romanticism influenced the way the temples of Ta Prohm and Preah Khan were preserved, as partial ruins in their jungle setting (Winter 2002: 333), in order to evoke the illusions of early French 'rediscovery' (Winter 2007: 116–138). The conservation objectives of the French clearly favoured the monuments over the people. As a result, very little information regarding the villages in Angkor, their rituals and practices is available. 'Archaeologists and anthropologists have often ignored the symbolism and value that archaeological material may hold for their host communities' (foreword by P. J. Ucko in Layton 1994: xiv), and this has impeded the development of a holistic understanding of the cultural pasts of societies.

The French protectorate came to an end in 1953 and King Sihanouk gained control over Cambodia (Chandler 2008: .227), however, the monarchic rule was short-lived and led to a decade of brutal regimes and political instability, the salient aspects of which were

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[46] This will be discussed in Chapter 5.

highlighted in Chapter 1. The outbreak of civil war in the 1970s put an end to all conservation efforts by ACO. Under the post-war political conditions, the ways in which Angkor heritage was to be managed in Cambodia were significantly altered. The creation of AWHS is discussed below.

ANGKOR WORLD HERITAGE SITE

POST-WAR CAMBODIA

Following the return to relative peace and order in the country of Kampuchea (the Khmer name for Cambodia) and the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement (PPA), a temporary government was established in Phnom Penh in 1991 (Chandler 2008: 287). The four Cambodian parties, signatories to PPA, formed a Supreme National Council (SNC) with H.R.H. Prince Norodom Sihanouk in his role as SNC's president, ratified the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, and requested the inclusion of Angkor in the World Heritage list. Cambodia, also a signatory to the 1954 Hague Convention (Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict) and the 1970 Convention (Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Cultural Property), was therefore committed to the protection of the nation's cultural heritage. The 1992 provisional inscription (see below) created the need for appropriate legislation to protect cultural heritage (Ang et al. 1998: 113).

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION

The Angkor Archaeological Park was nominated as World Heritage on the basis of criteria i, ii, iii and iv of the operational guidelines of the World Heritage Convention (WHC) which include the monuments and their archaeological zones. The nomination criteria (italicised) (UNESCO 1992a: 5) in 1992, and the evaluation against these criteria are given below (UNESCO 1992b: 1, 147):

> i) *represent a unique artistic achievement, a masterpiece of the creative* genius;—The Angkor complex represents the entire range of Khmer art from the 9th–14th centuries and includes a number of indisputable artistic masterpieces (e.g. Angkor Vat, the Bayon, Banteay Srei)
> ii) have exerted great influence over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts or town planning and landscaping; or;—The influence of Khmer art, as developed at Angkor was a profound one over much of Southeast Asia and played a fundamental role in its distinctive evolution
> iii) *bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a civilization which has disappeared*;—The Khmer empire of the 9th–14th centuries encompassed much of Southeast Asia and played a formative role in the political and cultural development of the region. All that remains of that civilization is its rich heritage of cult structures in brick and stone.
> iv) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement which is representative of a culture and which has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;—Khmer architecture evolved largely from that of the Indian sub-continent, from which it soon became clearly distinct as it developed its own special characteristics, some independently evolved and

others acquired from neighbouring cultural traditions. The result was a new artistic horizon in oriental art and architecture.

The evaluation against the criteria focused solely on the tangible architecture from the Angkorian period. The nomination documentation provided detailed information regarding history, significant temples, and their conservation history. Proposals for protective measures were also presented and the only significant threat identified was tourism with long-term negative impacts. Nowhere in the nomination were the villages and the local population mentioned. The nomination clearly adhered to the century-long French preoccupation with the tangible remains in Angkor (Winter 2007: 55–56).

The cultural connections of the local population, their cultural values, social practices and attachments to the landscape did not merit any serious attention in these early documents. In helping a war-stricken nation rebuild itself, the emotional, cultural and social wellbeing of its population is as critical as establishing provisions for the conservation and restoration of war-damaged heritage. As Ang et al. have argued 'in planning for a future of healthy social and cultural evolution, this living inheritance [traditional Khmer culture] from the past must be protected with as much if not more care than the great Angkorian monuments themselves' (1998: 126). The primary concern of the international community's attention however, was the conservation and restoration of tangible heritage seriously affected by intense looting and warfare. The extent of the protected area proposed at the time of nomination is shown below (Figure 3.6). The protected area was delineated into zones according to the 1992 resolution proposed by the State of Cambodia (SOC) (UNDP 1993: plan 4). Accordingly, the zones were defined as:

> Zone 1: Temple zone, 30 metre around temples, moats and *baray*
> Zone 2: Archaeological parks, 300 metre around temples, moats and *baray*
> Zone 3: Scheduled zone, 2500 metre around temples, moats and *baray*
> Zone 4: Zone for protection of nature and historic features
> Zone 5: Archaeological protection zone. Areas for archaeological research and excavation

To address monument conservation problems effectively and quickly, the World Heritage Committee (WHC), placed Angkor on the list of endangered World Heritage, granting probationary inscription for the period 1993–1995—a controversial step (Candelaria 2005: 264), subject to conditions. The Cambodian State Party was required to fulfil ICOMOS recommendations in accordance with articles 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the WHC (UNESCO 1972), in order to conserve the archaeological park and remove Angkor from the endangered list. The conditions were that the state:

> a) enact adequate protective legislation;
> b) establish an adequately staffed national protection agency;
> c) establish permanent boundaries based on the UNDP project;
> d) define meaningful buffer zones;

e) establish monitoring and coordination of the international conservation effort (UNESCO 1992b: 1, 147)

The conditions when met would ensure that Angkor remained on the World Heritage list. An integrated Zoning and Environmental Management Plan (ZEMP) was prepared to define zones and protect the cultural and natural resources while ensuring that appropriate development took place. The State Party eventually met all the conditions set by the WHC and Angkor was removed from the endangered list and permanently inscribed as World Heritage in 2004 (Khoun 2006a; UNESCO 2004a). The salient aspects of ZEMP are detailed below.

Resolution of SOC, 1992
Zone1: Temple zone, 30m around temples, moats and *baray*
Zone 2: Archaeological parks, 300m around temples, moats and *baray*
Zone 3: Scheduled zone, 2500 m around temples, moats and *baray*
Zone 4: Zone for protection of nature and historic features
Zone 5: Archaeological protection zone, areas for archaeological research and excavation
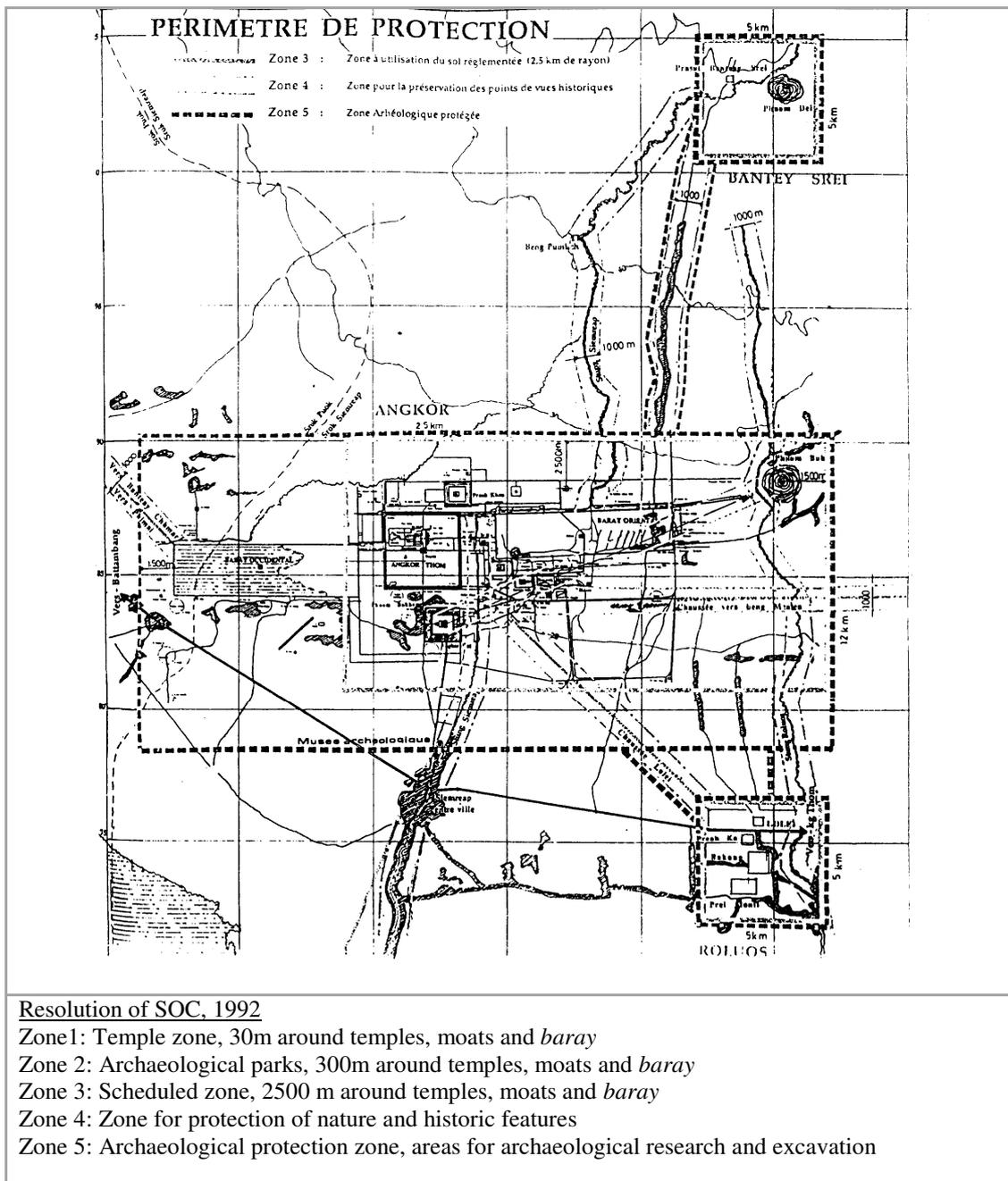
Figure 3.6 SOC—Proposed Limits to the World Heritage Site, 1991 (UNESCO 1992b).

ZEMP: ZONING AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

The ZEMP study initiated by UNESCO was funded by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), along with in-kind, technical assistance from the Angkor Foundation of Hungary, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and EFEO, amongst others. ZEMP was a five month study undertaken by a multi-disciplinary team comprising more than twenty-five Cambodian and international experts. Between December 1992 and April 1993, the ZEMP experts made at least two visits to the site. The first was to survey existing data, interpret aerial photos and provide data in a digitized form for GIS and the second was to participate in a three week workshop to review and analyse the individual expert reports. The approach, which included the application of sustainable development principles and the process of interdisciplinary interaction, helped to synthesise and develop policies, zones and guidelines (UNDP 1993; Wager 1995a, 1995b).

ZEMP was an ambitious project completed within an incredibly short period of time. The study was comprehensive in addressing the large volume of architectural and archaeological remains over a 5000 square kilometre study region. It identified that Khmer traditions continued to exist, even after the sack of Angkor by the Siamese in 1431, carried out by the Buddhist monks who continued to maintain the temple of Angkor Wat, and that separating religion and daily life was inappropriate to understanding Khmer heritage (UNDP 1993: Chap II, 2–7). Further it emphasised that

> It is undesirable to attempt to fossilise village life and then to market the local population as an 'authentic' tourist attraction. Both physical and social change must be allowed to occur. What is important is to avoid unnecessary damage to community life from the negative influences of tourism and at the same time, help villagers unwittingly or by apparent necessity, destroying the archaeology and attractive environment in which they live. The natural environment around the monuments may be preserved but the 'local way of life' should be able to evolve (UNDP 1993: Chap IV, 4)

The study also articulated that, the impoverished local communities needed to improve their health and lives and benefit from ZEMP, and from any opportunities the Angkor Park may offer. Further, the study suggested that,

> any [villager] relocation should be minimal, due to their historical and spiritual ties with their homelands. Development of the archaeological park should not exclude people (UNDP 1993: 3)

The need for the local ways of life to evolve was stressed, but there were no provisions provided to support this. The primary task recognised by ZEMP was the protection of the archaeological sites through a series of hierarchical zones; Restricted Areas (RA)—monument areas, Angkor Park (AP), Special Areas of Archaeological Concern (SAACS) and Angkor Cultural Reserve (ACR). Besides these conservation areas, ZEMP also identified Urban Expansion Zones (UEZ), Urban Conservation Zone (UCZ), Tourism Development Zone

(TDZ), Forest Management Zone, Tonle Sap Flood Plain Protection Zone and Water Corridors. Detailed controls on each zone were provided, along with an agency responsible for its administration. ZEMP comprehensively addressed all areas of Angkor's heritage for protection and also provided provisions to ensure sustainable development. (for further details regarding the protection strategies see Chapters V–VIII UNDP 1993).

The draft policies and management guidelines outlined in the ZEMP document helped the State Party legislate for the protection of the AWHS and meet all the pre-conditions set by ICOMOS to ensure the successful listing of Angkor on the World Heritage List. A Royal decree (*Reachkret*), approved by King H.R.H Norodom Sihanouk in May 1994, defined the zones of protection in the Siem Reap region, but the hierarchical zoning suggested in ZEMP, with monuments warranting the maximum protection was not adopted. Instead, the whole of Angkor Park was made Zone 1, with restrictive protection measures, as discussed below.

ICC: INTERNATIONAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

The International Coordinating Committee was established in October 1993 following the intergovernmental conference 'Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Site of Angkor' held in Tokyo. The committee, chaired jointly by France and Japan, along with the Cambodian authorities, was responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring international conservation efforts at Angkor (Tokyo Declaration, UNESCO 1995a: 1). ICC had organised two plenary sessions in 1993–94 and four technical committee meetings in 1994–95. The plenary session organised at Phnom Penh (21–22 December 1993) received project proposals from eleven countries and several international agencies, establishing the relevance of international cooperation. The first technical committee met on 21 March 1994 in Phnom Penh, bringing together more than twenty countries and a number of international organisations, signifying the importance of Angkor to the international community. In addition, an *Ad hoc* group of experts was created in 1997 to advise APSARA on technical solutions to specific problems (solely with regards to tangible heritage resources). All national and international projects were required to be submitted to the ICC via the technical committee for approval. In addition, any recommendation proposed by the *Ad hoc* group was required to be followed strictly (APSARA 2005b).

The mechanisms established through the ICC allowed APSARA to collaborate with the international agencies on the various projects undertaken at Angkor, thereby strengthening their technical capabilities. The ICC has met without fail twice a year, and by 2002, 100 projects had been implemented, 15 monuments restored and over 500 reports published (Lemaistre and Cavalier 2002: 119). Most recently, the eighteenth technical session was held

in June 2009 and the sixteenth plenary session held in December 2009. Following the success of ICC in the war torn nation of Cambodia, UNESCO has extended the concept to other countries emerging from war and conflicts, including Afghanistan (2002) and Iraq (2007a). The second intergovernmental conference on Angkor held in Paris in November 2003 provided new directions, which will be discussed in the section on the APSARA Authority.

ICC's heavy emphasis on the safeguarding of tangible heritage is by no means an exaggeration. Since 2004, there has been some focus on the park communities since the creation of the new APSARA departments, as detailed later in this chapter. Although the 'Angkor Management Plan' (implemented in January 2009), completed with funding from New Zealand Aid (discussion to follow), and the 'Heritage Management Framework' proposed by the Australian government have both addressed local community needs and stressed the inclusion of intangible heritage, a large percentage of ICC's time and energy has been directed towards Angkor's tangible heritage. Eighteen years since the listing of Angkor Park on the World Heritage list and six years since its removal from the endangered list, it would seem an appropriate time for the ICC to shift a greater degree of focus to a more holistic management approach that includes the tangible heritage and its social values. Such a re-emphasis would stress the inclusion of local community values, establish their cultural connections and move the process beyond merely creating inventories of tangible and intangible cultural heritage (UNESCO 2004b).

ROYAL DECREE AND OTHER LEGAL PROVISIONS

The Royal decree[47] 001/NS dated 28 May 1994 was fundamental in meeting the pre-conditions set by ICOMOS and realising the objectives outlined by the ZEMP study. The legislation allowed for the implementation of the zoning proposals of ZEMP (APSARA 2005c), and was drafted in two parts, the first of which established the protected cultural zones in Siem Reap region and the second provided the guidelines for their management (Figure 3.7). The zones defined by the Royal decree are:

> Zone 1: Monumental Sites
> Zone 2: Protected Archaeological Reserves
> Zone 3: Protected Cultural Landscapes
> Zone 4: Sites of Archaeological, Anthropological or Historic Interest
> Zone 5: The socio-economic and cultural development zone of the Seam Reap Region

As stated earlier, there was a fundamental problem in the translation of the ZEMP zones to those legislated by APSARA. Zone 1, designated as the monumental sites, does not relate to the immediate boundaries of the significant monuments, as specified by ZEMP and SOC, but includes the large Angkor Park, with a large number of established villages. Zone 2 was

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[47] For APSARA laws, see http://www.autoriteapsara.org/en/apsara/about_apsara/legal_texts.html

essentially a buffer zone proposed by SOC for purposes of the World Heritage nomination, but has been translated as Protected Archaeological Reserves in the Royal decree. Zone 2 in the case of Roluos and Banteay Srei is particularly meaningless, as it is only a fifty metre-wide buffer. Zone 3, proposed along linear features such as roads and waterways, has been termed as Protected Cultural Landscapes in the APSARA zone. This definition is also ambiguous because the entire World Heritage site is a cultural landscape. In other words, all five zones have been wrongly interpreted from what was proposed by SOC and later by ZEMP. This misinterpreted classification has caused serious problems in the management of heritage, as will be demonstrated through the findings detailed in Chapters 7 and 8.
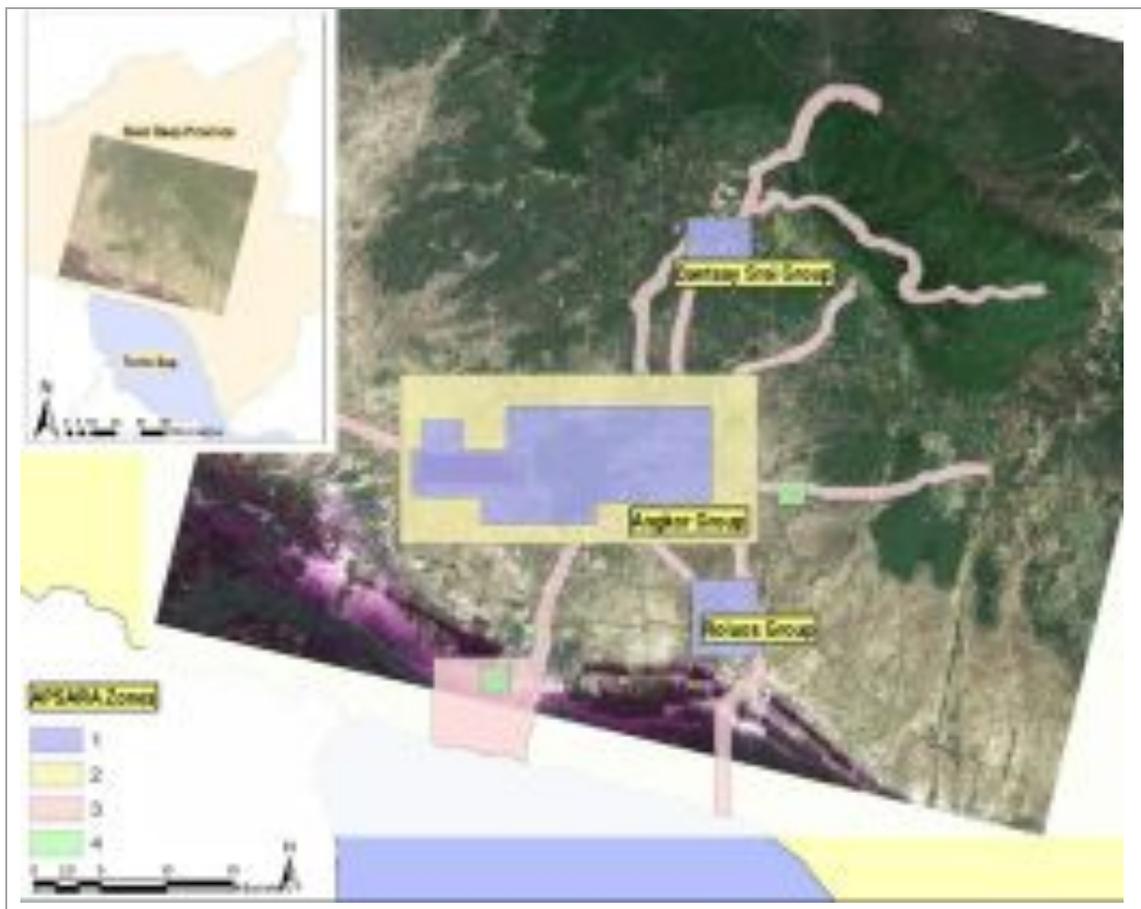
Figure 3.7 Angkor World Heritage Site Zoning Map in accordance with the Royal decree, 1994. The province of Siem Reap (inset) is Zone 5. 2004 SPOT5 imagery overlaid with APSARA zones

A Royal decree NS/RKT/0295/12 dated 19 February 1995 established the national authority for the Protection and Management of Angkor and the region of Siem Reap (APSARA), and a Royal decree NS/RKT/0295/11 dated 19 February 1995 established the Supreme Council on National Culture. Subsequently, a Royal decree NS/RKM/0196/26 dated 25 January 1996 passed the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage in Cambodia. Further to these fundamental pieces of legislation, a number of sub-decrees were issued, including one which established the Hotel Zone (79/ANKR/PK in 1995) and a special police corps for the

protection of cultural heritage (60/ANKR/PK in 1997). While it is beyond the scope of this study to discuss the legislation in detail, the parameters relevant to the present study and the Roluos zone will be presented in the later sections.

APSARA AUTHORITY

APSARA (Authority for the Protection and Management of Angkor and the Region of Siem Reap) was established to conform to the royal decree NS/RKT/0295/12 enacted on 19 February 1995. The act was subsequently amended by royal decree NS/RKT/0199/18, passed on 22 January 1999, to provide statutory powers to APSARA to act as the sole authority approving new constructions at the Angkor site. Article 6 of the decree clearly outlines the Authority's legal powers. APSARA has legal, administrative and financial autonomy. APSARA's principal task is illustrated through its Khmer slogan 'Conservation for the Development and Development to strengthen the Conservation' (APSARA booklet distributed to the commune offices, 2004).

The APSARA Authority has grown from a small organisation of around twenty staff in the initial years to a large institution of 360 employees (APSARA 2008), with a number of departments being responsible for various aspects of the AWHS management. The Authority has successfully carried out its duties in the conservation of the tangible heritage and in meeting the obligations of UNESCO's WHC and ICC. However, since the regional Asian seminar on 'Preservation and Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage' (UNESCO 1998) and 'Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention' (UNESCO 2003a), UNESCO's mandate has broadened to include intangible cultural heritage and local communities. The Second Intergovernmental Conference for the safeguarding and sustainable development of Angkor and its region was held in Paris on 14 & 15 November 2003 (UNESCO 2003b). The prime focus was 'sustainable growth as a crucial factor in poverty alleviation'[48]. This called for a re-structure of the APSARA Authority and four additional departments, the Department of Monuments and Archaeology 2 (DMA2), Department of Water and Forests (DWF), Department of Demography and Development (DDD) and Mix Intervention Unit (MIU) were created in 2004 (Khoun 2006a: 3). The new departments' obligations have included a strong focus regarding the local communities living within the Angkor Park. Their duties include promoting heritage awareness, legislation awareness and sustainable development, dealing with both agriculture and forest resources while also combating the illegal activities of land grabbing and illicit construction.

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[48] Message from the Prime Minister Hun Sen at the second intergovernmental conference for the safeguarding of Angkor and its region, November 2003

APSARA has been recently restructured following the recommendations of the Angkor Management Plan completed in early 2007. A sub-decree enabled the restructure and the changing of the departments' roles and names (RGC 2008a). The former DMA2 has been renamed the Department of Land Planning and Habitat Management (DLPHM) responsible for matters relating to the local residents in the Angkor Park including the issue of building permits, promoting heritage awareness and implementing community development projects. The Department of Order and Cooperation (DOC) was first created on 20 September 2006 by a sub-decree (96 ANK.BK) which amended an earlier sub-decree (15 ANK.BK dated 11 June 2004) and continues to function with the recent restructure (Khoun 2009: *personal communication*) employing forty people to act as wardens in protecting the tangible heritage and in transforming the locals' antagonistic views towards APSARA (Howse et al. 2007d: 56; Tan 2006). DOC staff members enforce the law through coercion, however, it has done little to change local attitudes towards APSARA. Fieldwork conducted as part of this research has validated this aspect and will be discussed in detail in Chapters 7 and 8.

COMPLEXITIES REGARDING ANGKOR PARK MANAGEMENT

There are a number of issues concerning the management of the Angkor Park. While there are some serious issues with regards to the physical conservation of tangible heritage, it is beyond the scope of this study to address concerns such as the night lighting of Angkor Wat. The following sections outline some of the additional organisational and political structures which add considerable complexity to the management of Angkor Park.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT BODIES

The Cambodian state is divided into a number of administrative units, which include the *khet* (province), *srok* (district), *khum* (commune) and *phum* (village). These administrative divisions are managed by the provincial government bodies—the provincial office headed by a governor, district office and commune office. A village is the smallest unit, managed by a village chief. The APSARA Authority, since its creation, has been responsible for managing the Angkor Park. As illustrated earlier, the APSARA Authority has been provisioned with exclusive rights to authorise building constructions within the Angkor Park's protected zones (article 6, item 1, RGC 1999). While APSARA is responsible for safeguarding Angkorian heritage and approving development applications, the provincial bodies continue to be responsible for regional administration and infrastructure.

When APSARA was initially established, there were many tensions with the provincial bodies, as the latter were reluctant to acknowledge APSARA's autonomy. This sometimes

impacted on the management of the Park's heritage, as, for example, when a section of West Baray embankment was damaged by an international agency working on an irrigation project in conjunction with the central ministry of Cambodia (Pottier 2006b). The agency was working with the provincial bodies, but there was no communication with APSARA, and damage resulted. Although the work was immediately stopped, it highlighted the necessity for improved communications between the provincial bodies and APSARA (Hang 2007). APSARA has since been working on improving networks with the provincial bodies.

The presence of multiple authorities governed by plural legislation brings additional complications to the existing management structures. While the autonomy and power granted to APSARA is essential for successfully safeguarding Angkor's World Heritage status, the local communities are often left in the lurch as they struggle to comprehend which agency is responsible for which local issue. This is often a 'riddle' that needs to be solved by the local communities; in other words, it is a conundrum. Fieldwork conducted as part of this research revealed that the local communities were often confused about the structure and responsibilities of different authorities, although APSARA was taking steps to amend this situation. These aspects will be discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

ISSUES REGARDING ZONE BOUNDARIES

The ambiguity in the definition of APSARA zones was raised above. A fundamental problem was the translation of the zones delineated by SOC and ZEMP for legislation. The maximum protection for monuments proposed in the SOC and ZEMP documents has not been adhered to, instead, the entire Angkor Park, legislated as Zone 1, has a high level of protection. The large number of monuments, more than a hundred villages and a consistently growing population complicates the management of this zone (Figure 3.8).

Concerns regarding the size of the heritage protection zones were raised by Wager, ZEMP team leader:

> A zone that requires maximum protection and intensive site management should not be made too large because: (1) large areas require more resources of finance and manpower to conserve and these will be in short supply at Angkor; and (2) strict regulations and management control over large areas will affect the interests of a greater number of inhabitants and thus make enforcement more difficult. (1995b: 424–425)

Despite these concerns, Zone 1 of Angkor Park is now approximately 400 square kilometres (UNESCO 1992b) and includes the Banteay Srei and Roluos groups. The large size and the presence of 112 villages make the management of AWHS rather unwieldy. Five study villages were chosen for this research and are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. They are part of

the Roluos group, which covers approximately 35 square kilometres. Figure 3.9 illustrates the

Zones 1, 2 and 3 around the Roluos group.

Figure 3.8 Villages in Zones 1 and 2 of the Angkor Group. APSARA zones layer, overlaid with archaeological features (Pottier 1999a) and villages (JICA 1998). Zone 1 is represented by dark green and Zone 2 is represented by light green.

Figure 3.9 Villages in Zones 1 and 2 of the Roluos Group. Angkor Zoning layer, overlaid with archaeological features (Pottier 1999a) and villages (JICA 1998). Zone 1 is represented by dark green and Zone 2 is represented by light green.

Figure 3.10 Roluos Group—Zones and Khum (Commune) boundaries. 2004 SPOT5 imagery overlaid with APSARA zones. Zone 1 is represented by dark green and Zone 2 is represented by light green. Khum boundaries are indicated as solid black lines

The Roluos group has two prime protective zones: Zone 1, which has a rectangular boundary measuring approximately three kilometres from the Bakong temple in the centre, and Zone 2, which is an arbitrary buffer of 50 metres in width surrounding Zone 1. Zone 3 is located along the historical road leading north-west from Lolei Baray and along the River Roluos to the east, and the rest of the surrounding region is part of Zone 5 of Siem Reap Province. The zone boundaries have not taken into consideration the existing communes (*khum*). Figure 3.10 illustrates the *khum* lying partially within the zone and partially outside, which makes the commune chief's job very difficult. For both commune chiefs and village chiefs, the management of villager problems is difficult, as some live within Zone 1 and some outside. They find it difficult to explain to the residents living within the zones that they must adhere to APSARA law, while those living outside Zone 1 are not bound by the regulations. This results in another 'riddle' or conundrum that the provincial bodies grapple with. The issues will be discussed in Chapter 7.

RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED ON LOCAL RESIDENTS

Article 17 of the Royal decree (RGC 1994) provides guidelines regarding the local residents:

    a) All protected cultural sites (Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

> Give residents of the protected sites priority of employment in the matters of site management and preservation work.
> b) Zone 1:
> Residential uses should be prohibited.
> Assistance should be given to residents for their relocation, in particular by providing them with land and building materials for their houses and community facilities.
> Residents should be given priority for trading permits/concessions on the sites.
> c) Zone 2:
> Preserve all the old villages.
> Prohibit the expansion of built-up areas.
> Ensure that any new development of existing properties conforms to traditional styles.
> Assist the development of essential community facilities and encourage small-scale tourist facilities linked with village life.

Article 17 made provisions for the preservation of villages and maintenance of existing land-use. New construction was to be prohibited and the existing character of the traditional villages was to be preserved (Ang 2000b). Although the legislation was directed at preserving the traditional villages and preventing unauthorised construction within the zones, it has been largely unsuccessful. An important directive dated 16 September 2004 attempted to prevent further migration into Angkor Park and to maintain the existing land-use in the villages (RGC 2004). Articles 1 and 2 of the directive state that:

> Article 1: All the land in Zones 1 and 2 of Siem Reap-Angkor Sites is State public property, which the APSARA Authority has to manage, preserve, and develop in a sustainable manner.
> Article 2: Standards for utilization of land in Zones 1 and 2 of Siem Reap/Angkor Sites shall be defined as follows:
> - The citizens who have long been dwelling in the Zones may continue living there without being subject to any evacuation;
> - The residents may renovate or repair dilapidated houses, or construct a new house to replace an old one, with authorization from APSARA Authority;
> - The residents are entitled to manage the land, in ways such as the transfer of ownership from parents to their descendants or the sale of their property to other members of the village community, in order to cope with the difficulties of life.

While all of Zones 1 and 2 are declared state public property, some form of ownership is granted to long-term residents (Gillespie 2009: 345), although there is no clear definition of how long 'long-term' is. While the contravening statements can tend to confuse local residents, fieldwork conducted as part of this research revealed that the laws were not being adhered to, as will be demonstrated in Chapters 7 and 8. A great deal of development has taken place in recent years, highlighting the failure of the existing heritage strategies and the difficulties inherent in monitoring such a large and complex site. Wager's warning, cited earlier, regarding large unmanageable zones is one possible reason for APSARA being unable to maintain strict control in spite of the Authority having overarching legal powers.

Despite the unauthorised activities observed during field visits, APSARA had started implementing an eco-village proposal in 2008 with the aim of resolving the issues of growing population and demand for new housing (Khoun 2006a). APSARA had acquired around 1000 hectares to the north-east of the Roluos group in the Run Ta Ek commune, where it proposed

to provide land for those in need of additional space within Zone 1, as families expanded, and for those who were interested in rebuilding their houses or constructing new residences. The basic amenities of infrastructure in the form of roads were being constructed and the Authority had proposed to provide all the facilities required to make the location attractive for the residents of Zone 1 (Khoun 2006a: 5). While the APSARA staff and the provincial government representatives suggested that the eco-village was a brilliant plan to resolve the existing problems, none of the respondents, including the provincial government representatives were willing to relocate from their present residences (Youn 2008). Relocation of local communities as possible solutions to protected area management is increasingly being viewed as politically and ethically unjustifiable, as the cooperation and support of local communities is now considered more important for protected area management (McLean and Stræde 2003: 513–514). A case study of the relocation of village communities from the Royal Chitwan National Park in Nepal demonstrated that relocation had detrimental effects on the villagers' livelihoods, cultural heritage, social structures and jobs (McLean and Stræde 2003: 522). The findings from the interviews with regards to this eco-village are presented in Chapter 7.

TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT

The ZEMP study highlighted tourism and development as the key issues threatening the future protection of the Angkor Park. Despite the detailed policies and management guidelines outlined in the ZEMP study (Chapters VI and VII; description, duties and organisation of managing authorities in Chapter VIII; legislation proposal in Chapter IX and key implementation strategies for implementing ZEMP in Chapter X), Angkor has witnessed a huge surge in tourism and the rate and scale of development in Siem Reap and its surrounding region is unparalleled compared with other Asian cities. There has been a staggering 10,000 percent rise in tourism (Winter 2007: 2) and a large number of hotels now dot the skyline of Siem Reap. According to the WTO mission report of 1991, an estimated total of around 20,000 tourists in 1989 had grown to 60,000 by 1991 (cited in Wager 1995a: 517), and had reached 466,365 in 2000 (Candelaria 2005: 261). The Cambodian ministry of tourism statistics reveal that the total number of visitors who arrived in 2008 was 2,125,465 (RGC 2008b) and 2009 was 2,161,577 (RGC 2010). The projected increase in tourist numbers for 2009 did not materialise due to the Global Financial Crisis. Thus, the Cambodian government's concerted efforts to improve tourism and make Siem Reap more accessible has been very successful, established through the tourist numbers (Heikkila and Peycam 2010; Winter 2007).

The park population in 1992 was approximately 20,000[49] (APSARA 2005b). The first census conducted in 1998 estimated this to have risen to 101,170 (Ponnapalli and Tan 2007) and an analysis of survey data by the team who prepared the Angkor Management Plan (AMP), it was estimated at 111,850 in 2005 (Howse et al. 2007c: 20). CIA's World Fact Book (2010) has predicted a 1.705 percent increase, which would project the population as 190,704 by 2010. New legislation (RGC 2004) to prevent new migrants and new constructions, and to maintain existing settlements, were introduced, but due to insufficient enforcement mechanisms, the population in the park has continued to grow and a large number of new buildings have been constructed. Heritage management in Angkor reflects complex management issues as illustrated in Chapters 7 and 8.

LAND SPECULATION

While the land value in Siem Reap has skyrocketed, land prices in the surrounding region and Angkor Park are also the subject of speculation. Land value increased five-fold between 2007 and 2008 from 10USD to 50USD per square metre (Lolei1-M42 2008). An unfavourable outcome of this has been that outside investors have been buying land from the Zone 2 villages that was originally intended to form a buffer zone for the protection of the Angkorian monuments (APSARA 2008: 13–14). Interviews conducted during the fieldwork for this research also highlighted this development. Large tracts of land between the Roluos group and Tonlé Sap have been purchased by investors from Phnom Penh. The arable land now lying fallow has caused economic problems for the villagers who are increasingly relying on job opportunities in Siem Reap for income. The sale of farm land has provided short-term financial independence for the villagers, who have largely invested in building large masonry houses. It is highly likely that the loss of agricultural land will impact on the livelihood of the villagers and in turn impact upon the sustainability of the region.

Large quantities of land to the north of the Roluos group were sold for the development of the new *Beung Siem Reap* golf resort inaugurated in January 2009 by the Cambodian Prime Minister HE Hun Sen. Although the golf course occupies over 200 hectares of cultivable land, impacting on the livelihoods of hundreds of farmers and costing a huge 450 billion dollars, it is being lauded for the 4000 jobs it proposes to generate (Hun 2009).

THREATENED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

The loss of natural resources and forest cover leading to environmental degradation was identified in the ZEMP document. The post-war years imposed a great deal of stress on the

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[49] The periods between the early 1980s and 1990s also saw large-scale repatriation of refugees who had been displaced before the war.

nation's resources, cultural and natural, resulting in looting of artefacts and heavy illegal logging. As the APSARA newsletter Yashodhara reported regarding social issues 'the most fundamental disturbance to village life has been massive logging in the area since the 1980s' (2000). The loss of forest cover is high in the region between Angkor and the Kulen mountains. A study observing the land cover change between the years 1989–2005 observed an accelerated loss towards the latter half of the period and interestingly, the rate of loss has increased since 1993, after the World Heritage listing (Gaughan et al. 2009). Since 2004, with the addition of community-focused departments, APSARA has attempted to address the issues related to the depletion of environmental resources. The former Department of Demography and Development (DDD), now renamed as the Department of Agriculture and Community Development (DACD), and the former Department of Water and Forests (DWF), now renamed Department of Water (DW), along with other departments, have proposed a series of initiatives aimed at improving local community awareness and socio-economic conditions. These aspects will be discussed in Chapter 7.

These many problems plainly indicate the complexities that exist at Angkor. Although the law clearly underlines APSARA Authority's autonomy and its vested powers, it is not easy for APSARA to exercise this power due to the existing provincial bodies. The provincial bodies have long been responsible for the region and this causes confusion for both the provincial bodies and the local communities. In addition, the competing forces of tourism, land speculation and development and environmental threats complicate the management of Angkor's heritage.

MULTIPLE AGENCIES WORKING AT ANGKOR

A significant aspect of AWHS management is the involvement of a large number of international teams, institutions, NGOs and other agencies. Although the ICC coordinates and approves all the projects, a number of overlapping projects are sometimes undertaken by different agencies. While this illustrates the commitment of the international community in safeguarding Angkor World Heritage, it is not without complications. It is beyond the scope of this research to discuss all these projects; nonetheless there is one project of particular interest, which is discussed below.

A team of researchers funded by New Zealand Aid prepared the Angkor Management Plan (AMP) in 2007 (Howse et al. 2007a, b, c, d), which focused on addressing the immediate issues of tourism and development, and on promoting participatory management approaches. The plan intended to address the shortcomings of ZEMP and has been largely successful in identifying the key problem areas and their influencing factors (APSARA 2008: 16–21). The

plan, accepted by the APSARA Authority, has led to the preparation of the Angkor Participatory Natural Resource Management and Livelihoods Programme (APNRMLP). Consequently, APSARA has reviewed the existing legislation (RGC 2008a), and has undertaken measures to accommodate the changes proposed by the AMP, including a complete re-structure of the organisation. Urgent action-oriented emphasis has been laid on engaging with the key stakeholders and the capacity building of the former DMA2, now renamed as Department of Land Planning and Habitat Management (DLPHM). A number of mini-projects have been identified to improve marginalised communities and improve APSARA relations with the Park's villagers.

The AMP and the APNRMLP are well researched documents aiming to achieve participatory sustainable management for the Park's residents. The projects identified for the socio-economic development of the people and improving the efficiency of the APSARA departments are comprehensive, but do not address the cultural heritage aspects of AWHS. The projects identified for the socio-economic development of the local communities do not include their social practices and do not address the problems related to the Angkorian material heritage. As a consequence, the research lacks a holistic approach to understanding the cultural context of the local community. Based on the number of times that local residents visit the Angkorian temples alone, the report has concluded that local Khmers are largely disconnected from the temples. While the fieldwork for this research also found that local Khmers visit the temples infrequently due to a number of factors, there are other aspects that socially and ritually connect them to the landscape and to some Angkorian temples. These connections, although they are rather tenuous, are not non-existent. Chapters 6, 7 and 8 discuss these aspects.

The Australian Government has recently approved the funding of a 'Heritage Management Framework' (HMF) to be undertaken by an Australian heritage consultancy, at an indicative budget of 1.7 million USD (UNESCO 2008A). The proposed HMF intends to extend the management of Angkor to a larger cultural region of around 1000 square kilometres. The HMF intends to employ an inclusive approach, taking into consideration both the tangible and intangible heritage and the social values of the local communities, and is one of the projects identified by the AMP. The area proposed for intervention by the HMF is very large, however, and the APSARA Authority is currently grappling with the management of the 400 square kilometres of the Park and 112 villages. A further increase in the size of the cultural region will increase the existing complexity. The issues facing the Authority in managing the heritage resources sustainably require urgent action, and the Authority is already in the process of addressing some of the concerns highlighted earlier. The rate of change in Angkor

is extremely rapid and the proposed HMF, while being a burden on financial resources, will also require crucial time and manpower. New research is critical to find solutions to resolve existing problems in the Angkor Park management, without creating additional issues, and it is imperative to provide capacity building for Cambodian professionals to help them manage their heritage sustainably.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided a comprehensive review of the current status of AWHS Management framework. An understanding of the current framework is essential in contextualising this study. Despite all the studies undertaken to date, the fundamental ideology of conservation continues to revolve around the conservation of the tangible remains and is strongly reminiscent of early conservation approaches discussed in Chapter 2. The nineteenth century European concepts of Romanticism and 'Historic Monument' continue to impact on how Angkor is managed today and as a consequence the local communities, their values and associations with the landscape continue to be bypassed.

The World Heritage nomination, the ZEMP studies, the enactment of suitable laws, delineation of protected zones, the formation of the ICC and APSARA have been appropriate responses to the post-war situation and have resulted in an ideal management scenario. However, the zones proposed by the State of Cambodia in the Angkor nomination documentation and later in ZEMP have been misinterpreted in the formulation of APSARA zones. The hierarchical protection suggested in ZEMP referred to restricted areas of monuments and their immediate surrounds, whereas the Zone 1 proposed by APSARA encompasses a very large area with a large population. The names of Zones 2, 3 and 4 and their purposes are ambiguous and need to be re-visited. While the unwavering focus on the tangible heritage has resulted in an effective consolidation of ruins, restoration of monuments, reassembling of pre-war dismantled temples and establishing best practice in architectural and archaeological conservation, the lack of an understanding of community values is working to disengage the Angkor Park from local Khmers and converting it into a large, open-air museum of monumental vestiges. Flourishing tourism has made Angkor Park the domain of tourists and tour guides during the daytime, and if the night-lighting of monuments becomes permanent, 'Angkor people will be deprived of their heritage more and more... and more' (Ang 2006).

The AMP, however, offers hope. In implementing the strategies outlined by the AMP, the restructured APSARA aims to help the struggling villagers, improve their living standards and increase heritage awareness. The projects identified are positive in strengthening the

communities and safeguarding the Park's tangible resources. Although APSARA Authority through APNRMLP (2008) is committed to increasing community awareness and implementing strategies for the benefit of local communities, the management of the P{ark may not become any easier unless a transparency of information is achieved and the community's intangible heritage acknowledged. As Smith and Waterton have illustrated, the experts need to pay attention to 'honesty, dialogue, recognition of power, a holistic and integrated approach and a critical regard for the political and social context of community engagement' (2009b: 139). They also need to be open to reviewing former constructs of heritage and understanding the systemic issues underlying community interactions (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 142–143).

This chapter has highlighted the confusions that exist for the authorities and the local people as a result of the provincial bodies and the APSARA Authority both being responsible for different aspects of the Park's management. The APSARA zones that define the protection of heritage make the jobs of commune chiefs and village chiefs difficult. The competing forces of tourism, land speculation and development, plus environmental threats, add to the complexity of the Park's management. The inevitable dissonance results in heritage conundrums, and solutions need to be sought at all levels despite the fact that they are not straightforward. While community-inclusive strategies and dialogues may provide opportunities for APSARA Authority to improve communications with the people and resolve Park management issues, the Authority also needs to improve communications with the provincial bodies to reduce complications in relation to Park management.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In recent years, heritage discourse has advocated a shift from the rigid material focus on the tangible to the intangible heritage, Indigenous contexts and local communities (Ruggles and Silverman 2009; Smith and Waterton 2009b). These shifts are prompting professionals in archaeology to acknowledge the ethical responsibilities of communities involved in their research (Meskell 2009b: 1) and for conservation professionals to accept the living nature of religious cultural heritage (Stovel 2003). Chapter 2 presented these transformations in ideologies and discussed the growing focus on intangible heritage and social values. The complexities of understanding heritage and managing it while incorporating the intangible heritage were highlighted. The notion of heritage as a cultural process is advocated by some scholars (Harvey 2001; Smith 2006) while the problems associated with the globalisation of heritage (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996: 21) and the issues related to AHD and the role of experts have been underscored by others (Smith 2006; Waterton 2005). The management of the Angkor World Heritage Site (AWHS) and associated issues were presented in Chapter 3. As indicated, the issues regarding AWHS management are multi-faceted, posing numerous problems for the local community living within the park and for the APSARA Authority in charge of managing the site and its population. The present research is set in this context and aims to clarify aspects of the connections that local people have with the archaeological remains whilst unravelling the complexities existing for both the managers and the local community.

Values have been established as being fundamental to the study of heritage places (Avrami et al. 2000; Riegl 1996; Torre 2002). Values that privilege monumentality and aesthetics have been paramount to the documentation of heritage and methodologies to elucidate these are now firmly set in place through the various conservation charters. Well-developed sets of methods are available for inventorying artefacts, documenting building plans and elevations and systemising the complex data (Baltsavias et al. 2006; Clark 2001; 1993). A range of sophisticated technology and equipment involving non-invasive methods that their developers claim are easy to use are available for investigating heritage places and buildings (Carbonnell 1989; Feilden 1987; Ogleby and Rivett 1985). International organisations such as ICCROM, ICOM and ICOMOS have established the standards for such studies and institutions training conservators globally advocate them. These institutions have also published a wide range of literature with regards to tangible heritage, their documentation and conservation (for lists of publications see GCI 2006; ICCROM 2006 and; ICOMOS 2005).

While methodologies to identify and document the values that privilege tangible heritage are well established and growing (Avrami et al. 2000: 5), the move to include the intangible heritage and social values in the assessment of heritage places has taken place only in the last two decades. As a result, the volume of literature addressing methodologies for the study of intangible or social values does not compare with those established to study tangible heritage. The Getty Conservation Institute's research[50] was aimed at understanding the heritage conservation processes and the improvement of conservation practice and policy. The reports highlighted the need for integrated interdisciplinary approaches and value-driven planning methodologies. These publications along with the various case studies, emphasised the comprehensive assessment of heritage sites and provided methodologies for the assessment of all values, including social values (Avrami et al. 2000; MacLean and Myers 2003; Mason et al. 2003a; Mason et al. 2003b; Torre 2002; Torre et al. 2003). Institutional publications in Australia have also dealt with the assessment of social values (Byrne et al. 2003; Johnston 1994). Owing to the complexity of heritage, as discussed in Chapter 2, the study and research of heritage values necessitates the use of multiple methods to include the diverse and sometimes conflicting values. Integrated approaches where both the tangible and intangible heritage are included, and multi-disciplinary approaches using qualitative methods, are now accepted in the field of heritage management to assess cultural heritage significance (Byrne and Nugent 2001; English 2002; King 2002, 2007; Letellier et al. 2007; Low 2002; Mason 2002; Taplin et al. 2002; Torre 2002). Intangible heritage and social values are embedded in the community's attachments associated with the heritage place, and the cultural landscape often holds memories of the communities. These can be best understood through a dialogue with the relevant communities engaged socially with the landscape, and qualitative methods are best suited to understanding these social values, which are subjective and contextual. They are also essential in understanding the overlapping and conflicting heritage values highlighted in Chapter 2 (Mason 2002: 15–16).

The move to incorporate social values in heritage assessments referred, led some heritage sites already recognised for their tangible heritage to be re-assessed for their social values with respect to relevant communities. The social values of some heritage sites now acknowledged by authorising agencies have necessitated a review of earlier management ideologies. Some examples include Grosse Île and the Irish Memorial National Historic Site

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[50] The series of research reports started with a meeting on 'Economics and Heritage Conservation' which was aimed at bridging the gaps between economics and heritage conservation (Mason 1998). The later research reports—'Values and Heritage Conservation' (Avrami 2000) addressed the lack of recognised and accepted methodologies for the assessment of cultural values; and the report on 'Assessing the values of Cultural Heritage' (Torre 2002) focused on methods of identifying, articulating, and establishing cultural significance. Emphasis was placed on identifying all the values of a heritage site including the social and economic values. The research initiative was set up to address the full spectrum of cultural heritage and the range of tangible and intangible constructs related to the concept of heritage, with an emphasis on material heritage and its associated constructs.

(MacLean and Myers 2003) in Canada, Kosciusko National Park (GML 2005), Mount Penang Detention Centre (GML 2001) and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (UNESCO 1994b) in Australia.

This research aims to elucidate the 'Khmer cultural connections', namely the social values attributed to the tangible archaeological heritage remains by the local Khmers living within the AWHS. They are one of the means by which the local community relate to their surrounding environment and its material heritage. These connections are highly contextual and subjective, and the choice of quantitative or qualitative research methods will depend on the nature of the research question. In the context of this research however, the 'why' and 'how' of 'cultural connections' in the context of Angkor, can best be qualified through qualitative research methods (Yin 1994). The research questions for the Angkor case study are set out below. The first half of this chapter outlines the use of qualitative methods to assess heritage values and the application of case study methodologies. The second half of the chapter presents the Angkor case study, selection of the study area, LWH project, field visits, ethical considerations and research methods used.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Consistent with changing philosophies in social sciences, qualitative research definitions have undergone considerable change in the last two decades. The most recent definition by Denzin and Lincoln which has considerably changed from an earlier version[51] (1994: 2), states that:

> Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos…qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 3)

While the earlier definition highlighted the multi-method aspect, the later definition clarified the position of the observer and his/her role in interpreting the world and the possible implications of the research. Creswell (2007) elaborates on this definition, drawing attention to the importance of research design and process.

Quantitative methods had traditionally dominated the field of social science as a means to conduct empirical research, and qualitative methods were developed in social studies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Taylor and Bogdan 1984: 3). As much debate was generated, this scenario changed causing a split between quantitative and qualitative

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[51] Qualitative research is multi-method in focus and adopts an interpretive naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting and attempt to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

approaches. Towards the end of the twentieth century however, there was a move towards a combination of these approaches (Punch 1998: 2). While quantitative methods tend to be positivistic, qualitative methods are 'multi-dimensional and pluralistic' (Punch 1998: 140); in other words they can be associated with alternative theories such as positivism and post-positivism, critical theory and constructivism. This makes them attractive for use in a number of professional fields beyond the social sciences including nursing, medicine, business, education and social work (Padgett 2004: 6), and also in the assessment of heritage values (Torre 2002).

Qualitative research encompasses a number of methodological paradigms arising out of the different philosophical approaches. Some of these methodologies are Grounded theory, Narrative analysis, Ethnography, Case study research and Mixed method approaches (Padgett 2004); Case studies, Ethnography, Phenomenology and Ethno-methodology, Grounded theory, Historical methods and Clinical research (Denzin and Lincoln 2005); Cognitive, Observational, Phenomenological, Historical, Ethnographic and Discourse (Low 2002). Of these methodologies, almost all are suited to the study of social settings. While 'qualitative research methods are a complex, changing and contested field of multiple methodologies and research practices' (Punch 1998: 139) and are subjective in essence (Denzin and Lincoln 1998), they are not a unified set of techniques or philosophies and cannot be reduced to a simple and prescriptive set of principles (Mason 2005: 2–3). Researchers from different disciplines and traditions often conduct research which is in one way or another qualitative in nature (Mason 2005). Some of these methodologies have considerable similarities and share some common research methods. Table 4.1 summarises the characteristic features of the various methodologies.

Methodology	Definition	Suitability to identify research methods for assessing social values
Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990)	**Grounded theory,** introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967), is 'inductively derived from the study of phenomenon it represents'. Data is collected first and a theory is allowed to emerge as opposed to beginning a research with a theory and then trying to prove it (Strauss and Corbin 1990: 23)	Grounded theory is an inductive approach often requiring discriminant sampling to allow theory to emerge. It lacks flexibility and does not aid in the identification of suitable methods to assess social values (Creswell 2007: 68)
Phenomenology (Holstein and Gubrium 1998; Smith 2007)	**Phenomenology,** attributed by Husserl, a nineteenth century philosopher, is 'the reflective study of the essence of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view (Smith 2007). Schütz, an Austrian philosopher and sociologist, attempted to bridge sociology with Husserl's philosophy in an attempt to arrive at social phenomenology. His theory of the social world was focused on everyday meaning and experience to explain how objects and experience are meaningfully constituted and communicated in daily life (Holstein and Gubrium 1998: 138–139)	Phenomenology is suited to finding meaning in everyday life and patterns. Although, an understanding of everyday life and patterns will help in assessing social values, the emphasis is largely on the researcher's perceptions and interpretations (Low 2002: 32)
Ethnographic (Creswell 2007; Low 2002)	**Ethnographic** methodology studies an entire cultural group often over an extended period of time (Creswell 2007: 68), and includes broad historical, social and political contexts of sites to comprehend contemporary cultural contexts (Low 2002: 32)	Ethnography derived from Anthropology, aims to study a cultural group extensively. The researcher is required to have a grounding in cultural anthropology and needs to spend extended periods in the field (Creswell 2007: 72)
Ethno-methodology (Bailey 1978)	**Ethno-methodology** is a sub-type of ethnography based on the understanding that everyday routine activities are made possible through a number of skills, varieties and assumptions. The lay public attempts to make sense of the social world and so do social science researchers. Ethno-methodology is practised by all and is a study of routine social activities (Bailey 1978: 283–285)	Ethno-methodology attempts to understand the social world and can be used to assess social values
Discourse (Low 2002)	**Discourse** approaches include social experiences, the reciprocal acts of speaking and being spoken to (Low 2002: 33)	Discourse approaches used extensively in literature studies often lack suitable methodology (Smith 2006: 15)
Narrative Studies (Creswell 2007)	**Narrative Analysis** involves biographies and oral histories and uses discourse methods. Originated from anthropology, literature, history, sociology, sociolinguistics and education—each field has adopted a distinct set of approaches (Creswell 2007: 53–57)	Narrative studies are most suited for biographical research and oral history and raises issues in the collecting, analysing and telling of the stories (Creswell 2007: 57)

Cognitive	**Cognitive** methodology is a study of cognitive processes like perception, attention, memory, language, reasoning, decision-making and problem-solving (Low 2002: 31)	While largely used in clinical psychology, it is also suited to locate tangible features in mapping geographical areas and document the tangible heritage
Ethno-Semantics (Low 2002)	**Ethno-semantics** is one field in which cognitive research plays a role in the cognition of culture (Low 2002: 31) and local values can be translated to tangible material that can be preserved (Low 2002: 35)	A highly professional perceptual system often not shared by the public can result in conflicts between the professional community and the public (Low 2002: 35)
Observational (Bailey 1978; Labovitz and Hagedom 1976; Low 2002)	**Observational** methodology is a basic technique for collecting information via one's senses viz., visual, hearing, touch or smell (Bailey 1978). Traditionally, this method is combined with behavioural observation using questionnaires, participant observation or mechanical devices and/or physical traces mapping to understand the environment under study (Labovitz and Hagedom 1976: 81; Low 2002: 31, 33)	Observational methodologies are best suited to identifying the local site—its use and disuse—and also to understanding the 'motivations, norms, values, intentions and symbolic meanings' that are associated with its use and disuse (Low 2002: 33). In other words, it is useful to elicit the social values attached to a heritage place.
Historical (GML 2001, 2005; Low 2002; Thakur et al. 2003)	**Historical** methods provide an understanding of the past uses and values of a heritage place, set within a temporal context (Low 2002: 33). A traditional method employed by architects, archaeologists and historians and demonstrated through most heritage studies and management plans (GML 2001, 2005; Thakur et al. 2003)	While it helps understand how perceptions have changed over time, it does not include contemporary users (Low 2002: 33)
Case Study (Creswell 2007; Gillham 2000; Scholz and Tietje 2002; Stake 1995; Yin 1994, 2009)	**Case Study Methodology** is the qualitative examination of a case or cases through multiple sources in a detailed and in-depth manner and is most popular in medicine, psychology and law (Creswell 2007: 73). It is also used in architectural studies and heritage studies (Bluestone 2000: 66; Leask and Fyall 2006; Low 2002: 39)	Case study allows a detailed and in-depth study of the case.
Table 4.1 Suitability of Qualitative Methodologies for Social Value Assessments		

Table 4.1 outlines the definitions of the various qualitative methodologies, and their suitability for assessing heritage values and in particular social values. Selecting a suitable methodology for this research requires an examination of the suitability of each type. Accordingly, grounded theory may require select sampling to establish a theory and is not suitable for the present research. This research does not aim to develop any theory, but rather to establish the relevance of assessing social values as integral to any heritage management process. On the other hand, Phenomenology and Ethnographic methodologies (including Ethno-methodology) are suited to understanding the intangible heritage, but require a sound knowledge of anthropology. As clarified in the introductory chapter, the researcher does not have a background in anthropology and the fieldwork conducted for the present research was done in four visits ranging from two weeks to two months. While narrative and discourse methods are well suited to oral histories and understanding social contexts, they are not suitable for the identification of research methods to assess social values. While observational and historical methodologies are suited to understanding the social environment and its historical context, including the social values, cognitive and ethno-semantics are more suited to eliciting the values associated with the tangible heritage. Case study methodology is useful for the analysis of cases based on certain parameters and is used a great deal in heritage studies (e.g. Leask and Fyall 2006; Jameson and Baugher 2007; Lozny 2006; McManamon and Hatton 2000).

Of all the methodologies discussed, Case study methodology provides the opportunity to study heritage conservation projects and understand the assessment of social values. To reiterate, there is little in the methodological literature on the assessment of intangible heritage values. To overcome this problem, it might be useful to study how social values have been assessed in various heritage projects in recent years (Low 2002: 39). From the case studies, it should be possible to identify the advantages and disadvantages of the various research methods and to select those most suited to the study of local Khmer cultural connections in the context of AWHS.

CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

'Case study is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances' (Stake 1995: xi). Case study varies according to the nature of the discipline and the type of result expected. It has been widely used in psychology, as well as in such disciplines as architecture to understand building planning, organisation and philosophies governing the architectural design. Likewise, in heritage conservation, case studies are used to understand the conservation techniques and

strategies adopted in a particular context to help devise suitable strategies for solving problems in a different context (Leask and Fyall 2006: part V).

Case study is viewed by some researchers as a methodology (Creswell 2007), whereas it is seen by others as a method (Stake 1995). It is often used as a logical tool to understand a problem and its complexities and to help reach suitable decisions. In many instances, these are inter-disciplinary and in some cases necessitate teamwork (Scholz and Tietje 2002). Case study research can be based on single or multiple case studies, and these can be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory (Yin 2003: 5). Case study methodology is thus suited to identifying suitable methods from various international heritage case studies. The case studies presented here demonstrate the range of different methods used in the assessment of heritage buildings and sites and in eliciting social values. The case studies highlight the uniqueness of each heritage site and the need for contextualised assessments (Mason 2002: 14). While these are exploratory, they answer 'what' in terms of suitable research methods. The Angkor case study set out in the remaining chapters of this thesis, intends to be descriptive and explanatory in order to answer the 'why' and 'how' of the research questions (Yin 2009: 9). The heritage case studies are presented below.

CASE STUDIES OF HERITAGE ASSESSMENTS

Approaches to heritage assessments in recent decades have broadened to include social values as indicated in Chapter 2. This inclusion of social values as part of heritage assessment can be seen in many instances around the world. Some examples have been chosen here as case studies and studied against a set of pre-defined parameters—including the stakeholders, qualitative methods used, the strengths and shortcomings of each approach. The case studies presented in Table 4.2 below have involved the respective communities through community consultation procedures. The social values have been identified, and in some instances these have helped in the formulation of appropriate strategies to manage cultural heritage resources. The involvement of community and the identification of social values were the main reasons for the choice of these case studies.

The primary task in assessing the social values of any heritage site is the identification of the various stakeholders (e.g. GML 2001, 2005). The definition of the community is highly contextual and includes both the local residents who are physically present in the vicinity of the heritage place and those who have direct or indirect spiritual or cultural associations through rituals and other connections. Besides these locals, other stakeholders include the professional community which is interested in the conservation of the heritage sites, the political community which has a vested interest in the heritage resource for various political

and economical reasons, and tourists, both domestic and international. The appropriate stakeholders for any heritage value assessment project have to be determined based on the context of the project and its social, cultural, political and economic needs (for discussion on communities see Dicks 2000; Merriman 2004; Smith and Waterton 2009b).

The case studies presented below are diverse assessments of social values for cultural heritage management and environmental conservation studies. All the case studies have applied qualitative methods to elicit the relevant social values. Moreover, the first five heritage management studies were for sites where the tangible heritage had been well-documented and measures for their protection had already been undertaken. These case studies indicate that community consultation has become an integral part of the heritage assessment process in recent years. The case studies have established the significance of social value assessment in heritage management and they have also indicated possible research methods used for assessing heritage places including social values. Table 4.2 presents the heritage assessment case studies.

Name	Stakeholders	Methods	Strengths	Shortcomings
Kosciusko National Park (GML 2005)	• Broad Australian community • Associated communities with direct connections including Aboriginal people, families associated with the construction or early use of the huts, recreational users, hut caretakers and government workers including scientific researchers	• Focus group workshops • Questionnaire • Web survey on NPWS website • Interviews • Historical research • Mapping	• Holistic approach to elicit the social values attached to huts • Some huts retained strong social value despite being destroyed • Some associations are long standing • Project was able to record diverse views	• Some groups advocating nature conservation attributed a negative value to the huts
Mount Penang Detention Centre (GML 2001)	• Detainees (Current and Former) • Staff (Current and Former) • Families of detainees and staff • Local population	• Discussion groups • Telephone survey • Questionnaire survey • Letters • Historical research	• Social value associated with the built fabric (both positive and negative)	• Small numbers of detainees (5), former detainees (3), local community (9), staff (6) and former staff (5) participated—the study assumes this as to be a representative sample
Grosse Île and the Irish Memorial National Historic Site (MacLean and Myers 2003)	• Canadian Irish community • Canadian community	• Historical research • Information session • Public Meetings • Telephone hotline • Statements	• Community inclusive management • Name of heritage site changed due to community demand • Dark periods in history acknowledged	• Parks Canada staff found it difficult to cope with the negative response from the larger Irish community
Chaco Culture National Historical Park (NPS 2001; Torre et al. 2003)	• Professional archaeologists, cultural anthropologists • Native American tribes including Hopi, Pueblo and Navajo • State, country, city and tribal governments • 'New age' religious followers • General American public, tourists • International community owing to World Heritage significance	• Public consultation—group meetings • Historical research • Surveys	• Conflicting values between the various community groups identified	• The Indigenous community was removed from the site nearly 50 years ago which makes it difficult to re-establish their social values • Research methods to understand cultural and spiritual values are not clearly stated • Conflicting values amongst stakeholders have made heritage management difficult. Some parts are now closed to public and to avoid conflicts, all forms of religious practices are banned • World Heritage nomination based on a civilisation that had disappeared, negating contemporary connections
Port Arthur Historic Site (Mason et al. 2003b)	• Heritage professionals from a variety of disciplines • Community living close to the site • People with direct or indirect traditional connections to the site	• Historical research • Discussion groups • Interviews	• Broad range of values including the values associated with the convict site • Positive and negative values associated with Indigenous communities acknowledged • Tragedy of Broad Arrow café recognised	• Conflicting values • Aboriginal values acknowledged but not considered a key management issue
Shoalhaven River Cultural Heritage Assessment (Moody et al. 2006)	• Statutory stake holders identified including the Local Aboriginal Land Councils, registered Elders Corporations and registered Native Title claimants	• Consultation with Aboriginal representatives (Interviews) • Group meetings • Historical research	• Consultation identified tangible heritage along with cultural values	• Methodology is not clearly explained and the methods eliciting Aboriginal heritage values are vague
East Gippsland and Central Highlands Joint Forest Projects (Lennon 1998; AHC 2006)	• Technical experts • Indigenous communities • Local population	• Case study of six communities • Interviews / Focus groups • Community heritage workshops • Telephone survey / GIS mapping • Historical research	• Cultural landscapes reflected regional stories • Social value associated with a number of places • Local communities have strong stake in heritage • A number of areas of Aboriginal places with traditional and historical associations were identified	• Conflicting values associated with different stakeholders
Upper and Lower North Eastern Regions in NSW (Context 1998a, 1998b)	• Community living in the region	• Community workshops • Historical research	• A number of new sites have been identified which will be assessed for their natural heritage value • Engaged participants in articulating shared values	• Insufficient publicity resulted in limited community participation

Table 4.2 Heritage Assessment Case Studies

Of all the case studies, the Grosse Île assessment encountered very strong negative responses from some Irish communities who felt that their values had not been included. This strong reaction led to an inclusion of their values and also led to a name change of the historic site (MacLean and Myers 2003). In the case of the Port Arthur assessment, negative values of the tragedy at the Broad Arrow café were acknowledged. Mount Penang and Kosciusko studies highlighted the social values attached to the tangible heritage, the buildings in the former and the huts in the latter. The case studies highlighted the various qualitative research methods used.

Research methods such as public meetings, discussion groups and group meetings were used in Mount Penang, Grosse Île, Chaco Cultural Historical Park, Port Arthur and Shoalhaven River Cultural Assessment projects. Community workshops were used in the assessment of social values in the Upper and Lower North Eastern Regions in NSW and in the East Gippsland project. Focus group workshops were used in the Kosciusko case study in addition to questionnaires, telephone surveys, web surveys and interviews. Public meetings, discussion groups, focus group workshops or community workshops require the support of community organisations or government bodies, and financial support. A fundamental requirement for the success of these methods is a common language. Efficiency is highly diminished when live translation is required to organise the sessions. In particular, information may get wrongly communicated, as there may be very little control with large groups of people present (Lloyd-Evans 2006: 155). The co-ordination of such sessions requires the availability of resources, and the outcomes may not necessarily reveal the reality, as dominant voices in the group take precedence and sensitive issues are often withheld and not openly discussed (Lloyd-Evans 2006: 155). Setting up a telephone hotline and web surveys, on the other hand, need organisational and financial support. They are most suited for long-term research projects with local government support and the infrastructure needs to be constantly updated.

Of the methods presented in Table 4.2, interviews, both structured and unstructured, are useful for the understanding of social contexts. In contrast to the structured interviews, semi-structured interviews are described as non-directive and open-ended (Taylor and Bogdan 1984: 88). Amongst the methods identified through the case studies it is possible to ascertain those best suited to the present case study of Angkor. These include historical research and interviews. Historical research is essential to elucidate the historical, socio-cultural and political contexts of the AWHS, some of which have been presented in Chapter 1. In addition, mapping techniques have been used to locate the heritage features in the landscape to provide a geographical context in the understanding of the local Khmer community's connections with the material heritage.

In-depth interviews in general are guided by a set of themes rather than a pre-determined set of questions. By contrast with structured interviews such as questionnaires which seek to obtain comparative data, semi structured in-depth interviews endeavour to answer social patterns in societies due to the open-ended nature of the questions which enables participation by the respondents. The number of interviews depends on the nature of the research; one researcher who studied eating disorders conducted sixty-four interviews, while another who examined the success of a government policy initiative conducted two interviews (Travers 2006: 89). Semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted as part of this research will be discussed in detail in the following section.

The study of heritage case studies has provided an understanding of how social value has previously been assessed. Most of the methods used in the case studies were not identified as not being suitable for this study; nevertheless they provided the opportunity to understand the issues and problems associated with each of the various methods. As highlighted at the beginning of this chapter, there are limited resources available for the study of intangible heritage as opposed to those available for the documentation of tangible heritage. The use of case study methodology in the study of heritage case studies from around the world provides the opportunity to overcome this problem. Also, the case studies help in understanding the approaches employed in the different contexts of the various projects.

The next section discusses the present case study of the AWHS which includes the choice of study area, the field visits, ethical considerations and research methods.

THE PRESENT CASE STUDY: ANGKOR WORLD HERITAGE SITE (AWHS)

The Angkor World Heritage site is examined as a case study. The aim of this research is to understand the contemporary cultural connections of the local Khmers living around the site and the implications of this knowledge for heritage management. Although several methodologies can be used to understand the socio-cultural values attributed by the local population to the archaeological sites, for reasons elaborated earlier case study methodology is applied here. To reiterate the research questions:

> What are the cultural connections of a community? Why are the intangible links with the tangible heritage important?
> How can cultural connections, identified in the local Khmer context of the Angkor World Heritage Site, inform World Heritage conservation and management?

As suggested by Yin, case study research is suited to answer the why and how of the research questions (1994: 8). This section gives a detail account of the Angkor case study, elaborating on its defining factors, the study area, population sample and research methods used.

SELECTION OF THE STUDY AREA/ VILLAGES
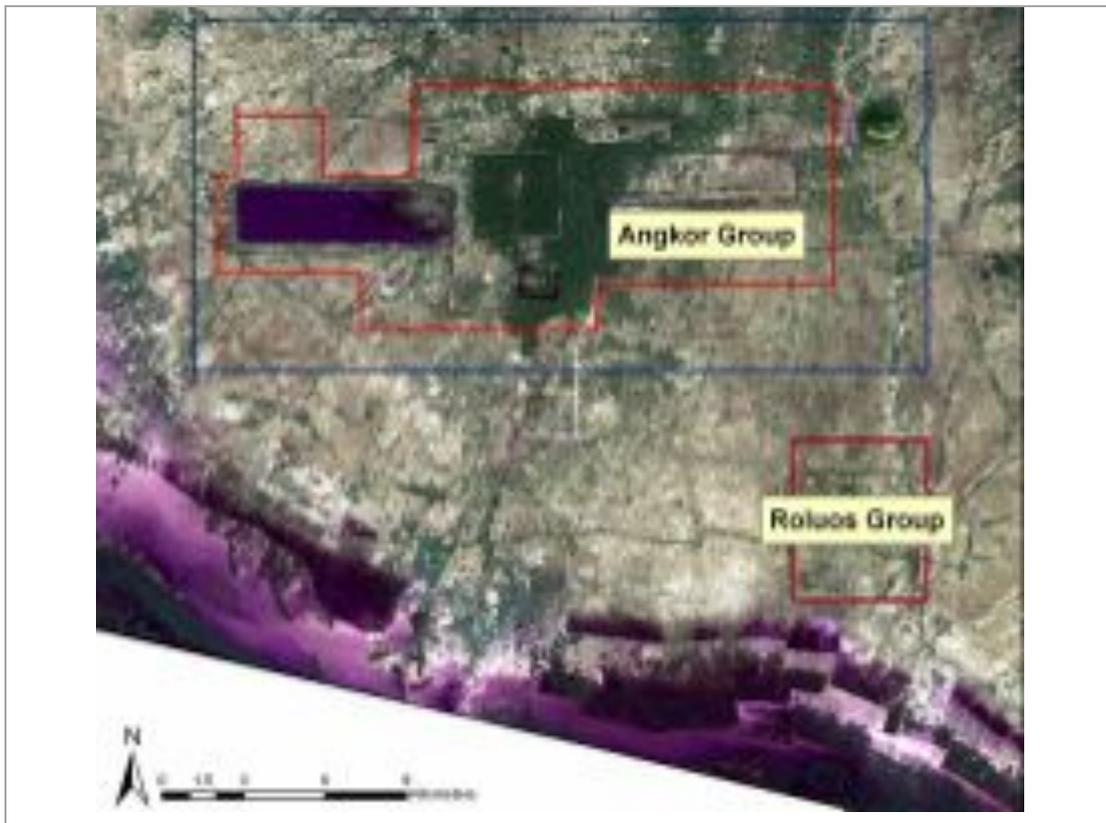
Figure 4.1 Location of Roluos group with respect to the Angkor group of monuments (2004 SPOT5 imagery overlaid with APSARA zones)
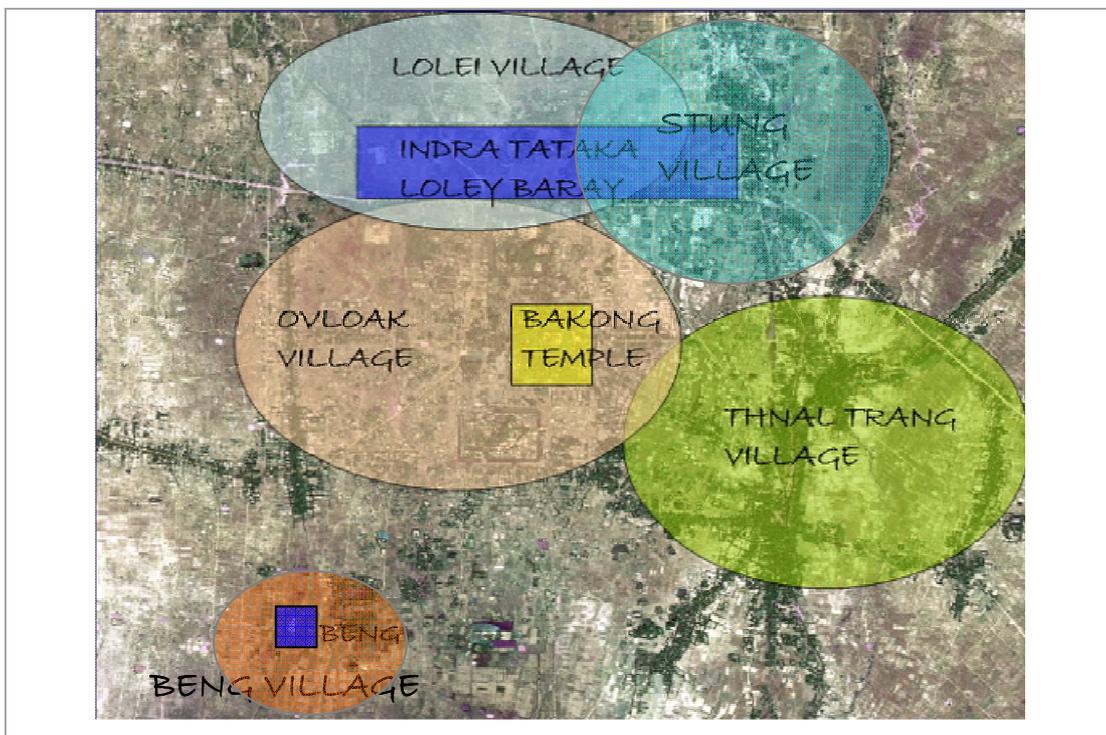
Figure 4.2 Location of the study villages—Lolei, Ovlaok, Thnal Trang, Stung, Beng illustrated over 2004 SPOT5 imagery (Note: the ovals are indicative only and not the actual extent of the villages)

The selection of the study area was governed by a number of factors:

° Angkor Park extends over 400 square kilometres which includes forested areas. There are around 113 villages within the protected area. A representative sample was chosen for the case study as it was not possible to survey the entire extent of the Angkor Park given the constraints of time and resources.
° As described in Chapter 3, the Angkor Park has three components: the Angkor group containing Angkor Wat and the monuments surrounding it, Banteay Srei group, an area encompassing Banteay Srei temple to the north-east of Angkor, and Roluos group, an area surrounding Prasat Bakong and other temples near the Roluos village to the south-east of Angkor. Of these three groups, the Angkor Park has been extensively researched and the villagers living in the protected area have been the focus of a number of different surveys over the past decade (e.g. Muira 2004; NZAID 2008).

As a result of the factors mentioned above, Zones 1 and 2 of the Roluos group, representative of the Angkor region, were chosen as the study area. Figure 4.1 illustrates the location of Roluos group of monuments, and Figure 4.2 illustrates the locations of the study villages. The factors that justify the choice of the study area are:

° Roluos, referred to as Hariharalaya in the Angkorian period, is the site of the first capital of the Angkorian kings. Jayavarman II (early ninth century), relocated the capital from Phnom Kulen, and his son Jayavarman III began building shrines in Roluos, but the establishment of the capital is largely attributed to King Indravarman I (late ninth century) (Coe 2003: 101).
° The study area is within Zones 1 and 2 of the Roluos group, part of the AWHS
° Five study villages were chosen on the basis of their proximity to a prominent heritage feature, in order to explore the local perceptions (social values) with relation to the heritage features (tangible) in the contemporary context.
° Phum Lolei and Phum Stung were chosen due to their location around the Lolei Baray
° Phum Ovlaok and Phum Thnal Trang were selected due to their proximity to the mountain temple Bakong
° Phum Beng was included due its location surrounding a large pond or *beng* in Khmer

The heritage features and the villages are discussed in detail in Chapter 5. The section below gives an account of other research projects undertaken by University of Sydney researchers which have overlapping objectives with this research. This is followed by a discussion on the various field visits to Cambodia and how they shaped the collection of qualitative data for the research.

LIVING WITH HERITAGE

This thesis is supported by, the ARC-linkage grant project 'Living with Heritage' (LWH). The research is very closely aligned to the aims of the larger project discussed above; the research projects undertaken as part of LWH were also outlined. Of these, the Cultural Landscape Mapping (CLM) by research associate Elizabeth Moylan is closely aligned to the present research. Historical maps and remote sensing data such as satellite imagery and aerial photographs were used to investigate settlement structure and land use/land cover changes to observe the impact of policy, identify areas under threat and develop management plans. The project also incorporated the local inhabitants' connections using an ethnophysiographical approach, whereby Indigenous landscape memory was documented using local terms and

names. The results were compiled in the form of a cultural landscape village atlas for the two villages of Srah Srang North and Rohal, and contained historical maps, landscape change maps, maps that illustrated the location of cultural features and description of landscape changes in the village. The atlas was also proposed as a template for cultural landscape mapping at Angkor. The CLM project had a different approach to the present research. It used spatial mapping techniques to map landscape change, locate cultural features and map the settlement. It overlaps with the present research in identifying the local inhabitants' connections to the landscape and was done using an ethnophysiographical approach, a recently defined field of study that questions whether people look at a natural landscape as a continuous entity, or one that has scattered features, or a continuous landscape with scattered features (Johnson and Hunn 2010: 27). This approach allows the information to be integrated with Geographic Information Systems (GIS), where the data can be spatially represented. Inevitably, the cartographic representation of local inhabitants' connections is subjective. The present research did not use spatial tools to map the local villager's connections, although GIS was used to map tangible cultural heritage features. The present research relies on semi-structured in-depth interviews to elicit the cultural connections that this research seeks to understand.

The work undertaken by Godden, Mackay and Logan (GML), Heritage Consultants of Sydney, one of LWH project's industry partners, are also closely aligned with the present research, having been involved in the identification of heritage values and issues at Angkor. The University of Sydney, in conjunction with GML and APSARA, has conducted a series of workshops in Siem Reap. These workshops, held in December 2005, March 2006, July 2006 and October 2007, allowed the Australian partners to share their expert knowledge with their Cambodian colleagues, in accordance with the objectives of the project. The workshop facilitated by GML in December 2006 was focused on the identification of the heritage values and issues at Angkor with the participation of the APSARA staff. Although the present research is also concerned with some aspects of these heritage values and issues, there has been no direct involvement with the work done by industry partner GML for the reasons given below.

The GML approach to identifying values was defined by the Burra Charter methodology (Mackay and Sullivan 2006), an approach led by experts (Waterton et al. 2006), and information was gathered through workshops organised with members of APSARA. While the workshops provided an excellent opportunity for staff from different departments of APSARA to meet and express their opinion regarding values, it did not provide an opportunity for the residents in Angkor Park to express their opinion. An inventory of

tangible and intangible heritage was proposed to be carried out by the technical committee of APSARA as part of the LWH project. The outcomes of these workshops and the initial surveys that followed were drafted into a document titled 'Angkor: Values and Issues', which provides a broad overview of Angkor's diverse values. The 'cultural heritage values statement' emphasises that Angkor is a 'living sacred landscape that has continuously received veneration from Cambodians. The temples, statues and associated environment make up a sacred landscape…' (Sullivan 2008: 80). The report also proposed a possible re-nomination of the World Heritage site to incorporate the Greater Angkor cultural region (Mackay 2008: 3). Whilst this is suitable for showcasing the archaeological values and reveals its large extent, it does not provide a holistic or a sustainable solution for a cultural landscape with overlapping and some conflicting values. Chapter 3 highlighted current issues in the management of the protected zones, which present a conundrum. The APSARA Authority is grappling with the existing 400 square kilometres of AWHA and the 112 villages that are located within. An increase in the extent of this protected area would not only increase APSARA's work load, but would also add complexity to the overall management, causing additional problems for both APSARA and the local communities. Further, an involvement with the work done by GML also meant working closely with APSARA staff. In order to allow the local villagers to express themselves freely, working with APSARA staff was avoided while carrying out the fieldwork for this research.

FIELD VISITS TO CAMBODIA

A total of five visits to the AWHS in Siem Reap Cambodia were conducted over the period of this research. Three of these visits were intended for data collection for the research and an additional visit in March 2006 was part of the 'Living with Heritage' project (basic details of the project were provided in Chapter 1). The last visit in December 2009 provided the opportunity to observe the most recent developments in the study villages.

FIELD VISIT 1 (JANUARY–FEBRUARY 2006)

The first visit to Cambodia in 2006 was a reconnaissance trip to become familiar with the study area, understand the cultural heritage and establish contacts locally to facilitate future visits for data collection. In order to understand the extent of AWHS and its complexity and to understand the characteristics of the archaeological landscape, all the significant architectural and archaeological resources including the monumental temples, reservoirs, smaller temples, and other heritage features were visited. Some of the villages, both inside and immediately outside the AWHS, were visited. Meetings were organised with key personnel in APSARA to explain the nature of this research and to seek assistance or

guidance as required. The meetings helped in establishing local networks and this proved to be of great value during later visits. This visit and the second one in March 2006 helped in the identification of potential study villages.

<u>LIVING WITH HERITAGE WORKSHOP (20–22 MARCH 2006)</u>

Of the series of LWH workshops, the series held in March 2006 aimed to establish a steering committee and a technical committee within the APSARA organisation. The workshops were organised for the directors of the different departments (steering committee) and some staff chosen by the respective departmental directors (technical committee). These workshops provided a platform for me to meet and network with the directors of APSARA, the various APSARA departments and some of the staff. These networks helped me later in my fieldwork and also in organising expert interviews. A knowledgeable staff member from APSARA translated the presentation sessions coordinated by the project industry Partner GML at the LWH workshop in March 2006 and the quality of translation was very good however, there were other occasions when all the Khmer discussion was not translated back into English.

In addition to the LWH workshop, I also had the opportunity to attend a workshop organised for the World Monument Fund (WMF) project of Phnom Bakheng on 23 March 2006, jointly run by WMF consultants and GML, which provided an opportunity to witness first-hand a meeting with the different stakeholders. The workshop had the participation of APSARA staff, representatives from the villages, monks from the local Wat and officials from the provincial government, along with WMF staff, GML representatives and independent researchers. The workshop provided a platform for the villagers and monks to express their opinion, to share their concerns and identify key problems. The villagers were forthcoming with their views and a number of problems were identified in the context of the Phnom Bakheng project. The workshop was 'expert' driven, being run by experts from WMF and GML who steered the discussions, and provided limited opportunity for open-ended participation by the communities. One important issue identified in the context of research methods regarded the instantaneous translation between Khmer and English that was essential to run the session. Luco (2006: *pers. comm.,* 23 March), a French anthropologist at the workshop with reasonable fluency in Khmer, observed that the translation was not accurate. She noted that the Khmer translator was having difficulty translating the technical terms; he was not trained for the role, and was unfamiliar with the technical terms being used. There was a practical difficulty in identifying suitable translators in Siem Reap, because not many qualified translators were available. While this highlighted the problems in conducting group workshops, where spontaneous translation was required, it also alerted me to the issues of finding an appropriate translator. Both workshops provided an opportunity to understand

firsthand the problems and issues that arise in conducting workshops. Some information was lost during translation, causing problems for both parties. The experience was, nevertheless, extremely valuable, as it helped in narrowing down suitable methods for my research.

FIELD VISIT 2 (NOVEMBER 2006–JANUARY 2007)

While the first field visit and the LWH workshop in March 2006 were helpful in defining the study area and establishing suitable research methods, the field visit 2 enabled the collection of primary data. In order to answer the key research questions, it was important to break down the larger research questions into smaller queries, to direct the research towards identifying the 'cultural connections'. The focus of the fieldwork was guided by these questions:

- Do local Khmers have a cultural connection with tangible cultural heritage?
- If so, how is it manifest, and what are the social values associated with the tangible aspects?
- How does the community deal with the heritage regulations impacting on their daily life?

Fieldwork was carried out in the three study villages of Lolei, Ovlaok and Thnal Trang during this visit and a total of 23 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted amongst the villagers. The research methods used are detailed later in this chapter and a description of the villages provided in the next chapter. Four expert interviews were also conducted during this field season. While the research was carried out with the support of the industry partner APSARA who provided the requisite permissions for carrying out the fieldwork, the interviews were conducted solely by the researcher with the help of a local translator. The presence of APSARA representatives from the LWH project's technical committee was strictly avoided, as the post-war Cambodian society preferred to have minimum contact with any authority (Luco 2002: 14).

FIELD VISIT 3 (MARCH–APRIL 2008)

A fourth trip to Cambodia was organised during March 2008, when the data collected during field visit 2 was substantiated with more semi-structured in-depth interviews of both the villagers and experts. The tasks identified for field visit 3 included the following:

- Re-interview some selected interviewees from field visit 2
- Increase the depth of information collected during field visit 2
- Identify boundaries of all study villages and cross-check those identified during field visit 2
- Conduct expert interviews of deputy directors and some staff of APSARA
- Conduct expert interviews of key professionals in Cambodia
- Conduct expert interviews of key officials in the provincial government offices in the study region.

During this visit, a total of forty semi-structured in-depth interviews with the villagers and eight expert interviews were conducted.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research, both quantitative and qualitative, has been strictly bound by ethical considerations in recent years. The significance of ethical practices in research has been highlighted by many researchers using qualitative methods (for more information on ethical considerations see Bailey 1978; Brydon 2006; Desai and Potter 2006; Gray 2003; Mason 2005: 79–82). Research involving people always raises a number of ethical concerns, which fundamentally imply being a good researcher and a good human being (Iphofen 2009: 2–3). Researchers need to be mindful of their intrusion into the lives of their respondents and take all possible care to ensure that they are sensitive to their rights. For some years, it has been mandatory to obtain approval from the respective institution's ethics committee before conducting any form of research related to people and society. This study has been granted ethics approval from the Human Research and Ethics Committee (HREC) at the University of Sydney (ref. no. 08-2006/9417). The approval was granted for fieldwork in the villages in and around the AWHS for the years 2006–2010, and it included permission to audio-tape interviews, subject to informing participants of their rights and obligations through the 'participant information statement'. The signing of the consent form (informed consent) was not mandatory due to the low level of literacy in Cambodia and the fear of signing forms that exists amongst the public owing to the political turmoil of the past 30–40 years. The 'participant information statement' was translated into Khmer for distribution amongst the respondents during fieldwork.

SEMI-STRUCTURED IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The research methods identified for this research are semi structured in-depth interviews, key informant or expert interviews and mapping of sites. The reasons for this choice of methods have been stated earlier. The semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with the villagers helped in understanding the local Khmer cultural connections. As indicated above, identifying a suitable translator was an important factor for the interview process. Although I faced translation issues similar to those already discussed, problems with translating face-to-face interviews were lessened compared with those of the public workshops. Interviews were less formal, a great deal of time was available for the respondent to answer the questions, and it was possible to re-phrase the questions and provide any additional clarifications that were required. A discussion on this is followed by the checklist used for the interview process and the interview process itself.

ENGAGING A TRANSLATOR

A sound knowledge of Khmer would have made the process of interviewing simpler, but it was not possible for me to achieve fluency within the short span of time available. Although I

had a limited knowledge, it was impossible to conduct interviews without the help of a translator. The selection of a suitable translator is critical to the research process, as pointed out by many researchers (Desai and Potter 2006). Bujra suggests that it is better to engage an interpreter who has a firsthand knowledge of the study region and is fluent in the local language than someone whose English is perfect. Additional factors include being a good listener, not portraying an ego and not inhibiting the interviewee (2006: 177). Although an interpreter was essential to the research, it was not an easy task to identify one. During field visit 2, a recent graduate in archaeology from the Royal University of Phnom Penh was engaged as an interpreter for a trial survey. Although, it was ideal to establish a mutually beneficial relationship with a Cambodian professional, the Khmer archaeologist had difficulty with translations as he was not from the Siem Reap region. He was from Kampot, a northern Cambodian province, where the spoken dialect differed from that of Siem Reap, making it difficult for him to communicate fluently with the villagers. The tour guide/tuk-tuk driver who had accompanied us on this occasion resolved some of the language and dialect issues as he was a local, well-versed in the cultural practices of the villagers. He was from a village near Siem Reap with a very good understanding of local cultural practices.

On the second day, the tuk-tuk driver was engaged as a translator on a trial basis. He proved to be well-suited for the task as he was a polite young man who approached the villagers with a great deal of respect and exhibited the qualities suggested by Bujra (2006). Moreover, his family was closely involved in spirit worship as his mother used to be a 'medium'[52] (a person who gets possessed by the spirit and conveys the wishes of the spirit). Being a local villager, he was very quick to pick out subtle nuances in cultural practices that were not obvious to the student from Kampot. While interviewing was relatively new to the tuk-tuk driver, considerable time was spent on debriefing to ensure that the needs of the research were understood (Bujra 2006: 177–178). Appropriate attention was paid to avoid 'leading' questions that might compromise the opinions of the villagers in a given context (Willis 2006: 149), which helped to avoid issues identified above. As indicated by Binns (2006: 18), the researcher and translator need to work well together and build a trusting partnership. Having established a very good rapport, I used the same translator during field season 3 in 2008.

CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

The semi-structured in-depth interviews were guided by a checklist of themes and questions. While this was a useful guide during the interviews, it was by no means restrictive; it provided the opportunity to allow the interviewee to talk freely and helped in eliciting the

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[52] A person who has the powers to communicate with spirits

required information. The checklist is provided in Figure 4.3 below, and is followed by a discussion of the interview process.

The first section of the interview concentrated on basic demographic information about age, gender, village name, whether or not the interviewee was an original inhabitant, description of village and socio-economic details such as occupation and income levels. Often, this was as an icebreaker that enabled the villagers to get comfortable with the interview process, and almost all of them spoke uninhibitedly (e.g. Willis 2006: 149). The second part of the interview focused on the cultural practices through an understanding of the community's religious practices, rituals and the location of *neak-ta* spirits. After the initial set of questions, the villagers were more comfortable and less threatened as they understood that the interview was non-political. It also appears that few researchers have asked them about the spirits and ancestral deity worship and their connections to the temples. As a rule, I focused on positive things to make the interviewee comfortable; I understood that once they felt comfortable, people readily spoke about their problems (Bernard 1994).

Figure 4.3 Checklist to guide the semi-structured in-depth interviews

Khmer terms were used to identify and qualify the features in the landscape and to understand cultural practices. These terms were identified through expert interviews conducted earlier

(Ang 2006; Pottier 2006b). The terms used were *kouk*[53] (any mound), *trapeang* (old water body), *prasat* (temple), *thnal* (road), *sra* (artificial pond), *beng* (large water body), *undong* (water body) and other tangible features. Qualifying words in Khmer like *boran* (meaning ancient) also helped to identify whether the feature was recent or historical. Khmer terms not only helped the locals understand the questions and share their opinion but also helped them get comfortable with the interviews. Furthermore, questions related to the worship of spirits (*neak-ta*) including their names, locations, significance, rituals conducted, and any story if known,' often amused the villagers and they answered the questions willingly. Finally, problems related to their cultural practices, APSARA restrictions and any other issues were questioned. The villagers shared their problems eagerly, as they were by now comfortable with the interview process. The interviews took between an hour and an hour and a half depending on the interviewee and the time of day.

Photograph 4.1 Impromptu group session in Phum Thnal Trang

Photograph 4.2 Interview with Head Monk, Wat Bakong

Photograph 4.3 *Kru* (person who conducts rituals) in Phum Ovlaok

Photograph 4.4 *Kru* in Phum Stung, conducting a ceremony *Chah Maha Bang Skol*

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[53] Refer Glossary for list of Khmer and Sanskrit words used

In order to identify the various cultural heritage features, paper maps of the village and the region were used. Some villagers understood the maps, but many were confused. In the event that the villagers were uncomfortable or did not understand, the maps were removed. Some villagers drew their maps on the ground and some on paper. The use of paper maps generated curiosity amongst the villagers, but most respondents were not able to understand the maps, making the exercise of mapping unsuitable. The use of local terms and the help of the translator made effective communication possible. The period November 2006 to January 2007 proved to be a busy time of the year for the villagers. Most of the working-age villagers were busy tending to their fields, but it was possible to talk to monks, senior people in the *wat* and their residences and a few younger people. A strict protocol was followed before beginning the interview process in any village. Accordingly, the first point of contact in any village was the village chief. After acquiring the required permissions, further interviewees were identified using 'snowballing' technique (Willis 2006: 148). The interviews sometimes expanded as impromptu group sessions, with more villagers voluntarily participating. Apart from the village chief, other villagers also helped identify other interviewees. A detailed analysis of the population sample is presented in Chapter 5.

EXPERT INTERVIEWS

Apart from the villagers, some experts in the villages and Siem Reap were identified for interviewing. They included professionals with specialist knowledge, key personnel from APSARA and representatives of the provincial government from the district office and commune office in the Roluos group. For each of the expert interviews, a different checklist and set of questions were prepared, specific to the respondent's department and background. Although most of these interviews did not require a translator, it was sometimes difficult to adhere to the set of questions, as certain experts often led the interviews away from the questions. Although this took the interview in a tangential direction, it proved beneficial at times.

LOCATING CULTURAL HERITAGE FEATURES USING EXISTING MAPPING

While semi-structured in-depth interviews were the primary source for data collection, mapping of the cultural features indicated by the villagers helped in locating them geographically. Most of these features were aligned with the archaeological features identified in recent decades (Pottier 1999a). The identification of these features on ground was difficult at times, as the landscape in the Angkor region is rather subtle. The region extending from the base of Phnom Kulen in the north down to Tonle Sap in the south is predominantly flat, however, subtle variations in height become obvious in the wet season when all the low-lying

areas get flooded. While the landscape was difficult to comprehend initially, the time spent in the field helped me understand the landscape and decipher the subtle changes in elevation. The temples and monumental features were easily identified, along with other prominent features such as laterite culverts, earthen embankments and water features such as *trapeang, beng, sra* and *baray*. GIS mapping was used as a tool to locate features geographically and was not a research method for this study. Figure 4.4 illustrates the base map used in the field.

Figure 4.4 Base map used in the field to identify cultural heritage features relevant to this study. Map layers used include Pottier (1999) and EFEO Inventory (2003)

Photograph 4.5 Temple mound to right surrounded by moat (grassy portion)

Photograph 4.6 Moat (grassy portion) surrounding Prasat Srang-Ai, with a raised causeway

While flooding helped identify cultural features during the wet season, the intangible associations with spirits helped locate archaeological mounds and *trapeang* due to the remnant ritual offerings left behind. The common offerings were incense, but elaborate offerings of betel nut leaves, *baisei* (ritual offering) and flowers were also found. Small shelters were sometimes built as a house for the *neak-ta* spirit. The cultural features identified, and the cultural practices and rituals connecting the people to the landscape are discussed in Chapters 6 and 8.

DATA COMPILATION AND ANALYSIS

The interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder and field notes were taken while conducting the interviews. The interviews with the villagers were transcribed based on the translation provided by the translator. All interview transcriptions follow a system of referencing in the format 'villagename-gender-age'. For example, an interview with a 46 year old man from Phum Lolei was referenced as Lolei-M46. This ensures that the respondent's identity remains confidential. The transcribed interviews are indexed and are provided in a CD attached to the back of this document. The references to the interviews are provided at the end. All the expert interviews conducted in English have also been transcribed, however, for ethical reasons, the transcriptions of the expert interviews are not provided, as it would be impossible to maintain confidentiality. The transcribed interviews are corrected for grammatical errors and presented as logical sentences to enable easy reading (Bernard 1994).

The transcribed interviews have been analysed using a thematic content analysis, whereby the interview transcripts provide categories for analysis (Burnard 1991). The emergent themes helped categorise the data, which also helped in organising the findings presented in Chapters 6–8. While it is not possible to go into detail regarding the analysis of the transcribed data, I would like to clarify my interview methods and my role as a researcher. One of the problems in using information from the semi-structured in-depth interviews is that the information maybe subjective. The villagers from the study villages have witnessed a significant growth in tourism and development with the increasing popularity of AWHS. The national heritage discourse advanced by APSARA and UNESCO is bound to have influenced their understanding of heritage. Moreover, tourism growth has provided great incentives for income-generation and jobs that cater to the needs of tourists. This has influenced their traditional narratives of the Angkorian temples which are now dominated by tour-guide and tourist accounts that they may have overheard (Ang 2008). Throughout this research, I have taken the position as an 'external' researcher. The observations made and the inferences drawn reflect this stance.

CONCLUSION

Qualitative research methods are increasingly being used in the social value assessments of heritage sites, as they are found to be highly suitable. This chapter discussed the various methodologies that could be adopted for the study of social values. While many research methodologies are suitable for assessing social values, many of these research methodologies were found to be unsuitable due to the researcher not having a cultural anthropology background. Case study methodology was chosen as it provided the flexibility of studying other heritage value assessments and understanding the procedures adopted in those instances. Further, it provided the opportunity to study Angkor as a case study.

It is evident that in the study of any heritage site, a combination of research methods is essential. While some tangible heritage values can be identified using quantitative research methods, the identification of social values necessitates the inclusion of social science research methods to understand how societies interact with their surrounding environment. Qualitative research methods such as focus groups, community meetings and interviews need to be incorporated to identify the social values of the communities associated with the heritage place. In the context of this research, semi-structured in-depth interviews were identified as the most suitable method to elicit the intangible links between the local Khmer communities and the tangible archaeological heritage that surrounds them in the landscape.

The information collected from the chosen study villages as part of this research is but a small sample. Despite this, there are reasons to believe that the problems and issues identified are generic across the entire World Heritage site. The findings from the interviews and field surveys are presented in detail in the Chapters 6, 7 and 8. The findings of this study, when combined with the existing knowledge base and extended over the entire region of AWHS, will help to provide a holistic understanding of the site and a comprehensive assessment of the values of all associated communities. It is also possible to apply these qualitative research methods across other heritage sites in other parts of the world for a comprehensive assessment of social values and to identify problems, in order to achieve 'best practices' in heritage management.

The next chapter provides a background to the Angkor World Heritage Site case study. It presents the geographical and cultural contexts of the study villages, followed by a detailed analysis of the study sample.

CHAPTER 5: BACKGROUND TO THE ANGKOR CASE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Local communities experience the landscape they live in and in the process create strong attachments to and develop intimate relationships with their surroundings (Moody et al. 2006: 77). The symbolic appropriation of these connections is varied and often expressed diversely. In order to understand the connections of local Khmers with the Angkorian landscape; it is necessary to understand the physical, social and cultural setting of their environment and this chapter provides this background. The previous chapters gave brief accounts of the historical and political contexts of Angkor and Cambodia; the philosophies guiding heritage conservation and management at global and local level; the management of the Angkor World Heritage Site (AWHS); the methodology guiding this research and the research methods used in data collection.

This chapter is organised as follows. The first part gives an account of the location, demography and administration, the second details the heritage features and the study villages, and the third provides an overview of the social and cultural setting, a brief account of the Khmer religion and ceremonies, followed by an evaluation of the study sample.

LOCATION, DEMOGRAPHY AND ADMINISTRATION

The study region of Roluos was introduced briefly in Chapter 4 along with the reasons for the choice of the study villages. Roluos group is the name given to the group of monuments that form part of the AWHS, located to the southeast of the Angkor group of monuments, at approximately fifteen kilometres to the east of Siem Reap (Figure 5.1). Roluos is also the name of the commune and two villages (Roluos Lech and Roluos Kaet) in the commune, from which the term 'Roluos group of monuments' was derived. To avoid confusion between the repetitive terms, the term Roluos when used will be suffixed with one of the words denoting the group, commune or village according to the context.

GETTING THERE

The Roluos group can be reached via Route 6, the national highway connecting Siem Reap and Phnom Penh. Tourists visiting Roluos monuments have a choice of taxi, chartered bus, tuk-tuk (vehicle powered by a scooter, seats 2–4) or a scooter depending on their budget and interests. The locals do not have the choice of public transport and usually walk or ride their personal scooter, motor bike or bicycle. For purposes of this research, scooter was the best option as it allowed travel on dirt tracks and amongst rice fields, making it possible to visit the

heritage sites away from the main routes. There is a marked transition from the bustling town of Siem Reap to the Roluos group of monuments. In recent years, the unprecedented growth in tourism has impacted the region through innumerable hotels and other constructions.

Photograph 5.1 Signage at entrance to Roluos group for the Golf Resort in Phum Lolei

Photograph 5.2 World Heritage sign, to the north of Prasat Bakong
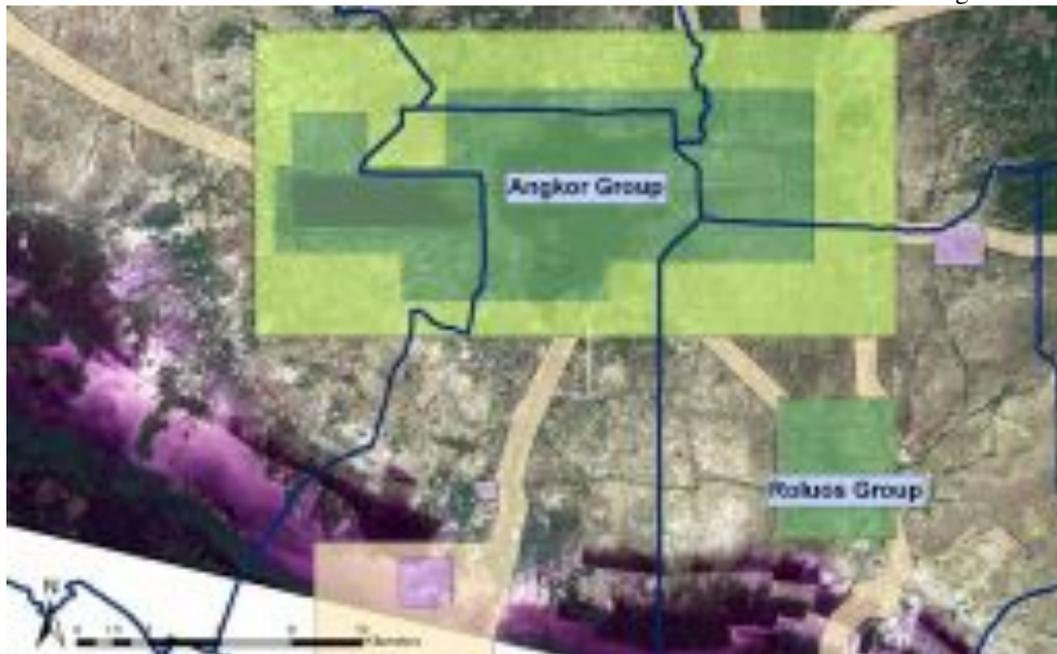
Figure 5.1 Roluos group of monuments and Angkor group of monuments (APSARA zones overlaid on 2004 SPOT5 imagery)

Beyond Siem Reap, the landscape changes to one of rice fields, villages and shops. Once the town is left behind, one encounters a landscape that comprises farm land, some small houses and shops. In recent years, the landscape has begun to change dramatically. During the most recent visit to the study villages in December 2009, new constructions were witnessed for a great part of the way. Land speculation has resulted in a considerable portion of the

agricultural land along Route 6 being sub-divided for sale and some plots have already been sold for development. A great deal of development was occurring all along Route 6 (Howse et al. 2007c: 22).

Despite increasing development, some areas were retained as villages where residences, shops and rice fields were seen. A number of lotus ponds lined the highway, and the view was often picturesque and flourishing. The remnant lushness of the countryside is a reminder of how the region possibly appeared before the surge in development. It took about half an hour of driving to reach the Roluos group. The prominently placed APSARA signs were an indicator of the World Heritage status. In December 2009, a number of additional signs were observed, warning the residents of their legal obligations and the consequences of violating the laws. New signage indicating the UNESCO World Heritage status has been added near the Bakong temple (Photograph 5.2). The demography and administration of the Roluos group is presented below.

POPULATION OF STUDY VILLAGES

The population within AWHS has risen steeply since the early 1990s. The rise in population growth was briefly highlighted in Chapter 3. In 1992, the population within the park was greater than 20,000 (APSARA 2005a). According to the first census conducted in 1998, after decades of war, the total population in Angkor Park was 101,170 (Ponnapalli and Tan 2007), indicating a steep 500 percent increase since then. The 2005 census conducted by APSARA recorded 103 villages[54] (Howse et al. 2007d: 75). According to the Community Aspects Report[55], 75 % of the villagers were original residents and 18 % had moved from a very distant land (Howse et al. 2007b: 5). Some recent studies by the Department of Demography and Development (DDD) have indicated that village numbers within Zones 1 and 2 of AWHS total 112 (Im 2008: 50). The total population steadily increased over the years 2002 (APSARA 2003), 2005 (APSARA 2005d) and 2008 (data collected for 2008 census Youn 2008). The population of the study villages except for *phum* (village) Beng is given below for the years 1998, 2002, 2005 and 2008. As part of Phum Kouk Srok, Phum Beng has had no been subject to individual population counts. The secondary village chief mentioned that the number of households in Beng was 56 (Beng-F48 2008). As indicated below, the steady increase in the population of the study villages is clearly evident.

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[54] The APSARA Authority resettled villagers from three villages in Zone 2 north of Siem Reap. They were given land in Phum Thmei to the north side of the town. Over time, many of the resettled families sold their allocated land and moved back to their original land holdings in the Park. They were included as 106 villages in the survey conducted as part of the AMP study (Howse et al. 2007d: 75). In 1988–89, the villagers from Phum Trapeang Seh were moved outside Siem Reap. Fieldwork conducted for this research found that the villagers had moved back to their original villages and were occupying the land illegally (Oum 2006).
[55] Angkor Management Plan funded by NZ Aid

Village	Number of Household (1998)				Male Population (1998)				Female Population (1998)				Total Population (1998)			
	1998	2002	2006	2008	1998	2002	2006	2008	1998	2002	2006	2008	1998	2002	2006	2008
Lolei	199	214	256	**249**	577	568	666	**766**	546	689	758	**669**	1123	1257	1424	**1435**
Stung	136	172	203	**215**	332	510	507	**558**	401	440	518	**546**	733	950	1025	**1104**
Thnal Trang	163	178	236	**251**	425	519	605	**629**	433	518	617	**608**	858	1037	1222	**1237**
Ovlaok	252	250	327	**412**	719	644	752	**1031**	711	685	807	**958**	1430	1329	1559	**1989**

Table 5.1 Population distribution in the study villages

A brief introduction to the provincial administration was provided in Chapter 3. The provincial government's administrative divisions in the Roluos group are presented below.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS AND STUDY VILLAGES

The Roluos group is located within *srok* (district) Prasat Bakong. There are nine *khum* (communes) in the district of Prasat Bakong and Zones 1 and 2 of Roluos group intersect with four of these *khum* (Figure 5.2). The communes that intersect with Roluos group include Kandaek, Bakong, Roluos and Meanchey. The study villages of Lolei, Ovlaok, Thnal Trang and Stung are located largely within Khum Bakong. A smaller part of Lolei and Ovlaok are located in Khum Kandaek, and a part of Thnal Trang is within Khum Roluos. The village of Beng is located in Khum Roluos. According to the villagers, the village of Beng functioned as an independent village sometime in the past, but has been merged as a part of Kouk Srok since the Vietnamese occupation (Beng-F48 2008). For the purposes of this research, Phum Beng has been treated as an independent village.

The district office of Prasat Bakong located on Route 6, along with the commune offices of Bakong and Roluos, are responsible for the provincial administration of the study region. The district office is responsible for district administration and reviewing commune development (Som 2008). The duties of the commune office include village development projects such as agriculture and infrastructure, including roads and bridges (Bong 2008; Youn 2008). Due to the overarching authority of APSARA in the management of the AWHS, the provincial departments are obliged to work with APSARA. As illustrated in Chapter 3, the early problems with provincial departments are being worked through by encouraging cooperation between the APSARA and the provincial government bodies. This is not easily achieved, however, due to economic incentives associated with land speculation, and results in reluctance on the part of the provincial bodies to cooperate with the newly formed APSARA.

Figure 5.2 Roluos group, Commune boundaries and Villages (Archaeological features (Pottier 1999a), APSARA zones, APSARA villages layers overlaid on 2004 SPOT5 imagery)

HERITAGE FEATURES AND STUDY VILLAGES

Significant heritage features present in the landscape were the decisive factors in the choice of the five study villages. Figure 5.3 illustrates the location of the villages with respect to heritage features. The study villages of Lolei and Stung are located around Lolei Baray (a large water reservoir); those of Ovlaok and Thnal Trang are located around and adjacent to the Bakong *prasat* (a large mountain temple in the region) and the small village of Beng is located around a historical pond referred to as a *beng* in Khmer.

Recent research at Angkor, presented in Chapter 1, revealed a high density of archaeological features mapped using remote sensing and GIS (for more information see Evans 2002; Fletcher et al. 2003; Pottier 1999a). While the new features were previously unknown to the archaeologists working in the region, the local villagers living around the features were mostly aware of the presence of a mound or a *trapeang* although they did not attribute any archaeological significance to these features[56]. The high density of archaeological features indicates the possible likelihood of a local understanding of the landscape. The local Khmers in their interaction with the landscape are more than likely to have established a connection with the landscape using their terms of reference. These are the cultural connections that this

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[56] (Breglia 2007) recorded a similar attitude with regards to the Maya villagers in Mexico, discussed in Chapter 2.

research seeks to elucidate. The following section introduces the study region including the chosen heritage features and the study villages surrounding them.
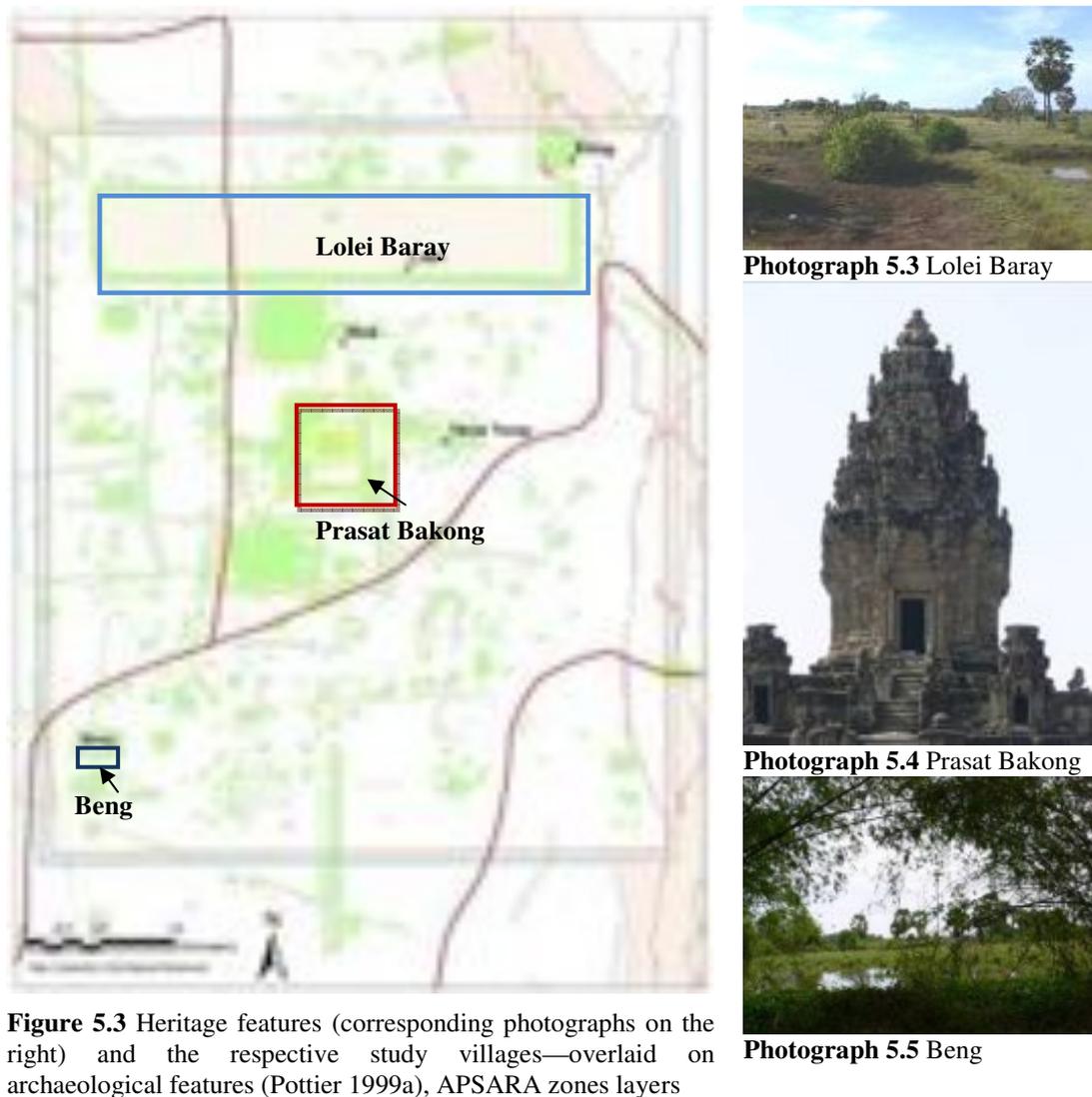
Figure 5.3 Heritage features (corresponding photographs on the right) and the respective study villages—overlaid on archaeological features (Pottier 1999a), APSARA zones layers

Photograph 5.3 Lolei Baray

Photograph 5.4 Prasat Bakong

Photograph 5.5 Beng

ROLUOS GROUP OF MONUMENTS

Roluos group, as referred to in present day, is a region occupied since pre-Angkorian times (Hua et al. 2007). This region was declared as the Khmer capital, Hariharalaya by King Indravarman I (Ang et al. 1998; Molyvann 2003). Most of the significant architectural and engineering works in Hariharalaya are attributed to King Indravarman I, who constructed Lolei Baray, Prasat Bakong and Prasat Preah Ko. When the capital of the Angkorian kings was shifted to Yashodharapura (Angkor Thom) by King Yashovarman I (889–910 AD), Hariharalaya continued to be occupied and King Yasovarman I dedicated a temple in the middle of Lolei Baray to his ancestors in 893 AD, referred to as Prasat Lolei (Coe 2003: 103; Roveda 1998).

Figure 5.4 2004 SPOT5 imagery overlaid with APSARA Zones and archaeological features (Pottier 1999a). Significant sites in the Roluos group are highlighted

Significant works of engineering and architectural merit in the Roluos group include Lolei Baray, Prasat Bakong, Prasat Preah Ko, Prasat Lolei, Prasat Prei Monti and Prasat Trapeang Phong and a number of smaller temples include Prasat Ovlaok, Prasat Trapeang Totung Thngai, Prasat Srang Aai, Prasat Chapou Teng along with a number of other smaller *prasat*, and Angkorian ponds. The Angkorian period temples and the *baray* indicate the possibility of human settlement in the region since the early ninth century AD (Pottier 2006a). Recent research using radiocarbon dating techniques on sediment cores collected from the Bakong moat puts this date earlier; as the dates returned were 660–890 calibrated years AD. This indicates that the region has been occupied since approximately the mid seventh century AD (Hua et al. 2007: 390).

During the war in the late twentieth century, almost all the smaller temples in the region were completely looted (Ang 2001), and some were looted more than once (Pottier 2006b). Some archaeological sites are devoid of any vestiges of the Angkorian past. Each of the chosen heritage features, along with the study villages, are described below.

LOLEI BARAY

Lolei Baray was the first *baray* to be built by the Khmer kings in the eighth century AD, and known then as the Indratataka (Coe 2003; Molyvann 2003), attributed to King Indravarman I. The Sanskrit name Indratataka refers to the pond of Lord Indra or alternatively the pond of King Indravarman I. Although King Indravarman I is credited for Lolei Baray, he only completed it (Dagens 2002: 17). This first *baray* was a possible prototype for all the other *baray* that were constructed until the end of the twelfth century AD (Dumarçay 2003: 10). Fed by s*tung* (river) Roluos it was subsequently modified in the ninth century (Dagens 2002: 16). Lolei Baray is a heritage feature of significant size and proportion measuring approximately 0.8 km in width and 3 km in length. The *baray* is a large 'on the ground' reservoir, built in the late ninth century and the surrounding earthen embankments of the *baray,* referred to as *thnal*[57], serve as roads. The *baray*, a rectangular reservoir measuring 3.8 kilometres long and 800 metres wide, with a capacity of nearly 7.5 million cubic metres at the height of the rainy season, was indeed a significant engineering achievement (Coe 2003: 101).

Photograph 5.6 View towards Lolei Baray from the southwest

Photograph 5.7 Rice Fields to the east of Lolei temple in the *baray*

The move from Hariharalaya to the central region of Angkor started during the time of King Indravarman (877–889 AD) and was concluded during the time of King Yasovarman I (889–910 AD). The move to shift power away from Hariharalaya did not abandon the settlement, as noted above. The temples were constantly maintained and endowed with statues. A new temple on an artificial island in the middle of Lolei Baray was built by King Yasovarman, dedicated to his ancestor; he also altered the *baray* (Dagens 2002: 17).

Lolei and Stung are two villages that surround the *baray*. The village of Lolei (also written Loley) is located along the western and larger part of the northern and southern embankments

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[57] Khmer word meaning embankment that serves as a road on the raised end and canal on the lower end

and the village of Stung (also written as Steung or Stung) is located along the eastern and part of the northern and southern embankments. There is no historical evidence to support the suggestion that the *baray* was completely filled, and it is not very clear as to whether it functioned as a reservoir[58] for long (Dumarçay and Royère 2001a: XXI, 49) The local community living around the *baray* today refer to it as *baray sngout*, a Khmer term meaning a dried-up reservoir.

PHUM LOLEI

Phum Lolei is the name given to the village that surrounds part of Lolei Baray. As is traditional in Cambodia, raised portions of the landscape are used for occupation due to the heavy monsoonal rains that sometimes cause flooding. Accordingly, most houses of Lolei village are located along the embankment of the *baray*. The land enclosed by the embankments, originally built as a reservoir, has been used for agriculture for a long time. A number of villagers farmed rice within the *baray*. Prasat Lolei was located in the middle of the *baray* closer to the northern embankment. Lolei Wat is located around the Angkorian *prasat* and all the ancillary structures have been built surrounding the *prasat* on the original platform. With the establishment of APSARA and heritage restrictions, additional structures for the *wat* have not been permitted on the *prasat* platform. The space surrounding the *prasat* platform is being used for structures associated with the *wat*. The houses were originally located all along the embankment to the west, south and north of the *baray*, however, due to growing land pressures in recent times, houses are now being located in the *baray* as well.

Photograph 5.8 Prasat Lolei and the Buddhist *Vihear*

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[58] (Dumarçay 2001: :XXI)) refers to the *baray* became rapidly silted and the king decided to build another

Figure 5.5 Extent of Phum Lolei (after village chief) overlaid on 2004 Quickbird imagery

According to the village chief and other respondents, Phum Lolei extended from the western embankment (Thnal Kahé) of the *baray* in the west, to the Phnom Bok (refer Figure 5.5) road in the east; from Route 6 on the south, to the Trapeang Zamko on Thnal Kahé in the north. The northern limit lacks clarity, as one villager mentioned that it extended up to 7 kilometres, while another stated 2 kilometres. The other three boundaries were described consistently by all interviewees. Lolei Baray to the east of the Phnom Bok road was part of Phum Stung.

PHUM STUNG

Phum Stung was located along the southern, eastern and part of the northern embankments of Lolei Baray. The village extends further to the east and north as indicated in Figure 5.6. A large archaeological site surrounded by moats called Kouk Don Teav was located to the north-eastern corner of Lolei Baray. The forested site was associated with a powerful *neak-ta* spirit revered by the local villagers. The site was identified as one of eight prominent *prasat*

sites by Groslier during his survey of the region (1998c, 1998d). Besides Kouk Don Teav, there are a few other archaeological mounds and *trapeang* located in the village.

Photograph 5.9 Phum Stung community hall

Figure 5.6 Extent of Phum Stung (after village chief) overlaid on 2004 Quickbird imagery

PRASAT BAKONG

Prasat Bakong, a significant temple of the Roluos group is credited to King Indravarman I[59]. He only completed the temple, however, and deserves only partial credit. He also built the temple of Preah Ko in 879 AD to the north of Prasat Bakong, dedicated to his ancestors

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[59] (Tremmel 1993: 195) George Trouvé discovered an inscribed stele which after invocation and eulogy of King Indravarman, describes the foundation in 881 AD of the god Shri Indresvara. It refers to other images of Shiva and finally it also mentions the excavation of Lolei Baray.

(Dagens 2002: 17). Although Bakong was considered to have been completed in the ninth century, research since the 1930s has revealed some twelfth century transformations (Pottier 2006a). The Bakong temple that exists in the present day is not the original, but, a reconstituted temple, built using the blocks found on the site by EFEO curator Maurice Glaize between the years 1936–1943 (Dumarçay 1998: 18; Tremmel 1993: 195).

Photograph 5.10 Eastern view of the central pyramid of Bakong in 1882. Photograph by Pestel (Aymonier 1999: 240)

Photograph 5.11 Eastern view of Bakong, 2006

In the 1860s, when the early researchers arrived in the region, there were established monasteries at Bakong and Lolei (Bastian 1865: 84). In fact the Photograph 5.10 depicts a structure atop the Bakong pyramid in 1882 (Aymonier 1999: 245), probably part of the Bakong monastery. Aymonier referred to the monastery that existed at the foot of the pyramid, where monks were engaged in casting small objects like statues and betel boxes and other items (1999: 244–245), but no further details of the monastery or the structure at the top of the central tower were provided.

Photograph 5.12 View from the top level of Prasat Bakong, looking east

Figure 5.7 Prasat Bakong showing the outer and the inner moat (2004 Quickbird imagery)

Prasat Bakong is constructed on a high sandstone pyramid in five levels representing Mount Meru, the holy abode of Siva (Tremmel 1993: 195). It measures 67 by 65 metres at the base (Dumarçay 1998: 18). It is the tallest amongst the temples in the Roluos group and is surrounded by two concentric moats; a precursor to Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom (Coe 2003: 101). The approach to the temple is from the east and west across a causeway, which also acts as a dyke to allow the movement of water below (Dumarçay 1998: 18). The Buddhist *wat* structures are located around the base of the pyramid within the large space encircled by an inner moat. There are a number of *prasat* in ruins in the space between the inner and outer moat. This large space is occupied in the present-day by the local villagers. During the Khmer New Year, tens of thousands of Khmers from all over Cambodia visit the *wat* and the *prasat* at Bakong highlighting its regional significance. An account of the Khmer New Year celebrations at Bakong is provided in Chapter 8.

PHUM OVLAOK

Phum Ovlaok (also written Olok, Ovlok) is the village that surrounds Prasat Bakong. A number of temples, archaeological mounds and *trapeang* are located within the village. Of these Prasat Bakong and Prasat Preah Ko are the more significant temples which are regularly visited by tourists. Preah Ko was built as a funerary temple in the honour of Indravarman's ancestors—Jayavarman II and his wife (Coe 2003: 101). The temple has six towers in two rows, the front three are dedicated to Lord Siva and the three rear towers dedicated to his consort Gauri. The central tower is also symbolically associated with King Jayavarman II and the one behind to his wife as was the tradition for the Khmer kings to be posthumously regarded as God (Harris 2005: 12). In addition, there are a few other ruined *prasat* sites and a great number of archaeological mounds (*kouk*), *trapeang* and moats surrounding the larger temples. Most of the temples and archaeological mounds are of significant size and are surrounded by a proportionate moat. In fact, according to the villagers, the entire village is a *kouk*. The village extends along the south of Route 6. Figure 5.8 illustrates the village extent as described by the village chief.


Figure 5.8 Extent of Phum Ovlaok (after village chief) overlaid on 2004 Quickbird imagery

PHUM THNAL TRANG

Phum Thnal Trang is located to the east of Prasat Bakong. The *wat* at Bakong is of significance to the villagers who visit the *wat* regularly. Prasat Bakong is considered a part of this village as well. The large ruined Prasat Srang-Ai is located to the east of Prasat Preah Ko. A number of *trapeang* and other water bodies along with archaeological mounds and some *prasat* mounds are part of this village.

The village is located to the south of Route 6 and extends from Phum Ovlaok on the west to Phum Roluos on the east. Figure 5.9 illustrates the approximated extent of the village.

Photograph 5.13 Road to Prasat Bakong from the east (Thnal Trang)
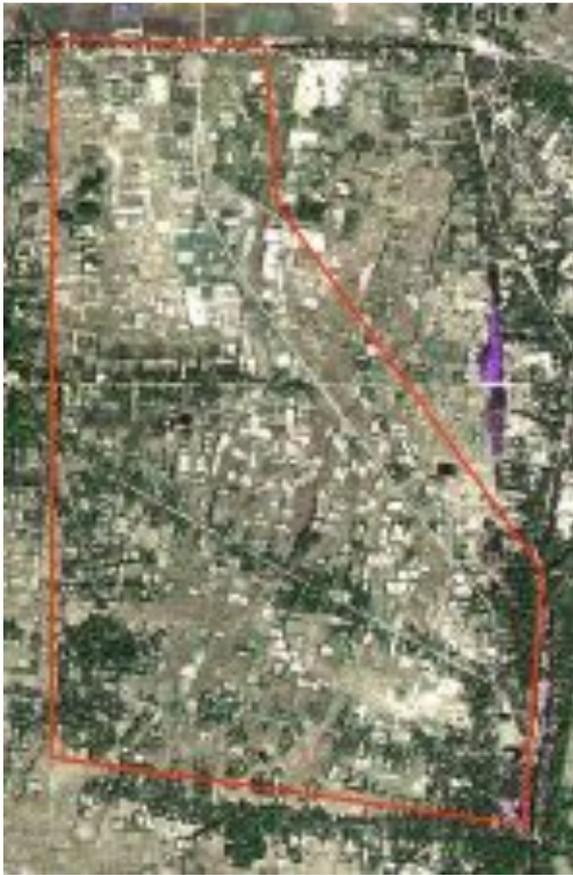
Figure 5.9 Extent of Phum Thnal Trang (after village chief) overlaid on 2004 Quickbird imagery

Photograph 5.14 Ruins of Prasat Srang-Ai

BENG

Beng is a Khmer word signifying a large water body. The *beng* chosen for this research is located to the south-west of the Roluos group. It is of a significant size measuring approximately 400 metres by 200 metres. While Lolei Baray and Prasat Bakong are noteworthy examples of Khmer engineering and architecture, the *beng* is also a prominent cultural heritage feature. Owing to its earthen embankments, it is difficult to date the *beng*, but its proximity to a ruined Angkorian temple (Prasat Totung-Thngai) indicates the likelihood that the *beng* may also be from the Angkorian period. It is tough to date the *beng* based on the morphological characteristics alone, nonetheless, it is accepted as a significant archaeological heritage feature (Pottier 2006b). It is believed by the local villagers to have existed for a very long time.

Phum Beng is the name given to the village that surrounds the *beng*. It was an independent village in the past, but since the 1980s Vietnamese occupation, it has been integrated with Phum Kouk Srok. Phum Beng is located two kilometres to the southwest of Prasat Bakong. Unlike the other study villages, Phum Beng is outside the tourist circuit and is undisturbed by the regular flow of tourists. As a result, it is a quiet village and there are no shops catering for tourists. Owing to the proximity of Prasat Trapeang Totung Thngai and Prasat Trapeang Phong, a few informed tourists go through the village of Beng to visit these sites.

Figure 5.10 Extent of Phum Beng and Kouk Srok (after village chief) overlaid on 2004 Quickbird imagery

Photograph 5.15 Prasat Trapeang Totung Thngai

Photograph 5.16 Houses surrounding the *beng*

Phum Kouk Srok has been chosen as a model cultural village by APSARA for experimenting with some of their cultural tourism objectives. The former DDD has developed a number of programs for the benefit of the villagers and these are being piloted in Phum Kouk Srok as part of their community programs. Phum Beng, located within Phum Kouk Srok (Figure 5.10) is part of this program. Some aspects of these are discussed in Chapter 7 which focuses on governance. The social and cultural setting of the Khmer villages including the rituals and ceremonies are presented next.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SETTING

Societies contribute to the cultures of the world, not just through meanings and values but also through the patterns of social organisations. The understanding of communities, their structure and organisation is made possible through their cultural lives and practices, which in turn evinces the cultural connections. Communities create connections with the environment they live in through their day-to-day activities, cultural practices and religious rituals. Chapter 1 gave a brief account of Cambodia's historical and political context. This chapter discusses the social and cultural aspects of the Khmers.

The religious contexts of local communities are an important component in the understanding of their cultural connections. In the context of Angkor, however, there exists a complex religious history with radical shifts and synchronisms between Buddhism (both Mahayana and Theravada) and Brahmanic Hinduism (Briggs 1951a: 228–229; de Casparis and Mabbett 1992: 287; Marston and Guthrie 2004: 8). The ritual use of the temples and their symbolic meanings has undergone significant changes all through history (Ang 1986: 68; Harris 2005). In addition, a pantheon of spirits and supernatural beings has influenced the lives of the Khmers for centuries (for instance see Ang 1986; Forest 1992; Porée and Maspero 1952). Regional influences from Thailand and Vietnam also affected the practice of Theravada Buddhism in Cambodia[60]. Cambodian Buddhism leaned more towards Thai influences, which introduced the *Thommayut* Buddhist tradition, leading to fractures within the existing Cambodian Buddhist *Sangha*. Some of the existing *Mahanikay* resisted the foreign *Thommayut* as they perceived this to be damaging to Cambodia's unity and monastic order, a case of tradition versus modern (Harris 2005: 110). To this complex patina of religious affiliations, the single-minded focus on the restoration of monuments by the French, devoid of its contemporary cultural context, contributed to the promotion of Angkor's glorious past from yesteryears (Norindr 2006: 56–57). In addition, the French set up a Pali religious school in 1914 and the *Institut Bouddhique* in 1930 to regulate the study of Khmer religion (Edwards 2004: 41–63). These institutes were favoured by the modernist *Thommayut* and modernists within *Mahinikay*, called the *Thommakay* (Harris 2005: 115). The monks favouring modernism also favoured the use of European methods in the interpretation of Buddhist doctrine and practice, which advocated 'Pali-text puritanism', which rejected traditional rituals as non-Buddhist (Harris 2005: 120). The disastrous period of Khmer Rouge in the mid

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[60] (Harris 2005: 40 – 48) Political instability in Cambodia was affected by invasions from neighbouring Thailand and Vietnam, which influenced the practice of religion. Religion in turn suffered serious setbacks. Shortly after the death of King Ang Chan (1794 – 1835), the Vietnamese took control of the country (1835 – 1841) and attempted to displace Khmer Buddhism and religious rites with those imported from Vietnam. King Ang Duang (1848 – 1860), a captive of the Thai rulers, was crowned king with the help of Thailand to emancipate Khmer Buddhism. Following the withdrawal of Vietnam in 1846, Theravada Buddhism regained strength, but was still heavily influenced by religious practices from Thailand.

to late 1970s brutally ruptured the cultural connections that had survived. Post Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese occupation, the country and its people have had to completely reconstruct their lives and deal with not only the loss of fellow countrymen but also the systematic destruction of their culture. In the words of Ledgerwood et al.:

> The Khmer Rouge had *atomized* Khmer society, broken it down into parts that had still not been reconstituted… Khmer culture has at least partially disappeared. Because of the tremendous loss of lives during the war years and the Democratic Kampuchea period, many skills known only to certain individuals are lost… As a result of deliberate destruction of texts by the Khmer Rouge, combined with loss from neglect and the effects of the elements, less than half of the Khmer-language materials from before 1975 exist today… The loss of cultural artefacts … was also tragically high… (1994: 2–3)

In post-war Cambodia, the nomination of the Angkor group of monuments to the World Heritage list necessitated strategies for heritage protection and management, as discussed earlier in Chapter 3. While the historical and religious shifts impacted the Khmer religion and traditions, and the war caused a huge disruption, the modern day influx of tourism has different repercussions. The Khmer traditional knowledge and stories are now being replaced by overheard tourist guide accounts, causing irreparable damage to traditional knowledge (Ang 2006). Despite these continued break-downs since Angkorian times, the local community has retained some associations with the landscape. Accordingly:

> Angkor as a big capital was abandoned in the middle of 15th century and it corresponds also to a collapse in terms of civilisation. It corresponded to a big rupture…Brahmanism for example got abandoned… it is normal that a lot of things have been forgotten… It is also normal that drastically the population of Angkor decreased very significantly… it being said, if you look in the detail of a ritual in particular… a singular ritual, then you can see the relation of this detail… or sometimes of the whole meaning of the ritual, you can relate to the lets say—to Angkor in the time of Brahmanism. (Ang 2006)

The Angkorian villages are described below, followed by Khmer religion and the ceremonies and social practices.

THE ANGKORIAN VILLAGES

The villages in the Angkor region (extending from the Kulen Mountains in the north-east to the Tonle Sap in the south) are classified into three distinct geographical zones based on their ecological characteristics. According to the social surveys conducted by the social research team of the culture department, a former department of APSARA, the villages and village communities exhibit distinctive differences or similarities based on these geographical zones. The study villages located in the Roluos region along the river Roluos fall under the second group. They live in clusters, having a mixed economy displaying self-sufficiency in rice and fish (Ang et al. 1998: 126). Whilst most villagers in Angkor practice rainfall dependent agriculture, which is seasonal, the villagers closer to the Tonle Sap farm throughout the year.

Owing to the farming patterns and livelihoods, the cultural activities, including ceremonies and rituals, of the Khmer villages are also distinctively different in these three zones.

Typical Cambodian villages are often exclusive and do not easily allow outsiders to enter. When an outsider comes to live in the village (mostly men move to their wife's village after marriage), they are usually viewed with scepticism and it takes a while before they are accepted as part of the village community (Luco 2002: 15). According to Forest, this compartmentalisation of social relations in Khmer society often did not provide any opportunity for individual expression (Forest 1992, cited in Luco 2002: 15). While these descriptions refer to the average village around Cambodia, they may not hold true in Angkor and the region of Siem Reap, owing to changes in recent decades. This region is witnessing an unprecedented increase in tourism and increasing developmental pressures, which has caused an inward migration to the region, increasing its population. Some aspects of these changes have emerged through the Angkor case study and are presented in the following chapters.

FAMILY AND SOCIETY

Khmer families around Angkor region were observed to be matrilineal by early scholars (Porée-Maspero 1962), wherein the woman inherited her parents' property and the husband moved to his wife's house and village after marriage. However, Ledgerwood asserts that the contemporary Cambodian kinship is bilateral and cognatic[61] (Ledgerwood 1995: 247). This was endorsed earlier by Whitaker et al. who suggested that the families of both parents were considered equally important, and in some cases the wife moved to the husband's property (1973: 59–61). Fieldwork conducted for this research also found evidence of married couples moving to either parents' house according to their wishes, and the two families were given equal importance. The houses were often clustered together, with parents and children living close by. Luco observed that children (especially daughters) moved separately into a different house after marriage, often on the same plot of land as their parents (if there was sufficient land) or another location (if the land was insufficient), and often the youngest daughter was expected to look after her parents in their old age (2002: 15). This clustering frequently led to the formation of new settlements, and explains why people are often related to one another within a village or with a neighbouring larger village (Delvert 1961 cited in Ebihara 1968: 83)

Due to APSARA's restrictions, however, the villagers are not free to add new houses for their children adjacent to their property, causing a great deal of stress to the residents. It is

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[61] (Ledgerwood 1995) bases this argument on Ebihara's (1968), Martel's (1975) and Kalab's (1965–66) research in pre-war Cambodia and her own research with Cambodian refugees in America.

particularly stressful for aging parents who prefer their children to live close by for support. Chapter 7 illustrates some of these problems identified by some residents.

LIFE AND OCCUPATION OF VILLAGERS

The Khmer villagers in the Angkor region are predominantly rice farmers. Seasonal fruits and vegetables are often grown on *kouk* (dry land), embankments along the river and banks of *trapeang* and moats of old *prasat* sites (Oum 2006). In the rice fields around the villages, the rainy season crop is sown in May and harvested in December. During the seasonal water-level rise in the flood plains of Tonle Sap, a species of floating rice is sown in April that is harvested three months later. When the water-level starts to recede, another species known as receding rice is sown that is harvested in December, and in February, fast growing irrigated rice is sown (Ang 2006; Ang et al. 1998). The villagers in the flood plains thus have a very busy lifestyle and are active all through the year. Amongst the study villages, most Beng villagers and a few villagers from the other study villages had farms in the flood plains and were busy throughout the year.

Apart from farming, the villagers also raised livestock, which included pigs, goats and poultry (hen and ducks). The pigs, when ready, were usually taken to Siem Reap to be slaughtered[62] and sold. Some reared buffaloes and cows. Some grew fruits and herbs around their places of residence, for sale in the local markets. Daily life linking the people to the landscape is discussed in Chapter 6. Khmer religion is discussed below.

THE KHMER RELIGION

Khmers in the present day practice Theravada Buddhism. According to Vickery, Hinduism, practised in the pre-Angkorian era before the eighth century, was 'not just the Indian religion transplanted, but adaptations by the Khmer of Indic features which fitted indigenous concepts. The proof—lies in the non-Sanskritized Khmer-language inscriptions' (1998: 170). Claude Jacques provides further affirmation of this by stating that the Khmer expression translated as Sanskrit *devaraja*, interpreted as '*god-king*', may actually refer to a local god called to protect the royal family (cited in de Casparis and Mabbett 1992: 325). Coedès suggested that the subjects adopted the religion propounded by the state and that they believed in the divinity of kings. The spiritual understanding of Hinduism or Mahayana Buddhism most likely belonged to the elite, while the common people believed in the folk religion (Coedès 1954 cited in

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[62] Khmer villagers, being Buddhist mostly left the slaughtering to Chinese and Muslims (Ebihara 1968; Anecdotal evidence from interviews)

Ebihara 1968: 33)[63]. Ang corroborates this by stating that in the context of the contemporary Khmers:

> Hinduism remained with the elite and never really touched the masses. The old civilization of Mon-Khmer lived steeped in ancestral animism and Theravada Buddhism was probably established more solidly following the Thai invasions. Traditional animism exists in perfect harmony with Buddhism including an altar for the spirit in the corner of the Buddhist monastery (*my translation* 1986: 9)

Animistic practices have continued all through the tumultuous history and the traumatic regimes of the recent past. These practices, well-integrated into the lives of Khmers in recent years, do display an influence of Brahmanism (Ang 2006). Evidence of temple iconography and inscriptions indicate the existence of Hinduism, Mahayana Buddhism and Hinayana (Theravada) Buddhism (2005) individually and synchronously patronised by the various kings (Porée-Maspero et al. 1949a: 9). Although there is no clear evidence as to when Hinduism was discontinued, Theravada Buddhism with influences from Lanka became the state religion by mid fourteenth century (Coe 2003) and the Cambodians became a nation converted (Ebihara 1968: 68). Even though Hinduism was not practised as a separate religion, there were many Hindu rituals that were integrated into popular religion; hence, it has not been forgotten. Despite the modernist influences affecting Buddhism, the rituals and social practices have continued. Further, stories from Hinduism have been given continuity by King Ang Chan, a devout Theravada Buddhist, who commissioned the series of bas-reliefs in Angkor Wat depicting stories of Krishna and Vishnu in the mid sixteenth century. A plausible explanation for this maybe due to Buddha also being regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu in Brahmanical Hinduism (Harris 2005: 32–33; see also Thompson 2004a).

Cambodians in the mid twentieth century followed Buddhism ('little vehicle' or Hinayana Buddhism); nevertheless their traditional beliefs were imbued with spirits of the indigenous ancestors mixed with mythical gods and Hindu colonisers, both Sivaites and Buddhists (Porée and Maspero 1952: 175). Although the external researcher perceives the influences of the different religions, the ordinary Khmer villager's religious beliefs are devoid of any denominational divides. 'Buddha and ghosts, prayers at the temple and invocations to spirits, monks and mediums are all part of... a single religious system, different aspects of which are called into play at different appropriate times' (Ebihara 1968: 364). At the time of the arrival of Europeans in the mid nineteenth century, the abandoned temples were associated with Khmer names (Chandler 1996b: 1). In analysing the myth of the 'Leper King', Chandler suggests that 'folk memories of Angkor were more persistent and more accurate than many nineteenth and twentieth century French *savants* were willing to grant' (Chandler 1996b: 14). The Khmer cosmology was associated with a supernatural world of spirits that surrounded

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[63] Coedès, George. 1954 L'osmose Indienne en Indochine et en Indonésie. *Journal of World History* 1: 827 – 838

them in the landscape (Ang 1986). With the creation of Angkor Park, the clearing of the forest and the arresting of the vegetation, the French conservators succeeded in conserving and consolidating the Angkor monuments; however, the uncompromising focus on monument architecture and aesthetics (Norindr 2006) failed to include the local cultural context (Winter 2007). Their scientific approach based on material evidence did not accept traditions and practices as a legitimate source. While the physical contexts were restored to perfection, the social contexts were given limited attention. As a result, the study of local culture and traditions was limited (Porée and Maspero 1952: 176), and was kept separate to the study of the monumental remains. The disregard for local practices strongly influenced the creation of 'heritage' in Angkor and subsequently its management. The animistic practices are discussed below.

Figure 5.11 Leper King venerated by the locals—signs of incense and crude shelter (Vincent 1988)

Figure 5.12 Interior of *Pagoda*, Angkor Wat (Carpeaux 1908)

ANIMISM

The Khmer supernatural world is governed by a pantheon of genies and spirits. In accordance with Animistic belief systems, the land belonged to the spirits of the ancestors (Harris 2005: 49). According to Briggs, the Khmer population practised ancestral worship, as was common in most parts of monsoon Asia, and were involved with the monumental temples only as forced labour (1951b: 231). Ebihara suggests that:

> Buddhism has characteristically been tolerant toward other religious systems. In Cambodia (as also in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand and Laos), it co-exists with what might be called a folk religion that centres around belief in a variety of supernatural beings and essentially magical rituals and other practices. There is virtually no competition or conflict between the high religion and this folk religion (Ebihara 1968: 423)

Ebihara suggested that animistic practices have long remained a part of the Khmer peasant life (1968). Animism and the worship of spirits are not unique to these Buddhist countries alone. In parts of Southern India, the worship of village deities existed before the second century BC (Whitehead 1921) and is now well-integrated with the main religion of Hinduism.

The same is true of other South East Asian countries (de Casparis and Mabbett 1992). Folk religion, as it is also referred to, with its array of spirits and ritual practices is firmly embedded in village life (Ebihara 1968: 364). The array of supernatural spirits in Cambodia include the *neak-ta* (ancestral/ guardian spirits), *kmauit* or *kmoch* (ghosts), *arak* (spirits of dead people), *bóngbét* (similar to *arak*, but will possess individuals), *meba* (ancestral spirits), *praet* (spirits of people who caused a dreadful sin), *cmniéng ptea* (house spirits) and *mrin kónvil* (guardian spirits of animals) (after Ebihara 1968: 423–433).

These spirits inhabit the Khmer countryside and are respected and feared by most villagers (for details regarding animistic beliefs and spirit worship see Ang 1986; Ang 1995; Ebihara 1968; Forest 1992; Harris 2005; Porée-Maspero et al. 1949; Thierry 1985). Amongst the spirits, *neak-ta* is one that almost always had a tangible representation (Ang 2000a). A tutelary spirit, considered a true sacred being of the country is found almost everywhere in the landscape (mountain, island, river, tree, fields, village, edge of roads, nestled in a stone or sheltered in the roof of a small structure in a pagoda) (Porée and Maspero 1952: 203; Harris 2005: 52–53) and often housed in a little wooden structure, sometimes on a pole or a tree. Villagers made offerings and burnt incense; the *neak-ta* are owners of the land, guards of harvests; they are spirits of the land and often have a hierarchy with a chief *neak-ta* and other subordinate *neak-ta*; in other words the Khmers created their own supernatural world from elements in nature (also see Porée-Maspero 1962: 9–11; Thierry 1964: 138–140) and the ritual practices have survived the traumatic disruptions of recent decades.

According to Ang, *neak-ta* are less prominent in the Angkor region because they are largely associated with the Angkorian temples, whereas in other parts of Cambodia they are present almost everywhere (Ang 2008). The sacred locations of *neak-ta* on the mountains were often chosen for the location of Hindu temples (Chandler 2008: 25–26; Thierry 1964: 140). Chandler argues that a continuity of occupation stressed a continuity of sacredness; he adds:

> ideas in themselves that had deep roots in Cambodian culture. If ancestors became Indian gods in times of centralization and prosperity, the gods became ancestors again when the rationale for Hinduism and its priestly supporters diminished or disappeared. Thus, at Angkor and in Cham sites in Vietnam studied by Paul Mus in 1930s, Indian images were worshipped in quite recent times not as emanations from India but as mysterious products of the *nak ta* (Chandler 2008: 26)

When Theravada Buddhism became the state religion, the ritual use of the various Hindu temples probably ceased. Due to the sacred symbolisms, most Buddhist *wat* were located near Hindu temples (Harris 2005: 64). Though there is no documented evidence on the precise use of the temples at this point, it would be safe to assume that they were no longer venerated in accordance with their original intent. Owing to the change in religious affiliation there was bound to be a lack of ritualistic maintenance, as a result of which many of the temples fell to

ruins and many others including Ta Prohm and Preah Khan were engulfed by the forest and the invasive tropical vegetation. Nevertheless, the space was always associated with sacred spirits, which were revered. Despite the apparent loss of connections, it is claimed by Chandler that the locals never forgot the Angkorian temples. They remembered them through folk songs, stories and memories (1996a).

The temples that were built as Buddhist and those converted to Buddhist continued to be in use for ritual worship. Angkor Wat in particular was never abandoned. The monastery within Angkor Wat continued to function throughout the French times, although the monk huts were removed to offer an uninterrupted view of the western façade. Loti, who travelled to Angkor in 1901, observed that visiting pilgrims made offerings to the Buddha statues in Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom (1999). Candee, who visited Angkor in 1922, saw monks meditating and praying inside the Angkor Wat temple (2008: 136). Most Angkorian temples and remains in the study villages are associated with *neak-ta*, along with many other spirits that inhabited the surroundings of the study villages.

CEREMONIES AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

As indicated above, contemporary Cambodians practice Theravada Buddhism and also conduct ritual worship of spirits. Ceremonies are fundamentally of two kinds; the annual festivals and the rites of passage, both of which are conducted individually or collectively (group of villagers). An important person in the event of any ceremony, both Buddhist and spirit worship is the *achār* (derived from Sanskrit *acārya* meaning master). The *achār* acts as an intermediary between the supernatural or religious and the secular world (Porée-Maspero et al. 1949a: 10), between the monks and the villagers, and conducts the rituals (also see Ebihara 1968: 371–372, 439–442). In addition to the *achār*, the *kru*, *memot* and *th'mup* also conduct rituals and play an important role in the villages. The *kru*[64] (from Sanskrit meaning guru or teacher was always a male) also functioned as a medicine man[65]. The *th'mup* (*tmóp*) is a kind of *kru* who practices black magic. The *memot* (Luco 2002: 22) and other mediums referred to as *rup* or *rup arak* communicate with the spirits and convey the spirit's wishes to the people (for more details Ang 1986; Bertrand 2001; Ebihara 1968; Harris 2005; Marston and Guthrie 2004; Porée and Maspero 1952). Offerings are prepared in accordance with the spirit's wishes conveyed by the *rup*.

The Buddhist *wat* is the centre of the religious and cultural life of the villagers. Elderly villagers dedicate all their free time to serving the monks, and they visit the *wat* on all the

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[64] One woman interviewed, known as a *kru*, was in reality a medium-*rup*, who communicated with a spirit called *gomapyth*

[65] Anecdotal evidence from interviews

auspicious days (*thngāi sel*) of the month (every eighth day in the lunar cycle), and other days as well, while the rest of the villagers visit the *wat* during the annual celebrations. During these times, the *wat* functions as a place for gaining merit through religion, a social gathering place and a place to perform rituals for overcoming misery and misfortune (for more information see Harris 2005; Leclère 1899; Marston and Guthrie 2004). A brief background into the cultural practices of the Khmers highlighting the annual festivals, civil ceremonies and material offerings, is given below.

ANNUAL CEREMONIES

Climate plays a central role in the ceremonies of Cambodians. The important festivals fall between the Khmer months of *Asoit* (September–October) to *Cèt/Chaitr* (March–April). Water festival marks the height of the wet season in the month of *Kattik* (October–November). The dry season following the harvest is associated with many rituals and festivities associated with both the animistic spirits and local Buddhist *wat*. The rituals associated with spirits include 'praying for the rain'; the climatic aspects and geography are thus closely linked to the cultural life of the society.

Choul Chnam Thmei (literally, 'enter year new') is the biggest and happiest holidays of all with three days of celebrations (Ebihara 1968: 89). The other important religious ceremonies include (Ebihara 1968: 398–411; Porée-Maspero et al. 1949a)

> *Visakh Bochéa* (anniversary of the birth, death and enlightenment of Buddha)—full moon of *Visakh*[66]
> *Choul Vossa* (meaning 'enter rain')—start of the rainy season, monks confine themselves to a three month meditation retreat—full moon of *Asath*
> Festival of the dead (*Prachum*) occurs between late September and early October—first day of new moon in *Photrobot*. On the last day of the fifteen day ceremony, special prayers for the dead are offered (*bangskol*)
> *Chen Vossa* (meaning 'leave rain')—monks return from retreat--full moon of *Asoit* (*Asoc*)
> *Kathen*--funds raised for the monks and monastery—can take place any time between first day of full moon in *Asoit* to full moon in *Kaduk* (Kattik)
> Water Festival
> Moon Festival
> *Miek Bochéa*--anniversary of last sermon of Buddha--full moon of *Miek* (*Mākh/Meāk*)

Of these, *Choul Chnam*, *Kathen* and *Prachum* are the most important festivals (Ebihara 1968: 409). These draw crowds in large numbers, and in the context of AWHS the Khmer New Year is rather significant as the domestic visitors to Angkor Wat range anywhere between 100,000 to 250,000 (Winter 2007: 111). This surge in visitor numbers during the three days of New Year causes high impact on the monuments and is discussed in Chapter 8. The festival of the dead is significant for the average villager (Ang et al. 2007); the origins probably lie in

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[66] Khmer months

Brahmanism in which funerary rites are performed to ensure the liberation of the soul of the deceased (de Casparis and Mabbett 1992: 306).

KHMER RITES OF PASSAGE

The family rituals can be broadly classified as the rites of passage which include birth, pre-puberty rituals and puberty rites, marriage, funeral and many others (for details see Ang et al. 2007; Porée-Maspero et al. 1949b). Besides these, there are a number of other ceremonies, which include agrarian rituals, ceremony conducted for the old before death, ceremony for the *neak-ta* and also exorcism of spirits. As Groslier observes, a number of such rites were associated with the spirits, including the water festival and agrarian rituals (2006: 89). All such rituals and annual festivals are accompanied by a variety of offerings, depending on the nature of the ceremony.

Photograph 5.17 *Baisei*

Photograph 5.18 *Baisei phrum*

Photograph 5.19 *Rum Doh* ceremony

Photograph 5.20 Ritual offering with five items

A number of ritual offerings are produced during each ceremony (Photographs 5.17–5.20). The offerings vary depending on the nature of the ceremony. The most common ritual offerings include cooked rice, salty and sweet, chewing betel and cigarettes. The offerings are made on plates of regular use or on plates made from leaves, and can be made on a base of a

banana trunk (formed into a *baisei*) or on a base of rice. The offerings depend on the kind of spirit the ceremony addresses and the spirit's requirements. There is often an accompaniment of traditional Khmer music and dance which are frequently re-enactments (for details Ang 2004; Ebihara 1968; Porée-Maspero et al. 1949b; Thompson 2005).

Photograph 5.21 Arak Bako Phum Nokor Krau

Photograph 5.22 *Neak-ta* in Phum Srah Srang

Photograph 5.23 *Neak-ta* Som Peh Loon—NW corner of the outer Moat of Angkor Wat)

Photograph 5.24 Representation of the Earth Goddess in a house construction ritual

Photograph 5.25 *Achār* conducting ritual for a house construction

Photograph 5.26 *Rum doh* ritual to undo one's sins—a cotton thread (*sima*) connects the villager and the monk

The ceremonies encountered during the fieldwork are detailed in Chapter 6. These rituals and ceremonies illustrate the cultural connections of the Khmer people, who are connected to the landscape. An understanding of these is often important to demonstrate the intangible links

with the tangible in the context of this research. Although not all ceremonies are associated with the Angkorian *prasat*, the acknowledgement of the sacred site is present in a subtle manner. The subtlety of this connection could possibly be exploited in the process of raising awareness amongst the villagers about the archaeological heritage.

STUDY SAMPLE

An understanding of the study sample is important to assist in clarifying the findings of any case study, as it provides data for comparative analysis. This section contains a summarised account of the study sample in terms of respondent details. The distribution of respondents in the study villages, gender distribution, age group distribution and occupations are presented below. The categories will help in a cross-sectional understanding of the survey sample.

VILLAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

The data for this research was collected through a series of field visits to Cambodia, as previously detailed. The qualitative data collected through the semi-structured in-depth interviews have helped in an understanding of the local community's contemporary connections with the archaeological landscape, as will be seen in later chapters. Sixty-three interviews were conducted amongst villagers in the five study villages of Lolei, Stung, Ovlaok, Thnal Trang and Beng. Figure 5.13 indicates the number of interviews conducted in each study village and the number of unpremeditated group sessions that took place.

	LOLEI	STOUNG	OVLOAK	THNAL TRANG	BENG
INTERVIEWS	28	6	10	12	7
GROUP SESSIONS	7	2	5	3	0
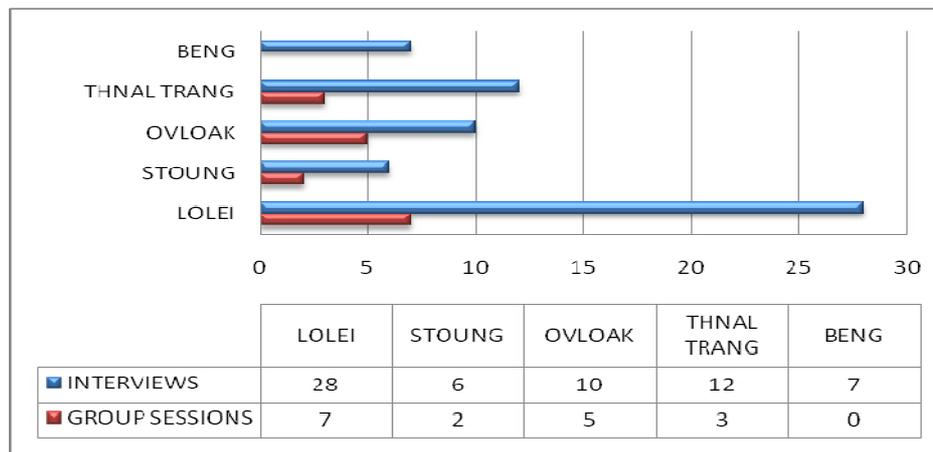
Figure 5.13 Distribution of interviews and group sessions in the study villages

The maximum number of interviews were conducted in Phum Lolei, followed by Phum Thnal Trang, Phum Ovlaok, Phum Beng and Phum Stung. The 63 interviews included seventeen impromptu group sessions. Across all 63 interviews, a total of 99 people were interviewed, of whom 58 were men and 41 women. Table 5.2 and Figure 5.14 show the gender distribution amongst the various study villages.

The highest number of men interviewed at one location came from Phum Lolei and Phum Ovlaok, and the lowest number of interviewees came from Phum Stung and Phum Beng. A possible reason for this uneven distribution was the time of the day at which the interviews were conducted. Men were usually available for interviews during lunchtime and in the afternoon after work. Women were often occupied with domestic chores around the house but, although busy, were available for interviews. A considerable percentage of the men interviewed were monks from Phum Lolei (Wat Lolei) and Phum Ovlaok (Wat Bakong), as shown below.

VILLAGE	Men		Women		Total	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**	**Number**	**%**
Lolei	28	45.0	14	35	42	41.0
Stung	3	5.0	5	12.5	8	8.0
Ovlaok	18	30.0	5	12.5	23	23.0
Thnal Trang	9	17.0	11	25	20	20.0
Beng	1	3.0	5	15	6	8.0
Total	**59**	**100**	**40**	**100**	**99**	**100**

Table 5.2 Distribution of men and women interviewed in the five study villages

	LOLEI	STOUNG	OVLOAK	THNAL TRANG	BENG
Men	27	3	18	9	1
Women	14	5	5	11	6
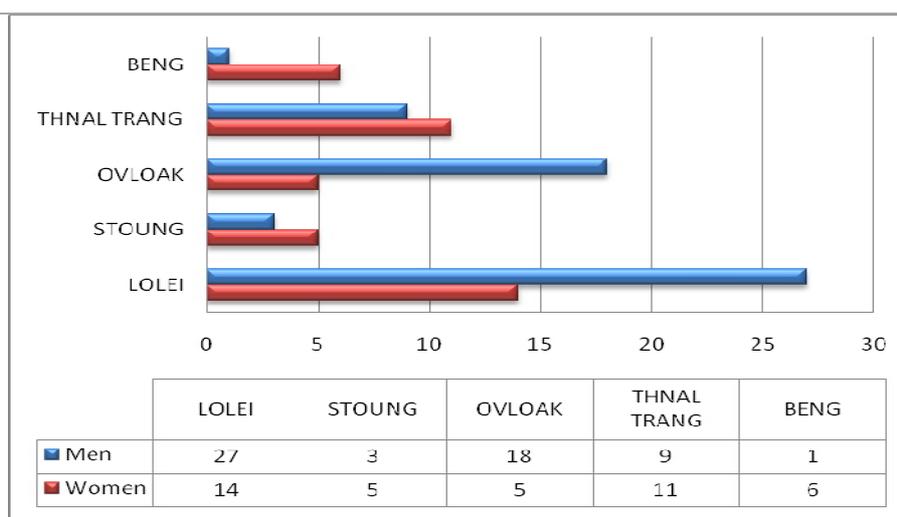
Figure 5.14 Gender distribution in the study villages

AGE-GROUP DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Table 5.3 depicts the age group distribution of the men and women interviewed. The percentage of men interviewed was 58 and the percentage of women interviewed was 41.

Age Group	Men	Women	Total
10 – 19	0	2	2
20 – 29	11	8	19
30 – 39	10	4	14
40 – 49	11	7	18
50 – 59	10	7	17
60 – 69	8	11	19
70 +	8	2	10
Total	**58**	**41**	**99**

Table 5.3: Total number of men and women interviewed

With the exception of the very young (two women under twenty years of age), the participants were more or less evenly distributed across age groups as illustrated in Table 5.3 above and Figure 5.15 below. The respondents represented an almost uniform cross-section of the population. While the number of women interviewed varied amongst the various age groups, the numbers of men were more or less consistent. Having illustrated the gender distribution and the age group distribution of the interviewees, the next aspect to consider is occupation.

	10 − 19	20 − 29	30 − 39	40 − 49	50 − 59	60 − 69	70 +
MEN	0	11	10	11	10	8	8
WOMEN	2	8	4	7	7	11	2
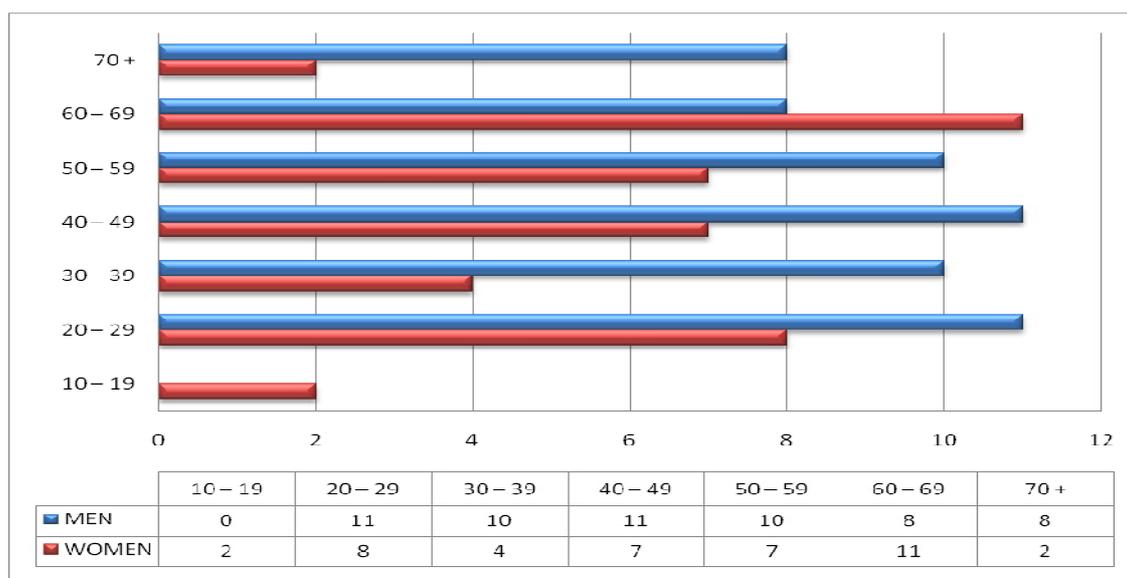
Figure 5.15 Gender distribution according to age groups

OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS

The occupation of the villagers is also an important aspect to categorise, as it is their daily life and occupation that brings the local Khmers in close contact with the landscape on a day to day basis. The villagers are often engaged in cultivating the land, fishing in the great lake (Tonle Sap) and other water bodies, growing vegetables on the *prasat* mounds during the wet season, harvesting flowers and fruits from *trapeang* and the forested areas, grazing cattle in the open fields and collecting firewood from the surrounding regions for domestic use. Although farming and fishing are the most prevalent traditional means of earning a living, World Heritage classification and resulting tourism provide an additional source of income. Some villagers are employed with government agencies such as APSARA as guards and heritage police; some are occupied as restoration workers on the temples, especially in Phum Ovlaok and others work at the local commune and district offices. Additionally, a number of villagers travel to Siem Reap to work as construction workers or in hotels and guest houses as part of the tourism industry, and some women from the villages run shops in front of the temples on the tourist circuits.

Occupation Type	Primary Occupation			Secondary Occupation		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Farming	16	19	35	23	17	40
Selling Produce	0	0	0	4	9	13
Shop	2	6	8	0	2	2
Government Job	8	0	8	1	1	2
Labourer	2	2	4	1	0	1
Serving Wat	9	13	22	0	1	1
Monk	14	0	14	0	0	0
Kru / Achār	5	1	6	0	0	0
Restoring Temple	2	0	2	1	0	1
Village Chief	0	0	0	7	1	8
Other	0	0	0	1	1	2
Total	**58**	**41**	**99**	**38**	**32**	**70**

Table 5.4 Gender distribution of primary and secondary occupations

Table 5.4 provides details of both the primary and secondary occupations of the interviewees, classified according to gender. Farming is the single largest occupation of the villagers with nearly 70 % of respondents engaged in farming either as a primary or as a secondary source of income. Although a majority were rice farmers, some also grew vegetables, herbs and fruits to supplement their income. The next major occupation amongst the interviewees was as a monk. Fourteen percent of the people interviewed were monks, of whom all were men. It is not common for young women to become nuns in this part of Cambodia (Ebihara 1968: 381), although women older than fifty years often dedicate their lives to the service of the monks and the monastery. Amongst the rest of the respondents, 23 % were involved with serving the *wat*, 8 % were village chiefs and 6 % worked as a *kru* or *achār* conducting rituals and ceremonies in the villages.

Of the 10 % who had shops, 8 % were run by women. The occupation types followed a distinct pattern based on gender and age groups. Although both men and women were equally involved in farming activities, women were solely responsible for all domestic chores including cooking and cleaning. Women mostly tend the livestock at home and a few enterprising women run shops catering to tourists near the temples that lie on the main tourist circuit. During the dry season after the harvest some men took up jobs in Siem Reap as labourers in the booming construction industry, a result of burgeoning tourism, and in recent years, large numbers of young men and women have sought employment in Siem Reap, often commuting distances greater than ten kilometres by bicycles. The occupations of villagers are discussed in Chapter 6. Figures 5.1 and 5.17 illustrate the gender distribution of primary and secondary occupation respectively.

	Farming	Shop	Government Job	Labourer	Serving Wat	Monk	Kru / Achār	Restoring Temple
Men	16	2	8	2	9	14	5	2
Women	19	6	0	2	13		1	0
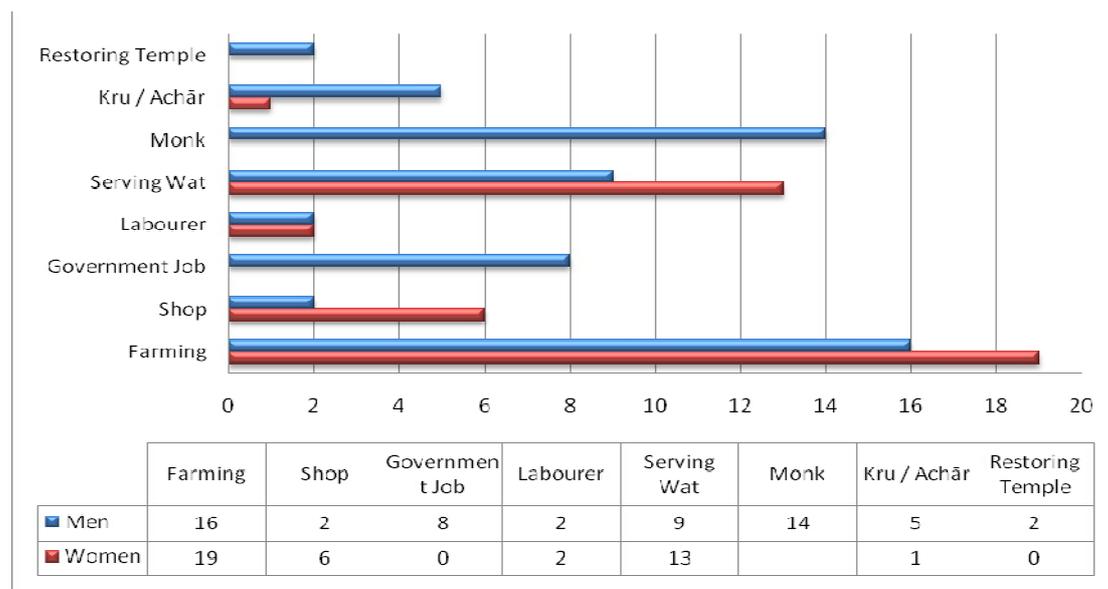
Figure 5.16 Gender distribution of primary occupation

	Farming	Selling Produce	Shop	Government Job	Labourer	Serving Wat	Restoring Temple	Village Chief	Other
Men	23	4	0	1	1	0	1	7	1
Women	17	9	2	1	0	1	0	1	1
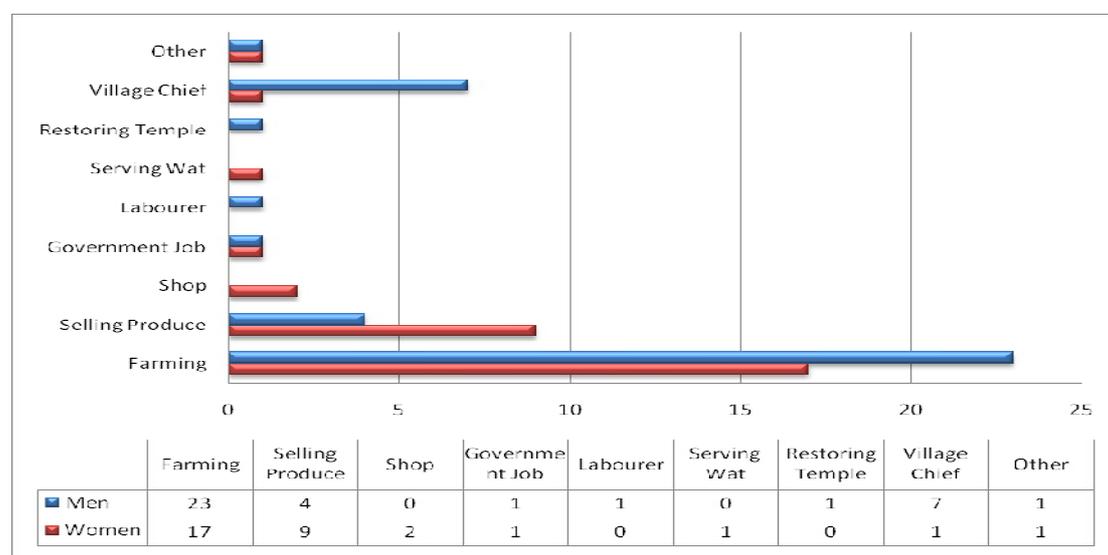
Figure 5.17 Gender distribution of secondary occupation

Occupation Type	Primary							Secondary						
	10 – 19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	> 70	10 – 19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	> 70
Farming	0	6	3	12	12	2	0	1	3	3	4	5	16	8
Selling Produce	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	6	4	0	0
Shop	2	3	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Government Job	0	0	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Labourer	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Serving *wat*	0	0	0	1	3	11	7	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Monk	0	9	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kru / Achār	0	1	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Restoring Temple	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Village Chief	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Total	**2**	**19**	**14**	**18**	**17**	**19**	**10**	**2**	**5**	**8**	**14**	**15**	**18**	**8**

Table 5.5 Distribution of different occupation types against the age groups of respondents

While gender differences existed in the type of jobs undertaken by the villagers, there was also some difference in the nature of tasks carried out by villagers based on their age group. While the villagers in the working age group (20s to early 50s) were engaged in earning a living, the older villagers (fifty years and above) often dedicated a considerable amount of time to serving the *wat* and the monks. Table 5.5 and Figures 5.18 and 5.19 illustrate the occupation based on age group.
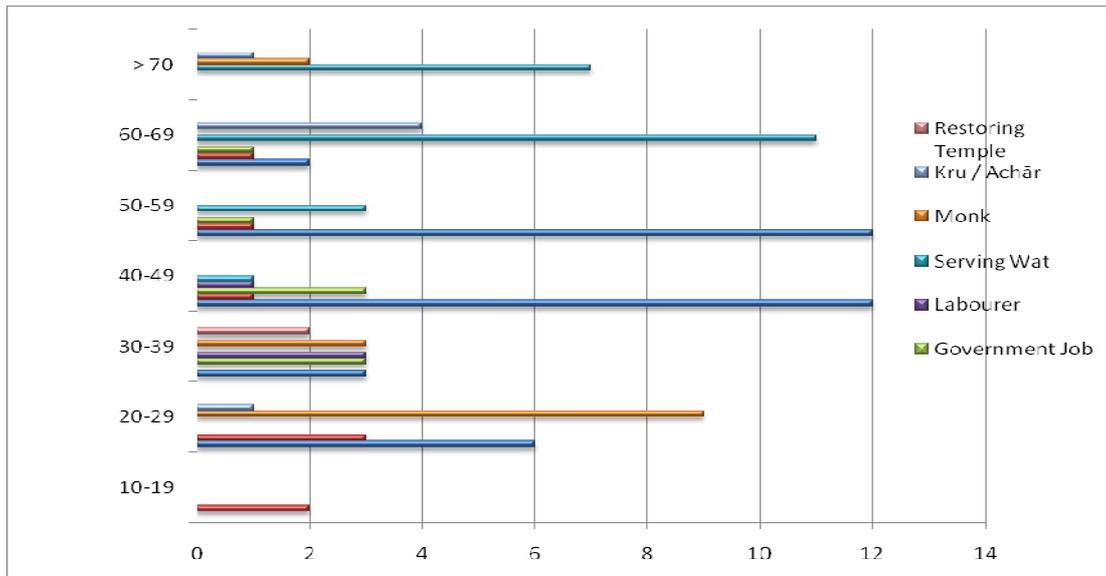
Figure 5.18 Age group distribution of primary occupation
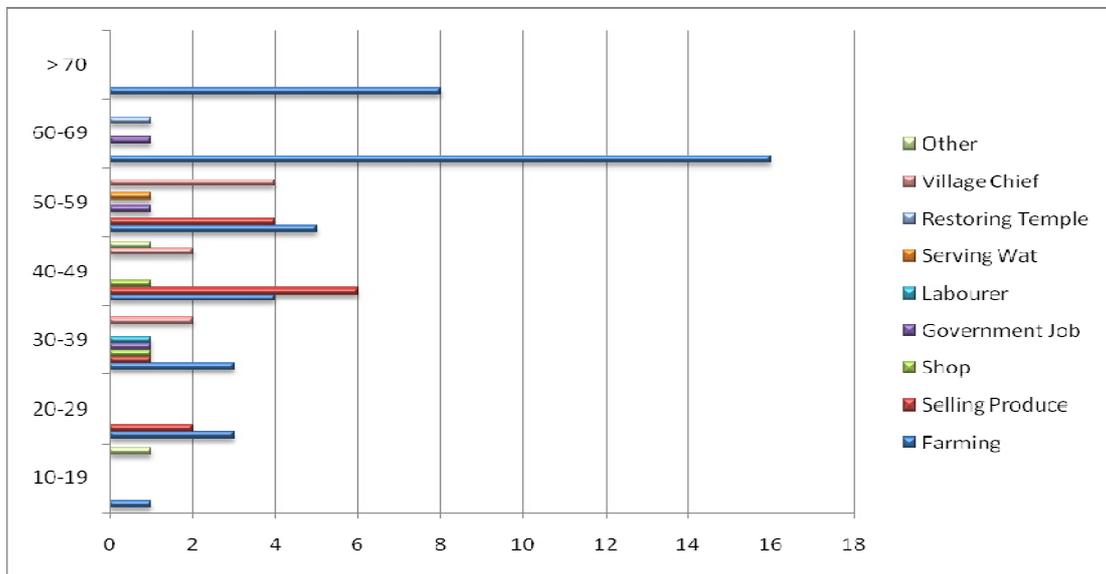
Figure 5.19 Age group distribution of secondary occupation

Nearly 35.5 % of villagers who had farming as a primary occupation were in the age range 20–69 and 40 % of villagers who had farming as a secondary occupation were aged 20 years and above. While 8 % of the respondents occupied with shops were distributed across the age groups, 22.2 % of the people who served the *wat* were aged 40 years and above. All Cambodian men are expected to earn merit by serving the *wat* at some stage in their lives, but

women often dedicate their service when they are older (Ebihara 1968: 363, 378–381). Most of the 35.5 % of respondents who were primarily farmers sold produce as a secondary occupation. 13.1 %of the interviewees sold produce such as fruits, herbs and vegetables grown in their place of residence at the local Roluos market. The village chiefs interviewed always had a primary occupation in addition to carrying out their duties as a village chief. The elderly villagers who served the *wat* and the monks often had farming as a secondary occupation. Their religious lives and practices will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the physical and social background to the Angkor Case Study. The study region of Roluos, located along Route 6, was easily accessible and the population in the region has been on a steady increase. The provincial government bodies, including the commune office and the district office, administer the region, along with APSARA; the provincial bodies are responsible for the infrastructural development of the region and the villages. The APSARA zone boundaries dissect the communes into two or more parts creating complications in their management. The heritage features of Lolei Baray, Prasat Bakong and Beng, were chosen due to their prominent presence in the landscape. The study villages include Lolei and Stung around Lolei Baray; Ovlaok and Thnal Trang around and to the east of Prasat Bakong; and Beng located around a *beng*.

The social and cultural setting highlighted the complex cultural affiliations present in Khmer society, probably since Angkorian times. Although Khmers today practice Theravada Buddhism, animistic worship is also highly prevalent. The presence of Hindu deities in the Buddhist ceremonies and the animistic worship of *neak-ta* spirits in the Angkorian temples, ruins and mounds highlight the lingering influences of Brahmanism and its long-term integration into popular religion. This indicates the indirect cultural continuity that has existed through history despite constant political disturbances until the early twentieth century and the violent political upheavals in recent decades. The traditions and ceremonies practised by the Khmer provide their cultural identity and along with religion, aid in the rebuilding of the post-conflict society.

The background to the Angkor Case Study also includes an evaluation of the study sample. The 63 semi-structured in-depth interviews include fourteen impromptu group sessions. Of the total 99 people interviewed, 41 % were from Lolei, 23 % from Ovlaok, 20 % from Thnal Trang, 8 % from Stung and 7 % from Beng. 59 % of the respondents were male while the remaining female. The distribution of respondents in the various age groups was nearly equal, ranging between 14 and 19 %. Two percent of the interviewees were below 20 (18 years of

age) and 10 % were above 70 years of age. Farming was the single major occupation of the villagers. Nearly 70 % of the people interviewed earned a living through farming, either as a primary or as a secondary occupation. While older villagers dedicated all their free time to the service of the *wat* and the monks, villagers in the working age group visited the Buddhist *wat* annually during important festivals. Occupation patterns were dependent on gender and age group.

The daily life and activities of the villagers kept them in contact with their local landscape enabling them to form cultural connections. In their constant commuting between their places of residence, their rice fields, other work commitments, Buddhist *wat* and ritual spaces, the villagers were well-placed to comprehend the landscape and its various features, including the archaeological remains. This kept them up to date with changes in the landscape and they had a good understanding of the environment in which they lived. The details of their cultural connections with the material heritage of AWHS will be discussed in detail in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 6: LOCAL CONNECTIONS—THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

> We come and go but the land is always here
> and the people who love it and understand it are the people
> who own it—for a little while
> Willa Cather, O Pioneers[67]

KHMER CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

The local Khmers living around the archaeological ruins of the Angkor World Heritage Site (AWHS) carry on with their daily lives in a seemingly unperturbed manner, despite being surrounded by architectural and archaeological heritage of 'outstanding universal value'. Having lived amidst the remnants of the once mighty Angkorian Empire for most of their lives, the Khmer villagers interact with the landscape through their day-to-day tasks and cultural practices, which connect them to the material heritage. The term 'cultural connections' as used in this research refers to the intangible connections of the local Khmers living within the AWHS, with the tangible remains that surround them in the landscape. These contemporary connections are important in understanding how the local people relate to the monumental temples and the archaeological remains. An understanding of these contemporary links between the tangible and the intangible will help in encouraging a harmonious partnership between the local community who continue to live around the monuments and the authorities who continue to manage the World Heritage site.

In this research, the Khmer cultural connections are studied in the context of heritage management. The social values of the villagers and their connections with the cultural heritage remains are addressed from the point of what the archaeological heritage means to the people; how they relate to it and what they understand of it. This research is based on approaches used in heritage studies relating to heritage issues and social values and is not a study using anthropological methods.

The previous chapters presented the theoretical context, background to the AWHS management, methodological framework used and background to the study. This chapter presents the findings and highlights the social links with the material remains in the context of the local Khmers and the AWHS. The preliminary field visits and interviews indicate certain criteria by which the local villagers interact with the cultural landscape. Additional interviews conducted during the third field visit reinforce these findings and an analysis of the transcribed semi-structured in-depth interviews helped the categorisation of the data collected. Within these cultural and governance categories, two levels of cultural connections (micro

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[67] Cited in Lozny 2006: 15

and macro) became apparent and together they determine the structure of the findings presented in this and the following two chapters.

Figure 6.1 illustrates the cultural and governance contexts of Khmer cultural connections. The cultural context includes the knowledge of the physical landscape through daily life activities, Buddhist and animistic rituals, social practices and connections with the Angkorian temples and remains, while the governance context examines the impacts of the APSARA regulations on the local community and the local community's understanding of the World Heritage status. These together help in understanding the contemporary society's connections with the Angkorian landscape and highlight the complexities and dissonance that exist due to heritage management regulations.
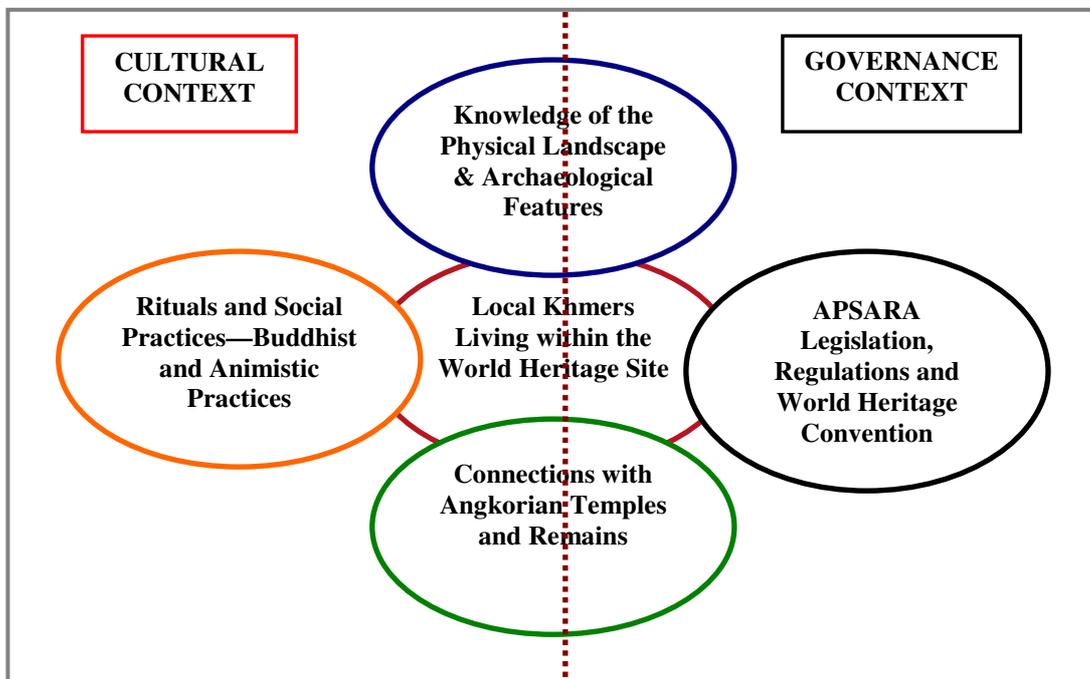
Figure 6.1 Thematic representation of Khmer cultural connections

The cultural contexts of the local community's interactions with the landscape are presented in this chapter. Chapter 7 discusses the governance aspects at both local and regional levels. In order to highlight the contemporary nature of the cultural connections, Chapter 8 will examine some examples in detail. The cultural aspects of connections at the local level include the knowledge of the landscape, rituals and social practices, and connections with the Angkorian temples. This chapter highlights the continuing knowledge of the local Khmers and their cultural landscape. Some aspects of these connections are weak, indicating a diminishing strength, but despite the tenuousness, this chapter argues that those cultural connections do exist and must be considered in the management of heritage.

LOCAL LEVEL

Local level connections include the inter-relationships between the people and the AWHS at the level of a village or a small group of neighbouring villages. The Khmer villagers relate to the surrounding landscape in a number of ways. Firstly, a sound knowledge of the landscape in which they live in, in terms of its geography, features and landmarks including the Angkorian temples and archaeological features, village names and extent, are all an indication of their continued associations with their environment. Secondly, the animistic rituals that they carry out on special occasions, help to maintain their connections with the landscape. Thirdly, the Buddhist festivals and associated rituals are celebrated and carried out at the local *wat*[68]. Fourthly, their connections with the Angkorian temples are examined through their opinions about them, their visits to them and rituals conducted in the temples. These manifest a physical and cultural connection to the landscape, including the material past, and are addressed below. In addition, a number of administrative factors affect the lives of the Khmer villagers, owing to the World Heritage classification and APSARA Authority's regulatory mechanisms. These aspects of governance are discussed in Chapter 7. An analysis of the Khmer interactions with the landscape through these themes will help in a better understanding of their connections and elicit the complexities existing in managing heritage.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE

The Khmers' knowledge of the local landscape developed primarily from their daily life. Their occupation and associated activities brought them in close contact with the landscape and provided an understanding of its geography and landmarks. Their long-term associations with their village made them familiar with the various village units and boundaries, their different names and any associated stories. Their movements within and amongst the villages as a result of work, family and other commitments gave them an opportunity to learn about the presence of Angkorian temples, ruins and other historic features. This section elaborates on an understanding of the physical landscape and is presented as daily life and occupations linking the people and the landscape, knowledge of historical features and archaeological remains and village units and boundaries.

DAILY LIFE AND OCCUPATIONS LINKING THE PEOPLE AND THE LANDSCAPE

Farming being the prevalent occupation, the majority of the interviewees exhibited a very good knowledge of the landscape. As outlined in Chapter 5, nearly 70% of the respondents

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[68] For Khmer and Sanskrit terms, refer to the glossary at the end

were engaged in farming either as a primary or a secondary source of income (Photograph 6.1, 6.2). The villagers were in constant physical contact with the surrounding landscape because along with agriculture, they were also engaged in fishing in Tonle Sap and other water bodies, growing vegetables on *prasat* mounds during the wet season (Oum 2006), harvesting flowers and fruits from *trapeang* and the forested areas, grazing cattle in the open spaces and collecting firewood from the surrounding regions for domestic use. Table 6.1 gives an indication of the different tasks of the respondents.

We do farming; we grow rice, bananas and vegetables. My husband works at the police station (a small outpost). We have a *sra* (pond) in our property, in which we are farming fish
(Lolei2-F62 2006)

We make *baisei* and we cook for the monks
(Lolei-F64&group 2006)

I joined APSARA as a guard in 2001, I work at Prasat Lolei (6 am to 6 pm)
(Lolei-M54 2006)

We are like nun, come here to ask advice from the monks and serve the *wat*. But now we are like guards here for the building material… for the new building of the crematorium
(Lolei-M71&M58 2006)

We do farming… We also grow herbs and vegetables to sell in Siem Reap
(Beng-F48 2008; Beng-F78 2008)

I run a shop in the village. We also grow vegetables and herbs and fruits like papaya and Water melon
(Beng-F43 2008; Lolei-F27 2006)

We make cement Water pots… We also do some rice farming nearby the village and grow vegetables and herbs around the house
(Beng-M50 2008)

I am a rice farmer, and I also make rice wine and rear pigs
(Lolei-M40 2006; ThnalTrang-M44 2008)

Table 6.1 Representative occupation in the study villages

Photograph 6.1 Rice farming is the most common occupation amongst villagers

Photograph 6.2 Vegetables, herbs and fruit trees are grown around houses by some villagers

As implied above, the villagers were often engaged in multiple tasks to earn their livelihoods. Although herbs, vegetables and fruits were grown around the house, the rice fields were not always nearby and they had to travel shorter or longer distances to get to their farms and other places of work.

Our farms are closer to the lake; we also do dry season farming. It is about 6–7 kilometres from here

(ThnalTrang-F64 2006)

Our rice fields are in to the east of stung river (around 1–2 kilometres)

(Stung-F49 2008; Stung-F54 2008; Stung-F59&group 2008)

My rice fields are in Phum Chambok (2 kilometres from here)

(ThnalTrang-M44 2008)

I have some rice farm around the house and some near the Tonle Sap near the 1978 Khmer Rouge dam (6–7 kilometres from here)

(ThnalTrang-M46&group 2008; ThnalTrang-M56 2008)

My rice farm is around 1 hectare near my house

(Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008)

The rice fields around 100 metres from Lolei Wat near route 6. More rice fields are to the north of *wat*

(Lolei-F42 2008)

My rice fields are to the north of the *baray* , 500 metres from the house

(Lolei-M38&F38 2008)

My rice fields are in the *baray*

(Lolei-M58 2008)

Our rice fields are very far away, near the lake in Jikraine district. It is about 70 kilometres to the east of Siem Reap…

(Lolei-F64 2008)

Table 6.2 Distances to the farms

Table 6.2, indicates the distances the villagers travelled to reach their farms. The average distance to the rice fields varied between a few hundred metres to some seven kilometres. One respondent had sold her fields in the *baray*, and purchased rice fields at a distance greater than 70 kilometres. While this was unusual, it highlighted the increase in land pressure and value in the Angkor region, which will be addressed in Chapter 7. Based on observations during the fieldwork, the most common modes of transport were walking, cycling, motor-bike or a scooter. Owing to the distances and the simple transportation modes, it is highly likely that these frequent movements covering large distances enhanced their understanding of the landscape.

Although farming and fishing are traditionally the preponderant occupations, World Heritage classification and the resultant tourism in recent decades have provided some additional jobs.

Some villagers were employed with APSARA as temple guards and restoration workers at temples, some were heritage police and others worked at the commune and district offices. Besides this, a number of villagers travelled to Siem Reap to work as construction workers or in hotels and guest houses as part of the growing tourism industry (Photograph 6.4); and some women from the villages ran shops in front of the temples to serve the tourists. While most villagers learnt about their landscape as a result of their regular travels, it is probable that the APSARA guards and restoration workers had a better understanding of the Angkorian temples due to their regular contact with them.

Photograph 6.3 APSARA provides jobs for the villagers as temple guards

Photograph 6.4 Increasing numbers of villagers commute to Siem Reap for work

Photograph 6.5 Twenty-three villagers from Phum Ovlaok work as restorers at Prasat Preah Ko

Photograph 6.6 Traditional ceremonies are officiated by an *Achār* or a Kru

The second largest category of respondents was the monks. They visited the villagers to receive alms and to offer blessings, and often during festivals and auspicious occasions, they travelled to Buddhist *wat* in the region. Annually, some monks travelled to Bayon and Angkor Wat for the meditation retreat at the start of the rainy season. The monks also had an understanding of the landscape and were familiar with the Angkorian features.

Photograph 6.7 Buddhist monk conducting a '*Rum-Doh*' ceremony in Wat Lolei

Photograph 6.8 Buddhist monks and *achār* at *Abisek Preah* ceremony at Wat Lolei

Although both men and women were equally involved in farming activities, women were solely responsible for all domestic chores, including cooking and cleaning. Women tended to livestock at home and a few enterprising women ran shops catering to tourists near the temples on the main tourist circuit (Photographs 6.9, 6.12 below).

Photograph 6.9 Woman selling palm juice in the village

Photograph 6.10 Elderly women dedicate their time to serve the monks and the *wat*

Photograph 6.11 Woman occupied with domestic chores at home

Photograph 6.12 Female APSARA guard and women selling scarves to tourists

Besides gender, age also decided the occupation patterns. Most elderly women and men over 50 years old dedicated their lives to the cause of Buddhism and spent their free time serving the monks and the *wat* (Photograph 6.10), and also helped their families in farming and other domestic activities. Villagers in the other age groups (20–50 years) worked to earn their living and visited the *wat* only during auspicious occasions and festivals.

The findings from the interviews demonstrate that daily life brings the villagers into regular contact with their local landscape, as they move perpetually between their places of residence, rice fields, other work commitments, Buddhist *wat* and ritual spaces in the village. Although this is clearly apparent, it also indicates that as a result, the villagers are likely to be aware of the large numbers of archaeological sites that surround them. As discussed in Chapter 4, the Angkorian landscape is largely flat and the subtle changes indicating mounds, moats and ponds can be understood only through continued associations with the landscape. To some extent, this informs their knowledge of the archaeological heritage in their surrounds and is discussed below.

KNOWLEDGE OF HISTORICAL FEATURES AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

A thorough knowledge of the archaeological features and their locations indicate a sound understanding of the landscape. Based on this premise, this section highlights the local Khmer knowledge of the Angkorian landscape in its physical context. A sound understanding of the archaeological landmarks is an indicator of continuing memory, linking the Khmers to the landscape. Such memories are often communal, transmitted through oral histories from older to younger generations. This section presents the community's understanding of the historical and archaeological features in the landscape, which include *kouk*, *trapeang*, *prasat*, *prasat* ruins, *thnal*, *beng* and *baray*. The local understanding of the tangible features in the landscape are discussed here, whilst the cultural associations through social practices will be discussed later.

The geography of the Angkor landscape as described in Chapter 1 is largely flat. There is a very subtle drop in elevation from the foothills of the Kulen mountain ranges in the north-east to the Tonlé Sap in the south and south-west (Coe 2003: 197). The visibility of the aforementioned features such as ponds and mounds are inconspicuous at the first instance (Photograph 6.13–6.20). The landscape, however, changes dramatically in the wet season when the subtle elevation differences become obvious due to the water-logging of the shallow features. Thus, it is not surprising that the local villagers have a comprehensive knowledge of the mounds and ponds. The information from the interviews highlights the local

understanding of the physical landscape. It is arranged in the order of the study villages, as the villagers often related to archaeological features that were near their villages.

The findings from the interviews indicate that, the respondents have a varying knowledge of the historical features that surrounded them in the landscape. The features acknowledged as historical included *trapeang*, *prasat*, *baray*, *kouk* and some roads. Often the Khmer word *boran*, meaning 'old/ancient' was used to qualify historical features. The villagers were well-versed with the 'lie of the land' based on where they were from. They were knowledgeable regarding these features in their villages and near where their rice fields were located. In other words, they were familiar with the landscape they regularly traversed for work and or family commitments.

PHUM LOLEI

Of the 28 interviewees in Lolei, all were aware of the Lolei Baray, which was referred to as *baray sngout* or *baray kouk* meaning dry *baray*. Since Lolei Baray is a rather large reservoir measuring 800 metres by 3000 metres, it would be surprising if the local villagers were not aware of the *baray*. In spite of its size, however, it was completely dry and like the rest of the landscape the presence of an 'on the ground' reservoir was not instantly evident. The embankment of the *baray* is raised just a few metres and its presence is more noticeable in aerial images. The *baray* area is largely used for rice farming and grazing cattle (Photographs 6.11, 6.12). Prior to the 1990s and the large influx in population, people lived only along the embankment referred to as *thnal* (Pottier 2006b). Owing to the population growth in recent years, a number of structures have been constructed in the *baray*, including monastery structures, a local school and houses. A large portion of the *baray* was being used for rice farming. Some generic responses are presented below.

The [Lolei] *baray* is known as *baray sngout* (Lolei-F64&group 2006; Lolei-M40 2006) *Why are the villagers living on the embankment* The embankment surrounds the rice fields. The ancient road surrounds the *baray sngout* *Do you refer to the embankment as kouk?* We call it *thnal* (Lolei-M56 2006) Lolei Baray is *baray sngout*. We sometimes use the term *kouk* to refer to the *baray* as well, because it is dry. It is also called *baray kouk* (Lolei-F42 2008; Lolei-M38&F38 2008) *Pralay lolum-ba*—it is where the concrete pipe is; it was formerly a laterite aqueduct that has now been replaced (Lolei-M73 2006)

Table 6.3 Knowledge of Lolei Baray

The responses in Table 6.3 demonstrate that the villagers from Phum Lolei are most familiar with their immediate surroundings. The toponyms indicate their knowledge of the landscape and signify the importance of local knowledge for research. For instance, *Lolum-ba* denotes a break in the *baray* and the location corresponds with the *baray* inlet (Pottier 2006b), and *baray sngout* or *baray kouk* meant a dry reservoir. The knowledge of the dry reservoir is overtly obvious; nevertheless, some villagers from neighbouring villages were not aware of the *baray* even though they visited Lolei Wat on special occasions. One resident from Phum Thnal Trang on seeing the extent of the *baray* on an aerial photograph exclaimed: '...it (Lolei Baray) is very big. I have just learnt about *baray sngout* and it is very big. I knew there was a *sra* but I did not know about the *baray*' (ThnalTrang-F64 2006). Considering the subtlety of the landscape, the local understanding of the *baray* and *Lolum-ba* established the villagers' knowledge of their immediate surrounding landscape.

Photograph 6.13 View of rice fields in Lolei Baray

Photograph 6.14 View of Lolei Baray from the southwest

The villagers of Phum Lolei also provided details regarding other archaeological features such as roads and *trapeang*. Table 6.4 lists some of these features.

This road is an old road called Thnal Kahé. It goes up to Phum Preah Dak... Trapeang Chrei is somewhere near the *wat* to the north of the embankment (Lolei2-F62 2006; Lolei-M38&F38 2008)
I have used the cart track, the old road to Phnom Bok. I used the road when I was young. One *trapeang* towards the east near Phum Stung is Trapeang Lom Chum, but it might be destroyed due to a road across it now (Lolei-F64 2008)
The ancient road goes to Phnom Bok from Phum Lolei. There is an ox cart road to the west going to Angkor. There is an old *beng* in Phum Ta Pok (Phum Stung) and Trapeang Bangkoang to the north. There are no canals only *stung* Roluos. Lolum ba (junction of Phum Lolei and Phum Stung)—there is a small bridge/aqueduct which was replaced with a concrete bridge in 2003. To the north of the *wat*, we feel there might be some kiln—we found some bricks (Lolei-M71&M58 2006)

Table 6.4 Details of archaeological or ancient features—Phum Lolei

The villagers often described these features from memory and were not confident that they could be identified in the present day due to developmental changes or destruction. One villager also suggested the possibility of a brick kiln, which indicates the awareness of the villagers regarding the archaeological heritage.

PHUM STUNG

The villagers of Phum Stung listed some *trapeang* and *kouk*. A few responses are given below.

My rice fields are near Kouk Don Aev. Another *kouk* near here is Kouk Chapou Teng
(Stung-F54 2008)

There is Kouk Dong Gombat and there is Kouk Chapou Teng. Kouk Chapou Teng—I know it was a temple, because I have seen bricks and it has a moat around it
(Stung-M51 2008)

There are some *kouk*, but we don't know the name. The *trapeang* nearby is called Trapeang Yeay Cheim
(Stung-F59&group 2008)

Table 6.5 Details of archaeological or ancient features—Phum Stung

Stung village chief (Stung-M51 2008) observed that Kouk Chapou Teng was a *prasat* because it had a moat around it and there were broken bricks lying around the site. Photograph 6.15 illustrates the moat around Kouk Don Aev and 6.16 shows a *trapeang* on the eastern side of Phum Stung.

Photograph 6.15 Moat around Kouk Don Aev

Photograph 6.16 *Trapeang* to the east of Phum Stung

The respondents from Phum Ovlaok indicated their knowledge regarding moats around temples and *trapeang*.

Photograph 6.17 *Trapeang* in Phum Ovlaok

A 78 year old man (2006) indicated that the villagers often interchanged the terms used to describe the moats around the temples. In addition, all the respondents confirmed that the entire area of the village was a mound, establishing the presence of a large number of temples and archaeological mounds.

> The *khassan* is only around temple. There is a *trapeang* here. Villagers often interchange the use of the words *khassan* and *trapeang*. *Trapeang* is an old pond and *khassan* is a moat. The temple of Prei Monti has a *khassan* around it. *Trapeang* happens because of buffalo—when they lie in swampy places and keep digging it becomes a *trapeang* [an old wives' tale]. The whole of this area is *kouk*—which has now become Phum Ovlaok
>
> (Ovlaok-M78&group 2006).
>
> Rice fields: most of the village is *kouk*… and not many rice fields. Most of the village is *prasat* mounds. There is a moat around Prasat Preah Ko. There is also a *trapeang*, it is called *khassan* Ta Keo
>
> (Ovlaok-M36 2006)

Table 6.6 Details of archaeological or ancient features—Phum Ovlaok

The villagers from Phum Thnal Trang had responses similar to those given above. They listed a number of *trapeang* and the ruins of Prasat Srang-ai. Table 6.7 lists some of the responses.

> I know some old *trapeang*… like Trapeang Phong. There is a lot of *trapeang* in Phum Chambok. I am more familiar with that village because that is where I am from
> (ThnalTrang-F21&group 2008; ThnalTrang-M44 2008)
>
> There is the *Undong* in front of Bakong and Kouk Chas. The site where the old lady is constructing a house—that *prasat* site is called Kouk Tuol Sambo Saka
> (ThnalTrang-M56 2008)
>
> Prasat Srang-ai—it is a temple in ruins to the east of Preah ko. There is a Trapeang Srang-ai nearby the *prasat*
> (ThnalTrang-F21&group 2008; ThnalTrang-M52 2008)

> The road in front of this house is an old road
>
> (ThnalTrang-F55 2008)
>
> There are 5 *trapeang* around this house: Trapeang Kralok Yeay Seurn, Trapeang Koong Moo-aych, Trapeang Sala, Trapeang Krahok, Trapeang Kou-Tet and Chouk Kands and Undong Preahng
>
> (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)

Table 6.7 Details of archaeological or ancient features—Phum Thnal Trang

While most respondents shared their knowledge of their local landscape, one villager (ThnalTrang-M44 2008) stated that he was more familiar with Phum Chambok (located to the south of Phum Thnal Trang), because he had grown up there. The *prasat* site of Kouk Tuol Sambo Saka indicated by the village chief, a site of contention between the owner and APSARA due to a house construction in 2006, is discussed in detail in Chapter 8. Photographs 6.18–6.20 illustrate some of the archaeological features referred to by the respondents from Phum Thnal Trang.

Photograph 6.18 *Kouk* used for rice cultivation near Prasat Srang-ai

Photograph 6.19 Ruins of Prasat Srang-Ai

Photograph 6.20 Trapeang Kou Tet in Phum Thnal Trang—the subtlety of the landscape is evident

The Khmer villagers displayed a good understanding of the physical characteristics of their landscape and were knowledgeable regarding the most visible and prominent archaeological features such as *kouk*, *trapeang* and *prasat*. They were aware of historical roads and ox cart tracks, some of which are still in use. The wet season and the annual flooding from Tonlé Sap

changed the landscape dramatically, and all the low-lying areas were water-logged, which added to their knowledge of the landscape.

> In wet season when water rises in Tonlé Sap, it comes till this village. In 2000, the water level was two feet high due to the flooding in Tonlé Sap (Beng-F48 2008)

Their daily life has kept them in constant touch with their landscape, demonstrating their knowledge of their surrounds. The toponyms correspond with known archaeological features in the landscape. Their knowledge of the landscape also suggests the presence of archaeological remains. The description of the Ovlaok villagers that 'most of the village is *kouk*' correlates with the significantly high number of *prasat* sites in the village. Further, they understand the morphology of the *prasat*; a mound surrounded by a moat was highly likely to be a *prasat*. However, their knowledge of the landscape is limited to their local village, rice fields and prominent temples. Despite their limited understanding, their knowledge and the toponyms highlight their relevance for archaeological research. The toponyms however, need to be carefully verified, as it maybe subjective due to the forced migrations during the years of political instability. The subtlety of the landscape and its subtle elevational changes evident in the photographs, validate the importance of local understanding of the material remains and the landscape, and this contributes significantly to our understanding of their cultural connections.

VILLAGE UNITS AND VILLAGE BOUNDARIES

Comprehension of the physical landscape is also expressed through an understanding of the local village structure (some villages are made up of a number of smaller units with distinct names) and boundaries. In many Cambodian villages, various parts of the village are referred to differently. As is characteristic of toponyms, they often reflect distinctive physical characteristics in the landscape and settlement patterns. While most interviewees were aware of the different village names and units, they were not all able to describe the village boundaries. An understanding of their village and its extent demonstrates their associations with the landscape and forms a significant part of their knowledge base and oral history. This knowledge, combined with their understanding of the archaeological remains in the landscape, is an intrinsic component of their cultural connections. Although the village and its boundaries are not established administrative boundaries, as discussed in Chapter 3, the villagers often articulated this with reference to tangible landmarks such as roads or neighbouring villages. The five study villages exhibit distinct differences and the discussion of their units and extents are presented below.

PHUM LOLEI

Phum Lolei, as described in Chapter 5, surrounds the western part of Lolei Baray. Prasat Lolei is located in the *baray*. The houses are located along the embankments of the *baray*. Of the 28 interviewees from Phum Lolei, everyone was aware of the village name and details except one woman who was a recent migrant to the village. A large section of the villagers were aware of the different names for the different parts of the village. A few representative responses are given below.

This part of Phum Lolei is called Phum Kahé (along the road Thnal *Kahé* which is the western embankment of Lolei Baray). *Lolum* is a part of the Lolei village near Route 6
(Lolei2-F62 2006; Lolei-M71&M58 2006)

The village on the western embankment (Thnal Kahé) is referred to as Lolum. From the bridge, along the embankment (along Thnal Kahé) till Trapeang asuh in the north, it is referred to as Lolum
(Lolei-M73 2006)

Lolum is along the western embankment. But I am not sure if it is part of Lolei
(Lolei-M38&F38 2008)

Lolei is village near *wat*, and *Lolum-ba* is to the east [break in the *baray*, along the north embankment]. The old name of Lolei is Krahale (this word maybe from Hariharalaya, the first capital of the Angkor empire). According to village stories a man named Ta lay was protecting the prince [future king]
(Lolei-M56 2006)

Table 6.8 Village units and names—Phum Lolei

Photograph 6.21 Extent of Lolei village, illustrated on the ground by the secondary village chief

The extent indicated shows the Bakong temple on the lower end. The large rectangle in the centre represents Lolei Baray, with the Lolei temple in the middle and a road access from Route 6. The straight lines, which resemble a quadrilateral going around the *baray* and beyond, are the extent of the Lolei village. According to the chief, it extends a few kilometres to the north along the Road to Phnom Bok to the east and to the west it extends up to Trapeang Zamko (Lolei-M56 2006)

Phum Lolei has three units. The part around the *prasat* is Phum Lolei. The section to the west along the western embankment/Thnal Kahé is Lolum and the section to the east along the northern embankment near the bridge is *Lolum-ba* (meaning a break in the *baray*). This corresponds to the inlet aqueducts to the *baray*, some of which are believed to be along this section (Pottier 2006b). Some villagers living along this part of the village indicated that one

aqueduct had been filled up and another was recently replaced with a modern construction. The village names correspond to distinctive features in the landscape and are indicative of community knowledge.

Responses regarding the extent of villages are provided in Table 6.9. Some respondents equated the size of the village to the number of houses, some gave an approximate area and some explained the boundaries relative to tangible landmarks such as existing structures, roads or villages. Two of the respondents, including the village chief, clarified that they did not know how big the village was (Lolei-F42 2008; Lolei-M56 2006), however, the village chief later roughly indicated the village extent by drawing on the ground, as illustrated in Photograph 6.21.

There are more than 100 houses; it [Phum Lolei] extends up to Phnom Bok road to the east
(Lolei2-F62 2006)

This [house] is part of the village; I cannot say how big the village is. It is mainly around the *prasat*. The village boundary extends up to route 6 and further to the east
(Lolei-M40 2006)

The village is about 3 kilometres square
(Lolei-F27 2006)

The village is bigger than the *baray*
(Lolei-F64&group 2006)

The village has more than 200 houses. It extends from west of *baray* till route 6, on the other side it extends up to Phum Stung
(Lolei-M54 2006)

There are around 150 families. It extends from route 6 on the south to road to Phnom Bok on the east. On the west it is closer to the Lolei Wat and on the east after Phnom Bok, the village is Stung. In the north it goes up to Trapeang asuh
(Lolei-M73 2006)

The village extends from the Lolum bridge, up to the road to Phnom Bok. To the north up to Bangkang village and the west up to Rohal village
(Lolei-M71&M58 2006)

The boundary of the village: To the east up to Phum Stung, south to Route 6 and on the west to *baray* embankment. [but later corrected that he was not sure if Lolum which is along western embankment was part of the village] The village boundary to the west could be up to Phum Trang and in the north there are rice fields. The boundary could be up to the rice fields of Phum Sarai
(Lolei-M38&F38 2008)

Table 6.9 Extent of Phum Lolei

The responses demonstrate that the descriptions of the village varied from respondent to respondent. Some described the extent of the village in simple terms, for example, noting that it was bigger than the *baray* and some described it more elaborately using roads and landmarks. Almost all the villagers were consistent with the boundaries to the south, east and

west, as these followed the existing roads of Route 6, the road to Phnom Bok and Thnal Kahé. There was a great deal of confusion regarding the northern boundary. (Refer to Figure 6.2 for the extent of Phum Lolei). Confusion with regards to village boundaries was also observed for the other study villages.

PHUM STUNG

Today, Phum Stung includes Ta Pok to the north. According to the village chief:

> Ta pok is the newer portion of the village. After 1979, that part was combined to Phum Stung. Phum Stung has two names: Stung and Ta Pok village or Phum Thmei (Khmer term meaning new). Both this is part of Phum Stung. (Stung-M51 2008)

A few other respondents, including the village chief's wife, referred to Ta Pok as a different village (Stung-F54 2008). This is probably due to the fact that they were two separate villages before being combined in 1979. The villagers were unclear as to the extent of the village. The western extent and the boundary to the south were established as Phum Lolei and route 6, but the extents to the east and north were ambiguous and differed from person to person. Figure 6.2 indicates the extent of Phum Stung.

The Boundary of village—to the east up to the *baray* embankment, to the north up to Phum Ta Pok, on the south up to route 6 and on the west up to Phum Lolei [road to Phnom Bok], which is marked by a concrete pipe
(Stung-F54 2008)
The village boundary on the east is up to Phum Tbaeng, on the south up to route 6, and I am not very sure about the western and northern boundaries
(Stung-F49 2008)
The boundary of the village to the south is up to Route 6, on the east up to Kouk Trach and on the west to Phum Lolei
(Stung-F59&group 2008)

Table 6.10 Extent of Phum Stung

PHUM OVLAOK

Of the five study villages, Phum Ovlaok and Phum Beng did not contain smaller village units and other names. All 23 respondents were consistent in their knowledge of the village name as Ovlaok. In defining the boundary of the village however, there was considerable obscurity and lack of consistency. Some responses are presented below. According to the village chief, the population of 333 households in 2006 had increased to 340 in 2008. While the northern boundary was fixed as the route 6, the other boundaries varied in description. Though the boundaries were not clear, the villagers did have an understanding of their neighbouring villages. Figure 6.2 shows the extent of Phum Ovlaok.

> To east [boundary]—Phum Thnal Trang, on the west Phum Spean Kaek, in the south—Phum Chambok and north—route 6. The total number of families are 340 and the population is 1770
>
> (Ovlaok-M38 2008; Ovlaok-M74 2008)
>
> The boundary to the north is Phum Lolei, in the east up to Phum Thnal Trang, west up to Phum Oo, and south up to Phum Kouk Srok
>
> (Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008)
>
> The boundary of Ovlaok; to the north is up to Route 6, on the west it is up to Phum Spean Kaek, on the east up to Kouk Ko (Thnal Trang) and on the south to Phum Thnal Trang
>
> (Ovlaok-F36&F18 2008)

Table 6.11 Extent of Phum Ovlaok

PHUM THNAL TRANG

The additional names for Phum Thnal Trang include Kouk Ko and Phum Thmei (new village). An interesting aspect observed is that rice fields owned by villagers were referred to by the village name of the owners rather than the village in which they were situated. This is illustrated in one response given below. The alternative names demonstrate settlement history and patterns; Kouk Ko is a name assigned during Khmer Rouge, while *phum thmei* is common to many villages and indicates the newer part of a village.

> My rice fields are located in Phum Chambok, but people call it Phum Thnal Trang because it belongs to a villager from Thnal Trang
>
> (ThnalTrang-M44 2008)
>
> The part of Thnal Trang along the axis of Bakong is called Kouk Ko. In 1975, during Khmer Rouge they shifted people to this part of Thnal Trang and named it Kouk Ko (by Khmer Rouge)
>
> (ThnalTrang-M56 2008; ThnalTrang-M74 2008)
>
> We call this part Thnal Thmei (new)
>
> (ThnalTrang-F55 2008)

Table 6.12 Village units of Phum Thnal Trang

Descriptions of the extent of Phum Thnal Trang were inconsistent, similar to those of other villages (Table 6.13). The northern boundary was fixed as route 6, the western extent was the outer moat of Prasat Bakong, but the other two boundaries varied. While most agreed that Phum Roluos marked the eastern boundary, the southern extent varied between Phum Chambok, Phum Thnal Kandal and Phum Don Teav. Despite the apparent confusion regarding boundaries, all the neighbouring villages and their names were correct. Figure 6.2 illustrates the extent of Phum Thnal Trang.

> The boundary extends from Bakong to the road (*psar* Roluos) on the east; and from behind this road (south) up to route 6 in the north
>
> (ThnalTrang-M25 2006)
>
> The boundary of Thnal Trang: 500 meters to the east of the road in front of Bakong and all the way up to Roluos to the east. On the north till route 6, on south till sala. There are around 200

> families here
>
> (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)
>
> The boundary of village; on the east is up to Phum Don Teav, on the west is up to Phum Ovlaok, on the south up to Phum Chambok and on the north up to route 6
>
> (ThnalTrang-M46&group 2008)
>
> The boundary of village—to the north up to Phum Lolei; east up to Phum Roluos Lech; south up to Phum Don Teav and Phum Chambok (Khum Roluos) and on the west up to Ovlaok
>
> (ThnalTrang-M52 2008; ThnalTrang-M56 2008)
>
> On the east the village boundary is up to Phum Roluos, on the south up to Phum Chambok around 100 metres from here, on the north to route 6, and on the west to Phum Ovlaok
>
> (ThnalTrang-F21&group 2008)
>
> From here, go up to Roluos and turn right—that is the boundary. To the west it is up to Prasat Bakong, to the east up to Phum Roluos and the north up to route 6
>
> (ThnalTrang-F55 2008)

Table 6.13 Extent of Phum Thnal Trang

PHUM BENG

Phum Beng does not have an alternative name and is the only village, which appears to have a clearly defined boundary. Although it forms part of the larger village of Kouk Srok, for the purpose of this research it has been considered an entity in itself. All the interviewees described the village as the settlement immediately around the *trapeang*. The boundary of Phum Beng and Phum Kouk Srok are described in responses below. Figure 6.2 indicates the extent of Phum Kouk Srok and Phum Beng.

> Phum Beng is just around the *trapeang*, it is about one square kilometre.
> *Was it a separate village before or has it always been part of Kouk Srok?*
> Phum Beng was separate before, but now 4 villages including Anlong Chrei, Beng, Kouk Srok and Dong Thnal have been combined together to form Kouk Srok. It was combined during Vietnamese occupation in 1979) during the new government, when they started giving people rice fields
>
> (Beng-F48 2008)
>
> Phum Beng is just around the *trapeang*, the houses which surround the *trapeang* are part of this village. Phum Beng is part of Phum Kouk Srok. The whole area is part of Kouk Srok
>
> (Beng-F43 2008; Beng-F78 2008)

Table 6.14 Extent of Phum Beng

All the respondents were familiar with the various units of their villages and alternative names, if any. They had an understanding of the extent of their village, although an exact mapping of the boundary was not completely successful due to the varying descriptions between villagers. The consistency in the knowledge of village units and their names, however, suggest the long-term association of these villagers with their villages.

Figure 6.2 Extents of the 5 study villages as described by the respective village chiefs overlaid on 2004 Quickbird imagery

Knowledge of a village including its names and boundaries, form a valuable part of the local community's oral history, because along with this knowledge come individual associations of personal and communal experiences that are transmitted from generation to generation. The understanding of the physical landscape, the presence of Angkorian temples and all features like *trapeang*, old roads, *baray*, ruined temples and *kouk* in the landscape are passed on from parents and grandparents. The knowledge of the physical landscape that surrounds the local Khmer villagers throughout their daily life, familiarity with the different village names, an understanding of the village extents and the presence of historical and archaeological features are therefore a fundamental aspect of Khmer cultural connections.

RITUALS AND SOCIAL PRACTICES

Social practices portray communities' cultural identities and are an authentication of their connections to place. Most cultures around the world derive their cultural identity and communal strength through these connections, which help to establish a continuity with their past. Tangible heritage has sometimes been lost to developmental changes and other damaging acts, but the cultural practices that have been kept alive have helped to contribute to a community's identity. In Cambodia, the ritual worship of spirits and offerings to animistic deities was one of the few cultural aspects that survived the disruptive years of the Khmer Rouge (Chandler 1996a). Aspects of cultural practices, including both the animistic and Buddhist rituals that indicate the links with the tangible cultural heritage, are discussed here. The animistic worship of *neak-ta* spirits is discussed in terms of their locations, rituals and stories.

RITUALS AND *NEAK-TA* SPIRITS

Amongst the spirits venerated in Cambodia, those that are most relevant for the purposes of this study are those that are associated with the tangible heritage, including archaeological remains and Angkorian temples. A brief discussion on some aspects of Cambodian animism and animistic practices was provided in Chapter 5. Of the spirits listed, a network of tutelary spirits (*neak-ta*) protected Cambodian villages, and the land was considered the domain of the *neak-ta* spirits (Harris 2005: 49–52). *Neak-ta* spirits are present in trees, ponds, forests and even rice fields. Most temples are also associated with one or more *neak-ta*. As is the case with most spirits, a generalised region, indicates the presence of a certain *neak-ta*. Whilst most *neak-ta* have a shelter constructed for purposes of ritual offerings, the quality of the shelter and its size validate the importance of the *neak-ta*. The worship of *neak-ta* spirits and associated ritual practices are one of the many elements that link the local community with the Angkorian landscape.

The worship of *neak-ta* spirits offers definite physical evidence of the presence of Khmer cultural connections and links with the tangible heritage. Of the five study villages, the worship of *neak-ta* spirits was evident in all of them. While most details regarding the *neak-ta* were known amongst most villagers, some stories and specific aspects related to some *neak-ta* were known only amongst the elders in the village. The information and stories associated with these spirits were often interesting and sometimes amusing. The respondents were also amused when they were questioned about *neak-ta* and their cultural practices, and this helped them relax. Only a small number of 'external' researchers have been involved in the study of cultural practices and animistic spirits in Angkor. Knowledge about *neak-ta* is mostly limited

to the immediate local residents and villagers and the villagers were possibly amused when questioned about *neak-ta* spirits, because this is private knowledge, and outsiders rarely enquire about *neak-ta.* The information presented below includes the location of *neak-ta* spirits, ritual offerings made and associated stories.

LOCATION OF *NEAK-TA* SPIRITS

The location of *neak-ta* spirits in and around the villages was often common knowledge. Almost all the respondents displayed a knowledge of the more significant spirits. Although shelters were built to indicate the presence of a certain *neak-ta*, some spirits were understood to be localised in a larger general area. It is communal knowledge and the villagers learn of these locations through their life experiences. These general locations of *neak-ta* can often be identified by remnant offerings, which can range from incense sticks, betel nut leaf or any other ritual offering that maybe found fresh or dried, however, the spirits commonly only come to light at times of adversity. The Khmer villagers believe that a sudden problem or sickness beyond their reasoning can occur only when they have angered the spirit. They then seek the counsel and assistance of a medium who communicates with the spirits to find the cause of the misfortunes. The medium could be a *kru, thmup* or a *memot,* although different terms are used for mediums in different regions of Cambodia (Luco 2002). The spirits convey their need for ritual offerings through these mediums (Ang 1986; Bertrand 2001). According to an *achār* from Phum Lolei:

> *Neak-ta* is one of the spirits that protects the villagers. Before the villagers do anything or start anything, they should get permission [from *neak-ta*]. *Neak-ta* in the countryside protects the village *neak-ta* outside the village is called *neak-ta* chum pleuh [guardians of the way]. (Lolei-M62 2006)

Despite their protective role, the villagers view these spirits with fear. They try not to cross the paths of the spirits, for fear of misfortune. The spirits that are not usually encountered by the villagers in their path of regular commutes do not affect them and are often forgotten by the community, unless someone unknowingly walks into the domain of the spirit and is affected because they have offended the spirit. The concept of *neak-ta* is rather dynamic; new *neak-ta* can be created and they can shift their established location. In some instances, when the tree in which the *neak-ta* resides needs to be cut down, the spirits can be moved by performing appropriate ceremonies (Harris 2005: 53). Some of the well-known *neak-ta* spirits have been located for each of the study villages and their locations have been mapped. The findings are presented below in order of the study villages.

There were three prominent *neak-ta* mentioned by almost all respondents in Phum Lolei. They were *neak-ta* Khleung Meung in front of Prasat Lolei, *neak-ta* Kwong and *neak-ta* Kahé on Thnal Kahé. In addition, *neak-ta* Basa was believed to reside in the Lolei *prasat*. Besides these, a number of other *neak-ta* were believed to exist in the *prasat* mounds and *trapeang* to the north of Lolei. Some of these include *neak-ta* Teyk, Yeay Gomvan, Dong Kambat and Ta Zamko. Yeay Mao is believed to reside in every Buddhist *wat* (Ang 1988). In Lolei there is a shrine dedicated to Yeay Mao to the south of the *prasat* platform. A few indicative responses are given in Table 6.15.

This village does not have a *pchit phum*, but maybe Prasat Lolei could be considered as one. *Neak-ta* Meung is near Prasat Lolei, Ta Kwong is at the bridge and Ta Kahé is near Thnal Kahé. These are significant only to the villagers of Lolei. But sometimes when *neak-ta* hurt people outside the village; then they can also come and make offering

(Lolei-M56 2006)

Neak-ta Meung is in front of the *wat*. There are a lot of *neak-ta* in the village. It is hard to count. The other *neak-ta* are Ta Teyk (north of Lolei Baray), Yeay Gomvan (north of Lolei), and Srei Ka Mau or Yeay Mao to the south of the Lolei Wat. Yeay Mao spirit lives in the Wat

(Lolei-M38&F38 2008; Lolei-M73 2006)

Neak-ta Basa—before there was a huge statue of *neak-ta*, inside the *prasat*, but now has disappeared. It was a human form statue, called Basa. It was very powerful and strong. All of this is following from the old people. The old people call it *neak-ta*, so we also call it *neak-ta*. If we have problem, if we are sick or something, if we pray we ask to be relieved, and we become cured. So we believe this. Ta Meung is in front of *prasat*. Ta Basa is inside the *prasat*. It is in the central shrine in the front

(Lolei-F64&group 2006)

There are a lot of *neak-ta* in Phum Lolei. *neak-ta* Kahe, *neak-ta* Meung, *neak-ta* Kwang
neak-ta Zamko (*kouk* near *trapeang*, on the Thnal Kahe going north), Yeay Mao is inside Wat Loley—this is the new sculpture near the pipal tree in front of the Wat and *neak-ta* Dong Kambat. Yeay Kaven located at Kouk Ta-ok.

(Lolei2-M42 2006; Lolei-M53 2006; Lolei-M71&M58 2006)

I don't know for how long, but we worship ta Kahé for a long time. When the villagers returned after Khmer Rouge period, they just know that the *neak-ta* is there

(Lolei-M40 2006)

Now that they have developed this road for golf course, is Ta Kahé still here?
We moved it [the sandstone] from the road and moved it inside fence. When the bulldozers came to flatten the road, we moved the stone to save it

(Lolei-M32&M42 2008)

Table 6.15 *Neak-ta* in Phum Lolei

Of the five study villages, Phum Lolei had the maximum number of *neak-ta* spirits that the locals knew of and made offerings to. The region to the north of the *baray* has a number of *kouk,* which are former *prasat* sites. The reason for the apparently larger numbers of spirits is

probably due to the larger presence of the Angkorian *prasat* sites. *Neak-ta* identified by the villagers are illustrated in Photographs 6.22–6.25.

Photograph 6. 22 Shrine for *neak-ta* Meung
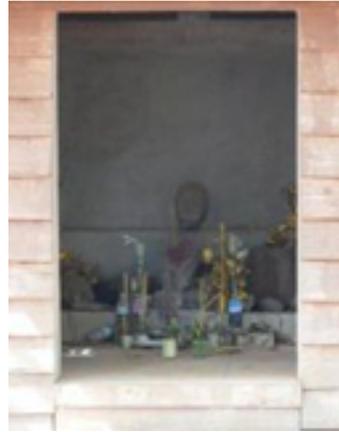
Photograph 6.23 Inside Ta Meung shrine (Photograph 6.22

Photograph 6.24 *Neak-ta* Yeay Mao/Srei Ka Mao to the south of Lolei *prasat*

Photograph 6.25 *Neak-ta* Kahé rescued from bulldozers, is now inside the fence

PHUM STUNG

All respondents of Phum Stung referred to one significant *neak-ta*—Don Aev—in Kouk Don Aev. A small broken shelter recorded in 2006 was found replaced with a masonry structure in 2008. Kouk Don Aev was recorded by Groslier as one of the eight significant sites identified by him during his survey of the region in 1958–59 (Groslier 1998c, 1998d).

Is there any neak-ta that you make offering? Only at Kouk Don Aev (Stung-F49 2008; Stung-F54 2008) The *neak-ta* in this village are Yeay Mao or Yeay Aev in the forest (Stung-F32 2008) There is a *neak-ta* Chas Roop, but we do not know where it is located (Stung-F59&group 2008)

Table 6.16 *Neak-ta* in Phum Stung

Unlike Phum Lolei, the villagers of Phum Stung identified largely with the single *neak-ta* Don Aev in Kouk Don Aev. Although Phum Stung had a number of *prasat* mounds and *trapeang*, *neak-ta* Don Aev was considered very significant and most villagers left offerings here (Photographs 6.26, 6.27). According to Groslier:

> Kouk Daun Aev is located at an angle to the northeast of Lolei Baray at its outer exterior. This site is of exceptional importance: it is a mound, bounded by a large moat, measuring more than 500 metres from the side. (*my translation* 1998c: 37)

Pottier, referred to Groslier's survey of Kouk Daun Aev in 1958:

> [Groslier] sees it as 'a temple'… where there are remains of structures or fragments of statues in *neak-ta* shelters. Although this site was revealed as promising, it is absent from the next report in 1959 and is not present in the maps of the 'hydraulic city' (the two sites indicated to the north of the *baray* are Kouk Dang Kambet and Prasat Chapou Teng) (Pottier 1999a: 99)

The site was indeed of an impressive size surrounded by a wide moat. There was no mention of a *prasat* by the locals and there were no apparent remains of a *prasat*. The site was densely overgrown with trees and villagers came to make offering to *neak-ta.* As stated above, the *neak-ta* shelter of 2006 was replaced with a new masonry structure with corrugated metal roofing built adjacent to the former structure. The attention to detail given to the making of the new shrine indicates the strength of the continuing belief system.

Photograph 6.26 *Neak-ta* Don Aev 2006   **Photograph 6.27** *Neak-ta* Don Aev 2008

PHUM OVLAOK

Phum Ovlaok has two major temples. A number of *neak-ta* spirits are believed to reside in Prasat Preah Ko and Prasat Bakong. These include the *neak-ta* Di in the ruined shrine behind the main *prasat* of Preah Ko and the *neak-ta* in the Chambok tree to its south. There are three important *neak-ta* locations in Prasat Bakong. They are Ta Chong, Ta Kwang and Yeay Mao. Yeay Mao is found in most Buddhist *wat*, and some other *neak-ta* are also common to most villages as they form part of a broader social context (see Ang 1988; Bertrand 2001). Table 6.17 highlights the significant *neak-ta* in Phum Ovlaok.

Neak-ta Di is in a ruined shrine behind the main temple of Preah Ko. There was a statue before, but after Khmer rouge, the statue was removed. Now the *neak-ta* is believed to be in the Chambok tree nearby

(Ovlaok-M38 2008)

I know only the *neak-ta* in the Bakong. It is Ta Chong, Ta Kwang and *Yeay* Mao. The *neak-ta* spirit moves or disappears when people don't give any offering.

(Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008)

Wherever there is a temple, a *neak-ta* spirit stays. But I cannot name them all. Ta Di *neak-ta* in Prasat Preah Ko can make a person go mad. My children have made offering to this *neak-ta*. I have never had the necessity to make an offering because I am a *kru*

(Ovlaok-M74 2008)

Neak-ta in Bakong: Ta Chong, *Yeay* Mao and Ta Kwang. Undong Prei—in front of Bakong Svay Prei—in Thnal Trang, and in Prasat Prei Monti—*neak-ta* Dambong Daek
(Ovlaok-F36&F18 2008; Ovlaok-M25&group 2008; Ovlaok-M34&group 2008)

Table 6.17 *Neak-ta* in Phum Ovlaok

Photograph 6.28 *Neak-ta* in Bakong at the *gopura*/doorway (detail: Photograph 6.29)

Photograph 6.29 Offering of hair and incense at *gopura* in Photograph 6.28

Photograph 6.30 *Neak-ta Di* behind Prasat Preah Ko

Photograph 6.31 *Neak-ta* under the Po tree to east of Prasat Bakong

The photographs above illustrate the location of *neak-ta* in Prasat Bakong. Photograph 6.28 shows the *neak-ta* at the *gopura*, and Photograph 6.29 illustrates the offerings of incense and

hair given by the local people and novices (6.38). Photograph 6.30 indicates the *neak-ta* Di in Prasat Preah Ko and 6.31, the *neak-ta* in the Po tree (*Ficus religiosa*) to the east of Prasat Bakong outside the inner moat. Most villagers believed in spirits and made ritual offerings when they felt the need to. Contrary to popular views, one villager interviewed during an impromptu group session had strong views about the ancestral deity worship. He had the opinion that these were superstitious beliefs and people should stop harbouring such beliefs.

> For *neak-ta*, it is now going to disappear because the villager when they are sick they will not go to the hospital. They will stay at home and ask *neak-ta* to make them better; for some people it works, for some it doesn't work and the villager just dies (loud laughter in the background). Some NGO are trying to teach people about how to stop believing in *neak-ta* and go to the hospital. But it will not completely disappear because there are lots of people who still respect [*neak-ta*]. (Ovlaok-M78 2006)

This was an unusual view expressed by a single respondent. While he claimed that the belief in *neak-ta* was not sufficient to cure a sick person, the villagers are adapting to the available facilities, so although they continue to practice their belief systems, they also seek medical help whenever possible. The respondent, nevertheless, pointed out that such practices will continue because many people believe in *neak-ta.* This view suggests the importance of evaluating local superstitions and highlights the need for health education for the villagers.

PHUM THNAL TRANG

Phum Thnal Trang villagers associated mostly with the *neak-ta* spirits in Prasat Bakong, Prasat Preah Ko and in Phum Chambok which is the adjacent village to the south. The photographs below illustrate the community hall, a place where the villagers gathered to pray as a community. Most rituals concerning village welfare are performed here. The villagers named some *neak-ta*, as shown in Table 6.18

Photograph 6.32 Community Hall, Phum Thnal Trang

Photograph 6.33 Communal praying in the Community hall (Photograph 6.32)

> *Neak-ta* Mreh Preh is located in Phum Chambok, and earlier people used to give a lot of respect this *neak-ta*, but now the name has been changed to *neak-ta* Svay Kmah—which refers to two mango trees in Phum Chambok. Earlier there was a statue, but it has been removed. There is no *neak-ta* in Thnal Trang. I cannot remember if there is any in Bakong
>
> (ThnalTrang-M56 2008)
>
> *Neak-ta* Mreh Preh (name of a herb) in Phum Chambok. Villagers from Thnal Trang make offering mostly to the *neak-ta* in Bakong. *Neak-ta* is not considered very important. They make offering only when someone gets affected. *Neak-ta* in Chambok is under a Cheuteul tree
>
> (ThnalTrang-M47 2008; ThnalTrang-M52 2008)
>
> *Neak-ta* Kwang is in Bakong, Ta Chong in Bakong is under the Po tree and *yeay* mao is in Bakong. *Neak-ta* kra nguoung is in a *trapeang* to the east of here. *Neak-ta* Di is all around the temple of Preah Ko, it is like the authority there. A small structure under the Po tree in front of Bakong is where offerings are made. We believe that all the spirits are in this structure
>
> (ThnalTrang-F55 2008)

Table 6.18 *Neak-ta* in Phum Thnal Trang

PHUM BENG

The villagers of Phum Beng listed two *neak-ta* in their village. One was a sandstone block to the south west of the *beng* and another *neak-ta* Pleuh (guardian of the way), at the village entrance, near the bridge. They stated that there was a *neak-ta* in Prasat Totung Thngai, but that they never made any offering because that spirit did not bother them. Some indicative responses are given below.

> Ta Peuh near the bridge, Prei *neak-ta* to south west of *trapeang*, it is Angkorian sandstone. People give offering to this sometimes. There is a *neak-ta* in Prasat Trapeang Totung Thngai and also a Bang Bat
>
> (Beng-F48 2008)
>
> The spirit (in Prasat Trapeang Totung Thngai) never makes anyone sick in the village and for this reason no one gives any offering. There is a *neak-ta* near Prasat Trapeang Phong, a temple located nearby. It is called Ta Chong
>
> (Beng-F58 2008; Beng-F78 2008)
>
> Neang Peuh is somewhere near the community hall, there is no exact spot for the *neak-ta*. *Neak-ta* Peh Srok is near the school in Kouk Srok. I am not sure if there is a *neak-ta* in Prasat Totung Thngai
>
> (Beng-F43 2008; Beng-M50 2008)

Table 6.19 *Neak-ta* in Phum Beng

The Photographs 6.34 and 6.35 show the Angkorian sandstone near the *beng* and the ruins of the Prasat Totung Thngai. Although the *prasat* site was located very close to Phum Beng, it was not in the regular paths of the villagers' commute. Since the spirit did not affect them, they did not fear the spirit or make any offering.

Photograph 6.34 *Neak-ta* in Phum Beng

Photograph 6.35 Prasat Totung Thngai

As indicated, the knowledge of *neak-ta* is prevalent in all the villages, and it was the village elders who often knew about the *neak-ta* and their details. As explained earlier, the villagers were usually amused because the concept of *neak-ta* was private to their lives and questions regarding *neak-ta* from outsiders were rare. They laughed loudly at every question related to spirit worship, which lightened up the atmosphere and helped them relax for the rest of the interview. With the exception of one interviewee from Phum Ovlaok all the villagers believed in the worship of animistic spirits.

NEAK-TA RITUALS

Animistic spirit worship has existed for a very long time in Cambodia (Ang 1986; Forest 1992). During Khmer Rouge, there was considerable disruption to society and cultural life, as indicated in Chapter 1. The people were forbidden to practise religious rituals, and as a result, animistic practices and worship of ancestral deities came to a near complete stop during this communist regime. Nevertheless, some of the interviewees stated that many people worshipped the spirits during the Khmer Rouge in secrecy, claiming that their belief in worshipping these spirits protected them during the difficult times (Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008; ThnalTrang-M46&group 2008). A common belief was that covering large areas of the upper body in tattoo would protect them during the time of war (Photographs 6.36 and 6.37).

Photograph 6.36 Magical tattoo   **Photograph 6.37** Magical tattoo

Every year during the Khmer month of *mākh* (January-February), offerings were made by individual families to *neak-ta*. The villagers believed that if they offended the *neak-ta,* they needed to appease the spirits by making offerings, which was their way of saying 'sorry'. Offerings were not only made to *neak-ta* for traditional reasons, in recent years, people have begun to pray to *neak-ta* for winning the lottery as well (Ang 1988: 39; Bertrand 2001: 36). Small offerings of incense are made to the *neak-ta* on these occasions.

The assimilation of animistic rituals and Hindu practices into Buddhism has taken place over centuries (Ang 2006; Bertrand 2001). However, regional influences and colonial institutions, discussed in Chapter 5, advocated significant changes to the Buddhist religion. Some Buddhist monks who subscribed to the modernist views of *Thommayut* and *Thommakay* claimed that spirit worship was not part of Buddhism, and that Buddhist monks had nothing to do with the spirits (Lolei-M34 2006; Lolei-M39 2006). Other monks stated that although they were not expected to worship spirits:

> *Neak-ta* Basa in Prasat Lolei protects all the monk children. The Basa spirit is very powerful and recently it came to a lady in the village. (Lolei-M33 2008)

While conducting fieldwork in Phum Ovlaok, late one evening, two young novices were seen praying at the doorway to the library at Prasat Bakong (Photograph 6.38). They burned incense and prayed. When asked, they answered that they were praying to the *neak-ta* for improving their memory and knowledge. Though some monks claimed that Buddhism was unrelated to animism and *neak-ta*, some of them did believe in the spirits, and many rituals concerning local practices, including the 'top-knot', ceremony was conducted by the Buddhist monks (Ang 2006)

Photograph 6.38 Young novices offering incense and praying to *neak-ta*

Photograph 6.39 *Achār* performing a ritual for a house construction (before the roof is laid)

The rituals and offerings made by the villagers are the subject of discussion here. In keeping with the structure of the rest of the chapter, the rituals are presented village by village.

PHUM LOLEI

Rituals for *neak-ta* in Phum Lolei were usually performed in front of the *neak-ta* Meung shrine. Offerings were also made in front of Prasat Lolei for *neak-ta* Basa during the Khmer New Year. Some generic responses are given in Table 6.20.

We come to Ta Meung to ask for rain, good fortune etc., On the baay kaat of Khmer pisa month (third day of rising moon), we cook and we ask for rain only at *neak-ta* shrine, not in the *wat*

(Lolei-M71&M58 2006)

In the Khmer month of *Meāk*, we made an offering to Ta Meung. We only make offering when we want to achieve something or we have done something bad with *neak-ta*. When we feel better or achieve what we want, then we will make offering called seyn (this can vary according to the people's capacity and it refers to what we promised to give). We offered pig's head, liquor, 5 incense (no cigarette)

(Lolei-F42 2008; Lolei-M38&F38 2008)

During *meāk* month, on the 3rd day of rising moon, we gave some rice. We made a cart from banana (using the banana tree trunk) and we offered rice in it to Ta Meung. We offered paddy, rice and money. These are offered as a way of saying 'thank you' after harvest. A similar ceremony also happens during 3rd rising moon of the Pisa month when they pray for rain. We do a role-play with one person acting the *neak-ta* and the other the villager.

(Lolei-F64 2008)

We visit the Prasat Lolei during the start and end of rainy season (Choul Vossa and Chen Vossa) and then we pray at the *prasat* to *neak-ta* Basa. During Khmer New Year and Chum ben also we pray at the *prasat*. This is a tradition handed down through generations, and we only follow it during those days, and not other days.

(Lolei-F64&group 2006)

Table 6.20 *Neak-ta* rituals, Phum Lolei

PHUM STUNG

The villagers of Phum Stung made offerings only at *neak-ta* Don Aev in Kouk Don Aev as it was the most revered *neak-ta* in the village. According to a 54 year old woman:

> Meāk is the main month when we make ritual for Neak-ta. On the 3rd day of waxing moon, we make offering at Kouk Don Aev. Sometimes when someone in the village or some children is sick in the village also we make offering. (Stung-F54 2008)

PHUM OVLAOK

Respondents from Phum Ovlaok stated that they made offerings at the community hall and at the *neak-ta* locations in Prasat Bakong. The Buddhist monks denied their associations with *neak-ta,* emphasising that only the villagers interacted with *neak-ta*. Some responses are indicated in Table 6.21.

No, we [monks] do not do anything with the *neak-ta* spirits. Only the villagers interact with the *neak-ta*. They make offering near the tree near the library. They make offering at the step, and then people meet near the tree near the library, where they play music

(Ovlaok-M25&group 2008)

We gave offering last year at the temple and at the community hall

(Ovlaok-F36&F18 2008)

When I was 32, my wife was seriously ill one time. I went and gave offering to Ta Di. It is a ruined shrine behind the main temple of Preah Ko. After Khmer rouge, the statue inside was removed and the *neak-ta* is now believed to be in the Chambok tree nearby

(Ovlaok-M38 2008)

The villagers do ritual offering each year. They give offering when someone is sick. The offering is usually given during the Khmer month of Meak

(Ovlaok-M34&group 2008)

Table 6.21 *Neak-ta* rituals, Phum Ovlaok

PHUM THNAL TRANG

The responses of the villagers from Thnal Trang were similar to the other study villages. Aspects that were identified included the facts that only a suggestive offering was made and that there was a belief in the continuity of animistic worship and practices. See Table 6.22.

When we do something wrong with the *neak-ta* and have any problem—then we have to give some offering like chicken skin, the meat is taken out and it is stuffed with something. It is made to look like chicken but it is only skin. It is a gesture of offering not real offering.

(ThnalTrang-M25 2006)

My family has never made any offering to *neak-ta.* But when the Tonle sap Water rises, we make offering so that we don't get any diseases and for this we make the offering at the boundary of Thnal Trang on the south, on the other side of Phum Don Teav.

(ThnalTrang-M56 2008)

> I make the offering only when I have a problem with the *neak-ta*, and when my problem was solved I made an offering of pig head, chicken etc., We make offering at the *wat* in front of the Po tree.
>
> (ThnalTrang-F55 2008)
>
> The rituals for the *neak-ta* will continue. My children will continue the practice. Villagers make offering only in *meāk*. Only special rituals for family can happen other times. I gave offering in *meāk* at the community hall when everyone in the village does. I made offering to Chong Yai Mao. He looks after the villagers here.
>
> (ThnalTrang-F66 2008)

Table 6.22 *Neak-ta* rituals, Phum Thnal Trang

PHUM BENG

As stated earlier, the villagers of Phum Beng do not make any offering in the Prasat Totung Thngai. Mostly, they make offering at the community hall:

> During Lang Meāk we make Cambodian noodle and go to the community hall. We invite monks from Wat Bakong for food and an offering of the noodle is made for Neak-ta. The offering is left near the bridge. (Beng-F43 2008)

The findings from the interviews from the five study villages establishes the continuity of cultural practices and *neak-ta* rituals performed by the villagers.

NEAK-TA STORIES

The location of *neak-ta* and rituals were discussed earlier. This section presents the stories told by the respondents when they were asked about the *neak-ta* spirits. The stories outlined here validate their belief systems, ritual practices and continuing oral traditions which keep these memories intact. Whilst changes in the landscape are inevitable due to rapid development, people's belief systems and oral traditions are bound to keep the rituals and practices alive (Robertson 2009). The messages conveyed through these stories often have a moral that emphasises the need to lead a righteous life[69]. As stated, this research was conducted using social science research methods and is not based on anthropological approaches. The stories below establish the continuity in the belief systems and the strength of the oral traditions.

Most villagers of Phum Lolei and one villager from Phum Thnal Trang narrated the story of Ta Meung who commandeered a ghost army to win against the Thai army. The story is popular throughout Cambodia (Bertrand 2001), and the *neak-ta* is celebrated in many places in Cambodia (Forest 1992), and in the United States (Yamada 2004). See Table 6.23 for the Ta Meung stories.

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[69] (Karlström 2009) suggests that the stories in the Laos oral tradition also convey a moral message for the community and emphasise the need to lead a righteous life

There is one story associated with *neak-ta* which goes like this: In Pol Pot regime, a nurse was sick. They find an old man to cook medicine but he [the nurse] gets no relief. He did not get better and then he asks the old man to find out as to why he was not getting any better. When you do something wrong with the *neak-ta* Meung, you get affected. The nurse had thrown the statue into the *sra* in front of Prasat Lolei.

Was there a statue at ta meung?
Yes, their used to be two figures of a *srei* and a *bproh* (man and a woman). The female statue was Yai tep and male statue was Ta Meung.

(Lolei-F64&group 2006)

Neak-ta first appears in history when Khmers were fighting against Thai. The Khmers were not strong enough. The Khmer army commander, Khleung Meung realized that they could not defeat the Thai; he decided to commit suicide and collect a ghost army. He killed himself by jumping on a spear stuck in the ground. He then collected a ghost army which fought the Thais at night, and the living army fought in the day time and they won the battle. The Khmer people want to say 'thank you' to Ta Meung, so every *meāk* month, they will sacrifice some cow or buffalo to give as offering in every village.
Do they continue this practice now?
Maybe not now, because it is too expensive to kill a buffalo [amidst laughter] so we just make the Khmer noodle offering—As a result Ta meung is hailed a hero and the people worship him as *neak-ta*. They make offering during the *meāk* month

(Lolei-M39 2006; ThnalTrang-M74 2008)

Ta Meung is considered very powerful to the extent that a saying goes—a bird flying over his head will fall down dead! It still has strong power though the birds don't fall down dead now. (To illustrate the power of the *neak-ta*, the monk recounted an incident when some people in a truck did not pay respect and the truck got stuck and would not move).

(Lolei-M33 2008)

Table 6.23 Stories about *neak-ta Meung*

Other stories relate to Commander Ta Kahé, a magic crocodile in a *trapeang* to the north of Lolei Baray and some personal experiences. All stories convey the importance of leading a righteous life. Some stories relate to the times of Pol Pot, when bad soldiers, who destroyed statuary were punished. The stories and beliefs regarding different *neak-ta* reinforce the cultural continuity in oral traditions. See Table 6.24 for *neak-ta* stories.

Ta Kahé is the strong commander of the past. He always travels from Lolei to Angkor on the ancient road.

(Lolei2-F62 2006; Lolei-M32&M42 2008)

Trapeang Chrei is somewhere near the *wat* to the north of the embankment. That *trapeang* is like a sacred place, a *neak-ta* crocodile lives there. We believe that it is a magic crocodile which transforms from Angkorian stone. In rainy season you can't find any stone, but in dry season, the stone just returns back to the same place under a tree. The crocodile escapes during rainy season and comes back as a stone in dry season. In rainy season we hear some sound like a crocodile and in dry season, when water is receding, we can't find any fish in the *trapeang* (which is unusual because catching fish in receding waters happens everywhere and almost everywhere the villagers find fish) and that's why we believe that there is a crocodile

(Lolei-M38&F38 2008)

Neak-ta Krong yung is in a broken *prasat* near Bakong. There, one of my brothers was taking the cow to the field. The cow was a bad cow, and so he took it to the *neak-ta* and asked for the cow to be killed. Some passerby said to my brother that the *neak-ta* should kill you and he [my brother] got very sick. We went to a medium who said that the *neak-ta* was angry and wanted

> chicken. We gave chicken and my brother got better
>
> (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)
>
> Chong Yeay Mao is a very strong *neak-ta.* Before I go travelling, I give offering of incense stick in front of the Po tree in front of Bakong. I go to ask that I may not get lost and I never get lost. Before I went to Phnom Penh for the first time, I did this and I never got lost
>
> (ThnalTrang-F66 2008)
>
> *How did you become a kru?*
> I had always been sick since I was little, but a month ago in February 2008, the '*Kru*' spirit came into my body and then I become a '*Kru*'. The spirit comes almost every day, but definitely every 8th day in the moon cycle. I have become quite popular since and people come from as far as Siem Reap. The spirit I get is called 'Gomapyth' which is 6 years old
>
> (ThnalTrang-F21&group 2008)

Table 6.24 *Neak-ta* stories

The villager, who shared her experience of becoming a *kru* (Table 6.24), suggested that she was a medium for a six-year old called *Gomapyth*. Bertrand (2001: 39–40), who has written about the *boramey* spirits of Cambodia, referred to this spirit as '*koma*', meaning child.

One unusual story narrated by the village chief of Phum Ovlaok, was particularly interesting, as it involved one of the foreign restoration teams that worked on Prasat Preah Ko. (Table 6.25)

> About 7 years ago, when the restoration work started at Prasat Preah Ko, there were some Italian and German experts involved. Before the work started for building the scaffolding, we asked them to organise offering for *neak-ta* di. They did not believe and did not make any offering. The village chief organised an offering of a pig's head, coconut (opened) 5 cigarettes, 5 incense sticks, 5 s*la-malu* (betel nut and betel nut leaf). Three months later the Italian conservator got very sick. He then made an offering and became better, and he started offering incense regularly (sometimes 5 times in a day)
>
> (Ovlaok-M38 2008)

Table 6.25 Story about the Italian conservator

These stories demonstrate the strong presence of spirits in the Khmer consciousness. Although most spirits are feared, some including Ta Meung and Ta Kahé are regarded as national heroes (for details of Khleung Meung, see Forest 1992: 237–247; Yamada 2004). Despite the fear, locals often sought comfort, strength, well-being and prosperity from the spirits. The stories indicate the importance of being a good person and demonstrate the role of both the belief systems and the oral traditions in keeping communities righteous.

As stated in Chapter 4, the *neak-ta* locations were mapped using a GPS along with the villager interviews. The information is illustrated in Figure 6.3. The mapping was used as a tool to help me locate the sites in the field. It was also possible to clarify the fact that some *neak-ta* were located on a *prasat* site or an archaeological site.

Figure 6.3 Location of interviews and *neak-ta* overlaid on 2004 Quickbird imagery, archaeological features layer (Pottier 1999a) and APSARA zones

The need for continuing these in a post-conflict society rebuilding itself cannot be understated. The stories and traditions have been kept alive during the turbulent years of the Khmer Rouge, and this is in itself evidence of the strength of these belief systems. The knowledge passed on from generation to generation is evidence of the efficacy of these belief systems, and their universality for the entire Khmer populace is an important factor in building resilient communities. Bertrand indicates that the increasing appearance of spirit mediums highlighted the increasing dependence of Cambodians on seeking solutions from the supernatural world of spirits. He suggests that the spirits were manifestations of Buddha's power in sending a 'moral message, crucial in rebuilding the war-torn society' (2001: 45–46), and that the spirits have come to 'repair a collective trauma' and establish order in the post-conflict society (Bertrand 2004: 166). The strengthening of such cultural practices is evident not just amongst Cambodians living in Cambodia, but also amongst the Khmer diaspora (Yamada 2004). The acknowledgement of these belief systems is important as it helps us to understand the local communities' cultural connections. Holistic approaches to heritage

management would benefit from the acknowledgment of local belief systems, their social practices and oral traditions, which in turn would help the community build trust because their values and beliefs are being acknowledged. This can help to build successful community-inclusive partnerships to manage heritage places.

BUDDHIST RITUALS

The Khmer villagers are involved in the celebration of a number of communal rituals over the course of a year. These are primarily Buddhist in nature; however, as described in Chapter 5, considerable synchronisation has taken place between Buddhism, Brahmanical Hinduism and Animism. Consequently, the Khmer rituals exhibit an assimilation of Hindu, Buddhist and Animist symbolisms (for further discussion on the Khmer religious affiliations, see Ang 1986, 1995; Ang 2007; Ang et al. 2007; Harris 2005). For the average Khmer villager, however, the differences are not obvious and these rituals are perceived as being primarily Buddhist. The more informed villagers and monks sometimes referred to the influences from Brahmanism. In many rituals, the Hindu divinities Indra, Brahma and Vishnu— were well-integrated into role-plays conducted during official Buddhist ceremonies. Despite the official shifts in religious affiliations throughout history, the integration of Hindu gods in village rituals establishes the long-term process of religious syncretism.

The Khmer Buddhists follow the lunar calendar and the lunar cycle plays a significant role in their ritual lives. The first and eighth day of the new moon and the full moon every month are auspicious days (*thngāi sel*), and the third day of the waxing moon and waning moon are equally symbolic. During these days, the villagers gathered at the local *wat* or community centre to pray. Most rituals include the cooking of certain traditional dishes according to the occasion, which is done either in groups or as individual families. In general, all the respondents were familiar with the festive occasions in their villages. Apart from the annual ceremonies, a number of rituals were organised by individual families as rites of passage (Ang et al. 2007) and a few such ceremonies were witnessed during the 2008 field season. While most Khmer ceremonies occurred throughout the year, the frequency of family and community rituals were higher during the period after harvest (Ang 2006), starting in the Khmer month of *Meāk* (January–February) and lasting till the Khmer New Year in *Cāitra* (April–May).

The interviews indicate the patterns of rituals for the local Khmers; visiting the *wat* on a regular basis is common for most elders in the village, while all the other ceremonies involve everyone in the village. Information on these is discussed below.

VISITING THE *WAT*

Although Khmer villagers are religious, those in the working age group visited the Buddhist *wat* only during the annual festivals (Ebihara 1968: 395-396). The Khmers believe in leading a righteous religious life once they are older (50 years for some), and they dedicate a considerable part or all of their spare time to the service of the monks and the local *wat* (Ebihara 1968). They visit the *wat* every eighth day of the lunar cycle, all auspicious days (*thngāi sel*), and all other important occasions; they pray and cook food for the monks, and undertake any activity required in the *wat* as part of regular housekeeping, or during preparations for rituals.

> *In a month, how many times do you go to the wat?*
> Every eighth day in the cycle of the moon. Four times in a month.
> *When is the next occasion that you go to the wat? Do all villagers go to the wat?*
> The day after tomorrow is full moon. We get some Buddhist scripts, we get advice from monks, and it is only for old people. I will go at 4 AM, Some people return home, but some stay there all day. I go to Wat Bakong. Only I go, my wife does not go.
> *Why is that so?*
> Wife: I do not consider myself ready for religious service. I am not calm enough for religious worship. I get angry sometimes and curse my children and that is not considered good in Buddhism.
>
> (Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008)
>
> I go to Wat Bakong depending on how well I am since it is very far. I go if I can arrange for someone to take me to the Wat.
> *Is it the closest wat?*
> Yes. The construction for a community hall has just begun; once it is complete I will just stay there to do my prayers. I will go to the Wat once a month.
>
> (Beng-F78 2008)
>
> I only go to Wat Bakong during some special festive occasions
>
> (ThnalTrang-M44 2008)
>
> I go to the Wat four days in the month during the lunar cycle. I go to Bakong regularly; sometimes I go to Wat Lolei and Wat Roluos.
>
> (ThnalTrang-M74 2008)
>
> We go to Wat Lolei for all the big ceremonies
>
> (Stung-F54 2008)

Table 6.26 Visiting the *wat*

Age Group	Numbers visiting *wat* regularly	Primary Occupation
20-29	10	9 monks, 1 female *kru*
30-39	6	3 monks, 3 APSARA guard
40-49	3	1 villager, 2 APSARA guard
50-59	5	4 villagers, 1 APSARA guard
60-69	15	9 villagers, 1 APSARA guard, 2 *kru*,
70-79	10	7 villagers, 2 monks, 1 *kru*
Total	**49**	

Table 6.27 Respondents visiting the *wat* regularly

The responses in Table 6.26 indicate that most of the elders go to the *wat* every *thngāi sel* and on all other festive occasions. Other villagers go to the *wat* only during important celebrations. Table 6.27 provides a breakdown of the respondents who go to the *wat* and the frequency of attendance. Amongst the 99 respondents from both the individual interviews and group sessions, 49 visited the *wat* regularly. Of these, most respondents between the age of 20 and 50 were monks, *kru* and APSARA guards. All other respondents older than 50 years were village elders, *kru* and a few monks. The total number of respondents who visited the *wat* to serve the monks and 'earn merit' was 32. There were some older villagers who did not go to the *wat* on a regular basis. Whilst one woman stated that she was not ready for religious service, because she was not calm, others were busy supporting their families. The remaining 50 respondents visited the *wat* only during the major annual celebrations.

COMMUNITY RITUALS

The villagers performed a number of rituals as a community. They came together on the various festive occasions mentioned earlier to cook food for the monks and to pray at their local community hall. A sample of generic responses is listed in Table 6.28.

In the month of *meāk* we have a big gathering and have big cooking. The villagers make Cambodian noodle and invite monk for food. For moon festival they make *amtuk* or *ambok sampeah preahay* (moon) People go to community hall, they collect money and put it in a collection (in the shape of a flower called money flower)

(ThnalTrang-M25 2006)

Sometimes the community rituals and family rituals come together. Community festivals are for the villagers: Villagers gather during the rainy season *Vossa, Pchum Ben*; end of rainy season; moon festival, the third day of waxing moon in the month of *Meāk* and New Year. During moon festival they come here (Wat Lolei) and during New Year they go to Bakong. We perform the rituals in front of the *wat*, in front of Ta Meung

(Lolei-F42 2008; Lolei-F64 2008)

The major ceremonies in the village are New Year, *Meāk* Bochea (month before Buddha dies), *Pisa Bochea* (when Buddha dies). When Buddha dies, I do not celebrate, I just go to the *wat* to pray. But during other festivals like *Pchum Ben*, Khmer new year, we take offering to the *wat*

(ThnalTrang-M74 2008)

We are Buddhist and we celebrate Buddhist rituals and ceremonies. In the month of *meāk* (*lang meak*) we cook Khmer noodle and invite monk, we also have rice mound thanking for the good harvest and saying 'sorry' to the animals for their suffering during the cultivation period. These ceremonies happen in the community hall. (*sala Chothean*). During *Chlong Kanthmey Chaitr* we cook rice at home and take to community hall and invite monks and pray.

(Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008; ThnalTrang-M56 2008)

Table 6.28 Community rituals in the villages

The villagers participated together as a community in celebrating most rituals and a number of rituals were witnessed during the 2008 field visit. Of these, two elaborate rituals, the *Abishek Preah* ceremony at Wat Lolei and *Chah Maha Bang Skol* in Phum Stung, are illustrated

below. The former was a celebration at the *wat* honouring Lord Buddha and surrounding villages took part, while the latter was for an individual which was attended by friends and relatives from the village. Photographs 6.40–6.43 illustrate the community involvement in the *Abisek Preah* ceremony. The rituals included elaborate 'role-plays' which included Hindu divinities, enacted by the villagers. The entire village of Lolei participated, along with visitors from neighbouring villages, highlighting the belief systems in the strength of these community rituals.

Photograph 6.40 Statues of Buddha assembled for the *Abisek Preah* Ceremony with cotton thread enclosures, the *sima*—an important symbolism in Buddhist rituals

Photograph 6.41 Evening prayer as part of the *Abisek Preah* ceremony

Photograph 6.42 Clay pots for receiving the offerings for the monks from the villagers

Photograph 6.43 Villagers circumambulating the offering bowls (Photograph 6.42) with the Buddha statues

A ceremony called *Chah Maha Bang Skol* (offering from the dead to the monks Porée and Maspero 1952: 194) was witnessed in Phum Stung. The ceremony was being conducted for an elderly woman, Yeay Deen, in Phum Stung. The belief was that all the items displayed as part of the ritual would become available to her after death. According to the villagers, it was a ritual that ensured comfort in the 'after-life' (Stung-M51 2008).

Photograph 6.44 Structure set up for the *Chah Maha Bang Skol* ceremony, resembles Angkor Wat

Photograph 6.45 Villagers gathered to pray and listen to the monks' sermons

Photograph 6.46 Items, believed to be available to the old woman (for whom the ceremony was conducted) in her 'after-life'

Photograph 6.47 Women are engaged in preparing the food

Photograph 6.48 Ritual offering include five mounds of sand resembling Mount Meru

The achār (2008), officiating at the ceremony gave an overview of the function and explained the ritual (Photographs 6.45–6.48). A number of things required for a comfortable life (e.g. bedding, cooking utensils and a cot) were provided outside the central structure. Inside the structure, offerings for the monks were organised hierarchically, including robes, incense, medicine and other items, as the monastic order was considered an important place for gaining merit (Harris 2005: 78). A striking aspect of this ritual was the layout of the enclosure for the ritual (Photograph 6.44). A temporary structure installed for the occasion, consisted of a central structure of five towers with lotus pinnacles resembling Angkor Wat and symbolic Mount Meru surrounded by three enclosures resembling the enclosures of Angkor Wat.

Village communities are largely homogeneous and inter-related. Most villagers are related to one another, or form part of a very large extended family (Ebihara 1968). The community rituals provide an opportunity for them to get together and earn collective 'merit'. Although the rituals are an expense for the people, they perform them according to their means. The rituals unify communities and indirectly help to strengthen the post-conflict society. The significance of Angkor Wat was clearly evident through the use of the temple form in the ritual. Although this was a singular event that had used the Angkor Wat form, the description of Khmer New Year in a later section will further highlight the symbolism of Angkor Wat and its overwhelming presence in the psyche of the Khmers. Elements of Hinduism are found to be well-integrated into cultural practices, indicating that the Hindu temples were once a part of their cultural life. Owing to religious shifts to Buddhism, however, the early Hindu temples are not used in the same spiritual context as the Buddhist *wat*. Nevertheless, the cultural links with Hinduism and the temples are clearly evident.

CONNECTIONS WITH ANGKORIAN TEMPLES...?

Khmer knowledge of the physical landscape and the presence of the Angkorian temples and archaeological remains have already been demonstrated. The findings indicate that the local Khmers have a good understanding of the archaeological landscape in which they live, clarifying their physical connections to the landscape. The findings on rituals and social practices further highlight the syncretised aspects of Hinduism and the continuing symbolisms of Angkor Wat for the local population. Hindu divinities are an integral part of some Khmer rituals, and some Hindu temples are regarded as being spiritual due to the presence of *neak-ta*, but the Buddhist *wat* was central to cultural consciousness of Khmer society. It is important to understand, however, whether the local Khmers included the Angkorian temples as part of their social practices. Spiritual connections to the temples and archaeological remains, if any, are important for understanding the links with the tangible heritage, in the context of Angkor.

To understand how the local villagers relate to the archaeological features and the local Angkorian temples, some of which are in ruins, questions were focused on the frequency of their visitation, their understanding of these features and how they used them. The findings are organised below, under the various themes.

PRASAT? IT IS JUST RUINS

Many villagers were perplexed when they were questioned with regards to the ruined *prasat*. They appreciated the legacy of the Khmer empire and were proud of their heritage. This referred to the monumental temples only and did not include the smaller ruins in their

immediate vicinity. Although they appreciated the temples, they were not interested in visiting them more than once. The overwhelming presence of Angkor Wat was obvious in some views. The villagers often did not have any opinion on the temples, and they were always amused and burst into laughter when asked about the temples. Table 6.29 presents some generic views.

Do you know anything about Prasat Lolei?
It is a broken temple, it is just a ruin.
<div align="right">(Lolei-F42 2008; Lolei-M38&F38 2008; Stung-F54 2008)</div>

What do you think about these old prasat?
Lot of people come to visit (he was amused and laughing)
Do you want to visit all the other old prasat?
I have seen them, so I don't want to see them again
<div align="right">(ThnalTrang-M44 2008; ThnalTrang-M46&group 2008)</div>

Do you go to the prasat when you go to the wat?
We only go to the *wat*, but we have visited the *prasat*
Have you visited any other prasat?
I don't know because there are too many temples. I know only Angkor
<div align="right">(Lolei-M38&F38 2008)</div>

Do people go to the prasat when they go to give offering?
Some may go, some don't. But most villagers will go back home straight after they give food to the monk.
Have you visited prasat Lolei?
Yes.
What do you think about that?
(laughing loudly) I don't know
<div align="right">(Lolei-F64 2008)</div>

Do you know anything about the prasat in Lolei?
We do not know anything about the old *prasat*. I have visited some of the temples, but I am not interested. A neighbour present said: I have visited the old temples and I have seen the bas-reliefs, they are well preserved
<div align="right">(Stung-F59&group 2008)</div>

Table 6.29 Villager views about Angkorian temples (*prasat boran)*

Photograph 6.49 Prasat Prei Monti Ruins

Photograph 6.50 Ruins of Prasat Srang-ai

The villagers were amused at various levels. Firstly, the questions were regarding broken temples. In their view, ruined temples were not of any significance, but the monumental temples that had been restored were worthy of appreciation (Winter 2007). Similar reactions were observed in India, where I had worked in teams conducting heritage surveys in small towns in India. They found it amusing that we were interested in old, ruined and sometimes dilapidated structures, whereas they were proud of their new temples and other structures. Secondly, they found it amusing that an external researcher was interested in the ruined structures that they considered redundant. These temples were once religious and significant; however, in the present day they are either revered or disregarded. According to Karlström, things that are no longer exposed to religious rituals can become redundant through neglect (2009: 186). Although the ruined temples were not considered as important as the Buddhist *wat* that was regularly venerated, the presence of spirits in some ruins provided a cultural connection. The local villagers have allowed some of these connections to survive, while others have been lost due to disuse.

MONKS AND THE TEMPLES

Whilst some of the villagers did not know a great deal about the temples, the monks were seemingly well informed.

What do you think about the Angkorian temples?
The temples are very important.
What do you think should be done to them?
Nothing, but the people living surrounding the temples have to protect them.
How can this be done?
Protect from looting.
What about the structural damage, what can be done about the way things are falling?
I am a monk, I cannot do anything, but there are the authority like APSARA who can do it

(Lolei-M39 2006)

What do you know about Prasat Lolei?
The *prasat* site is in good condition because the monk master here is strong and the monks look after the site. The monk master (head monk) is here since 1997, he has been protecting the *prasat*. I live on the *prasat* platform near the old *prasat*. It is now very difficult to see the temple because it is falling down, and it is risky. I visit Angkor very often. Whenever I am stressed I go there to the *prasat*. I take other monks from other parts of Cambodia to visit Angkor (like a guide)

(Lolei-M33 2008)

Do you know anything about the old prasat at Bakong?
No we don't know anything related to its history, sculpture, kings associated or the gods associated. But if you want to know, talk to someone (named the senior monks in Wat Bakong) who will know

(Ovlaok-M25&group 2008)

Table 6.30 Villager views about Angkorian temples (*prasat boran)*

As this indicates, the head monk at Lolei insisted that the temples needed protection; another monk indicated that the *prasat* site at Lolei was in good condition and a group of young monks suggested that I talk to the senior monks for information on the *prasat* as they did not know any historical information related to the *prasat*. The monks were better placed to know about the temples, because most modern *wat* and monasteries were located on or near an Angkorian temple site, and many re-used the Angkorian building material (Harris 2005: 64; Pottier 2006b). One monk claimed that Prasat Lolei was well-maintained, in reality, however, the *prasat* towers were severely damaged and in a partially collapsed state. Some towers have completely collapsed, while others have been shored up to prevent further damage. The *prasat* towers at Lolei have been greatly damaged only in recent decades; the monks have been uncooperative and most damage to the Angkorian temple has been a result of their indifference (Pottier 2006b). On the other hand, the monks in need of more space for their monastery found it frustrating that building permissions were difficult to obtain. In recent years, APSARA has been conducting meetings to raise awareness amongst the monks and other communities, and some of the relevant issues are highlighted in Chapter 7.
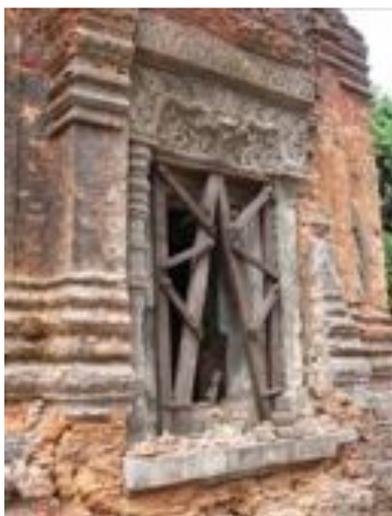
Photograph 6.51 Doorway of Prasat Lolei supported with props

Photograph 6.52 Prasat Lolei, with its collapsed and ruined towers

The head monk at Bakong had some interesting observations. He indicated that the reasons for locating *wat* near a *prasat* site, was because the *kouk* with the temple was considered sacred, so monks established themselves there and slowly these sites became monasteries. A conversion of pre-existing structures led to the emergence of many Theravada monastic sites (Marchal 1918 in Harris 2005: 36). When asked if the Angkorian temples were sacred to the monks, he replied that:

> There is nothing useful from this temple. For a monk, it doesn't make any sense and we cannot make a living because the temples belong to government. They sell tickets for entry. The tourists only buy tickets from the government and the monks cannot sell tickets and we

don't get any income or revenue. During Pol Pot time all the monks were evacuated and later it became government property. (Ovlaok-M75 2008)

The response above reflects the Angkorian reality. Despite the temples epitomising Khmer architectural excellence and the pride of the nation, the rapid increase in tourism has meant that the temples are looked at as a source of income not just by the villagers and the monks but also by the Cambodian government (Winter 2007).

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT TEMPLES?

Most village chiefs and elderly men were knowledgeable about the temples; this was often due to the advocacy measures undertaken by APSARA to increase awareness in the community. Some villagers confidently gave an estimated time of construction and the names of the kings, though they were sometimes incorrect.

Photograph 6.53 Preah Ko tower showing the original section before restoration (2006)

Photograph 6.54 Section of a restored Preah Ko tower (2006)

An interesting observation was the Ovlaok village chief's comment regarding the restoration at Preah Ko temple. The restoration project, managed by APSARA has used a lot of new material, which has resulted in heavy criticism from the *barang* (foreign) tourists who felt that the temple was overtly restored. The villagers were keen to reverse the situation, by 'ageing' the bricks to improve tourist opinion (Ovlaok-M38 2008).

Do you know about the significance of the old temples?
Nowadays the people learn about the temples. They know that it is significant for them. It is their ancestral heritage and they are happy that they can earn some money from the temples through tourists, so they think it is very important

(Ovlaok-M38 2008)

I have seen the sculptures. I know that the temples are old around 6th to 7th century—but I do not know more…

(Ovlaok-M74 2008)

I do not know much about the old temples but from APSARA I know that the people should not cut trees and damage the environment around the temples and the people should protect the

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temples

(ThnalTrang-M56 2008)

Have you visited the prasat in Bakong? *Do you know anything about the old prasat?*
Yes, Bakong was built by King Jayavarman II in 802

(ThnalTrang-M74 2008)

Table 6.31 What do you know about temples?

The reaction of the villagers to the tourist comments validates the head monk's response in Table 6.31 on the value of tourism and the importance of revenue through tourism. Enterprising villagers recognise the importance of tourism and the need to restore the temples in accordance with what was acceptable. This is a fundamental dichotomy in which Asian heritage places are often caught with regards to heritage conservation. Tourism incentives drive the need for heritage conservation, and often the unmanaged tourism detrimentally impacts the heritage assets (Durand 2002).

DO YOU VISIT THE TEMPLES?

In addition to the above questions, I also asked the interviewees if they had visited the temples with the aim of understanding whether they had any additional knowledge as a result of their visits.

Yes we have visited the *prasat* in Angkor
What do you think about the old temples?
I think they are beautiful and better quality than the modern temple

(ThnalTrang-F55 2008)

The people just visit *prasat*, burn incense. After harvest, people burn incense wherever they go. After the *prasat*, they go to the Buddhist temple and burn incense, they go to the big chedai (stupa like structure where mortal remains are placed) and burn incense

(Lolei-M54 2006)

I have visited all the *prasat* in Angkor. I visit regularly; sometimes in the evenings and sometimes on Sundays…

(Beng-F20 2008)

My children visited recently. I am too old to climb the temples

(Beng-F43 2008; Ovlaok-M74 2008)

Do people come to visit the Prasat Totung Thngai?
They just walk past, people do not go for a visit; it is just ruins.

(Beng-F43 2008)

Have you visited the prasat in Bakong?
I visited when I was young, but now I only go to the *wat*

(Beng-F58 2008)

Have you been to Prasat Bakong? Have you climbed up to the top?
Yes, but it was before not now. I climbed 2 years ago. Now, I don't go anymore because it is very tiring to climb. Sometimes when someone asks me to give offering at the *prasat*, I go up.

(Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008)

Table 6.32 Do you visit temples?

Table 6.32 presents the villagers' views on visiting temples. The elderly villagers had visited the *prasat* when they were younger and were not keen on re-visiting them; often, the reasons were that they were now old and it was tedious to climb the temples. The younger respondents, on the other hand, visited the temples on a regular basis. Visiting temples was perceived as a leisurely activity and it was usually done with groups of friends who mostly took a picnic lunch and rested in a shaded spot in the vicinity. Most of the respondents who had visited the temples had seen them once and were usually not interested in seeing them again. Nevertheless, they enjoyed visiting the open spaces around the temples for leisurely picnic activities with friends and families. The lack of significant open spaces in Siem Reap town was also a probable reason for Angkor Park to serve as a recreational space. In addition, large numbers of Khmer visitors from other parts of Cambodia visit the temples during Khmer New Year (Winter 2007: 126–130). This is discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

WHAT ABOUT RITUALS IN THE TEMPLES?

The villagers displayed mixed reactions regarding the Angkorian temples. The monumental temples were accepted as significant by the Khmer villagers, but the ruined temples were not considered in the same way. Some ruins, however, were revered for their association with spirits, as demonstrated earlier. Although the growth in tourism has altered the villagers' focus towards economic gain, it is beyond dispute as far as they are concerned that some of these temples are residences for spirits. As indicated in the section on *neak-ta* spirits, ritual offerings are often made to the spirit in the vicinity of the Angkorian temples, but visitors have been forced to modify these practices due to APSARA restrictions, which will be discussed later. A 74 year old *kru* from Phum Ovlaok stated that offerings were made to the *neak-ta* at Prasat Bakong; according to him:

> Sometimes when someone asks me to give offering at the *prasat*, I go up. Every year people can make offering. It usually occurs once in a year during the month of meāk. Some people give offering at the base of the temple, some climb up to the top. (Ovlaok-M74 2008)

The Angkorian temples thus become a place for ritual during the Khmer month of *meāk* when the villagers make offerings to the *neak-ta* in the temples. Offerings are also made at Angkor Wat by communities from nearby villages, which is discussed in Chapter 8.

The findings from this section are of great significance in demonstrating the Khmer cultural connections in the present. Connections with the material remains are highly complex and involve a great number of factors. Whilst there are seemingly no connections at the first instance, once the surface is scratched, significant cultural symbolisms are revealed, and this research is an attempt to portray the complexities that exist in contemporary Khmer cultural connections. The average Cambodian villagers are aware of the Angkorian temples in the

landscape and are overwhelmed by the prominent temples due to international tourism recognition, but did not offer further information. On the other hand, the monks were more informative about the temples, but contribute very little in terms of their maintenance, although, they are aware of the tourism potential of these temples. The local villagers are also appreciative of the tourism values of these temples. Most of the older respondents had visited the temples at least once and were not keen to re-visit. The younger interviewees visited the temples regularly for leisure with their friends, however, it is their animistic beliefs and the presence of *neak-ta* that encourage the rituals and offerings that are often made in the vicinity of the temples and ruins.

CONCLUSION

The local Khmers living in the shadow of the Angkorian monuments are physically and culturally connected to the remnant vestiges scattered around them in the landscape. Their day-to-day activities bring them into regular contact with the landscape owing to the distances traversed for their work and other commitments. These interactions make the physical understanding of various archaeological features including *kouk, beng, trapeang*, *prasat* ruins, *thnal, sra* and *baray* inevitable, and keep alive the memory of the tangible landscape. Although the villagers are oblivious to the archaeological significance of these sites, they have functional and cultural associations with some of them; some sites are residences of spirits, and some mounds and moats are used for cultivating vegetables. The knowledge of village units and boundaries is a valuable part of the local community's memory and oral history, as these are transmitted from the older to the younger generations. The toponyms often reflect distinctive physical characteristics and settlement patterns; furthermore, the cultural practices and rituals demonstrate the ties that connected the people to their local landscape. Whilst a significant proportion of their ritual practices are Buddhist, linking them to the contemporary Buddhist *wat*, it is the animistic practices that establish the continuing Khmer associations with the Angkorian temple remains.

MICRO/LOCAL LEVEL

LOCAL KHMERS: CULTURAL CONTEXT
➢ Knowledge of the Local Landscape
• Daily life and Occupation Linking People and the Landscape
• Knowledge of Historical Features and Archaeological Remains
• Village Units and Village Boundaries
➢ Rituals and Social Practices
• Rituals and *Neak-ta* spirits—Location of *Neak-ta* Spirits/ *Neak-ta* Rituals/ *Neak-ta* Stories
• Buddhist Rituals—Visiting the *Wat*/ Community Rituals
➢ Connections with the Angkorian Temples
Prasat? It is just ruins/Monks & Temples/ What do you know about Temples?/
Do you visit Temples?/ What about rituals in the Temples?
LOCAL KHMERS: GOVERNANCE CONTEXT
➢ Villagers and APSARA (villagers' understanding)
What do you know about APSARA?/ What are the Restrictions?/ What can you
do to get Permissions?/ Was there Trouble with New Constructions?/ What about
the Water Bodies?/ What are the Restrictions regarding Rituals?/ What about the
Land, Do you have Property Documents?/ Can you sell your Land?
➢ APSARA and the Villagers (Campaigns to raise awareness)
APSARA signs/ Zone Boundary Markers/ APSARA Information Sessions/
APSARA Brochures/ Measures to improve Villager's Livelihoods/ APSARA
Measures to prevent unauthorised Constructions

REGIONAL KHMERS: GOVERNANCE CONTEXT
Do you know this is World Heritage?/ Land Pressures and Developmental Issues
REGIONAL KHMERS: CULTURAL CONTEXT
Angkor *Wat* Significance/ Khmer New Year

REGIONAL/MACRO LEVEL

Figure 6.4 Khmer cultural connections from the micro to the macro level

To emphasize the connections of the local Khmers with the Angkor archaeological landscape, Figure 6.4, visually illustrates these cultural connections manifest at both the micro and the macro level, as discussed in this thesis. The micro or local level is at the village or community level, including individual families, whereas the macro or regional level manifests in the context of the larger region of the AWHS and beyond. The local connections are those exhibited by the local Khmer community with the local landscape, including the local Angkorian archaeological remains and temples, whereas the regional level refers to the connections of the larger Khmer community living nationwide with the most significant monuments of the Angkor Park. The aspects of local connections described through the cultural contexts in this chapter and the governance aspects in the next chapter are clarified through this illustration.

Angkorian temples and archaeological remains do not seem to hold any direct symbolism for the average Cambodian villager, despite them having a sound knowledge of the tangible heritage. Looking beyond the surface however, the animistic practices are a visible manifestation of the cultural continuities that have existed all through Khmer history. Moreover, the presence of Hindu divinities in Khmer rituals establishes the syncretistic nature of the religious beliefs (Harris 2005: 79). This highlights the fact that the Angkorian Hindu temples, once part of Khmer religious life, continue to exude symbolism. Although the average villager is unable to articulate this aspect, it is nevertheless obvious that such syncretised beliefs could not have continued for nearly 600 years if it had not been for the strength of the continuing belief systems, social practices and oral traditions. The strength of these connections is evident from the fact that, these social practices have survived traumatic disruptions during Khmer Rouge. Nonetheless, these connections are also tenuous, threatened by changing values, accelerated tourism and huge developmental pressures. While it is important to safeguard the World Heritage values, it is also important to help the villagers safeguard their cultural practices. The strengthening of these weak connections will help to reconnect the Khmers to the Angkorian heritage and to build stronger communities. In the context of a nation rebuilding after a traumatic period of war and genocide, cultural connections can help to strengthen communities, which in turn, may contribute to the protection of the tangible heritage remains.

CHAPTER 7: MICRO AND MACRO CONNECTIONS—THE GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

The connections between the local community and the archaeological remains in the present day are governed by the Archaeological Park regulations. Angkor World Heritage Site (AWHS) is legislated by Royal decree[70], which prescribes heritage regulations through the employment of ordered zones. In addition, a number of sub-decrees, orders and laws aid APSARA in meeting the obligations of the World Heritage Convention (WHC) and in fulfilling the recommendations of the International Coordinating Committee (ICC). While the Authority is grappling with the management of the 400 square kilometres of the Park, the villages and population living within the Park continue to grow. Combined with the exponentially increasing numbers of international and domestic tourists, and inward migrations into Siem Reap province, the pressure on the Authority is very high to meet the demands of UNESCO and ICC to comply with the obligations of WHC. As a consequence, the local communities are subjected to a great deal of stress and discomfort through regulations that disallow new constructions and restrictions regarding their cultural practices. An interesting, but concerning aspect to observe is that large numbers of the villagers are unaware of the implications of the heritage legislation and WHC that govern their lives.

This chapter clarifies some of the local understandings on these regulations and local community perspectives regarding the zone boundaries and the restrictions imposed on their lives. The findings from the interviews relate primarily to the study region, i.e., Zone 1 of the Roluos group. However, owing to the representativeness of the sample, similar issues are likely to affect the communities living within the Angkor and Banteay Srei groups. The findings are thus of relevance in the larger context of AWHS management. For a comprehensive understanding of the situation, APSARA personnel and relevant officials from the provincial bodies were also interviewed. The findings from the village interviews are juxtaposed with the findings from the expert interviews in order to understand the synergies and handicaps for both parties.

The local level heritage governance issues in the context of the lives of the villagers and from the perspective of APSARA are presented, followed by regional level heritage governance issues, which include the local community's understanding of the World Heritage status, and the issues on land pressures and development. The villagers' understanding of APSARA and its regulations is outlined below.

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[70] For APSARA legislation, see http://www.autoriteapsara.org/en/apsara/about_apsara/legal_texts.html

VILLAGERS AND APSARA

To find out whether the villagers are aware of APSARA's regulations, they were asked the following questions. It is believed that their responses will clarify their understanding of the Authority, its role and its rules.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT APSARA?

During the interviews, the villagers were asked questions about their understanding of APSARA's role. Table 7.1 lists some generic responses.

Their role is to clean the *prasat*, to look after the *prasat* and to protect the *prasat* from looting
(Lolei-M71&M58 2006)

APSARA restriction on no digging… it is to keep the heritage for the next generation. Because it is ancient and precious. So we have keep it and protect and conserve it for the next generation
(Lolei-M53 2006)

APSARA restriction is for no new building, no digging and no cutting of trees
(Lolei-M38&F38 2008)

The other restrictions are
° cannot buy and sell land in APSARA Zone
° no digging up of the rice field for *sra*
° cannot construct concrete houses and not make deep foundation
(ThnalTrang-M74 2008)

No cutting trees, no dumping of rubbish in the *trapeang*, no new constructions
(Beng-F43 2008)

It is the duty of the Khmer people to safeguard the World Heritage site and observe the rules of APSARA
(Lolei2-M42 2006)

Yes, APSARA just want to keep stability… like if there is one house in a location in an old style APSARA want to keep it forever
(Ovlaok-M75 2008)

Table 7.1 The role of APSARA

The villagers were aware that APSARA is responsible for the protection and maintenance of the temples, but although they were familiar with its general role and restrictions, they did not provide any further details. Their knowledge of the Authority stemmed from the large numbers of APSARA signs and public information sessions conducted by the Authority since 2005. Of all the respondents, only one stated that APSARA managed the World Heritage site.

WHAT ARE THE RESTRICTIONS?

Most respondents discussed the restrictions imposed by APSARA, as it had significantly impacted their lives. Almost all the villagers living within the Park who had attempted to build a new house or make extensions to their existing house had come into contact with the

Authority. The attitude expressed by some respondents to the restrictions can be found in Table 7.2.

> Yes, we know [the restrictions]. It is not very good for us because we want to build something but we cannot
>
> (Lolei-F64&group 2006; Stung-F54 2008)
>
> Yes, people cannot do what they want and people cannot use what they want. They cannot cut trees because it might affect the temple
>
> (ThnalTrang-M52 2008)
>
> No problems with authorities, problems occur only when we build house
>
> (Lolei-M73 2006)
>
> They don't allow us to do anything without permission. No digging on the *kouk*…
>
> (Lolei-M53 2006)
>
> (At the construction site of the Lolei Wat Crematorium) *Do you have permission?*
> We got verbal permission from APSARA, but when we start building, APSARA intervened and stopped the building for a while. We have asked them to go again and get permission from APSARA. But APSARA has many departments and if one department gives permission another department stops it. It is a complex process.
> *Is the construction stopped now?*
> Postponed until we get permission.
> *Who will get the permission? Will it be the monks or will it be the villagers?*
> *Achār* from the *wat* committee will go and get the permission
>
> (Lolei-M71&M58 2006)
>
> APSARA restrictions—we can build houses only by model. We have to ask for APSARA permission and it is a very long process, but we never get the permission paper
>
> (ThnalTrang-M74 2008)
>
> APSARA restrictions... it used to be a big problem before because it took a lot of time to get permission. But now the process has become quicker and APSARA has relaxed the restrictions
>
> (Stung-M51 2008)

Table 7.2 Restrictions imposed by APSARA—Villagers

The restrictions are an imposition on the villagers' lives. They realise that it is impossible to build any structure without an approval from the Authority, but the approval is very complicated to obtain as there are many departments within APSARA. The crematorium construction at Wat Lolei was suspended by APSARA because the building was not officially approved. The villagers managing the construction site were not happy about this and they recognised that obtaining approval was complicated. The monks shared the same unhappiness stating that it was very difficult to get permission for new monastery structures. Article 18 (b) of the royal decree (RGC 1994) prohibits religious activity in the monuments and the construction of any new facilities near monuments; however, concessions have been made to the established monasteries of Angkor Wat, Bakong and Lolei (RGC 1994: article 18c). Some of the concerns shared by the monks are listed in Table 7.3.

> We cannot build any new construction for the monastery
>
> (Lolei-M34 2006)

Do you have any problems with the Authority?
It is very hard. The monks always have problems with APSARA Authority. When we have to build some structure… to put monastery and the library… it is very hard to get permission
If APSARA give permission to build away from the temple, will that be fine?
But we don't get permission even if it is away

(Lolei-M22&group 2006)

There are restrictions with regards to new construction. We have had problems for a very long time

(Ovlaok-M25&group 2008)

Yes, they do not allow us to build another *Vihear* or other structure on the space… where there has been no constructions. If APSARA allowed, we would build new structures

(Ovlaok-M75 2008)

Table 7.3 Restrictions imposed by APSARA—Monks

The monks and the villagers alike were keen to have new buildings. Families often needed more space when their children were grown and married, and the monks needed new structures for libraries, to accommodate the growing needs of the *wat* and to house the visiting monks. However, they were very wary of securing permissions from the Authority. The crematorium construction at Lolei Wat that had been suspended during the field visit in 2006 was later resumed and was nearly completed during the visit in December 2009.

Photograph 7.1 Crematorium at Lolei Wat (2006)

Photograph 7.2 Crematorium at Lolei Wat (2008)

Photograph 7.3 Crematorium at Lolei Wat (2009)

The Authority had forced the suspension of this construction on the grounds that the structure was too high. They suggested a revision of the proposal in accordance with the regulations. However, the structure that was nearly completed in 2009 was the same as that proposed in 2006, as evident in Photographs 7.1–7.3. Although APSARA suggestions were not followed, the Authority has been obliged to make concessions as there has been a very large number of new constructions within Zone 1 of the Roluos group in this period. One such example is discussed in detail Chapter 8.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO GET PERMISSIONS?

The former DMA2 (Department of Monuments and Archaeology 2) of APSARA, which was reorganised as the Department for Community Development and Land Management (DCDLM), was responsible for disseminating information about development applications and related information. Although there was awareness among some villagers regarding the building regulations and about the model house advocated by APSARA, none of them was aware of the department responsible. The villagers were largely sceptical about obtaining permissions and they feared that it was a time-consuming process.

> APSARA will give permission to build a house in wood, but not a cement house… We will follow the rules. It is very difficult to get permission from APSARA. We sometimes have to bribe to get the permission
>
> (Lolei-M56 2006)
>
> We do not have any problems with APSARA because we are away from the *prasat* and live near the road to the west. For building house, if you ask for permission, it is ok
>
> (Lolei-F36 2006; Lolei-M40 2006)
>
> Yes there are restrictions for house construction. Even if we follow APSARA model, we still have to obtain permission
>
> (Lolei-M38&F38 2008)
>
> But if we give bribe, we will get permission to build
>
> (Beng-F43 2008)

Table 7.4 How to get permissions?

As shown, the villagers were partly aware of what was acceptable and what was not. Although some of them were prepared to follow the rules, they all realised that they had to obtain permission, which was complicated and there was a strong consensus amongst some of them that, bribes would secure them building approvals. The corruption that was rife in some parts of the agency encouraged this thinking (Muira 2004: 140).

WAS THERE TROUBLE WITH NEW CONSTRUCTIONS?

Despite popular opinion that it was difficult to get building approval from APSARA, some new constructions were observed during the field visit of 2006. While some of these had been completed before APSARA became active, a large number of them were unauthorised constructions.

> *But you have built all these new structures? Did you not get permission?*
> During the construction of any building APSARA always come and they try to stop… but we still try and make it because we don't have any rooms to stay… and after we build it completely APSARA says okay… because they can't do anything after the construction is complete
>
> (Lolei-M22&group 2006)
>
> The house is a new construction, not in accordance with APSARA design, but we had

> constructed it before APSARA was formed
>
> (Lolei-F27 2006)

Table 7.5 New constructions

The generic responses in Table 7.5 indicate that the villagers had continued to build, despite being stopped by the Authority. They were confident that the Authority was helpless to do anything, once construction was complete. With the addition of the new Department of Order and Cooperation (DOC) in 2006, which was staffed by army personnel, APSARA tried to coerce the locals to follow the rules. When dealing with an unauthorised construction, a team consisting of members from DMA2, the commune office and DOC went to issue a warning to the owner. When the warnings failed, the villager was persuaded in the presence of a large number of army soldiers (from DOC) to obey the law. The case of one respondent in Phum Thnal Trang who was coerced in this manner is discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

During the field visit in 2008, a large number of new constructions were observed in all the study villages except Beng, which was at a distance from the developmental pressure. Table 7.6 provides some examples.

> My house has been constructed according to APSARA rules (It is a good example)
>
> (Beng-F58 2008)
>
> (at a partly constructed residence in Phum Thnal Trang)
> *When you were constructing the house did you have problems with APSARA?*
> Yes. APSARA stopped the construction.
> *When did you start construction? Is it completed?*
> The construction was started in 2007. It is not yet finished; because we have no more money.
> *Did APSARA come as a group?*
> APSARA people came with the army police to stop the construction. The village chief and commune officials did not come with the group.
> *Have you now got permission from APSARA to complete the house?*
> Yes we can finish the house now
>
> (ThnalTrang-M46&group 2008)
>
> *Have you had any problems with APSARA?*
> Yes. For example like this house—before it had wooden poles supporting the house. But when we need to put concrete on the ground—they did not allow. We ask permission for one month—we did not get the permission. We just decided to do without permission. And also the problem with the new construction in the space around the house… the Authority will never allow to build in that space. Everyone have to have the old house
>
> (Lolei-F42 2008)
>
> We don't have any problems with APSARA as yet. There is a forest behind the house and I want to cut wood for replacing the rotten pillars, but I have not asked permission as yet.
> *Will you ask for permission?*
> I don't want to complicate matters because if I go to APSARA, they will keep sending me from one department to another. I want to replace, but I don't want to ask permission
>
> (Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008)

Table 7.6 Problems with APSARA?

Of the 63 interviews, only one family had constructed in accordance with the regulations (Photograph 7.15). The interviewee's son was an APSARA employee and as such was knowledgeable about the regulations and was also able to obtain the required permission. Besides this singular case observed in Phum Beng, all the other new constructions in the study villages had been completed partly or fully without APSARA consent. In the words of Phum Lolei's village chief:

> All the new constructions have had problem with APSARA. But they all build—because the people who build the house are only the original people who live here—like people who are born here. They had some problems. APSARA tried to stop—they come to stop—and said everyone in the village has to have permission. But all just build including me and now APSARA cannot do anything. (Lolei-M58 2008)

The Authority has been unable to take any action despite existing legal provisions (article 6(1), RGC 1999) and the presence of military personnel from DOC. If APSARA has to take action, large numbers of illegal constructions will have to be dealt with and this may not be feasible. Moreover, the actions may create an adverse situation for the Authority (Khoun 2008).

WHAT ABOUT THE WATER BODIES?

The respondents from Phum Lolei, Phum Stung and Phum Beng were clearly aware of the restrictions with regards to the water reservoir. Digging was not permitted in Lolei Baray and the use of electric fishing equipment was prohibited in Phum Beng (only the traditional means of fishing was permitted). The villagers from Ovlaok and Thnal Trang were aware of these restrictions in relevance to *trapeang*, *khassan* and other water bodies found in their villages. Some responses are given below.

By APSARA law, digging is not allowed in the *baray*

(Lolei-M56 2006).

But we will do what we want. We have a *sra* that we have already dug. We farm fish here. This *sra* is shallow so we want to make it deeper.

(Lolei2-F62 2006)

No one use the *trapeang* now. In the past they used to use the water. But during the 1970s the soldiers filled up the *trapeang*, and the water became muddy and less. People don't use it anymore. We now use water from well. NGO helped us dig the well

(Ovlaok-M78&group 2006)

APSARA has restrictions in the use of *trapeang*. We cannot dig. We can use the water, which we collect in buckets. We cannot use electric shock to kill the fish

(Beng-F48 2008)

We have had no problems with APSARA. They gave model for the bridge to be built in Phum Beng. We were not allowed to put a pipe, but had to leave an opening in the middle for the water flow. We use the water in the *trapeang/ beng* for the veggie garden. We are allowed to fish in the *trapeang*, but we cannot use electric tools to kill fish. We can use traditional fish

---

traps for catching fish
(Beng-F78 2008)

Table 7.7 Restrictions to water bodies

The responses reported in Table 7.7 indicate that there were some restrictions to the use of *trapeang* and other Angkorian water features. In Phum Ovlaok, though they were used in the past as a source of water, they were not used anymore due to the convenience of wells dug with the help of NGOs. Moreover, during the Khmer Rouge period, some of these *trapeang* were filled in with soil rendering them unusable. The villagers have not made any attempts to revive the *trapeang* due to the heritage regulations. In contrast, one resident from Phum Lolei indicated that she would make her *sra* in Lolei Baray deeper even though it was forbidden to dig in the *baray*. She was defiant because the *sra* was made before the formation of APSARA. While the villagers from Phum Ovlaok, Phum Thnal Trang, Phum Lolei and Phum Stung did not express an interest in maintaining *trapeang* or any other historical water body, the villagers of Phum Beng were keen to maintain continuity in their use of the *beng*. Beng villagers have used the water from the reservoir for a long time. The village is in the flood plains, closer to Tonle Sap, and the water in the *beng* never dries up. As a result, the villagers who live around the *beng* have continued to use the water for growing vegetables.

WHAT ARE THE RESTRICTIONS REGARDING RITUALS?

APSARA is responsible for the maintenance of the temple premises and ensuring that they stay clean for tourists. Consequently, food and meat brought by the locals as offerings to the *neak-ta* at some temples were either removed immediately or the villagers were requested to make the offerings away from the temple. By and large, the villagers and the APSARA guards did not perceive this as a restriction; rather, both were eager to provide a welcoming environment for the tourists.

Have you [APSARA guards] stopped any ceremony of the local people? No one wants to stop them, but we don't allow them to leave offerings. Before we do anything we also ask for permission. We advise villagers, that it has to be very quick. For any festival they do not need permission, but if there is a special occasion when they want to play music, then they ask permission from APSARA (Lolei-M54 2006) Sometimes when people want to give offering in front of a temple, it is not allowed by APSARA (ThnalTrang-M25 2006) At the *neak-ta* under the tree near Preah Ko... offerings are made by the Ovlaok villagers during the month of *Meāk*. Offerings made in front of the Preah Ko (bull) is usually by villagers from other provinces… they burn incense. *Do the villagers offer any food like chicken?* The villagers offer chicken, but when they do APSARA guards leave it for a little while and then remove it, because it is not good for tourists.

Are the locals happy with this arrangement?
Yes, because before making any offering the villagers ask APSARA guards for permission and APSARA guards ask them to remove the offering in a short time after they have finished. It will be removed to somewhere nearby

(Ovlaok-M38 2008)

Is offering (food) allowed inside the temple?
Chicken is normally not offered inside Prasat Bakong, but in front of the Po tree in front of Bakong. We want to keep the place clean for tourists. The villagers give offering in front of the Po tree only—there is no restriction; the villagers are free to practice what they want—sometimes, we remove the offering (food) and we eat it…

(Ovlaok-M34&group 2008)

Whenever we have made offering, there has been no problem with APSARA asking us to remove. But we don't know what happens behind our backs.
When APSARA Authority stops you from making offering?
We feel upset when that happens

(Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008)

Table 7.8 Problems with ritual offerings

The responses evinced in Table 7.8 indicate that although the ritual offerings of food were removed, the villagers were not upset, although when probed, one elderly couple stated that they would be upset if their offering were to be removed. Nevertheless, the majority of the respondents did not see this as an issue, and it is possible to conclude that in most instances, the villagers consensually agreed to make their offerings of food away from the tourists. The removal of the food offerings by the Authority was primarily to keep the place clean for the tourists. It was unanimously accepted amongst the APSARA guards and the villagers that leaving food and meat offerings was unattractive. APSARA was certainly not against the ritual practices; in fact, APSARA guards from local villages also made offerings with their families.

WHAT ABOUT THE LAND, DO YOU HAVE PROPERTY DOCUMENTS?

Khmer villagers predominantly do not own land registration documents. During Khmer Rouge occupation, all land records were systematically destroyed in order to abolish private land ownership (Ratia et al. 2006: 6; Russell 1997). Private property rights were re-introduced in 1989; a land law was passed in 1992, and the current land law in practice was passed in 2001. A program of land registration in Cambodia was begun in 1997 by the National Land Registration of Finland (NLRF). This was merged with a parallel program run by Germany in 2002 and termed the Land Management and Administration Project (LMAP). Subsequently, the National Cadastral Commission for Cambodia was set up (MLMUPC 2003; Phann 2006; Ratia et al. 2006). The Cadastral Commission has started the process of land registration and land registration of the entire nation is expected to be complete by 2017 (RGC 2005). The

findings from the field interviews reveal that none of the respondents have any official documents to claim ownership to their property[71].

Do you have property documents?
No I don't have.
Would it be a problem if the Authority wanted to do something with your property?
Even if I don't have documents, nobody has the right to take my land. Everyone knows that the field belongs to me.
Is the situation same with the house? Do you have documents for the house?
No, I do not have. But when I borrow money on my house—an authorization needs to be made that the house belongs to me. It is verified by the village chief

(Lolei-M40 2006)

Do you own this house? Do you have documents?
Yes, we own this house. But, no, we don't have

(Lolei2-F62 2006)

Has anyone registered land in this village?
No, no one has registered land formally here. APSARA is hoping to soon commence the process of registering land ownership details. Now, there is a temporary form of documentation used to claim ownership to land. It is just an estimate of house plot and rice fields for the purpose of taxation (one block for one basket) and to borrow money on land

(ThnalTrang-M56 2008)

Have the villagers registered their land in this village?
Some of the villagers have registered the land to the village chief, commune chief and sometimes to district chief—it is unofficial. But I do not have my house or land registered. I have been living here since 1979.

(Stung-M51 2008)

Table 7.9 Do you have property documents?

As indicated above, unofficial documentation was prepared for the purpose of mortgaging the land to borrow money. These forms of documentation were attested by the village chief, commune chief or sometimes the district chief (Bong 2008; Som 2008; Youn 2008). Although these documents are not legally valid, the villagers were not worried. They were unaware of the legal consequences of not possessing valid documentations for their property. In contrast to the villagers' beliefs, directive No.70 (RGC 2004) reinforced that the entire World Heritage site was state property. This information has been conveyed through booklets and signage and is discussed in the next section.

CAN YOU SELL YOUR LAND?

An APSARA directive, passed in 2004 (RGC 2004) prohibited the buying and selling of land within the zones to outsiders. The residents living within the protected zones were allowed to own and sell the land amongst villagers, but were forbidden from selling land for commercial

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[71] (Howse et al 2007: 30) According to the Community aspects report prepared for AMP, 66% of the villagers do not have a title to land they occupy or farm

development. Some responses provided in Table 7.10 give an understanding of the local villagers with regards to selling land within Zone 1.

> In this village, the people cannot sell the land the outsiders. But they can sell within the people in the village. But when they have to construct a house they go to APSARA for permission
>
>   (Ovlaok-M36 2006)
>
> *Are there any new families in this past year?*
> There are five or six new houses but they are sons or daughters of people in the village—Eight new families have been settled here in the past one year... from Kampong Cham province. They have bought land in the village and moved here.
> *Can they buy land?*
> Yes they can buy. When someone wants to sell... they can buy. Anyone can buy land. And villagers don't mind the outsiders.
>
>   (Ovlaok-M38 2008)
>
> I thank APSARA because now no one can buy or sell land and so my land is safe
>
> Land in APSARA zone has become very cheap because they cannot sell the land to outsiders (they can sell only to people within APSARA zone). The people living inside the zone feel jealous of the people living outside
>
>   (ThnalTrang-M52 2008)
>
> The land value was 10$/sqm last year, now it is 50$/sqm (April 2008). The land acquisition started for the golf course since 1997 (at that time price was 200$/hectare). I have rice field within Zone 1. I want to sell, but I cannot because of APSARA regulation
>
>   (Lolei3-M42 2006)

Table 7.10 Can you sell your land?

The responses indicate that the local villagers are well aware of the rules with regards to buying and selling land within the protected zones. While one villager was happy that her land was protected from commercial exploitation, the others felt that the restrictions were not justified[72]. An interesting observation can be noted in the Phum Ovlaok's village chief's response. In 2006, he had stated that people could not sell land to outsiders; whereas in 2008, he clarified that eight new families from Kampong Cham province had bought land and moved into Ovlaok. The regulation stipulates that land can be sold only amongst the villagers. The responses above indicate that this was yet another regulation that was not adhered to in the strictest sense.

CONCLUSION

The villagers living within Zone 1 of the study area are well aware of APSARA regulations. Their understanding of why there were regulations within the zones is limited and they also do not have a broader understanding of World Heritage, as will be illustrated later. Largely, however, the villagers are unhappy with the regulations and the imposition of rules by an

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[72] (Howse et al 2007: 20) The lack of a clear understanding about the Park regulations causes a high level of stress amongst villagers. Some responses include 'We are afraid that APSARA (will) expel us to live in another place'; '…afraid (that) APSARA will not permit us to cultivate…' or 'I am afraid of losing land as it is located in APSARA zone'

organisation, which is relatively new. A 55 year-old respondent well articulated this unhappiness:

> I am very upset with APSARA. Long time ago, there is no APSARA. Just recently APSARA try to come here and they are very strict. We cannot do what we want. We have to ask for permission. But when we ask for permission they never give. I have a lot of questions for APSARA, I don't have any answers. I want to know when and why APSARA come here. I want to give my daughter a piece of land nearby and I want her to live nearby (so that she can look after me when I am ill or old)—but APSARA is not allowing this to happen (APSARA is not allowing any new construction). I am very unhappy because of these restrictions. (ThnalTrang-F55 2008)

She was loud and clear in expressing her disconsolate state regarding the regulations. Despite APSARA's efforts to generate public awareness, large sections of the village communities that live within the protected zones are not aware of the regulations. The lack of sufficient knowledge generates a high level of resentment towards the Authority, making the task of APSARA highly difficult. The woman's outburst, however disconcerting, draws attention to the high level of dissonance existing amongst the Angkor Park residents towards the Authority, which controls their lives in many ways.

APSARA AND THE VILLAGERS

CAMPAIGNS TO RAISE AWARENESS

The Second Intergovernmental Conference for the Safeguarding and the Development of Angkor organised by UNESCO (2003b) introduced the mandate of 'community'; as a consequence, there has been a concerted effort to engage the local community and to promote heritage awareness amongst the community in Angkor. Subsequently, three new departments within APSARA were created with a community focus: the Department of Monuments and Archaeology 2 (DMA2), Department of Demography and Development (DDD) and Department of Water and Forests (DWF). These departments, along with the Mix Intervention Unit and Communication Unit in the Administrative department, have realised a number of programs for the benefit of the community (Khoun 2006a: 3–8). Some of these include the installation of APSARA signboards, zone boundary markers, public information sessions, community forest management, community gardening, improved techniques for agriculture and technical support. A few of these aspects are discussed here with responses from both the Authority and the community. The new departments introduced in 2004 have subsequently been renamed, following the re-structure of APSARA to implement the recommendations of the Angkor Participatory Natural Resource Management and Livelihoods Programme (APNRMLP), an outcome of the Angkor Management Plan (AMP). Chapter 3 presented these changes.

APSARA S<small>IGNS</small>

	Prasat Srang-Ai: The following acts are prohibited: ° No digging the temple platform and no clearing the forest ° No building house in the temple area ° No occupying temple land ° No damaging the ancient ruins ° No digging or trading the soil from the temple moat ° No damaging the temple moat's water system.
Photograph 7.4 APSARA sign at Prasat Srang-Ai, Phum Thnal Trang	
	Indratataka Pond, Angkor Park ° No new constructions ° No digging or filling pond and no dredging pond soil ° No burning or cutting forest
Photograph 7.5 APSARA sign along Lolei Baray embankment	
	Ban ° No burning of forest ° No clearing of forest to claim land ° No throwing of burning cigarette in the forest as it could cause forest fire ° No setting fire for the harvest of wild bee ° No burning of dried grassland ° Never leave fire unattended
Photograph 7.6 Sign at the entry to Phum Ovlaok and Prasat Bakong	
	All the land in the Siem Reap-Angkor sites is State public property, which APSARA has to manage, preserve and develop sustainably. Standards for utilisation of land in Zones 1 and 2 of Siem Reap/Angkor Sites shall be defined as follows: ° The citizens who have long been dwelling in the Zones may continue living there without being subject to any evacuation ° The residents may renovate or repair dilapidated houses, or construct a new house to replace an old one, with authorisation from APSARA ° The residents are entitled to manage the land, in ways such as the transfer of ownership from parents to their descendants or the sale of their property to other villagers, in order to cope with the difficulties of life (Extract from directive 70 of Cambodian Government, dated 16 September 2004)
Photograph 7.7 New signs installed at vantage locations across the AWHS. This was photographed near the airport (2009)	

In the interest of publicly disseminating information, signs informing the public of Angkor Park regulations have been installed at strategic locations within the zones. APSARA restrictions regarding protected temples have been installed near some temples and ruins (Photograph 7.4); those regarding water bodies have been located in the vicinity of water bodies, including Lolei Baray and the moat surrounding Prasat Prei Monti (Photograph 7.5). A number of new signs have been installed since 2009. The signs and a rough translation of their contents are provided below.

As a result, the villagers are all familiar with the APSARA slogans. These signs provide the park residents with information regarding appropriate activities permitted within the protected zones of Angkor Park. The new signs give additional information; regarding prohibited activities within the Park (Photographs 7.6), and regarding the land-use regulations, as per directive 70/SSR of 2004, highlighting that the entire World Heritage site is state property (Photographs 7.7). The signs convey the Authority's role in protecting the World Heritage and clearly define the autonomy of APSARA; in so doing, they have also highlighted the 'top-down' management structure. Many of the old signs were badly damaged by local residents, who resented these regulations. Vandalism in the form of axe-marks is clearly evident on some signs, while others have been completely removed from their original locations. The Authority however, in its commitment to convey the Park regulations intends to replace every damaged sign until the message is conveyed clearly to the people.

Besides APSARA signs, a number of other signs were also found in the villages.

Photograph 7.8 Sign in Phum Beng	**Photograph 7.9** Sign on Route 6, Phum Ovlaok
The nature protection community of Beung Totung Thngai has obligations to protect and replant forest. They say, ° No deforestation, or Causing forest fire in any way. This is punishable by law. (Funded by DANIDA)	With reference to directive 80, dated 25 February, 2003 of Interior Ministry and Environment Ministry; article 4 states that, ° the littering of solid waste along road, public place, water resource etc., is forbidden. If someone does not obey, he/she will be charged with a sum of 10,000 riel or more, but if he/she reoffends, he/she will be fined double.

The sign installed by DANIDA (Danish Development Agency) instructs Phum Beng villagers to protect their environment (Photograph 7.8). The green sign by the Ministry for Environment warns residents against throwing garbage and maintaining a clean environment (Photograph 7.9).

The multiplicity of agencies and regulations reflects the complexity of management that exists at various levels in Cambodia. The archaeological park is under the governance of both the provincial government bodies and the APSARA Authority. Although APSARA was created by national legislation and has overriding authority, there are still a number of issues that need to be resolved to improve communication and coordination between the provincial offices and APSARA departments.

ZONE BOUNDARY MARKERS

With the creation of the heritage zones for the protection and management of Angkor Archaeological Park in 1994, APSARA had taken steps to install zone boundary markers to help the villagers and provincial bodies understand the extent of Zones 1 and 2 only in 2004-05. The Zone 1 markers were painted red at the top and the Zone 2 markers were painted blue at the top (Khoun 2006a).

Photograph 7.10 Zone 1 boundary marker in Phum Rolous

Photograph 7.11 Zone 1 boundary marker lying down in a low lying area on the way from Phum Beng to Phum Ovlaok

Photograph 7.12 Zone 1 boundary marker attached to a wooden post in Phum Roluos

> *Do you know any zone boundary marker in this village?*
> There was a marker somewhere near the bridge… to the south-east and to the east of Lolei.
> *Can the marker be seen?*
> No, the marker was removed by the villagers, because they complain about the restrictions.
> (Stung-M51 2008)
>
> No, there is one boundary marker in Anlong Chrei village and one on the way back.
> *Do they know that this village is within the Zone 1?*
> Yes, almost every village with temples is within APSARA zone.
> (Beng-F48 2008)

Table 7.11 Are there any zone boundary markers?

The responses in Table 7.11 indicate that some of the zone markers have been removed by the exasperated villagers. The discussion in the earlier parts of this chapter illustrated the reasons for this resentment. Some zone markers were identified on the ground from interviews and with the help of staff from the Department of Order and Cooperation (DOC). The photographs (7.10–7.12) above illustrate the markers located in Phum Roluos, near a *wat* in Phum Roluos and another on the way from Phum Beng to Phum Ovlaok.

A 2010 newspaper article reported that it was proposed to install 600 new Zone boundary markers to define the protected area. In the words of APSARA's Director-General Bun Narith; 'We are trying to ensure a balance between temples, nature and people' (Rann 2010).

APSARA INFORMATION SESSIONS

The Communication Unit in the Administrative Department of APSARA has been implementing the publicity campaigns. Working closely with other departments, the purpose of these information sessions is to improve heritage awareness amongst local communities and explain the Authority's policies and programs. 'Getting accurate and helpful information to the local community is quite crucial to APSARA's success in managing the World Heritage Area' (Khoun 2006a: 6). Accordingly, the Authority organised information sessions twice in every village within AWHS (Khoun 2006b). APSARA had organised these sessions in schools and Buddhist monasteries for the benefit of both villagers and members of the Buddhist clergy. The responses tabled in Table 7.12 indicate the information sessions organised at Wat Bakong and Wat Lolei.

> Yes, they come for meeting. I am one of APSARA members. Everything here is under APSARA Authority. But this *wat* was built a long time before APSARA come—this *wat* and the *Vihear* were built a long time ago. The *Vihear* is now being restored by APSARA and the French.
> *Did they talk about APSARA rules when they came?*
> Yes they did
> (Head monk at Wat Bakong 2008)
>
> The problem is we will have to train monks on how to meet the costs of building new

construction. APSARA will bring some expert here and tell us how to do our new construction. Earlier APSARA came once to tell about rules. There is going to be a meeting in November. They will have one member from APSARA, one from province, an organization called (NGO) volunteers and they will talk related to the monk rules

(Head monk at Wat Lolei 2006)

Table 7.12 APSARA information sessions at the *wat*

The village chiefs of the different study villages also confirmed these publicity campaigns. Table 7.13 presents the opinions of three village chiefs.

Since APSARA started their restriction (since they have restricted the zones), they have been to this place in 2 times… APSARA has been active only since the past 5 years

(Village Chief of Ovlaok 2008)

Are there any issues with APSARA due to the restrictions?
No, there are no problems. APSARA has organised awareness generating meetings—once at the school and once in the community hall. More than 100 people gathered, but not all villagers. So not everyone (in the village) knows about APSARA needs

(Village Chief of Thnal Trang 2008)

APSARA also organised meetings in the village for two times

(Village chief of Stung 2008)

Table 7.13 APSARA Information Sessions in the Villages

One villager stated that APSARA had organised a meeting to inform the villagers about the restrictions (ThnalTrang-M74 2008). According to him, the restrictions included:

cannot buy and sell land in APSARA zone
no digging up of the rice field for *sra*
cannot construct concrete houses—not make deep foundation

The information sessions organised by the Authority have successfully conveyed their restrictions and regulations to those who have attended these sessions. While a small section of the village population was aware of these restrictions, large sections including the respondents quoted earlier (this document: 192), were unaware of the regulations. Although the Authority has taken steps to inform residents living within the World Heritage site, the message has not reached all residents.

APSARA BROCHURES

To convey building regulations, and acceptable forms of house constructions within the AWHS, APSARA Authority has prepared brochures. Copies of these have been provided to the commune offices for the benefit of the villagers. They provide information on the acceptable forms of traditional houses within the Park and also indicate unsuitable construction styles and techniques. While they state clearly what can and cannot be done, they do not provide sufficient information on how this can be achieved.
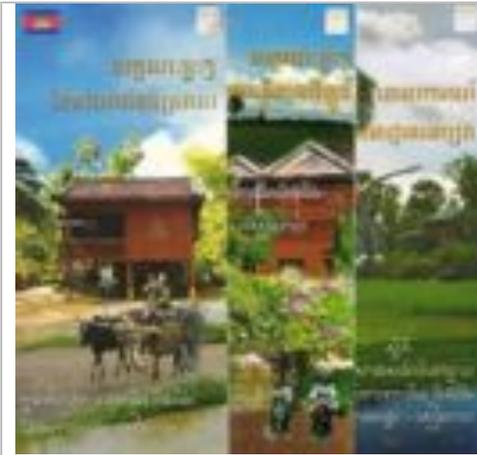
Figure 7.1 APSARA Brochures

Figure 7.2 Acceptable house and fencing house

Figure 7.3 Acceptable houses within the Park
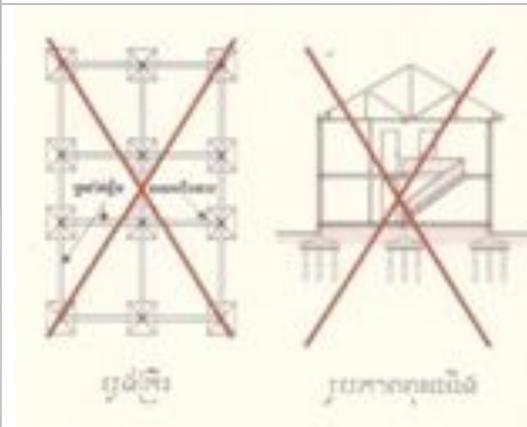
Figure 7.4 Unacceptable forms of construction

Photograph 7.13 Traditional house in Phum Thnal Trang before reconstruction (2006)

Photograph 7.14 House pictured in Photograph 7.13 reconstructed (2009)

| **Photograph 7.15** House built according to APSARA rules, Phum Beng (2008) | **Photograph 7.16** Newly constructed house in Phum Lolei (2008) |

Given the ban on the use of forest resources, the procurement of wood for traditional constructions is impossible. In order to encourage the villagers to build houses in a traditional style, the Authority needs to provide viable alternatives of construction material and techniques that can be adopted to achieve the desired results. As sufficient information and suitable alternatives are not available, the villagers view the Authority's restrictions as impractical, and build houses according to their requirements (Photograph 7.16). Photographs 7.13 and 7.14 illustrate a traditional house in Thnal Trang and its reconstructed view. The new house has been reconstructed following the same plan as the original, but the builder has not adhered to APSARA's style manual. As discussed earlier, only one interviewee had her house built (Photograph 7.15) in accordance with APSARA's style guide (this document: 188).

MEASURES TO IMPROVE VILLAGERS' LIVELIHOODS

The new departments of 2004, described above, have been involved in raising community awareness and trying to understand their needs. Amongst the various programs that have been initiated by the different departments of APSARA, the programs proposed to be implemented by the former DDD (now the Department of Agriculture and Community Development DACD) give priority to the local community's requirements. These programs were developed by APSARA as part of the Cultural Villages Programme, and have gained encouragement as a result of the recommendations of the Angkor Participatory Natural Resource Management and Livelihoods Programme (APNRMLP). At the time of the 2008 fieldwork, it was proposed to pilot the DACD programs in selected villages. These villages were chosen as part of APSARA's cultural villages program, and the selected villages were also to be projected as cultural villages for cultural tourism.

Of the five study villages, only Phum Beng, in Kouk Srok was one of the selected villages. According to Tan, the deputy director of DDD, twelve villages had been chosen in the previous year and twelve model farmers had been trained (2008). The concept was to build

trust with the farmers through a demonstration of profitable strategies for their benefit. Accordingly, 35 cooperatives had been formed within Angkor Park. The villages chosen in the Roluos group include Don Teav, Kouk Srok, Chambok, and Kan Chok (Khum Roluos). A range of different tasks identified for the program are listed below (Tan 2008).

(The projects we advocate include) Khmer Effective Micro-organism, a stimulant for rice planting Developing good Composting techniques Encourage villagers to grow salad vegetables Breed fish quickly High yielding rice Helping villagers in farming chicken Fast growing seedling of trees to be used as firewood (Tan 2008)

Table 7.14 Department of Demography and Development—Projects

The projects were formulated based on a study of the villagers and an understanding of their socio-economic needs. Accordingly, farming chicken was found to be more profitable than growing rice. The director's responses regarding implementation are provided in Table 7.15.

Do you talk to the farmers directly? We have 10 staff (to work on this project) in the village—in each district there are 2 staff responsible for at least 2 villages each. First village we train (the villagers) by our staff… so we can eliminate technical programs. *How easy is it to get these across to the farmers?* Not easy, because they like (using) the chemical. *Is there a separate provincial government department working in the rural areas?* We work closely with them. In some villages, people are very happy with us. We are planning to take villagers to see what other farmers in the association do… *Can you say something regarding (phum Beng) phum Kouk Srok?* There are many people there who grow vegetables (Tan 2008)

Table 7.15 How are the projects implemented?

According to Tan, the villagers in Phum Kouk Srok (including Phum Beng) preferred to grow vegetables than farm chicken (Tan 2008). Some of the interviewees from Phum Beng were questioned in this regard but it was the village chief who offered the maximum information. Her answers are given in Table 7.16. Another villager who was appointed as the project coordinator also offered some limited information.

How did the program start? Did APSARA come and start meetings? They come here to do meeting—and people do volunteer—more people from this village join the meeting because we are also good at agriculture—like vegetable garden. It started in March 2008. *Is there anything new that the department is teaching you?* They teach us techniques and in the use of fertilizer and how to make rope *Have you seen this somewhere?* We do grow vegetables in group (like a collective) for my village—sometimes I am the intermediary in selling vegetables

> *APSARA has a place where they do the testing, have the villagers visited that place?*
> We went to APSARA station in Prey Vieng province recently. We as a community got tips on saving money
> ° pig slaughter
> ° animal feed
> ° agriculture—for agriculture, their suggestions are not as good as what we already do
> *Why are you joining APSARA program? Is there anything beneficial? What are your reasons?*
> I joined because I want to know—is it real development? I want to find out, and 25 families have joined from this village
> *What is the group called?*
> *Khasikam Banko Bankan Pal Prahchee Tamma Cheata* Phum Kouk Srok—roughly translated it is 'agriculture that uses natural fertilizers in Kouk Srok village'
> *They also have another program of fast growing trees from this department. Will you use that also for firewood?*
> Yes, we have brought some 200 saplings to plant in this village. We will plant some good timber trees and also some fast growing trees like acacia and *angkea bos* (khmer name)… is a fast growing so good for firewood
>
> (Beng-F48 2008)

Table 7.16 Phum Beng village chief's knowledge regarding the DDD project

Despite all the criticism, the Authority was making efforts to improve community awareness and enable public participation. The projects promoted by DACD, if successful, will help to build the much-needed cooperation between the villagers and the Authority. Although these are projected as the expert guiding the villagers and are not inherently discursive, they are aimed at benefiting the villagers. The success of these projects will enable the authorities to gain public trust and cooperation and it will be possible for other villages to gain from these examples.

<u>APSARA MEASURES TO PREVENT UNAUTHORISED CONSTRUCTIONS</u>

The details of the creation of the Department of Order and Cooperation were provided in Chapter 3. The DOC staffed by the military (RGC 2006) was responsible among other things, for saving trees from destruction, preventing illegal land grabbing, monitoring development (Tan 2006) and to acting as wardens in the protection of Angkor's heritage in accordance with APNRMLP recommendations (APSARA 2008). The DOC's chief of administration, interviewed in December 2006, revealed some of the key problems they faced. Table 7.17 highlights the key concerns for both the Authority and the local residents.

> *Do you have problems with the people?*
> Sometimes we have a little bit problems with the people. Sometimes people move from other provinces—people like to live in this area so they can buy a small land—they have to take the trees out and build a small house for living—they know that APSARA and the government do not allow to cut down the trees—but they still do at night time—and our team work during day to control the area
>
> *Do lots of people know about the rules?*
> Most of the people know about the law of protection. They know and most of the people when they would like to build a home or any construction they go to DMA2. Some people don't know because they just build a small house—that is the problem.

Do villagers get angry with your staff?
We don't know. But when we advise them they understand us. Because we follow by the—what we call the sign of the King (the royal decree)—the sign of the King for the protection in this area for the World Heritage site of the Angkor Wat. So, the people—most of the people understand. Because if we do not protect this area—the region, the ancient heritage of the area, we are afraid no tourist will come

(Tan 2006)

Table 7.17 DOC—Chief of administration

While population influx is one of the biggest problems that APSARA has to deal with, insufficient understanding of APSARA regulations poses a significant hurdle in AWHS management. As expressed by Tan (2006), people who are aware of the regulations are fraudulent enough to cut down trees and pursue irregular construction at night, and other people who are unaware of the regulations carry on their constructions but are stopped by the DOC. The process has caused undue stress on Park residents as will be elaborated through an example in Chapter 8. As a result of continuing reverence for the King, he suggested that the villagers will follow the rules; however, the reference to tourists immediately afterwards signifies the importance of tourism in Cambodia. Tourism is given a far greater priority by the authorities than meeting the needs of their own people. When queried regarding land ownership within Zone 1, Tan stated that:

With regards to property within Zone 1; Does it belong to people or does APSARA own some of the land?—because I know monuments are managed by DMA1—the surroundings of the moat, khassan and some trapeang are managed by DWF—and people living in the villages—they own the house, they own the rice field—but sometimes some parts are not clear—as to who owns them… so is there an understanding of the ownership details in the park?
Ok, one thing you should know is that APSARA never own the property
But sometimes I have come across in the park—local people say that this land belongs to APSARA
No, people are sometimes confused. APSARA is just an Authority that protects the area of the Angkor park. But some people confuse and say that this land belongs to APSARA. So we know that some people are living from 1979—after the Pol Pot time—like the village of Srah Srang, where people have been living for a long time

(Tan 2006)

Table 7.18 Who owns the property in Zone 1?

Table 7.18 reveals one of the complexities of Angkor Park management today. Tan stated that APSARA does not own any property, but articles 1 and 2 of the directive issued by the Government, dated 16 September 2004, provides clear standards for land use in Zones 1 and 2 (Bun 2004; RGC 2004). While article 1 states that all the land in Zones 1 and 2 is state public property, article 2 states that citizens who have been 'long dwelling' can continue to live without fearing evacuation. These contradictory statements not only confuse park residents but also the APSARA staff, who do not completely comprehend the implications of the plural legislation. Some aspects of this issue were addressed in Chapter 3 and in the discussion earlier in this chapter. Although the higher level officials are fully aware of the legislative

requirements, other members of APSARA are not necessarily aware of the nuances of these regulations. This lack of knowledge often places them in a disadvantageous position when they have to clarify the doubts of the villagers.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the Authority has procured around 1000 hectares of land in Run Ta Ek commune as a solution to resolve the issues of growing population and increasing land pressures. Land will be provided for those villagers who wished to expand their existing houses or were interested in building new. The relocation is expected to solve the problems of additional space for the families within the Zones 1 and 2 (Khoun 2006a). However, experiences in relocating people in other parts of the world have had negative consequences. The inclusion of local people and their support and cooperation is considered more important for protected area management rather than their exclusion which is being increasing perceived as a politically and ethically unacceptable (McLean and Stræde 2003). The inclusion of the local community as custodians in the form of guards has proved successful in the conservation of biodiversity in Saint Katherine in Egypt, where the local Bedouins are engaged as community guards protecting cultural and natural heritage and they are also encouraged to manage and promote ecotourism in the region (Grainger 2003). Thus relocation of communities may not be the only solution to address the problems of growing population and increasing land pressures within AWHS.

CONCLUSION

The discussion so far clearly highlights the dissonance that exists at Angkor and the resulting conundrums. The local communities are aware of the salient restrictions advocated by APSARA but are prepared to default because they are confident that the Authority is powerless to carry out its warnings. Of all the interviewees, only one had constructed her house in accordance with the rules. While APSARA had undertaken a series of measures to raise awareness amongst the villagers, there were not many villagers who understood the full implications of the plural legislation that governed Zones 1 and 2 of Angkor Park. Moreover, the political and bureaucratic nature of the Authority has failed so far to provide the desired results. The 'top-down' approach, clearly locates the Authority in the role of 'expert', providing directions for the community to follow. Although there are provisions for the community to express their views via a telephone hotline and message boxes, lack of awareness and low levels of literacy, has so far prevented the villagers from using these facilities. Moreover, the trauma of the recent turbulent decades is still evident amongst some of the villagers who experienced pain and suffering from governing bodies. As a consequence, they preferred to keep contact with those governing bodies and authorities to a minimum (Luco 2002).

A booklet intended as an educational tool for both the provincial government bodies and local residents was issued to provide information about the obligations of the villagers living within Zones 1 and 2. Copies of the booklet, which explained the information through a series of 'questions and answers', were provided to the village and commune chiefs. Thanks to the APSARA signs and the information sessions, the villagers were aware of the restrictions imposed on their lives; however, they were largely unaware of the legal implications of living within the protected World Heritage site. No dialogue has been initiated by the Authority to engage the community in a meaningful discussion to understand their needs; as a result, it is viewed less as a custodian of national heritage and more as an authoritative, restrictive agency that impacts the lives of local residents. The discussion presented above, thus establishes the dissidence at local level with greater clarity. Regional level issues related to heritage governance aspects are presented next.

REGIONAL LEVEL / MACRO

The regional level connections are the inter-relationships between the people and the remains of the Angkorian cultural landscape. In other words, it refers to the cultural connections at the macro level. As already illustrated, emergent themes from the interview data were key factors in determining the presentation of the research findings. While the previous chapter demonstrated the local level connections in a cultural context, this chapter examines the connections in relationship to governance. The first part of this chapter focused on governance issues at the local level. This section will briefly illustrate the issues at the regional level in terms of the local understanding of World Heritage and the issues related to development.

DO YOU KNOW IF THIS IS WORLD HERITAGE?

During the semi-structured interviews of 2008, the villagers were asked specifically if they knew that they lived within a World Heritage site. The purpose of this question was to understand if they were aware of this basic fact. Of the 40 respondents interviewed in 2008 as individuals or as a group, 14 of them answered 'yes', which is approximately 35% of the respondents. The remaining 26 (65%) did not have any understanding nor the knowledge of the term 'World Heritage'. The respondents who were well-informed and understood that they lived inside a World Heritage site, were mainly the village chiefs, monks and very few villagers. Of these fourteen informed respondents, only one was a woman, and she was the deputy village chief of Phum Kouk Srok.

All the village chiefs of the five study villages were aware that their villages were part of the World Heritage site. The responses of the village chiefs of Phum Thnal Trang and Phum Beng are provided in Table 7.19.

Yes, I know this from APSARA, but I don't know any further details. I know this is a significant site because so many tourists come here to visit (ThnalTrang-M56 2008) Yes I know that this is World Heritage. *Do you know what it means?* We understand it is World Heritage, which is a good thing for Cambodia, because foreigners know and come to visit and that brings revenue into the country and for us. It is a good thing for Cambodia, and to let the world know this and allow the people to come and visit our country (Beng-F48 2008)

Table 7.19 Village chiefs' knowledge regarding World Heritage status

Tourism was a recurring feature in both the responses tabled above. While both the village chiefs displayed an understanding of World Heritage status, one indicated that the temples were significant because of tourists and another indicated that World Heritage status was good because it encouraged international tourists to visit Cambodia. Although the significance of World Heritage was not articulated, the global visibility of Angkor due to its World Heritage status was welcomed not just by these village chiefs but also by the rest of the villagers. Tourism was recognised as a positive outcome for most villagers, who have benefitted directly or indirectly through tourism. The synonymous nature of World Heritage and tourism was also articulated by other respondents as will be seen later in this section.

Responses from some monks are provided below.

Do you know that this is a World Heritage site? Yes, we know. *What more do you know, what does World Heritage mean to you?* It means we have to conserve the heritage (Ovlaok-M25&group 2008) Angkor is World Heritage but not this temple (Prasat Lolei) (Lolei-M33 2008)

Table 7. 20 Monks' knowledge regarding World Heritage status

The group of monks interviewed in Prasat Bakong expressed that World Heritage status meant that they were required to conserve the heritage. Their informed view established that they had benefitted from the APSARA information sessions and signboards; however, it is also important to note that the same group of monks had earlier expressed frustration over APSARA restrictions and the problems they had experienced with regards to new constructions (refer to Table 7.3). On the other hand, a monk from Wat Lolei stated that only Angkor Wat was World Heritage and not the other temples. The unrivalled significance of

Angkor Wat was accepted by all the interviewees, whereas smaller temples and ruined temples were regarded as insignificant, as demonstrated in the previous chapter. The responses of the villagers regarding World Heritage classification are provided in Table 7.21.

Do you know that this is a World Heritage site? What does it mean to you?
Yes. I don't know much. It is a tourist area
(ThnalTrang-M44 2008)
Yes, I believe the temples are invaluable as designated by UNESCO
(ThnalTrang-M52 2008)
Yes I know, but I do not know what it means. I do not have an opinion on that
(Beng-M50 2008)
Do you know that this is World Heritage?
Tourists come to visit
(Lolei-M38&F38 2008)
We do not know much, but we feel that we should protect their national heritage
(Ovlaok-M34&group 2008)

Table 7.21 Villagers' knowledge regarding World Heritage status

The responses above indicate the level of informed knowledge amongst the local villagers with respect to the World Heritage site. Of the five responses tabled above, only one person indicated a good understanding of the World Heritage status and he was the head of legal issues in Khum Bakong (ThnalTrang-M52 2008). Of the remaining four responses, two equated World Heritage with tourists while the third had no opinion. The last response is from a group of APSARA guards and a member of the regional police. Despite the fact that they worked for the Authority, they had a limited understanding but felt that it was their duty to protect their national heritage. This indicates the *possible* impact of the nationalistic discourses on Khmer identity, wherein Angkor has been appropriated as a national icon since the French colonial period (Edwards 2007). Responses from other villagers are given in Table 7.22.

I do not understand what the term 'World Heritage' means…
(Ovlaok-M74 2008)
No, we do not know that this is world heritage. We do not know the meaning of world heritage
(Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008; ThnalTrang-F21&group 2008)
No, I only know about the old temples. From old temples I know that it is very nice
(ThnalTrang-F55 2008)
No (because I cannot read and write)
(Beng-F43 2008)

Table 7.22 What do you know about World Heritage?

Some generic negative responses are outlined in Table 7.22. These responses are indicative of the lack of awareness of World Heritage status that exists amongst a large section of the local population. Interestingly, one interviewee, a woman from Phum Beng, indicated that she did not know about the World Heritage status because she was illiterate.

To summarise, a large proportion of the interviewees are not aware of the World Heritage status of Angkor. Amongst those who know, only a handful are aware of the significance and implications of World Heritage. For most villagers and some village chiefs, World Heritage implies a growth in international tourism and improved economic opportunities. Heritage is largely valued for its tourism and economic benefits. In the words of the Head monk of Bakong:

> I know that it is a World Heritage site… the government give request to the world
> organization to get money… for the monk money for maintaining and cleaning the surrounds
> of the temples… and some tourists admire that the monks are doing a good job (Ovlaok-M75
> 2008)

The head monk's view indicates that the significance of the World Heritage status is synonymous with revenue generation, this view resonates with the rest of the villagers that World Heritage status is regarded as a source of revenue and income. Excepting a handful, who express pride in the World Heritage status and state that it is imperative to protect their national heritage, the rest of the interviewees equate World Heritage status with revenue. In fact, the villagers are absolutely right in equating World Heritage and tourism. As pointed out earlier, the Cambodian Government's efforts to improve the visitor experience and accessibility to Siem Reap (Heikkila and Peycam 2010; Winter 2007) has effectively improved tourism.

The lack of awareness amongst the other interviewees regarding the World Heritage status is a strong indicator of the Authority's failure to increase heritage awareness in local communities. Despite the fact that the Authority has taken steps to increase public awareness, the focus has primarily been on educating the villagers regarding rules and regulations and not on the broader aspects of World Heritage status and the real implications for the villagers who live within a World Heritage site. The Authority has not attempted to articulate the ramifications of plural legislation for the residents of Zones 1 and 2. The local population living within the World Heritage site is entitled to know about the obligations of living amongst cultural heritage of outstanding universal value and how their lives will be affected. This is a fundamental human right of the local villagers. While the Authority's prime task is to safeguard Angkor's World Heritage, it will be difficult to achieve if it does not include the local communities and their needs. In order to allow for meaningful community participation, the Authority must take the necessary steps to improve the local community's understanding

on all aspects of World Heritage and the regulations that affect the lives of those living within the protected zones.

LAND PRESSURES AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

An important factor affecting the local population in recent years has been the increasing pressure on land. The unprecedented increase in tourism in recent years has caused a steep escalation in development and new construction in the region. As a result, land value has increased nearly five times within the span of one year (2007–2008) (Lolei1-M42 2008). An increased rate of development was observed during 2008 compared with 2006. Most houses in the study villages of Lolei, Stung, Ovlaok and Thnal Trang had been converted, or were being converted, to larger concrete residences (Photographs 7.17, 7.18).

Photograph 7.17 New house, Phum Lolei 2008   **Photograph 7.18** New house, Phum Stung 2008

The prime reason for this surge in development was the large scale land acquisition that had taken place to the south of the Roluos group. The trend in increased land sales to the south of Roluos was observed in the AMP (APSARA 2008: 13). The villagers had sold some or all portions of their rice fields to unnamed developers from Phnom Penh and used the income to rebuild their traditional houses into masonry structures that were regarded as more secure and durable. Table 7.23 indicates some of the responses related to this land acquisition.

> The main job after rice field is growing vegetables… But now lots of farm land has been sold. Lots of concrete walls… land is lying fallow… The concrete wall is everywhere… except south west of SR… but outside Angkor Wat… lots of concrete walls
>
> (Beng-F48 2008)
>
> I had a dry season rice field which I have sold along with the other villagers. I sold it to a company (lots of villagers have sold to some company from Phnom Penh). Large sections of land are being acquired by some company all the way from Siem Reap.
> *Do you know what the land is going to be used for?*
> No, we do not know... All the villagers regret the sale of their rice fields
> *Why?*
> If we had waited we might have got better price for their land.

> *Could you resist selling?*
> We were all forced to sell because otherwise the land would just be acquired. We would not have access to our land once all the land around had been acquired by the buyer.
>
> (ThnalTrang-M47 2008)
>
> *Do you know anything regarding land that is sold south of Roluos?*
> ...it is large areas of land not just here but all the way along Tonle Sap... Maybe the development might be for agriculture. People should resist selling… but it is very difficult.
>
> (ThnalTrang-M46&group 2008)

Table 7.23 Large scale sale of land around the villages

These responses indicate that large quantities of land are now lying fallow as they have been sold. The villagers were unhappy because they had sold their land very cheaply[73]. However, if they had resisted and not wanted to sell, they would have eventually been pressured into selling, because once the land surrounding theirs had been acquired, they would be unable to access their property. Along with this large scale land acquisition to the south of Roluos group, another significant development to the north of Lolei was observed in 2008. The development of a golf course was under way along Thnal Kahé. The golf course measured approximately three kilometres by 300 metres and was situated to the north of Phum Lolei; a portion of the site was located within the zone (Figure 7.5). Photographs 7.19, 7.20 and 7.21 indicate the dramatic changes to the landscape as a result of the golf course.

Photograph 7.19 Large scale land modifications to create water features, 2008

Photograph 7.20 Large scale land modifications to create water features, 2008

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[73] Ebihara (1968: 84 – 85) recorded similar feelings in relation to an incident in the West hamlet where some villagers had to sell rice fields for an institute. The villagers expressed bitterness because they considered the compensation insufficient, but later assumed a neutral attitude towards the school when the value of education was accepted.

Photograph 7.21 Road is being widened, 2008
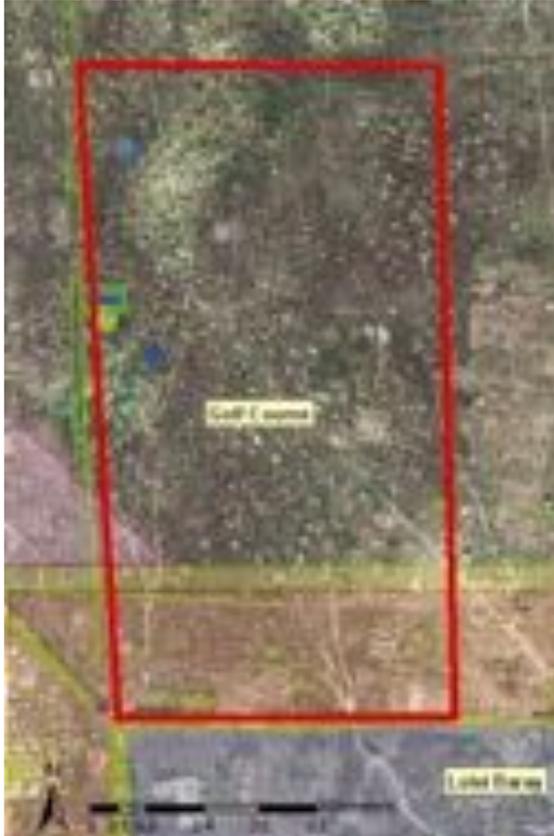
Figure 7.5 Extent of Golf course, 2008

Photograph 7.22 Golf course construction in 2008

Photograph 7.23 Golf course in use, 2009

The golf course development had started in June 2007, although the procurement of land had begun as early as 1997. The village of Lolei, observed as sleepy and quiet during the 2006 field visit, had been completely transformed in 2008 due to the golf course development. The golf course example illustrates the fact that developers with the power of money are capable of accomplishing any form of development. Although the golf course property is largely located outside the Zones, a small section is located within the Roluos Zones (Figure 7.5). The director of DMA2 stated that the golf course was largely outside the Zone and suggested that the portion that was within the Zone was proposed be maintained as a garden (Khoun 2008).

Prior to the development of the golf course, the area had rice fields and a few archaeological features. The rice fields in the region belonged to the villagers from both Lolei and Trapeang Roun, a village to the north of Roluos group located in Ampil commune (Lolei-M58 2008). The region did not have a great number of archaeological features (Figure 7.5), apart from three *trapeang*, two of which had been filled in, there had not been much disturbance to those archaeological features (Haen & Plat 2008). Although the golf course was located immediately outside Zone 1 of the Roluos group, however, its development has seriously modified the landscape, which was bound to have an impact on the environment. Large scale levelling, high embankments and water features (Photographs 7.19–7.23) were created for the landscaping of the golf course. This drastically engineered project was certain to affect the farming activities of the villagers to the south due to the possible prevention of water flowing to the south. The responses in Table 7.24 clarify the land acquisition process that took place for the golf course in the late 1990s.

Have people sold their rice fields for the golf course?
Yes, but it was sold long time ago. Government officials came here and said they wanted to buy the land for improving the country like development. They buy it very cheap. Like 5 hectare cost only 5 hun of gold (approximately half gram of gold for one hectare). And they said people can use the rice field for rice … and they said it will be a long process to develop the country to develop the site… so the people just agree to sell it
So most of the villagers sold their rice fields at that time?
There was some complaint… but it did not work.
Who complained to whom?
The people from this village complained to the company… but did not work.
Why did they not complain to the government?
Because the people from the district office said it was the land for developing this area… so people think that it belong to government… so they keep quiet

(Lolei-M32&M42 2008)

What do the villagers feel about this development?
They are upset and happy. They are happy because of development. They are upset because when they sell the land at the time… it was very cheap. If they could sell the land now… it may be a bit more expensive… they feel a bit regret of selling cheap. One good thing… is this road. It was a bad road… but now become smoother and good. When they widen the road, they take some people land. Some people want some money from the company… but the company said if they want money, they won't build a good road… so the people have to say yes. So the village chief tells them to give a piece of land for a good road.

(Lolei-M58 2008)

Table 7.24 Sale of land for the golf course to north of Phum Lolei

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The responses provided in Table 7.24 clearly indicate the anarchic systems that exist in Cambodia with regards to land acquisition. The developers (in the form of government officials) not only exploited the people by appropriating their land for extremely low prices in the guise of national development[74], but they also manipulated their powerlessness by widening the road into their private properties without providing any compensation. The

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[74] (Pottier 2010: *personal communication*) Initially there was some proposal regarding a university when the land was acquired; however, this changed in due course.

deputy village chief of Lolei stated that he had sold five hectares of his farm land for the golf course development. His response in Table 7.25 indicates the complex system of corruption that has been practised in Cambodia with regards to land appropriations.

I sold 5 hectares of farm land to the golf course development very cheaply
Were you happy to sell?
All villagers were forced to sell the land. If I didn't sell… the golf course people anyway need it… so they just take it… if people sell… they get 200$/hectare… and also I have no choice… so I sell it
Some part of the land to the north of the Lolei village was given as land for the refugee people from Thai border. The land was then sold for university and commune office. Some part of the golf course used to belong to the people from this village. At some point when refugees from Thai border came to live here—they were given that land by the government. But later the refugee land was sold to the university and commune office. The land has been sold in some cases a few times—after selling to university—they came back

(Lolei-M58 2008)

Table 7.25 Land Appropriation for the Golf Course

The response in Table 7.25 highlights the land grabbing issues that were rampant in post-war Cambodian society. The land to the north of Phum Lolei was sold several times and in each instance, government officials were involved. Similar incidents have been recorded in other parts of Cambodia (see various case studies in Williams 1999b).

Is there any other development nearby?
On the west of the golf course development—lot of people (from Phnom Penh) are buying land like 1 hectare, 5 hectare etc., right now they are only rice fields but I am suspicious of their intentions. But to the north of the golf course there is another 200 hectares of land which is proposed to become part of the golf course… but nothing happen now. The people who own such large area of land, like 100 and 200 hectare must be big official in the government… and they can have money to buy the land. In future, when they have plan they will come to build something. That belongs to the dealers (like property developer)… but there is still some pockets in between which are villagers' farm land. 3 families have rice fields in the area

(Lolei-M58 2008)

Table 7.26 Is there any other Development?

The response presented in Table 7.26 highlights the uncertainty for farming land in the future. As mentioned, there is a widespread land speculation in the region where large pockets of arable land have been acquired by unknown developers from Phnom Penh. While there are no imminent pressures, the land is being hoarded for possible future projects and as a consequence, the local villagers are being divested of their farming land. The victimisation of poor Cambodians in large scale land speculation has been recorded as rampant in other parts of Cambodia and has been highlighted by various reports on land issues (see also Amnesty 2008; Williams 1999a, 1999b). The Oxfam report states that:

> Poor Cambodians are losing their livelihood base in increasing numbers because of multifarious and interconnected factors… While most of the casual factors of landlessness are rooted in systemic poverty, loss of access to common property resources-the source of the vital supplement that has allowed poor Cambodian's without enough farmland to survive-has been the result of contemporary government policy. (Williams 1999a: 16)

The Oxfam report was prepared in 1999 and presents a scenario that had appeared elsewhere in Cambodia, but there are a number of parallels that relate to the situation in Angkor. The widespread issues due to land speculation and land grabbing have existed not as a result of weakness in legislation, but rather, as the result of weakness in implementation, according to a World Bank report (Sokhom et al. 2006: 72). While the Angkor Zones are governed by national legislation, the Authority will be unable to guide sustainable development without the appropriate implementation mechanisms.

On a positive note, the dirt road of Thnal Kahé has been widened and eventually metalled (Photograph 7.24–7.27). Furthermore, the villagers were extremely happy about the golf course development and they hoped for improved employment opportunities and allied economic benefits.

Photograph 7.24 Thnal Kahé 2006

Photograph 7.25 Thnal Kahé 2008

Photograph 7.26 Thnal Kahé 2009

Photograph 7.27 Thnal Kahé 2009

CONCLUSION

The local and regional level issues of heritage governance have been highlighted throughout this chapter. The local villagers expressed disappointment in the Authority largely due to their lack of awareness regarding APSARA rules and objectives. On the other hand, APSARA has taken a number of steps to raising the local community's awareness of heritage regulations.

Despite these efforts, only a very small percentage of the respondents are aware of the Authority's role. Most villagers are aware of the regulations due to APSARA signs placed in prominent locations, but only a handful were aware of the World Heritage status. While the villagers struggled to understand the policies of the Authority, the interviews revealed that even some members of the Authority were not completely cognisant of the implications of the legislation.

The Authority, on the other hand, has formulated a number of projects for the benefit of the local community and to create mutually beneficial relationships, but unless these projects are successful, it will be difficult for the villagers to trust the Authority. In an attempt to improve community relationships, APSARA has started *wat* restoration projects as well as managing the historical heritage in the zones. Efficient management of Angkor Park will be possible only when the regulation implementation mechanisms are improved. Finally, unless the Cambodian Government regulates the reigning anarchy in land speculation it will be extremely difficult for ordinary Cambodians to build trust in the Authority and the government and work towards safeguarding their nation's World Heritage.

CHAPTER 8: ZOOMING-IN: CONNECTIONS IN DETAIL

INTRODUCTION

The findings from the interviews presented in the preceding chapters help to establish the cultural connections of the local Khmers with the archaeological landscape. Using semi-structured in-depth interviews, it is possible to understand that, while the cultural connections link them through rituals and practices with the landscape, heritage governance factors impact on their lives at both the micro and the macro level. The findings help to clearly establish the connections of the contemporary population with the material remains in the study villages. Their daily lives bring them into daily physical contact with the surrounding landscape, and their cultural practices, animistic worship and Buddhist rituals connect them ritually to the Angkorian remains in the landscape. An active ritual practice did not seem to exist with regards to the Angkorian temples; however, when probed, people referred to spirit worship and in particular to offerings that were made to appease some *neak-ta*[75] that were believed to reside in Hindu deities, in sandstone from temples or in *prasat* ruins and mounds—validating the subtle cultural connections[76]. Some of the connections with the prominent Angkorian temples have now been re-created[77] and are celebrated by the Cambodian community. Even though tourism has improved the visibility of the monuments and made them popular, growing tourism and allied development has also had a detrimental impact. The continuing focus on tangible heritage, furthermore, disadvantages the local people and their cultural connections through restrictive heritage management practices.

Chapters 6 and 7 demonstrated the connections at the local and regional level and this chapter reviews a few examples in detail. The overarching significance of Angkor Wat is unrivalled by any other Buddhist temple in the region. The subtle cultural connections become apparent during Khmer New Year when Cambodians from around the country converge at the World Heritage site. The trip to Angkor is largely taken for leisure, as it coincides with the national holiday season. The first half of this chapter deals with the significance of Angkor Wat and Khmer New Year from observations in 2008. The second half of the chapter deals with two incidents related to development, detrimental to two archaeological sites, highlighting the issues in managing heritage and the inefficiencies of the heritage strategies in place.

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[75] Refer to Glossary for the meaning of Khmer terms

[76] Angkor region has a lesser presence of *neak-ta* shrines than the rest of Cambodia where *neak-ta* shrines are found almost everywhere. In Angkor although *neak-ta* spirits are also associated with natural features such as trees, hills and land, a great number are associated with the remains of the Hindu temples (Ang 2006: interview excerpt).

[77] The re-consecration of the reclining Buddha at Baphuon temple is one such example (ICC June, 2008)

SIGNIFICANCE OF ANGKOR WAT

Angkor Wat is regarded by Khmers as a highly significant symbol of Khmer identity. Angkor Wat is the largest temple in the world (Chandler 1996d: 320) and is considered to be a remarkable architectural achievement. Much has been written about its architectural elegance, iconography and archaeology (Dagens 1995; Dagens 2002; Dumarçay 1998; Mannikka 1997). While the bulk of scholarship concentrates on understanding the material culture, very little research exists regarding the rituals conducted within the temple. Completed around 1150, Angkor Wat, originally a Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu (Chandler 2008: 56–58; Coe 2003: 116–121) was later re-consecrated as a Buddhist temple (Coe 2003: 117).

Today, Angkor Wat is a national icon, adorning the nation's flag and the Cambodian currency the 'riel'. France was enamoured with Angkor Wat and the other temples, and over the years of French presence in Cambodia, the temples came to be viewed as France's heritage, occupying a central position at the annual International *Exposition Universelle* (1867, 1878, 1889, 1900) and *Exposition Coloniale* (1906, 1922, 1931) (Dagens 1995: 60, 104, 110–111, 182–183; Edwards 2007: 28–34, 45–48, 142, 153–154, 160–165).

Photograph 8.1 General view of Angkor Wat from the west

Figure 8.1 Refugees in Angkor Wat © 2001 Greg Davis/pjnet.com

Angkor's achievements also inspired the notion of *Khmer Daem* (original Khmer), one of the founding principles of the Khmer Rouge regime (Edwards 2007: 1–2; Straus 2001). Angkor Wat provided refuge at the beginning of the war in early the 1970s for around 3000 people, many of whom were working with *Conservation d'Angkor* (Dagens 1995: 126). Figure 8.1 illustrates Angkor Wat as a safe haven for distressed Khmers during the UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia) period, after the restoration of peace (Davis 2001: 276).

The villagers interviewed for this study recognise Angkor Wat as a national icon and as an achievement of the ancient Khmer (ancient here refers to the local peoples' perceptions of the Khmers in history). Some of them express the popular Cambodian myth that the Angkorian temples were built by *yeak* or giants. They unanimously agree that the temple is an architectural marvel, but they have no further knowledge of it. However, their views have also been considerably influenced by the public discourse on heritage conducted by the experts from UNESCO on the one hand, and growing tourism on the other.

Night lighting of Angkor Wat was being trialled in 2008 (Photograph 8.2). While the night lighting encouraged tourists to visit the temple at night, it possibly affected the built fabric and was also perceived as a factor that might alienate the locals from the temples:

> Before Angkor belonged to Angkor people… except people from the EFEO who went to restore the temples. But after that I mean, up to now… in daytime of course it belongs to tourists and tour guides and all tourists including national tourists… but at least at night time Angkor area, it belongs to the people. But that will not be the case, because now I see they are beginning to control/restrict; [the people are] forbidden by the law… and there will be show in the night… progressively; today it is at Angkor Wat, tomorrow will be at Bayon etc., etc., And Angkor people are deprived of their heritage more and more and more. (Ang 2008: interview excerpt)

Photograph 8.2 Night view of Angkor Wat from the west

The findings from the interviews presented in the next few pages highlight local community perceptions of the temple.

<u>HAVE YOU VISITED ANGKOR WAT?</u>

With the exception of a few, most of the villagers have visited Angkor Wat at least once in their lifetime. One woman who has never visited Angkor Wat identified the lack of financial resources as the prime reason (Lolei-F36 2006). Most of the interviewees who have visited Angkor Wat have visited the older *prasat*. A large percentage of the respondents stated that they went to Angkor Wat for a picnic or just a visit to their nation's most treasured monument; their curiosity being increased since the arrival of increasing numbers of foreign tourists. The head monk of Lolei mentioned that he visits Angkor for meditation; but soon clarified that he visits Wat Thlok in Angkor Thom and not Angkor Wat (Lolei-M34 2006). Some of the other monks also corroborated this information (Lolei-M22&group 2006; Lolei-M39 2006). Some common responses are presented in Table 8.1.

Have you visited the temples in Angkor and Angkor Wat?
I visited when I was young.
Where did you go? And has your wife visited Angkor Wat?
Only Angkor Wat. Yes, she has. (They were very amused and started laughing)
<div align="right">(Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008)</div>

We don't go to the *prasat*, but to the Wat. In Angkor Wat, we have visited the old temple
<div align="right">(Lolei-M56 2006)</div>

I have visited Angkor Wat and some temples during New Year. I do not know any names
Do you visit the temples at any other time?
Only during New Year. We go to the temples, West Baray to have a swim and a picnic. We do not go there other times because we do not have free time
<div align="right">(Beng-F43 2008; Lolei-M38&F38 2008)</div>

I went to Angkor Wat to visit. I always get lost in the temple. I always go from the east but never from the west. I always climb up to the sanctuary.
How often do you go to Angkor Wat*?*
I go there for visiting and for Buddhist ceremony; Chum Ben, Kathen
<div align="right">(ThnalTrang-F64 2006)</div>

I have visited Angkor Wat and Bayon temples. I have not been to the inside
<div align="right">(Beng-F58 2008; Stung-F32 2008)</div>

I have visited some temples. I am not interested in them
<div align="right">(Stung-F59&group 2008)</div>

Yes, I have visited Angkor, but only the Angkor. I don't know anything about the temple. I just go there because I want to see the temple
<div align="right">(ThnalTrang-M46&group 2008)</div>

We sometimes go [to Angkor] for a ritual, sometimes we go for a visit because it is an important place in Cambodia. We go every three months to pray at Angkor
<div align="right">(Ovlaok-M36 2006)</div>

Table 8.1 Visiting Angkor Wat

Amongst the respondents, very few have ventured to the interior of the temple and climbed the various levels. Difficulty in scaling the height of the monument was the reason given by most; the older interviewees in the age groups 60–70 and above 70 voiced this difficulty. The

younger interviewees visit the temple regularly and have climbed it, sometimes more than once.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE SCULPTURES?

In order to understand how the villagers related to the artistic qualities of Angkor Wat, they were asked if they knew anything about the temples and the sculptures. See Table 8.2.

The sculptures [are] good, but I don't know any details. I wonder how big the people were at the time of Angkor, to build such massive temples with huge stones

(Lolei-M56 2006)

[The sculptures are] for depicting the Khmer activity in the past; or for [narrating] a story. It is a gift for the Khmer generation of the present and future as an inheritance

(Beng-F48 2008)

No, we do not know anything [about sculptures or temples] (They were thoroughly amused and started laughing very loudly)

(Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008)

I have seen the bas-reliefs at Angkor Wat, they are beautiful

(Lolei-M40 2006; Stung-F32 2008)

The people who built Angkor Wat are very clever. I am proud of my ancestors for what they have done

(Lolei2-F62 2006)

I think they are beautiful and better quality than the modern temple

(ThnalTrang-F55 2008)

Table 8.2 Angkor Wat sculptures

Although the villagers appreciate the beauty of the bas-reliefs and the sculptures, they admitted that they did not know any further details. Except for a handful, the respondents were not knowledgeable about their iconic temples. When they visited Angkor Wat, they almost always visited the Buddhist temple and enjoyed the landscape surrounding Angkor Wat. Some villagers were amused when questioned regarding *prasat boran*, similar to their reaction when questioned regarding *neak-ta*. There are many possible explanations for their amusement—Asians laughing in defence has been reported by business researchers interested in developing networks with Asian countries (Reeder 1987: 71). It is possible that the Khmer interviewees were embarrassed about answering those questions for which they did not have appropriate answers, or that they laughed at the researcher who they considered to be an 'expert' who did not know the answers.

RITUALS IN ANGKOR WAT?

Despite the abandonment of Angkor as a capital in the mid fifteenth century (Coe 2003), Angkor Wat has remained in continuous ritual use, as evidence suggests. Early restoration of

Angkor Wat is recorded in an inscription dated 1579 CE, when the Queen Mother, Mahakalyanavatti Sri Sujata's son, the King restored *Preah Pisnulok* or Angkor Wat (Lewitz 1970 in Harris 2005: 35). Restoration of the central sanctuary of Angkor Wat, the Bakan is recorded in a set of four inscriptions dated 1586 CE (Harris 2005: 35). Chinese inscriptions by Japanese pilgrims confirm Angkor Wat's religious presence in Asia (Harris 2005: 35; Dagens 1995). The bas-reliefs were added mid sixteenth century by King Ang Chan (Harris 2005: 33). Travel accounts in the early twentieth century highlight the presence of monks chanting and worshipping in Angkor Wat (Birnbaum 1952: 56–57; Candee and Bigham 2008: 136; Vincent 1988: 219), and of ceremonies and festivities (Carpeaux 1908: 226–227). In 1909, a ceremony at Angkor Wat was jointly coordinated by King S.M. Sisowath and the colonial administration to celebrate the retrocession of Battambang, Siem Reap and Sisophon (Edwards 2007: 134). A detailed account of the ceremonies was provided in the *Chronique* of the EFEO Bulletin:

> King Sisowath, seated under the porticos of the cruciform terrace, presided over the ceremonies on 25 September 1909. Offerings of gifts and food were made to the deity and a royal dance was performed. On 29 September, a religious ceremony in honour of the spirits of the former kings of Angkor was performed. (*my interpretation* BEFEO 1909: 822–823)

The religious ceremony in honour of the former kings mentioned in the account most probably referred to the festival of the dead[78]. Cremation rites were also conducted within the Angkor Wat temple complex[79] (Kennedy 1867: 307). Figures 8.2, 8.3 depict scenes of incineration within the temple complex in the early 1900s (Carpeaux 1908). Angkor Wat was certainly a place of active spiritual worship during the early years of French occupation.

Figure 8.2 Incineration scene from Angkor Wat (Carpeaux 1908)

Figure 8.3 Another scene of incineration at Angkor Wat (Carpeaux 1908)

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[78] (Porée-Maspero et al. 1949) Festival of the dead or Chum Ben is celebrated for 15 days between late September and early October

[79] (Kennedy 1867: 307) 'About thirty or forty priests have fixed their habitation under the shelter of the ruins... conducting the obsequies of those whose bodies are brought to this venerated sanctuary [Angkor Wat] for cremation'. The scene described is lively with music, feasting and a constant influx of visitors

Photograph 8.3 Worshipping Buddha statue at the upper level of Angkor Wat

Photograph 8.4 Lok-Ta Reach (Vishnu statue) revered as a powerful *neak-ta*

Photograph 8.5.*Achār* conducting a ritual

Photograph 8.6 Vishnu shrine (Photograph 8.4) in background

Photograph 8.7 Gathering of villagers and some curious tourists

Photograph 8.8 Ritual offerings including pig's head, fruits and Khmer food

Although some practices have been discontinued, Angkor Wat continues to be a spiritual place for the Khmers. Occasional rituals can be seen in the present day around Angkor Wat and some other temples; however, colonial occupation, decades of war and political instability

have affected the ways in which the temple is used, which are now reinforced by the restrictive measures of APSARA, which as highlighted in Chapter 7.

While some villagers stated that they pray inside Angkor Wat, most villagers did not claim any religious or spiritual connection. On observation, however, it was seen that most Cambodian visitors to the temple burn incense and pay their respects to the Buddha statues (Photograph 8.3) inside the temple and to the Vishnu Statue *Lok-ta Reach* in the outer enclosure (Photograph 8.4). *Lok-Ta Reach* (literally, 'grandfather royal') was revered by the entire Khmer community from the larger provincial region (Muira 2004). According to Ang Chouléan (2006), villagers who came for Buddhist ordination ceremonies from afar, first did a *pradikshina* (circumambulation) of Angkor Wat before going to the Buddhist Wat. A ceremony of ritual offering in front of the Vishnu statue was observed during the 2006 field visit, and Photographs 8.5–8.8 illustrate this event. The offerings included pig heads, incense, special Cambodian dishes made for the occasion, traditional music and other traditional ritual objects. An *achār* conducted the ritual for a large gathering of villagers.

A recent dissertation on Angkor Wat highlights the issues for the monastic community in relation to heritage management. According to the dissertation, the local people were not free to conduct any ceremonies in Angkor Wat and restrictions had been imposed on people staying overnight (Baillie 2005: 72–76). However, article 18, on pagodas, of the 1994 royal decree that established protected zones, clearly states:

> a)   All protected cultural sites (Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
> Show regard for religious associations and maintain the old pagodas.
> Discourage any activity affecting the surface of the ground.
> Encourage traditional training activities.
> b)   Zone 1:
> Allow no new pagodas or religious facilities in the monuments.
> Prohibit any overnight stays except in the monasteries of Bakong, Angkor Wat and Lolei.

Officially, the law did not prohibit ceremonies, although as noted in Chapter 7, the ritual offering of meat in temples was unofficially prevented, to avoid upsetting tourists. Problems with the implementation of the regulations were also identified. Baillie's research highlighted the top-handed approach of APSARA in the way it has been managing AWHS. She has demonstrated, through her research interviews, the disappointments of the local communities and the problems for the monastic communities. It is critical that APSARA should engage with the *sangha* and help to strengthen the religious connections of Angkor. On the other hand, it is also essential that awareness be raised amongst the villagers and the monks with regards to the material remains and looting.

While restrictions have been imposed on people staying overnight at Angkor Wat, it is critically important with the advent of night-lighting that the guards ensure that no one enters the temple at night due to the problem of vandalism and looting. When I visited Angkor Wat to view the night-lighting, I observed that the number of guards was insufficient and the temple too large to ensure efficient vigilance. Of particular concern were the bas-reliefs, which warrant careful supervision. As stated, the temples have witnessed unprecedented looting during and after the war of the 1970s. In fact, newspaper reports regarding the smuggling of Cambodia's artefacts into Thailand implicate both the Thai and Cambodian military (Wilkinson 1999; Stark and Griffin 2004). Artefacts marketed through looting in Cambodia are part of a complex web that involves people and organisations from the bottom through to the very top, including the military (Stark and Griffin 2004:136). Looting is often directed by greed, mischief, poverty and many other reasons (Silverman and Ruggles 2007a), and the meagre profits have tempted local communities and young members of the monastic community[80] to vandalise archaeological sites. Large sections of the local population do exhibit respect and reverence for their national cultural heritage; nonetheless, unfortunate looting incidents place the entire regional community under suspicion. The Authority needs to ensure that the looting of cultural material is completely stopped; at the same time, there are differences between policies and how these are interpreted for implementation.

CHOUL CHNAM THMEI (KHMER NEW YEAR)

Figure 8.4 Khmer New Year celebrations at Angkor Wat (cruciform gallery), 1904 (Carpeaux 1908: 227)

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[80] (Pottier 2010: *personal communication*) Two sites were excavated in Wat Khnat and Kouk Ta Sien, located to the south of West Baray*,* towards the end of 2000. On 1 January 2000, some young monks from Wat Khnat visiting *phum* Pralay for a ceremony at the residence of a villager, destroyed and looted the excavated pits. They returned to Wat Khnat and looted the excavation pit at the monastery as well. The matter was reported to the police who took immediate action and the valuable items looted including some gold leaves were confiscated. Such incidents however shameful, clearly demonstrate the insensitivity of some Buddhist monks with regards to the smaller *prasat* and archaeological sites, which makes the management of tangible archaeological heritage in Angkor very difficult.

Choul Chnam Thmei which literally means 'enter year new' is one of the most important Khmer festivals. The festival falls on the fourteenth of April every year and is also celebrated by the Laos, Thai and Burmese Buddhists in South-East Asia and the Tamils, Bengalis and Manipuri Hindus in India.

The events during *Choul Chnam Thmei* are a strong indicator that Angkor was never abandoned in the minds of the Khmers. Carpeaux's descriptions, dated 15 April 1904 (Figure 8.4), are the earliest documented evidence of celebrations at Angkor Wat:

> Hundreds of Cambodian men and women decked out in brightly coloured scarves wandering through the ruins that are usually deserted. People singing and dancing in the cruciform gallery they do the stag dance [with sticks and masks]. (Carpeaux cited in Dagens 1995: 147)

Describing the events of *Choul Chnam Thmei* during the mid twentieth century, Thierry observed:

> [the villagers] returned each year in pilgrimage on April 13, when the Khmer year begins, the *Col Chnam*. An unusual crowd invades the small city of Siem-Reap... In celebrating the New Year near the temple of Angkor Wat, they celebrated more or less consciously the great dynasty, offering homage to their ancestral kings. Then they re-created the old dances on the streets of Siem Reap and around the temple. Dances of *Leng Trot* also said to occur in other provinces…[including] primitive rites of hunting and fishing, pantomime… The troupe gesticulates through the streets, stopping in front of houses, wearing masks, sticks and bells— strange accessories… Sometimes a group enters the dark galleries of Angkor Wat and punctuates the dancing with a long chant [in front] of Lord Vishnu. (*my translation* 1964: 20)

The royal *trot* ceremony performed during New Year was an exorcism ritual to remove evil spirits from the king in order to purify the kingdom. Acts of ritual regicide were performed during the dance when 'a group of hunters symbolically kill… a metonymical substitute for the King: a deer, or sometimes the Buddha' (Thompson 2004b: 109). According to Ang (2006), during the New Year a ritual was performed with old people only in Angkor. Expressing sadness over the loss of rituals, he added '…it is a special dance …they sing special songs… they go from town to town… collecting small amounts of money… because it has a ritual purpose'. The ritual ceremony no longer takes place at Angkor.

While all Cambodians travel to Angkor Wat during Khmer New Year, the regional Cambodians also visit Wat Bakong on the occasion. The New Year is the main holiday season of the Khmers, as they are free after the harvest. Most villagers enjoy the long holiday before getting back to farming activities and travel in big groups to visit all the Buddhist *wat,* and the popular Angkorian temples. The itinerary always includes the West Baray as well, because it is the hottest time of the year. During this time, they also paid their respects to the regionally significant *neak-ta* spirits in the Angkorian temples. The celebration is spread over three days, the first day being the end of the previous year, the second the start of the New Year

Some Cambodian tourists interviewed at Angkor Wat and Bakong stated that they came to visit the *wat* and see the temple. They were from provinces as far-flung as Kampot, a province to the south-west of Siem Reap. They travelled together in large groups of family and friends and visited the important Angkorian temples and the Buddhist *wat* in the region. The national tourism authority does not have an official count of Cambodian visitors, but it was estimated to be anywhere between 100,000 to 250,000 (Winter 2007). Such numbers are huge, impacting on the temples over the three-day period. Despite the annual occurrence and additional security deployed, APSARA and the provincial bodies struggle to cope. Photographs 8.9–8.13 illustrate the Khmer New Year in Angkor Wat.

Photograph 8.9 Large numbers of vehicles in front of Angkor Wat during the New Year, 2008

Photograph 8.10 Family groups visiting Angkor

Photograph 8.11 Crowded western *gopura*

Photograph 8.12 Crowded entry to *Lok-Ta-Reach* (Vishnu statue)

Photograph 8.13 Offerings to *Lok-Ta-Reach*

NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS AT WAT LOLEI

The festival provides the opportunity for all the villagers to gather at the local *wat* and work alongside the Buddhist monks in building sand mounds and making other arrangements for the festival. The process earns them merit, which is inherent to the practice of Buddhism. Traditionally, nine sand mounds were made outside the *wat* to venerate guardians of the world (Porée and Maspero 1952: 205). Today, most *wat* build five mounds, symbolic of *Satchemoni Preah Chedai* (stupa in heaven)[81], which are also symbolic of the five towers of Angkor Wat. Photographs 8.14 and 8.15 show the sand mounds in the process of construction. The mounds are kept until the end of the Khmer month *Chaitr*. Photographs 8.16 and 8.17 portray the finished mounds, and 8.18 and 8.19 the prayer ceremony at the appointed hour of the beginning of the New Year.

Photograph 8.14 Preparation of sand mounds

Photograph 8.15 Constructing sand mounds

Photograph 8.16 Finished sand mounds

Photograph 8.17 Altar facing east

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[81] (Lolei-M33 2008) Information provided by a monk preparing the sand mounds, Lolei

Photograph 8.18 Villagers praying at the break of New Year

Photograph 8.19 Altar lit-up at night

In the villages, families prepare their houses and light them with a star-shaped paper lantern from the first day. Offerings are placed in a prominent location at the front of the house and the doors and windows are left open for three days (Photographs 8.20 and 8.21). Traditional *baisei* (ritual offering) prepared earlier by the villagers are now replaced by artificial paper *baisei*. The fruits are arranged symmetrically in pairs and are consumed after three days.

Photograph 8.20 Offerings in a Khmer house

Photograph 8.21 Offerings at the open window

NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS AT WAT BAKONG

Prasat Bakong is prominent during the New Year. A big fair is organised with a large number of stalls, entertainment and joy rides in the space between the inner and outer moat of the Angkorian temple (8.22–8.25). Traditional games are played and it is a happy occasion for all.

Photograph 8.22 Khmer villagers beginning to visit temples on the morning of 14th April 2008

Photograph 8.23 Shops at the fair in front of Bakong temple

Photograph 8.24 Variety of shops at the fair   **Photograph 8.25** Joy rides and entertainment

Table 8.3 gives an account of the general preparations for the ceremony carried out by the villagers.

What are the preparations for Choul Chnam Thmei?
The commune chief has asked every house to put a Cambodian flag for New Year.
We make Sla Teuh *baisei*, it is *baisei* with betel nut leaf, banana stalk and incense.
Last year I made the *baisei*, but this year I will buy, which will not be the traditional one but a modern one made of paper; lots of fruits, all available varieties depending on the budget; drink (traditionally they offered homemade juice), but nowadays any drink from the shops are used, some people offer coconut
Will you go to Bakong? When?
Yes. From the second day we will go to Bakong and play a game of throwing colours and water at each other (this is an influence from Thailand) a lot of other different games will also be played. Sometimes this game is played three days after new year
Why does this happen only in Bakong?

> I do not know, but it is traditional and has been happening since I was young. People always go there, maybe because of the open space
>
> (Beng-F48 2008; Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008)
>
> During Khmer new year lots of people come to Bakong. Everyone does offering in their house and they decorate houses with lights Lots of people come—around 24000.
> *Why is Bakong so significant for New Year?*
> It is more easily accessible as opposed to Angkor Wat
>
> (Ovlaok-M38 2008)

Table 8.3 Preparations for the Khmer New Year

The political influence of the government has permeated all levels in Cambodia. Every house was instructed to have a Cambodian flag according to the commune chief's instructions. The head monk of Wat Bakong in his interview gave a brief account of the Khmer New Year celebrations (Table 8.4) and their significance.

> For New Year, lots of people come especially on the second day. It is very crowded and it is difficult to find a space to walk. People everywhere… and people from everywhere come here.
> *Why do so many people come?*
> It is a traditional practice carried out by people since a long time ago (since he was little). Two places are significant to Khmers. One is here at Bakong and one at Angkor. But Angkor has become a place for tourists, and mainly foreigner tourists, and it is not so good for Khmer people. Maybe they just close the temple there, so the Khmer people just drive here.
> *What do they do on the three days?*
> The New Year [celebration] takes 3 days so that people who are working can have 3 day holiday. The villagers they take a 7 day break. The monks go around the villages to give people blessing and good luck for New Year. The old god will go for meditation and a new god will come to protect them. This is a tradition that gets repeated every year.
> On 13th April evening, the houses are lit up with lights in shape of a star. Some people use oil lamps and some people use electricity. The whole temple gets lit up
>
> (Ovlaok-M75 2008)

Table 8.4 Preparations for Khmer New Year—Head monk of Wat Bakong

The head monk suggested that people visited Bakong probably because they were not allowed at Angkor, but this was incorrect, as there was no restriction on local Khmers visiting the temples at AWHS. Although there are a large number of Khmer visitors during the New Year, there is no official count because the Government has focused only on international tourist counts. The APSARA guards at Prasat Bakong stated:

> The maximum Khmer visitors come during *Choul Chnam* and *Chum Ben*, around an average of 30,000 people from all over Cambodia. We will have a lot of police during the time to monitor the crowd. (Ovlaok-M34&group 2008)

On 14 April 2008, there were nine guards in addition to the usual six. At the time of visiting Prasat Bakong on this day, the temple was not very crowded, although Khmer visitors had started arriving.

CONCLUSION

The contemporary significance of Angkor Wat has been clearly established in these sections. The Angkorian temple is recognised as being highly significant and Cambodians in recent years have tried to visit the temple at least once in their lifetime. The growing presence of large numbers of international tourists has kindled their curiosity and the holidays during *Choul Chnam Thmei* offer an ideal opportunity to visit the temples.

Most Cambodians hold deep regard for the temples, however, the looting history in recent decades makes it difficult not to suspect the local Cambodians. The percentage of looting has been very high (Ang 2001; Pottier 1999b), even after the nomination of Angkor to the World Heritage list. Many respondents in the villages stated that most looting was organised not by the villagers, but by people in uniform[82]. The villagers often became accomplices to looting for monetary gain, to support their often meagre income (Silverman and Ruggles 2007a: 15) While these factors make the management of heritage difficult, the task of APSARA is further complicated due to the increasing pressure on land. Two incidents related to development, observed during the field visit in 2006 are presented next. They help to clarify the difficulties that exist for the villagers and the Authority alike, highlighting the heritage conundrum that exists at Angkor.

HERITAGE CONUNDRUM...?

The Angkor region has witnessed a huge surge in development as a result of multiple factors. The unprecedented escalation in tourism has increased the pressure on land, which has resulted in a growing number of hotels, resorts and facilities for international tourists. During the 2006 fieldwork, significant instances of conflict with the archaeological values of AWHS were observed. In Roluos, a significantly large *prasat* site to the north of Lolei Baray in Phum Lolei was being bulldozed for unclear developmental reasons. A woman constructing a personal residence in Phum Thnal Trang came under intense pressure from the Authority to stop the house construction as the site was possibly part of an Angkorian *prasat* site. Both the sites were recorded by Groslier as part of his survey of the region in 1958-59 (1998c, 1998d), establishing their historical relevance.

Although some aspects of developmental issues have already been discussed in Chapter 7, these two examples are indicative of the developmental problems in their elemental detail. A closer examination will help clarify earlier discussions and further assist an understanding of

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[82] Respondents often stated that army soldiers forced the locals to loot temple sites. Moreover, their comprehensive knowledge of the landscape made it easily possible to locate the *prasat* mounds. The information was corroborated by Pottier, who encountered looters during his survey of archaeological sites, and the presence of army personnel on these sites (2010: personal communication)

the connections between the contemporary Khmers and the archaeological heritage. The cases presented here are the bulldozing incident at Prasat Chapou Teng and the house construction on Kouk-ko in Thnal Trang.

BULLDOZING AT PRASAT CHAPOU TENG

The example of the bulldozing incident at Prasat Chapou Teng highlights some of the dangers threatening the archaeological sites of Angkor today. The findings endeavour to elucidate the connections of local Khmers to these archaeological sites. Their perceptions of the incident have been analysed in detail, in order to validate the strength of their cultural connections. The site location and description, its history and the bulldozing incident are presented, followed by an analysis of community perceptions of the incident.

LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Prasat Chapou Teng is located in Phum Lolei, to the north of Lolei Baray on the road to Phnom Bok. Figure 8.5 gives its location.
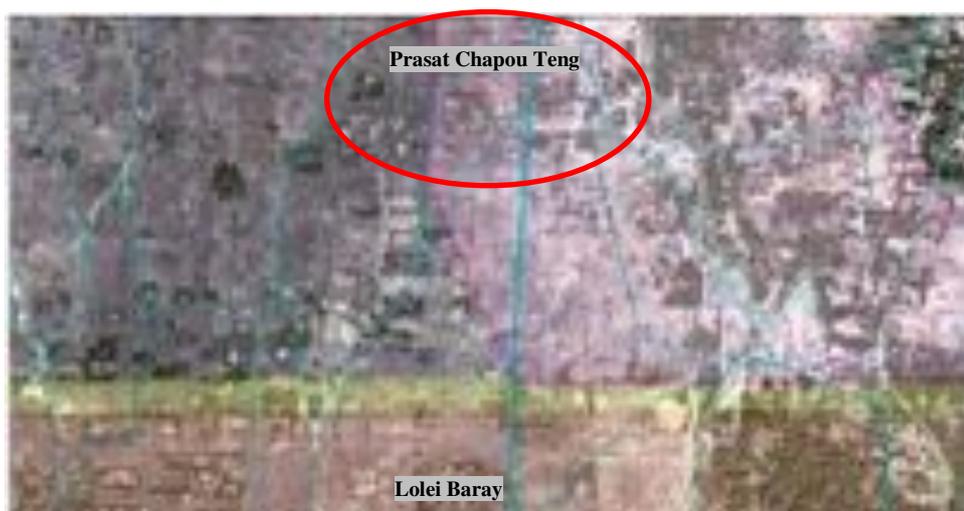
Figure 8.5 Prasat Chapou Teng and the protected zones: The temple site is located within Zone 3. 2004 Quickbird imagery overlaid with APSARA zones layer

The site of Prasat Chapou Teng was a large mound, surrounded by a wide moat (approximately 17 metres) measuring approximately 140 metres by 140 metres including the moat. The *trapeang* located to the east of the temple was also relatively large, measuring approximately 60 metres by 35 metres. The road to Phnom Bok has divided the *prasat* and the *trapeang* at some time in recent decades.

The 1992 and 2004 aerial views, give an indication of the site during these years. Comparison of the two images shows that changes on the site during this time have been minimal.

Although such a visual comparison has its limitations, it can be seen that there are discernible changes with planting and removal of vegetation on the *prasat* site. A large clearing to the west indicates that this area was probably cleared further after 1992. The north-eastern corner appears partly cleared in 1992, but it is green in the 2004 imagery, suggesting that new trees or bushes have been established since 1992. New tree plantings are clearly visible to the south in 2004.

Figure 8.6 FinnMapp aerial photograph (1992) showing Prasat Chapou Teng

Figure 8.7 Quickbird (2004) imagery showing Prasat Chapou Teng and Trapeang Muong

In contrast to the *prasat* mound, where obvious changes in relation to vegetation have been noted, no significant changes are visible in relation to the *trapeang* located to the east of the *prasat*. The *trapeang* appears similar in the two images.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE SITE

Historical evidences suggest that Prasat Chapou Teng dates to the Angkorian period. B.P. Groslier, an archaeologist at EFEO had recorded three *prasat* structures on the site in the Preah-Ko style. In the preliminary report of his survey in Roluos, he states that:

> I was able to locate eight important sites. All eight consist of mounds and are surrounded by moats. The first is located to the east and sits along the axis of Bakong: Prasat Klmum. The second is to the west along the axis of Preah Ko and just south of Route 6: Prei Phot. Two are

located in the west and are almost along the axis of Trapeang Totung Thngai: Prei Ping Pang and Trapeang Arak Baek Ko. Finally, three are located to the north of Lolei Baray: Kuk Tatrau and Prei Jambu Teng are roughly aligned to the north-south axis of the *baray*. (*my translation* 1998c: 37)

Groslier identified Prei Jambu Teng (another name for Prasat Chapou Teng) as one of the eight important sites in the region. The size and location of the archaeological mound signified the importance of the temple remains. In his mission report of 1958, he recorded his excavation of the site:

> Prei Champouo Teng: This site was excavated. In the centre was a hillock (110 x 45 m) surrounded by a moat, further encircled by a brick wall. Three brick sanctuaries were aligned north-south (18.60 m between the bases of the north and south towers). The central tower was entirely in ruins. The northern tower (3.1 x 2.4 m) was relatively the best preserved and the southern tower could be outlined from the remaining vestiges. Various architectural elements were rediscovered, in particular a small column, dated in the style of Preah Ko. This can also be confirmed from a masculine head and the body of a female divinity (0.71 m tall) discovered nearby. (*my translation* 1998d: 56)

Groslier's findings are important in establishing the historical significance of the site. The information presented in his mission report quantified the grand scale of the *prasat* that occupied the site in Angkorian times.

Pottier recorded the site of Prasat Chapou Teng as CP378. The different names inventoried were *Tuol Chum Pou Téng*, *Prasat Chapouo Teng*, *Prei Jambu Teng* and *Trapéang Ta Muong*. The site was referred to as *Le sanctuaire de l'arbre (Eugenia jambos) Téng*, *Le tertre de l'arbre (Eugenia jambos) Téng* (Pottier 1999a: 294). At the time of Pottier's mapping, the record included the remnants of a *prasat* platform, a moat and a *trapeang*. The *trapeang* was located to the east of the temple site. A timber structure located to the east of the *prasat* used to function as a school. At the time of his survey, the school was in use (Pottier 2006b). The names recorded by Groslier and Pottier are of particular interest, as will be demonstrated later.

THE BULLDOZING INCIDENT

This example deals with the bulldozing of the archaeological site at Prasat Chapou Teng, observed during the 2006 field visit.

BULLDOZING OF THE *PRASAT* SITE

On 28 December 2006, while conducting a field survey in the region north of Lolei Baray, I was informed by a local villager, a fifty year old woman, living on the northern embankment of Lolei Baray that a *kouk* to the north was being bulldozed (Lolei-F50 2006). On visiting the site, I found that a large tip-truck was dumping a huge load of trash and soil into the moat, at the south-eastern corner (Photographs 8.26–8.29). The precise objectives were unclear, but the damage to the archaeological site through levelling was evident.

Photograph 8.26 Bulldozer in action, to the right end of the picture: view from the north-east showing the wet moat in the foreground

Photograph 8.27 Bulldozer, flattening the mound at Prasat Chapou Teng

Two men were supervising the bulldozing activity. When I first questioned their objective, they did not give any direct answer. Later, they mentioned that they were planning to plant an orchard of fruit trees and that they were flattening the ground for that reason. When asked if they were going to fill the moat, they denied that it would be filled up. However, they seemed uncomfortable and displeased at my presence and my questions. They took the translator aside and requested that the site be left alone and no photographs taken. They asked my translator to discourage me from re-visiting the site in future. They also offered him a bribe to keep me away from the site.

It was difficult to determine the ownership of the site at the time of the bulldozing, as the people present, possibly the owners, were uncooperative. During the field visit of 2008, attempts were made to identify the owner of the site. However, this proved very difficult. Some respondents from Lolei and Stung said that the site had belonged to a Lolei villager previously, but it had probably been sold to an outsider.

Photograph 8.28 Tip-truck dumping trash into the moat of Prasat Chapou Teng

Photograph 8.29 Trash tipped into the moat at Prasat Chapou Teng

ACTION TAKEN TO STOP THE BULLDOZING

The bulldozing was clearly detrimental to the tangible archaeological values of the Angkorian site and the following day I reported the incident to the deputy director of DMA2 (Department of Monuments and Archaeology 2) of APSARA. Over the course of the next few days, DMA2 applied for permission from the director-general to stop any further damage (Khoun 2006b). The matter was reported on a Friday and the authorisation to stop the bulldozing was issued five days later. When the site was revisited a week later (4 January 2007), the bulldozing had stopped. There was no one present at the site and it was impossible to make any further enquiries.

SITE CONDITION AFTER THE BULLDOZING

Following the bulldozing, a large section of the site was rendered completely barren and flat. Photographs 8.30–8.35 give a good indication of the damage. A large number of trees had

been cut down before the bulldozing and the eastern part of the mound was flattened considerably. This act has irreversibly damaged the archaeological site.

Photograph 8.30 Lots of trees cut down before bulldozing

Photograph 8.31 Large sections of the *prasat* mound bulldozed

Groslier's surveys in 1958–59 had found significant remains including a small column and statuary (1998c, 1998d). During Pottier's survey (1999a), the only remains recorded were bricks, as the site was possibly looted during the post-war years. The 2006 field visit yielded some broken bricks and rubble as seen in the photographs below.

Photograph 8.32 Pit in the moat, possibly used as a fish trap at the end of wet season

Photograph 8.33 A section of old bricks possibly from the old *prasat*

Photograph 8.34 A big pile of Angkorian bricks lying to the south of the *prasat* site (2006)

Photograph 8.35 View of the same location featured in Photograph 8.34 (2008)

The *prasat* site was re-visited in 2008. There were no signs of any developmental activity. There was also no evidence of any bulldozing or trash dumping, as had been observed earlier. APSARA's restrictions were seemingly being followed; however, a comparison of the site in 2006 and later in 2008 indicated that the big pile of Angkorian bricks and rubble remains from the *prasat* found in 2006 was considerably reduced in 2008. The two Photographs (8.34 and 8.35) of the same location at the *prasat* site were taken from across the moat from the south. Another development on the site was the presence of some young eucalyptus saplings. On one section of the site, eucalyptus and some other saplings were planted in rows (photographs below). As observed earlier in the site description, the site has a continuous history of vegetation change. The exact impact of planting non-native species and their effect on the archaeological site is at present unclear. Although the site does not appear to be under any imminent threat, it does not imply that it is completely protected either. The site was revisited in December 2009 and no visible changes were noticed. The eucalypts planted earlier appeared established.

Photograph 8.36 Eucalyptus sapling (2008)

Photograph 8.37 Eucalyptus saplings planted in a row (2008)

Photograph 8.38 Established eucalypt in 2009

Photograph 8.39 *Sala*, former school (2006)

Photograph 8.40 Only the plinth of the *sala* remains (2009)

A structure located to the east of the *prasat* mound, functioned as a school during the 1990s (Pottier 2006b). The school was relocated some years ago and at the time of bulldozing, the shed was being used by the people present. In 2009, however, the *sala* structure had been completely removed and only the plinth remained.

Photograph 8.41 Centre of the *prasat* mound after bulldozing (2006)

Photograph 8.42 Comparative view of *prasat* mound—as in Photograph 8.41 (2009)

Photograph 8.43 Villagers fishing in the moat of Prasat Chapou Teng (2009)

Photograph 8.44 *Trapeang* to the east of *prasat* mound (2009)

The site of Prasat Chapou Teng appeared undisturbed in 2009. There were no obvious development activities and the *trapeang* remained untouched. The biggest threat to the site, however, was a large real estate development adjacent to the site to its south.

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS

The bulldozing incident raises some important questions regarding the contemporary cultural connections of the local villagers with the Angkorian heritage remains. Did the locals attach any values to these archaeological sites that were devoid of any remains? Were they affected by these detrimental acts, and what were their reactions? Or was it the misuse of power by some that destroyed heritage sites? The discussion presented below seeks to reinforce some concerns raised in the previous chapter. Addressing these questions may result in a better understanding of the contemporary connections with the tangible heritage.

The semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted after 28 December 2006 included specific questions about the bulldozing of Prasat Chapou Teng. Of the twenty-eight villagers interviewed from Lolei, three men and three women offered their opinion on the bulldozing incident. Two key experts conducting research in the Angkor region were also consulted; in addition, the opinion of the district chief of the provincial government district office was sought. The juxtaposing of the views of the villagers and the experts has helped to clarify the cultural connections of the villagers and to understand the issues involved in the management of this complex archaeological landscape. The findings from the interviews are grouped under

two themes. The first group of findings is classified as cultural connections, and the second relates to aspects of heritage management.

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

Analyses of the interviews helped to establish, the social connections of the people with the material remains of Prasat Chapou Teng. The connections were possibly manifest in a number of ways, including the worship of animistic spirits, knowledge of the site, reactions to the bulldozing and the damage to, and loss of, cultural heritage.

ANIMISTIC WORSHIP AND THE ANGKORIAN *PRASAT*

The religious significance of an Angkorian *prasat* site was often acknowledged and it was frequently believed that there was an associated spirit (ThnalTrang-F64 2006). Cambodian scholar Ang (2008) re-iterates this fact: 'the *prasat* is already a spiritual place'. In accordance with the traditional beliefs and practices that exist in the Angkor region, it is possible that the site of Prasat Chapou Teng may have been associated with a spirit. Despite the considerable material evidence found in the late 1950s (Groslier 1998d), however, none of the respondents mentioned the presence of any associated spirit.

As Ang (2006) suggests (this document: 114), it is possible that the strength of the spiritual continuity with the Hindu temples was reduced with the disruption and changes to religious affiliations following the fall of Angkor. Prasat Chapou Teng was located at a distance from the village and the site was not necessarily in their path of the villagers' commute; it is therefore possible that the connections with the spirits, if any had existed in the past, were now non-existent. The absence of animistic spirits on the site indicates that there were no ritual connections for the Lolei villagers.

DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNTS OF THE SITE

Cultural connections were also expressed through local understanding of the physical landscape. As demonstrated in Chapter 6, the villagers have a comprehensive knowledge of the landscape in which they live. Their responses regarding the names and descriptions of Prasat Chapou Teng correspond to the descriptive account of Groslier (1998c, 1998d). The physical characteristics of the site were described with clarity and familiarity; they were also able to articulate in detail the condition of the site as they remembered it. It must be noted here that all these respondents were older than fifty years of age.

A 58 year old man from Phum Lolei expressed a view that was reiterated by the other respondents:

> I have seen Prasat Chapou Teng… the *khassan* (moat) goes around the temple. The *trapeang* to the east is Trapeang Ta Moung. There used to be a path before, but now a road divides the *prasat* and the *trapeang*. (Lolei-M58 2006)

Table 8.5 presents all the other respondents' views.

I have seen a lot of old bricks on that site before. One of my friends informed me that there used to be a long line of sandstone

(Lolei-M62&M80 2006)

I visited that place (Prasat Chapou Teng) during Pol Pot (Khmer Rouge regime)… I saw some *prasat*… some part… like some brick around. During Pol Pot, they used the area for *jhamkaar* agriculture (slash and burn technique). The *prasat* was about half metre above the ground

(Lolei-F42 2008)

I know it was a temple site before… I have seen bricks and there is a moat around it

(Stung-M51 2008)

In my time here… I have seen some stones (on the site of Prasat Chapou Teng), but no significant structure

(Lolei-M53 2006)

Table 8.5 Description of Prasat Chapou Teng

The site of the *prasat* and its features were clearly understood by the villagers. They were aware of the moat around the mound and the *trapeang* to the east. The details of the *prasat* and its vestiges, such as old bricks and sandstone, evidenced that some of them had visited the site at some point in their lives. The deforestation of the region and the practice of *jhamkaar* agriculture during the Khmer Rouge regime was mentioned (Lolei-F42 2008). In addition, they were saddened by the loss of trees and forest, which was their source of firewood (Lolei-M53 2006).

The name Prasat Chapou Teng was mentioned in Groslier's report (1998d) and Trapeang Ta Muong was recorded by Pottier (1999a). The consistency in the names used today to refer to the archaeological site indicates the strength of oral histories. The knowledge of the site has remained with the villagers, despite the years of political instability. This suggests that the respondents and their families have lived here for some generations.

REACTIONS TO THE BULLDOZING

A gender difference in the respondents' views of the bulldozing incident was discerned. Although establishing gender differences and attitudes is beyond the scope of this research, nevertheless, it is necessary to point out broad differences in the views expressed. During the interviews, the men were eager to share their knowledge and provided the most appropriate answers (or what they thought was expected of them), while the women were often busily engaged in a domestic activity and did not seem to worry about giving an expected answer.

A sense of sadness and helplessness was expressed by the men with regards to the bulldozing. Invariably, all of them considered that owners could do whatever they wanted on their private properties. Some views are given below.

I know it [the site of Prasat Chapou Teng] is being destroyed. I am not very happy. Nobody in the village is happy

(Lolei-M62&M80 2006)

…the place is now someone's property. After the owner has sold to someone else, they can do whatever they want to. We cannot do anything. We feel very sorry

(Lolei-M71&M58 2006)

It is a very bad thing (the bulldozing). It is very sad.

(Lolei-M53 2006)

Table 8.6 Views of men about the bulldozing

In contrast to the views of the men, none of the three women interviewed would commit to feeling sad or upset. They appeared detached from the destruction of the archaeological site (Table 8.7).

The bulldozing of the *prasat* site does not mean anything to me. It does not make me feel happy or sad that the *prasat* site is damaged. I don't think anything about the *prasat*

(Lolei-F50 2006)

I don't know. Maybe it (the property) has been sold to someone else. It is someone's property, the owner has sold it to somebody… the new owner can do what they want

(Lolei-F64 2008)

I do not have any opinion

(Lolei-F42 2008)

Table 8.7 Views of women about the bulldozing

While the men were upset and expressed their helplessness at the loss of ancestral heritage, the women were unconcerned and did not have an opinion to offer. It was not a matter that concerned their immediate lives and families.

One woman, however, shifted from her neutral viewpoint and stated that the bulldozing was *not good* (Lolei-F42 2008). This shift was primarily due to the re-phrasing of the question by the translator. In order to encourage the respondent to extend her view, he asked if the bulldozing incident was good or not good. Despite this change to one woman's answer, the overall findings show the apparent differences in the perceptions of men and women. The men exhibited a broader perception of AWHS, while the women appeared focused on their immediate domestic needs.

<u>D</u><small>AMAGE TO AND</small> <u>L</u><small>OSS OF</small> <u>C</u><small>ULTURAL</small> <u>H</u><small>ERITAGE</small>

Regarding the loss of ancestral heritage and the damage to cultural property, villagers and experts had a variety of views. While some gender differences were evident, as illustrated above, there were also discernible differences in the views of the experts and the villagers.

The villagers from Lolei indicated that Prasat Chapou Teng was part of their ancestral heritage. All of them acknowledged their understanding of ancestral heritage as information passed on from their parents' and grandparents' generations. Besides ancestral heritage, they also expressed concern for loss of heritage due to looting in the past and bulldozing in the present. The views expressed are given below.

This is the ancestor property for the next generation… in my generation everyone knows that there is a temple Chapou Teng… but in my grandchildren's time… maybe the site will disappear. No one will get to know of its existence. I know it is ancestral property. I have seen it a very long time ago… also my parents and grandparents have told me about it… and I have learnt about it from my grandparents

(Lolei-M71&M58 2006)

I saw a lot of looting pits

(Lolei-M62&M80 2006)

It is one that we can keep for the next generation, but now it will disappear

(Lolei-M53 2006)

Table 8.8 Loss of ancestral heritage

The three women did not offer any opinion regarding the loss of cultural heritage, but the men were eager to share their knowledge of their ancestral heritage. Though this signified a gender difference in perception, it also indicated that the women were probably less forthcoming in their views, or that they did not want to talk about something with which they were not completely familiar.

In contrast to the views of the villagers, the experts offered additional and diverse information. The experts included two researchers and one provincial government official. The researchers were a Cambodian anthropologist trained in France and the director of EFEO. Khmer anthropologist Ang, who was a researcher at EFEO, taught at RUFA (Royal University of Fine Arts, Phnom Penh) and had a special interest in the research of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of Angkor and Cambodia. He had formerly headed APSARA Authority's Department of Culture and Monuments (2000–2004), and had carried out research in Angkor for nearly two decades. A Social Research Unit set up in 2000 as part of this department had started the documentation of ICH in the Angkor region (Im 2008: 47); however, the project was discontinued due to a re-structure of APSARA in 2004–2005 (Im 2008: 48). The French archaeologist Christophe Pottier, on the other hand, has an extensive

knowledge of the region from his research, which has spanned more than ten years. He had systematically mapped Angkor Park and the region to its south, including temples and other archaeological mounds, moats, embankments, roads and rice fields, demonstrating for the first time the intricacy of the Angkorian landscape (Pottier 1999a).

Khmer anthropologist Ang was convinced that the local people would be deeply saddened by the bulldozing. According to him, the true locals of the place would be significantly disturbed by changes to their surroundings. In his words:

> They [the local villagers] would be… I know that if it is old people, real local people; who used to know the site before etc., this [bulldozing] incident would cause a sad feeling. As you know, every site has been more or less looted. (Ang 2008)

Pottier's views were in strong contrast to those expressed by Ang. He was not at all surprised that the *prasat* site was being bulldozed. Having worked in the region for more than ten years, he stated that though the villagers expressed sadness, they would not be affected because:

> well, it is not their piece of land… even if it was their piece of land… they would be the ones digging it… and the men too… all the looters I have seen in action were men. (Pottier 2006b)

It was Pottier's experience, having extensively surveyed the region, to have seen a great number of looted sites, including seeing people actively engaged in looting at some sites. According to him, some sites in the Roluos region were looted repeatedly, sometimes up to three times (2006b). He had visited Prasat Chapou Teng three times during his survey. When he first arrived in 1995, the site had already been looted, as evidenced by the looting pits (information provided in the original site inventory Pottier 2006b).

In complete contrast to both the researchers, the district officer did not express any direct opinion with regards to the bulldozing. On repeated questioning however, he dismissed the bulldozing incident stating that:

> I don't know much about the area because I am a new district chief [started six months ago]… the temple is just some stone… I don't know how much temple is here… so, some villagers just plant some tree on top of the temple site… villagers just probably wanted to plant some tree—maybe the land was sold to someone in village. (Som 2008)

He refrained from commenting directly with regards to the actual act of bulldozing. The incident had taken place in December 2006, and Som Aat had started work as district chief towards the end of 2007. When I enquired if there were any other senior members of his staff who would know more about the bulldozing incident, he replied '…no one will know any better than me… on that site, people had planted trees long before APSARA came… so maybe people do as habit… as usual'.

The deputy director of DMA2, Khoun Khun-Neay was responsible for stopping the bulldozing. As soon as I reported the matter, he immediately made preparations to get the

order approved by APSARA's director-general. As the matter was reported on a Friday, however, it took two working days before the bulldozing could be stopped, and it was stopped the following week.

The views expressed by the two researchers and the district officer were diverse. Ang acknowledged the fragile cultural connections of the people, but Pottier, disillusioned by having seen a large number of looted sites, questioned the existence of same. While Pottier's views are seemingly harsh, they are the result of the incredible loss of cultural heritage he has witnessed firsthand during his research. According to the report he presented at ICC in 1999, nearly 90 % of the sites he had listed had been looted (ICC 1999b). The frustration was understandable, given the fact that the looting resulted not only in the loss of remnant cultural material, but also in the complete destruction of undocumented archaeological information at some sites (Silverman and Ruggles 2007: 5). Ang, on the other hand strongly believed that a connection existed between the community and the temples, although he was saddened by the growing loss of traditional values in recent decades. Despite their differing viewpoints, both researchers were disturbed by the bulldozing.

In contrast to the researchers, the district officer was seemingly unperturbed. He trivialised the bulldozing, dismissing it as a non-issue, that villagers just wanted to plant trees. The provincial government bodies were responsible for land management before APSARA, and the creation of an autonomous body caused problems for these well-established provincial bodies, thus, they were uncooperative at first. In recent years, however, APSARA has conducted information sessions to generate awareness and develop cooperation, not only with the villagers, but also with various sections of the provincial administration. Unless an understanding is reached between the authorities, and the provincial bodies recognise the significance of the smaller archaeological sites, it will be impossible to prevent damage to such archaeological sites.

PROBLEMS FOR HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

The bulldozing incident highlights the failure in the heritage management mechanisms that are in place to protect the values of AWHS. The cultural heritage of Angkor is protected by plural legislation, as outlined in Chapter 3. One of the difficulties for APSARA in managing the heritage effectively is that the provincial bodies also have jurisdiction over the land. In Angkor, a number of development activities, detrimental to the archaeological values[83], have

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[83] A West Baray irrigation project approved by the Government of Cambodia resulted in the consultants cutting a section of the archaeological embankment, due to their lack of understanding of its archaeological significance. The matter was raised as an issue in ICC and eventually the irrigation project was stopped. Puok Golf Course is

been approved by Cambodian Government bodies in the past. APSARA is also partly responsible for the loss of some archaeological sites, as it is not fully cognisant of the archaeological values of the smaller sites. The issues identified as problematic are detailed below.

<u>LEGISLATION AND ZONING ISSUES</u>

The royal decree, issued in 1996, allows for the protection of cultural heritage within the protected zones of AWHS. Prasat Chapou Teng is located outside Zone 1, but is located within Zone 3. Although the main focus of the APSARA Authority is within Zone 1, it is also responsible for the protection of all archaeological sites and cultural property within the province of Siem Reap. The order to stop the demolition of the *prasat* site was issued, based on this power vested in the Authority. Article 5 of Royal decree 001/NS states:

> Zone 3: Protected Cultural Landscapes are areas with the characteristics of a landscape that should be protected on account of its traditional appearance, land use practices, varied habitats, historic building, or man-made features from the past or of recent origin, that contribute to the cultural value or reflect traditional life styles and patterns of land use. Cultural landscapes may also safeguard viewpoints and relationships between significant features which contribute to their historic or aesthetic value. Protected Cultural Landscapes are subject to regulations controlling harmful or disruptive activities. (RGC 1994)

The excerpt highlights issues of legislation and zoning. The definition of protected cultural landscapes cannot be ascribed solely to Zone 3, as the entire region is a cultural landscape (refer to Chapter 3 for more details). The kind of protection stated in the APSARA decree is contradictory to what happens in reality. An analysis of the legislation is beyond the scope of this study; nevertheless, the zoning discrepancies and problems need to be highlighted. The Authority needs to identify core areas warranting the highest degree of protection, as it is not possible to protect the entire province of Siem Reap. Unless these basic issues are addressed immediately and appropriately, it will be impossible to protect archaeological sites from destruction and development.

CONCLUSION

The case of the Prasat Chapou Teng bulldozing highlights a generic problem that exists in Angkor. Many such archaeological sites are vulnerable to land speculation and development, and are lost, despite the existence of heritage protection laws. In addition, looting in the past has resulted in the destruction of archaeological material. This example clearly highlights the local community's perceptions of damage to archaeological heritage.

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another example where no archaeological study was conducted prior to starting work, and an ancient road and an Angkorian bridge were destroyed.

The villagers demonstrated a good understanding of the *prasat* site from their oral traditions. The names they used were consistent amongst the villagers and also corresponded to some of the names documented by Pottier (1999a: 294). While this highlights the strength of oral traditions, it also indicates that the respondents are long-term residents of the village and establishes the fact that local knowledge and toponyms are valuable supplements to archaeological research. Despite the immense proportions of the site, there was no evidence of any spirit or *neak-ta* worship.

A significant observation of the study is the different views expressed by the men and the women. While the men were eager to share their concern for the loss of cultural heritage, the women were unconcerned and did not have any opinion. The concern expressed by men may possibly be due to the increased awareness of heritage in Angkor owing to the measures taken by APSARA.

An observation of the actions and attitude of the people present at the time of the bulldozing act made it clear that they were not necessarily concerned about the archaeological values of the site. They seemed fully aware of the implications of their actions and were willing to carry them out at any cost (including bribing my translator). Three years later, the site appeared not to have been disturbed further. Closer observation, however, indicated a significant reduction in old bricks and cultural material compared with the previous field visit, and eucalyptus saplings had been planted. It is beyond the scope of this study to estimate the detrimental effect of planting non-native species on the archaeological mound; nevertheless, it has been established that eucalypts destroy ground water resources and reduce soil moisture (Shiva 2002)[84]. It is therefore likely that these non-native species may be detrimental to the site.

Sadness was expressed about the bulldozing of a *prasat* site. While there was a fairly consistent knowledge of the landscape, the cultural connections of the people with the cultural landscape are slowly diminishing. Unless considerable efforts are invested in the promotion of heritage conservation and attempts to generate heritage awareness amongst the local community in safeguarding the less significant archaeological sites, these sites will inevitably be lost to development within a short span of time. Increased pressures on land, evidenced through land sub-divided for sale in the adjacent property, were noted during the 2009 visit. This may have a negative impact on the *prasat* site in the future. The incident of a house construction on a *prasat* site is discussed next.

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[84] Shiva (2002: 4–5) discusses the damage of eucalypt in India. She highlights that even in Australia, where it is a native species, damage to ground water resources and soil moisture have been established.

HOUSE CONSTRUCTION ON KOUK-KO SITE

This case examines the incident of the construction of a house on a possible *prasat* site and is an example of unintentional damage to an archaeological site as a result of continued occupation. A villager building a house in the study village of Thnal Trang came under intense pressure to stop the construction, as she was building on an archaeological site and had not obtained the necessary approval. The problems with heritage management mechanisms are highlighted, together with the problems faced by the local population living within the AWHS. The site of the house construction, its location and description are presented, along with its historical setting, the background to the incident, its present condition and local community reactions to the problem.

LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The site of Kouk-ko is located on the road leading from Prasat Bakong, directly on its eastern axis, in Phum Thnal Trang. The site is fraught with complexities, as its morphology is rather unclear and has possibly been modified over time. The site is occupied by several different families and is surrounded by a number of water bodies.

A comparison of the 1992 aerial photograph (Figure 8.8) and the 2004 Quickbird satellite imagery (Figure 8.9) is provided below, to give an understanding of the site. In the 1992 Finnmap image, the large numbers of water bodies surrounding the site are clearly visible as dark patches. The road from Bakong can also be seen. Most importantly, it shows an L-shaped water body to the north-west of the site and another to the south-west. The 2004 Quickbird imagery gives a recent view of the site. The water bodies surrounding the site are unchanged and the landscape appears to have remained in a condition similar to the aerial photograph of 1992. The only obvious difference is the buildings added over the twelve-year period.

Pottier's archaeological map of 1999 overlaid on the Quickbird imagery (Figure 8.10) highlights the archaeological characteristics of this site and its surrounds. The green shaded portions are *kouk* (raised mound) and the blue cross-hatched sections are water bodies. Although the L-shaped water bodies to the west of the site resemble a moat, they are not referred to by the locals as *khassan* (moat). The archaeological mound surrounded by the water bodies is a large *kouk*, measuring approximately 100 metres by 100 metres.

Figure 8.8 FinnMap (1992) aerial imagery showing Kouk-ko and surrounds

Figure 8.9 Quickbird (2004) imagery showing the location of the *prasat* site

Figure 8.10 Quickbird (2004) imagery overlaid with Pottier's archaeological layer (1999)

HISTORICAL SETTING

Groslier's survey in the region during 1958–59 recorded the site of a possible *prasat*. He had identified eight important sites in the Roluos region, which included Prasat Klmum and Prasat Chapou Teng, the second of which was discussed earlier. His survey referred to a site east of Prasat Bakong located directly on its axis as Prasat Klmum (Figure 8.11). '…I located eight important sites... All eight are mounds, surrounded by moats. One is located to the east on the axis of Bakong: Prasat Klmum' (*my translation* 1998c: 37).

Figure 8.11 Prasat Klmum lies directly on the eastern axis of Prasat Bakong (2004 Quickbird imagery)

Pottier in his in-depth survey of Angkor recorded the site as Kouk-ko (CP726). For purposes of his research, he used a number of sources, including old documents, photographs and toponymy. The information was always cross-checked with local residents living nearby. In the case of Kouk-ko, the aerial photographs did not reveal the site clearly, and Pottier sought information from the inhabitants living in the vicinity (1999a: 352). He assumed that Kouk-ko was the same as Prasat Klmum referred to by Groslier, as there was no other significant *prasat* on the eastern axis of Bakong temple. In the case of Kouk-ko, the locals were not aware of the name Prasat Klmum, as referred to by Groslier (1998c), and Pottier attributes the discovery of Prasat Klmum to Groslier (1999a: 71-72). The alternative names recorded for this site at the time of his inventorying include *Tuol Trapéang Kong Moch*, *Le tertre des kapokiers* (the mound of kapok), *Le tertre du trapeang de l'aïeul moch* (the mound of the *trapeang* of ancestor *moch*), *Le sanctuaire de l'abeille* (the sanctuary of the bee) and Prasat Klmum (1999a: 352). Material evidences recorded on the site included bricks, sandstone, laterite, temple, mound, *trapeang* and moat. Although the site may or may not be a *prasat*, it was definitely of archaeological value as demonstrated below. The site was known as Kouk Sambo Sroh Ka by the local villagers of Thnal Trang before the Khmer Rouge occupation. Following the occupation, the site was referred to as Kouk-ko (ThnalTrang-F64 2006).

During the field visit of December 2006 in Thnal Trang, I was alerted to an incident of an alleged illegal house construction that did not comply with APSARA regulations. This section provides a detailed account of the observations recorded from interviews during the visits to this site, when the construction was stopped, and later during 2008 when the house construction had been completed and was occupied.

The owner, an original resident of Phum Thnal Trang had begun the construction of her house on the site of Kouk-ko. She had nine children and she lived on the site with two of her unmarried children. Most of her children were married and they lived nearby in the same village. They were rice farmers and they farmed all year around; she had two sets of rice fields: dry season rice fields located seven kilometres away, near Tonle Sap and wet season rice fields located nearby in Phum Ovlaok, near the community hall. She had begun her house construction in November 2006, while living in a tiny thatched hut onsite. The house construction had been under way for a month when the authorities learnt about the construction (ThnalTrang-F64 2006).

Photograph 8.45 Thatched shed where owner was residing during construction

Photograph 8.46 House though unfinished was already occupied

APSARA's Department of Monuments and Archaeology (both DMA1 and DMA2) was at that time responsible for implementing the heritage regulations within the protected zones of AWHS. A new department called the Department of Order and Cooperation (DOC), detailed in Chapters 3 and 7, was responsible for monitoring and preventing unauthorised constructions within Zones 1 and 2. As an agency responsible for security and cooperation, it acted as an intermediary between APSARA and the Provincial government bodies, including the village chief, the Commune Office and the District Office (Tan 2006).

Photograph 8.47 Construction of second storey started despite pressure from the Authority

Photograph 8.48 View of the house construction from the road to the north

In late December 2006, a team of personnel consisting of DMA2 staff, DOC staff and the commune consul from the Commune Office visited the site and informed the owner that her construction was unauthorised, as she had not obtained approval. They asked her to stop the construction. Several visits by the team took place over the course of the week, when she was repeatedly asked to stop and was warned of the repercussions if she failed to follow the law. The owner listened to what the team had to say, but continued to build her house. At the time the first warning was issued, the house construction was only at ground floor level, but during the course of the week, the framework for a first floor was laid despite the repeated warnings.

Photograph 8.49 Gathering in front of the house construction after the signing of the promissory note

Finally, on 27 December 2006, a small regiment arrived at the site to stop the construction altogether. Around twenty soldiers in uniform, along with the team specified earlier, arrived

and the owner was compelled to sign a promissory[85] note. The village chief and some village elders were called upon to witness the signing. A big group of villagers had gathered at the time (Photograph 8.49). The woman was in deep distress after signing, so she was interviewed at a later date when she was more composed.

CONDITION OF KOUK-KO, 2006

In 2006, the site of Kouk-ko was occupied by a few families and there were houses on either side of the road. Almost all the families were related to the owner (Ebihara 1968: 83). The house adjacent to her new construction belongs to her daughter. This house, though occupied, was unfinished at the time of the interview. APSARA had also stopped this house construction a few years ago, but the daughter had completed the structure and occupied the unfinished house. Despite the construction being unauthorised, APSARA staff have not troubled her since it has been occupied, however, the house was never plastered and finished due to the lack of APSARA approval.

Photograph 8.50 Incomplete house adjacent to the new construction

Photograph 8.51 House of the village chief, one of the few traditional houses remaining

Today, the precise historical context of the site is hard to understand. Material evidence strongly establishes its archaeological character, and broken bits of bricks and laterite have been found near the house on the eastern edge of the site.

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[85] A legal term which refers to 'a legally binding agreement the borrower signs to obtain money'. In this context, it was a legally binding agreement which the owner signed, giving her commitment to obey the law.

Photograph 8.52 Laterite found amongst the plants to the west of the construction

Photograph 8.53 Old bricks lying amongst vegetation surrounding the site

Photograph 8.54 Laterite found very close to the southern side of the house construction

A number of water bodies, including *trapeang*, a moat-like feature, *undong* and a *beng* surround the site. The different names of the water bodies were recorded during the interview.

Figure 8.12 Names of all water bodies that surround Kouk-ko. 2004 Quickbird imagery overlaid with archaeological sites (Pottier 1999a)

Photograph 8.55 *Trapeang* to the south west of house construction: Trapeang Kou Tet

Photograph 8.56 Trapeang Kralok Yai Seurn

Photograph 8.57 Houses to the southern side of Kouk-ko (2009)

Photograph 8.58 Moat-like feature to the south west of the house construction

Photograph 8.59 Trapeang Kralok Yeay Seurn

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS

The instance of deliberate damage to archaeological heritage discussed earlier raises some basic questions regarding contemporary society's cultural connections and the efficacy of heritage management mechanisms in practice. This case deals with an issue of inadvertent damage and it addresses some of the same problems. Common questions arising from both

the examples are: Do the archaeological sites mean anything to the local people? Are the heritage management mechanisms in place effective? This case, although dealing with incidental damage to heritage sites, highlights the problems for local communities who are trying to satisfy their fundamental human need for shelter.

The views of the owner reflect the frustrations of dealing with APSARA and its complex regulations. The members of the Authority have their share of frustrations as well. This section presents the opinions expressed by the various respondents, analysed to demonstrate the possibly diminishing cultural connections and the problems of existing heritage management mechanisms.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

IS THERE A *PRASAT*?

The new construction discussed in this section was stopped because it was on the site of a possible *prasat*. *Prasat* sites are often associated with spiritual powers (Ovlaok-M75 2008). Generally, Khmer villagers never reside on a former *prasat* site although they frequently use the land to grow vegetables. The soils found in most *prasat* sites are very fertile and the moats that surround most of these Angkorian temples provide the water required for cultivating vegetables (Oum 2006). The occupation of *prasat* sites and the construction of a house or houses at such locations is rather uncommon.

After learning about the incident from a research colleague, I briefly introduced myself and spoke to the owner at the site, requesting her permission to interview her later. At that time, she denied the existence of a *prasat* and complained that the authorities were unduly bothering her. The following day, when a full interview was made, she appeared perplexed and modified her stance regarding the *prasat*.

> I don't know [if there is a *prasat*]. APSARA said there is *prasat*, I asked my son to dig for evidence, and we did not find any. So I am not sure (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)

Researchers from EFEO had conducted systematic surveys in the area since the 1990s. Pottier, who was the director of EFEO, had stated that several excavations had been conducted in the Roluos area, one in a house to the east of Bakong on the same road as this case under discussion (Pottier 2006b). The owner did not mention any excavation on this site, however, and when questioned regarding the excavations, she stated:

> Some ten years ago, some *barang* asked if there was a *prasat* here. I said no. And then I asked the *barang* if there was a *prasat*, the *barang* said no (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)

The owner respected the directions of the APSARA Authority and was willing to follow the rules, but she was not completely convinced about the existence of a *prasat*. Although the site

was *probably* a *prasat*, APSARA Authority had accepted that the site definitely was one, according to the archaeological map.

WHAT IF THERE IS A *PRASAT*?

Villagers do not generally live on *prasat* sites, due to the possibility of offending any spirits. Her views regarding the *prasat* and the presence of spirits are given below.

> If I knew that this was a *prasat*, I will not stay here and I will not build on it. Because it is a *prasat*. I would not have started construction if I had known that it was a *prasat* platform. According to traditional beliefs, there is a spirit in a *prasat* which would not be happy if built over. The spirit will hurt me or make me unlucky.
>
> (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)

Table 8.9 What if there is a *prasat*?

Before beginning her house construction, she had consulted a *kru*[86]. Her response is tabled below.

> Before I started construction, I consulted with *kru* Cheun. He will look at the land and tell if it is good to build a house. He can find out if something is wrong. He can suggest which part of the land is good location for the house he is a *kru* who will help people locate the best spot for building house... He said there was a hole at the site before, and he said it is *bhukman* land. It will make my house lucky for any business…
>
> (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)

Table 8.10 Consulting the *Kru*

EVIDENCE OF A *PRASAT*

In her interview she mentioned a large hole that needed to be filled in before the construction could begin. Her responses to questions about the hole are presented below.

> …and that's why I asked my children to fill up the hole so I could build.
>
> *How big was the hole?*
> The hole was bigger than this house (the new construction)
> *Would it be a water body?*
> The hole was not a pond, but just lower ground same as the road. The road is at a lower level because it is heavily used.
>
> (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)

Table 8.11 Can you describe the site before construction?

The hole she described seemed unusual. The site was now understood to be part of the larger *kouk* (mound) area that it occupied; however, the presence of a hole larger than the present construction raises some questions. Though it is impossible to make any meaningful claims with regards to this hole without any additional information, it is possible to state that it may have been possible evidence of the archaeology of the site. The hole could have been a former pond or a section of the Angkorian moat (Pottier 2010: *personal communication*). The

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[86] (Ebihara 1968: 433) *Kru* is a specialist in any particular realm of knowledge (from Sanskrit and Pali *guru*).

material evidence of laterite and Angkorian bricks lying around the site further suggest the presence of an Angkorian structure. The archaeological value of the site, in any case, has been undoubtedly established by Pottier (1999a: 72, 352; 2006b) and from the material evidence on the site.

HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE AUTHORITY

The house construction had progressed for over a month, when the Authority first informed the owner about the heritage regulations and her obligations to the law. When she requested permission to proceed with the construction, she was given the authorisation by APSARA to repair the existing house, in accordance with the regulations. The APSARA staff and the DOC staff, together with the commune consul, cautioned her about the illegal construction. According to Sok (2006), the official from DOC, the construction was illegal and it was their duty to stop it, but despite the initial warnings, the owner continued with the construction. In fact, the entire framework for the first floor was laid after repeated warnings were issued. The owner was determined that she would complete her house despite the threats.

> I asked [the Authority] for permission to construct. But the permission was only given to repair the old house. The old house is almost all of it broken, so cannot repair.
>
> (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)
>
> I only know that the construction happened without permission. And they are building with cement and brick which is not allowed
>
> (Sok 2006)
>
> If I stop building, I don't have any house to stay. If I continue then APSARA will come to stop. But I will continue to build no matter what.
>
> (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)

Table 8.12 Actions taken by the APSARA Authority

APSARA and the soldiers from DOC finally issued the order to stop the construction. The owner was obliged to sign a promissory note wherein she unconditionally accepted the APSARA's conditions. A battalion of around eighteen to twenty soldiers in uniform were present to prevent any conflict, and the Authority advised her that she would have to contact the appropriate department and make amendments to her construction in order to obtain permission. APSARA's department DMA2 was responsible for development applications within heritage Zones 1 and 2 and they had the capacity to provide advice.

The site was re-visited two years later in 2008. The two levels of the house were finished and painted. The owner was very happy and relaxed, although she had faced a number of problems before she could complete the construction. She had waited for a few months before

proceeding with her construction. Eventually she proceeded, and once the construction was completed, the Authority was unable to do anything.

> There were serious problems. They [the village chief] asked me to postpone… The village chief asked me to postpone for one month. And we go to ask permission from APSARA... we were delayed till 40 days… but there was no permission paper. And we just ask the worker… who says to do it… and when they come back to see… it [the house] is finished- and APSARA don't say anything
>
> (ThnalTrang-F64 2006)

Table 8.13 What happened after stopping construction?

This house is but one of the many houses that have since been constructed within Zone 1. Despite the continued warnings and the signing of the promissory note, the owner decided to proceed with the construction. She understood that she was breaking the law in not obeying the rules laid down by the Authority, but she was determined to complete the construction of her residence. The incident clearly highlights the problems associated with the implementation of heritage regulations within the protected zones of AWHS.

Photograph 8.60 Shop in front of adjacent house (2009)

Photograph 8.61 House after completion (2008)

Photograph 8.62 View of the house along with adjacent properties (2009)

CONCLUSION

The study of the house construction on the site of Kouk-ko raises a number of issues in relation to the heritage management of the Angkor World Heritage site. Firstly, the failure of heritage regulatory mechanisms is reinforced through this example. Despite warnings, threats and the signing of a promissory note, the owner continued to build her house and later

completed it. Her reaction in not adhering to heritage regulation, suggests that APSARA needs to re-think the heritage management strategies that are currently in place. Also, coercion through a military presence is hardly suitable for ensuring the long-term protection of heritage.

Secondly, the case establishes the serious concern of diminishing values and connections with archaeological heritage sites. Although the site was not proven as a *prasat*, its archaeological value had been established. The case highlights that while *prasat* sites with tangible remains are mostly valued, archaeological sites with no material evidences are sometimes not. It is, however, important to address this issue at the level of the community living within AWHS, to prevent further loss of archaeological heritage. Smaller archaeological sites such as this will continue to remain unprotected and will be inadvertently destroyed with increasing development pressures.

The example also raises the question of fundamental human rights for the local community living around the monuments in Angkor. Are these archaeological sites more important than allowing people to live and construct their houses (Silverman and Ruggles 2007: 15)? This woman was merely trying to construct a house for personal use, but she was warned, threatened, and finally forced to stop the construction in the presence of an army regiment of around twenty soldiers and officials and made to sign a promissory note. The signing was an unconditional acceptance of compliance with APSARA law, whereby the owner was not provided an opportunity to discuss her problems. In other words, there were no provisions for community consultation and appeal.

CONCLUSION

Chapter 6 established the connections of the local villagers with the tangible heritage that surrounds them in AWHS, highlighting the cultural continuity of the local Khmers. Chapter 7 set out the complex situation that exists with regards to the management of cultural heritage for both the villagers and the authorities. The four examples examined in this chapter, clearly show the evidence of cultural connections amidst heritage conundrums.

Angkor Wat is unequivocally accepted as the most remarkable temple by all the villagers interviewed. They are very proud of their national heritage and icon. All except two respondents had visited Angkor Wat at least once in their life time. Most of them visit the temple grounds to enjoy a picnic or a social gathering with friends or family, and very few venture inside. Most appreciate that the sculptures are remarkable, but very few have a great understanding of their significance. While the villagers never articulated their spiritual values

for Angkor Wat, an observation of the Cambodian visitors to the temple revealed that they had a religious connection. Most prayed at all the Buddha statues and in front of the Vishnu statue, offering incense and other ritual items. The temple, usually filled with international tourists, comes alive every Khmer New Year, when Cambodians from all over converge to celebrate their annual holiday. In the words of Thierry:

> Angkor has always been known and frequented by the Khmer. Angkor has always remained the metropolis in times of glory and grandeur, but the link was forgotten, causing Angkor and its builders to become fabulous and mythical (*my translation* 1964: 10)

Choul Chnam Thmei is one important occasion when most Cambodians, free of farming obligations, make time to relax and visit the temples. The three days of festivities transform the temples, demonstrating the strong Cambodian connection. The festival illustrates the fact that the Khmers maintain a cultural connection with Angkor Wat, despite the historical discontinuities and the political trauma of recent decades. While the traditional practice of a special Cambodian dance during the festival has stopped, the number of Cambodians visiting Angkor is steadily on the rise. For three days of the New Year celebrations, Angkor is re-possessed by the Khmers, and this occasion is also a time when the villagers visit the other temples and the West Baray. In addition to Angkor Wat, Prasat Bakong in the study village of Ovlaok is another significant temple visited during the New Year. Traditional games are played and a large fair is organised to the east of the *prasat*, between the inner and outer moats. The event attracts large numbers of regional Khmers, and according to the APSARA guards at the temple, the numbers in past years have reached 30,000. For the local villager, it is a time of merit-making, by helping the local *wat* in building sand mounds. Once again, the influences of the Angkorian temples becomes evident; the five sand mounds that are built are representative of the Angkor Wat towers and Mount Meru, the underlying Hindu and Buddhist philosophies in temple design. Thus the festival provides the villagers with the opportunity to earn merit and socialise with other villagers, and to enjoy their holidays at the same time.

The two examples relating to heritage management issues indicate the complex state of affairs. The knowledge of the site has remained amongst the older villagers, but if the site is lost, it is highly likely that this knowledge will also be lost. The construction of a house on the site of Prasat Klmum on the other hand, describes a parallel problem although in a different context. The owner, wishing to construct a house for personal use, was not only frustrated by the cumbersome heritage rules and the heavy-handedness of APSARA, but was also defiant to the extent of knowingly breaking the law. While the destruction of Prasat Chapou Teng raises concerns for the smaller archaeological sites that are vulnerable to loss due to development, the problems faced by the villagers in the construction of residences for personal use raises

concerns regarding fundamental human rights. The two archaeological sites were also devoid of any material remains. They were mere mounds, and it is possible that the animistic associations that existed at *prasat* sites with tangible remains did not exist there.

The examples presented in this chapter accentuate the need for APSARA to engage the village communities. The 'top-down' approach in instructing the villagers of their restrictions and obligations does not necessarily encourage the villager to safeguard heritage; rather, it has resulted in defiance, as evidenced by the large number of new houses constructed since 2007 within Zones 1 and 2. The villagers need to be involved in a meaningful manner and their requirements need to be given priority, so that their heritage awareness is improved and their willingness to safeguard heritage in Angkor can be solicited. Along with the villagers, the members of the Provincial bodies and APSARA need to be made aware of the significance of smaller archaeological heritage sites. Unless a system of community consultation is introduced, and the villagers are included in the process of managing Angkor's cultural heritage, it is unlikely that the smaller archaeological sites in the region can be conserved.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS—CULTURAL RE-CONNECTIONS?

> The attempted creation of a universal heritage which provides an equal but full inheritance for all is not only essentially illogical but the attempt to approach it rapidly creates its own problems (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996: 21)

All communities form attachments, both physical and metaphysical, and these define a community's cultural identity. Their traditions and cultural practices provide local cultural contexts and help maintain cultural diversity. The social phenomenon that connects people and places is as significant as the material heritage; at times, more significant. The dominant discourse of heritage has long focused on the preservation and conservation of material remains, and as a consequence it has drawn attention away from the social and cultural contexts which are important elements in the process of understanding heritage. My focus in this thesis has been to draw attention to the social connections that exist between local communities and heritage places, and to the complexities of those connections. The need to understand communities, their social values and intangible heritage has been highlighted in recent heritage literature (Jameson and Baugher 2007; McManamon and Hatton 2000; Smith and Akagawa 2009a; Smith and Waterton 2009a).

Using Angkor World Heritage Site (AWHS) as a case study, and semi-structured in-depth interviews, I have identified the ways in which local communities connect to the landscape and to the tangible archaeological remains. In the process, a number of issues concerning the management of these sites have been revealed. I have focused specifically on the local Khmer social values only, and for various reasons I have not addressed the problems of looting and tourism, which also need to be factored in to the long term management of heritage places at Angkor. The scale of looting in Cambodia has ranged from the ordinary to the overwhelming; on one hand, looting has been committed by villagers who have vandalised archaeological sites for small profits (Anderson 2007: 108), and on the other, large scale organised crime has operated with the support of military and government officials (Stark and Griffin 2004: 126). As such, looting is a sensitive issue to broach through interviews. The issues of tourism appear at a broader scale of the nation and region, although their impact can be perceived at the smaller scale of local villagers. It is for these reasons, that I have not addressed looting and tourism, inspite of the fact that some issues related to looting and tourism have been revealed to a limited extent through the interviews. The focus of this study has been at a micro level, studying the local level connections of the Khmer villagers and the archaeological landscape. This chapter draws together the interview findings discussed in earlier chapters and offers a conclusion to the research questions posed in Chapter 1, namely:

> What are the cultural connections of a community? Why are the social links with the tangible heritage important?

> How can cultural connections, identified in the local Khmer context of the Angkor World Heritage Site, inform World Heritage conservation and management?

Heritage means different things to different people (Lozny 2006), and this is one of the major problems in the concept of universal heritage. The universalisation of heritage or the creation of World Heritage is fundamentally a dissonant concept, where the singular 'outstanding universal value' is given precedence over all the other values that are of significance to local communities. The hegemonic 'authorised heritage discourse' (AHD) (coined by Smith 2006: 11) is reliant on the knowledge claims of experts and is institutionalised in the state management authorities who are obliged to manage the World Heritage. The disparate ideas of heritage and the popular culture are often obscured in the process and the social values of places to communities often go unnoticed (Byrne 2008).

The findings from the fieldwork established a range of cultural connections between local communities and the Angkorian landscape. Using Smith's (2006) concept of authorised heritage discourse, the AHD, UNESCO and APSARA are positioned as the legitimatised expert authorities responsible for safeguarding the Angkor World Heritage Site. Smith and Waterton have argued that AHD characterises the privileging of expertise and efficiency (2009b: 29). Heritage professionals assume a pedagogic role in which heritage is imagined as old, beautiful, tangible, and important to the nation, while closing down debate on personal, local and community heritage to reduce conflicts and controversies. The groups outside the expert communities are therefore not involved in the processes of identifying and managing significant heritage (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 29–30). As a result, in the context of Angkor World Heritage, the outstanding universal value and other values have been assigned and managed by the experts (e.g. APSARA, UNESCO, ICC, international researchers). The underlying Western approach to heritage conservation has directed the focus of state-nominated authority—APSARA—primarily towards the restoration and conservation of tangible heritage features. While it has led to the effective conservation of significant archaeological sites, this selective focus has not only excluded, and continues to exclude, local communities, their values and practices, but it has also impacted their daily lives due to the policies centred on tangible heritage. This has additionally resulted in an eclipsing of local connections and the community's popular religious beliefs.

The selective focus on material remains in Angkor is hardly surprising, given that the current philosophies originated from a set of Western elitist ideas (Smith 2006). Archaeology and conservation in Cambodia, developed by the French, was rooted in the idea of *patrimoine* and 'historic monument', and as such had focused on researching Cambodia's monumental past and writing its national history (Edwards 2007). As a consequence, early French research was

concentrated solely on Angkor's monumental heritage since the 'rediscovery' of Angkor in 1862 and the establishment of the French protectorate in 1864. The establishment of EFEO in Hanoi in 1900 and the creation of *Conservation d'Angkor* in Siem Reap in 1908 facilitated detailed studies of the temples, and thus began a systematic process of documentation, restoration and conservation (Dagens 1995; Pottier 2000a). These interventions centred on the monuments paid very little attention to their social relevance to the small communities that lived in the region at the time. The local associations with Angkor Wat and some of the ruined temples through Animism and Buddhism went unnoticed and as a result there is a limited understanding of the social values that may have previously existed. The political instability of the 1970s further contributed to this lacuna of knowledge. Authoritarian regimes, mass genocides, foreign occupation and international exclusion significantly disrupted the cultural continuity of the local communities with their traditional landscapes and led to an impoverished nation. Interestingly, it was noted from the interviews that the animistic beliefs gave hope during the traumatic years and helped the Cambodian villagers survive one of the most difficult periods in their nation's recent past. Some respondents asserted that their belief in animistic spirits and the act of worshipping these spirits in secrecy during Khmer Rouge saved their lives (Ovlaok-M74&F68 2008; ThnalTrang-M46&group 2008).

Authorised Heritage Discourse is legitimised internationally through a series of recommendations, charters, conventions and documents. These include the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Natural and Cultural Heritage 1972 (Smith and Waterton 2009b). These standards have been heavily resisted and criticised by the non-West, for being developed with a Western focus. Continuing living traditions and their inherent intangible values, indicated as prime differences between Western and the non-Western heritage, demanded distinctly different conservation approaches. The Nara document (1994) was one such response, and it re-defined the Venice charter's universal definition of 'authenticity', as the original was not applicable in an Asian context (Silverman and Ruggles 2007a). Although, these distinctions are now clearly defined and accepted in heritage discourse, entrenched heritage management practices have not changed greatly. In other words, the national authorities safeguarding heritage in the non-West continue to follow earlier practices that focus on the material remains.

While the imposition of these hegemonic constructs of heritage exclude other notions of heritage, the super-imposition of the World Heritage framework and the universalisation of heritage causes additional problems. In effect, the over-arching concept of outstanding universal value negates the local social values, overshadows local communities and raises concerns about fundamental cultural rights (UNESCO 1995b), which are part of human rights

(Silverman and Ruggles 2007b). In the context of Angkor, a serious consequence of the World Heritage status is that the entire AWHS is state-owned property. APSARA, the controlling Authority, has provided a booklet and brochures to local commune offices regarding the regulations, but not one of the respondents was fully cognisant of their implications. In fact, the data collected in 2008 for this study indicates that only 35 % of the informed respondents were aware that they lived within a World Heritage site. As a result, the poor understanding of the regulations and insufficient knowledge generally is causing a high level of stress amongst the villagers, some of whom are afraid that they might be expelled from their village (also observed by Howse et al. 2007b).

AWHS is an interesting case study for this research for a number of reasons. The nomination of Angkor was timely to protect the site from the dangers of looting. A well-written management plan proposed efficient strategies for the management of the site through a national agency. A number of laws were enacted to safeguard Angkor's heritage and create the national agency called APSARA. A system of annual monitoring has been set up through the International Coordinating Committee, which meets twice a year to coordinate heritage management at Angkor. Despite these ideally formulated strategies, there are various issues and dissonances. There are tensions between the outstanding universal value and the local values, and problems of managing the tangible heritage under the World Heritage Convention at the expense of local communities' social values and intangible cultural heritage. The definitions of the heritage zones lack clarity and pose problems for the implementation of the regulations by the managing bodies. The local communities are unhappy with APSARA's regulations and domineering approach, and there are problems due to unmonitored development and escalation in tourism, both international and domestic. All these constitute the conundrums that this thesis has pointed out through the findings from the interviews.

The Angkor monuments were nominated as World Heritage, purely for the Angkorian period tangible heritage (UNESCO 1992b). This focus on the 'glorious past' and the 'monumental heritage' in itself negates the continuing traditions and social connections with the local Khmers that maybe more valuable to the locals (Sullivan 2003: 52). Following the conditional inscription of Angkor, a ZEMP study was commissioned to prioritise conservation and promote the sustainable management of AWHS. Although the ZEMP study indicated the presence of local communities and their social values, the recommendations focused solely on post-war monument conservation needs. ZEMP also proposed hierarchical zoning, which prioritised the conservation of the monuments and accorded maximum protection to the core zones immediately surrounding the monuments (UNDP 1993). The measures taken by the Cambodian government since the provisional inscription in 1992 led to serious conservation

work being facilitated through ICC and APSARA, and eventually AWHS was removed from the endangered list and permanently inscribed as World Heritage in 2004 (UNESCO 2004a). The biggest problem, however, has been in the translation of ZEMP zones to the Royal decree, which enacted the heritage zones. The hierarchical zoning proposed by ZEMP was not strictly adhered to and the restricted core zone proposed by ZEMP around the boundary of each monument was not adopted. Instead, a larger Zone 1, which included the entire Angkor Park along with the numerous villages has been ascribed a high degree of protection. Consequently, this has not only complicated the lives of the local communities living in the vicinity of the monuments, due to the restrictive zoning regulations, but has also caused a number of problems for the Authority in managing the AWHS. The other APSARA zones also lack clarity in their definitions. Unless the temples and other tangible remains are distinctly identified for protection and the different zones are hierarchically regulated, the lives of the locals will continue to be restricted and it will be difficult for APSARA to achieve meaningful conservation.

The local communities living amongst the monuments of Angkor are physically connected with the archaeological landscape and the tangible heritage through their day-to-day interactions through occupation, religious and ritual practices. Although this appears to be a simplistic observation, it is nevertheless important. The Khmer villagers are primarily rice farmers, an occupation that has helped them to understand their surrounding landscape very well and has provided them with opportunities to comprehend the subtle variations in topography. The interviews show that the villagers are familiar with most archaeological features in the region, recognising features such as mounds, ponds, roads, embankments, Angkorian temples and ruins. They understand the different parts of their village, the various names attributed to these parts and the village extents. Despite the subtlety of the landscape, the understanding of the Khmer in this study of their physical surroundings is comprehensive. Oral traditions have played a significant role in communicating this communal knowledge. This understanding of the landscape, passed on through generations, can supplement archaeological research, but, the information needs to be carefully studied, as it maybe subjective as a result of the forced migration during the Khmer Rouge. The Khmer connections to the Angkorian temples, however, are complex, as is demonstrated in the interviews.

The ruined temples in the landscape do not fascinate the local Khmers in the way they appeal to experts and tourists alike. They are merely temple mounds and ruins. These places have been part of their lives and memories and are not new or discovered; similar to the local Maya appreciation of the archaeological mounds at Chanmulá in Mexico (Breglia 2007). Some of

the Angkorian mounds, however, are attributed with functional symbolisms. They are used for cultivating vegetables and the surrounding moats serve as a source of water much needed for growing vegetables. Additional symbolisms are manifest through the social and ritual practices. Places can thus have multivocal symbolisms, articulated by specific meanings and attachments (Lozny 2006).

The Khmer religious world is populated by both Buddhist symbolisms and animistic spirits. Most Angkorian *prasat*, *prasat* ruins and other sites such as moats and *trapeang* are considered places in which *neak-ta* spirits reside. *Neak-ta* spirits are either localised in a region or established in a shrine. Although *neak-ta* is just one of category of animistic spirits, these associations signify the Khmer connections with the landscape and their understanding of the same. With the exception of one interviewee who stated that these are superstitious beliefs, all the other respondents indicated that they believe in the spirits and perform rituals when required. The communal rituals bring the villagers together in collective merit-making. The stories associated with *neak-ta* emphasise the importance of leading a righteous life. These, transmitted through oral histories, validate the continuity of the belief systems and offer comfort and support for the traumatised post-conflict society (Bertrand 2001). The universality of this belief system for the entire Khmer populace is crucial to their cultural identity, as illustrated through the ritual practices of the Cambodian diaspora in the United States (Yamada 2004)[87] and in France (Kalab 1994)[88]. These rituals and traditions are of continuing importance to the villagers and they are a significant contribution to the Khmer identity.

In addition to spirit worship, the local Buddhist *wat* was found to be the nucleus of the community. The older people dedicate all their free time in the service of the *wat* and the monks, while the rest of the villagers participate only during the annual Buddhist festivals. An interesting observation of animistic practices and Buddhist rituals is the remnant influences from Brahmanic Hinduism, manifest through the presence of Hindu gods, role-plays involving stories from both Hinduism and Buddhism, and symbolisms such as Mount Meru[89]. While some of the philosophies are common to both the religions, in Cambodia, the religious history is rather complex with radical shifts and sycretisms between the two major religions (Briggs 1951a; Marston and Guthrie 2004).

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[87] (Yamada 2004: 215) On 3 March 1996, the first public spirit-flag-raising ritual was held among the Cambodian community in Long Beach, California. This was the first public recognition of the ancestor cult of Khleang Moeung in Long Beach.

[88] Kalab discusses the Buddhist monasteries in Paris, demonstrating the Khmer need to establish their identities.

[89] It is the cosmic symbolism, common to both Buddhism and Hinduism, on which the planning of Hindu and Buddhist temples is based.

While the spiritual connections with the *wat* are straightforward, the connections with the Angkorian temples, both intact and ruined are rather complex. While all the respondents had all seen these Angkorian temples and visited them at least once in their lifetime, they seldom visit them regularly for spiritual reasons. Mostly, they visit the prominent temples during annual holidays, for making ritual offerings and as a collective recreational activity. Although the older villagers rarely visit the Angkorian temples due to the difficulty in scaling the mighty, tall structures, the younger respondents visit the temples regularly with friends for recreation. All the interviewees regarded the larger and prominent Angkorian temples as significant, but they did not have an opinion regarding some of the ruined sites. To them, these are mere broken temples. The monks, on the other hand, offered mixed opinions regarding the temples. While they acknowledged that the temples are significant, they do not accept any direct responsibility to care for the temples, and are disappointed that they do not benefit directly from tourism. In fact, many *prasat* sites in Cambodia have been quarried for stone, laterite and brick by the monks (Pottier 2006b) who use these in the construction of the newer monastery structures (Harris 2006: 64). While these acts are regarded as acts of vandalism, detrimental to the archaeological values (Silverman and Ruggles 2007a), recent studies highlight the fact that these acts are symbolic of the notion of Buddhist impermanence, where materiality is of no concern to those practising canonical Buddhism or theoretical Buddhism which occurs within the Buddhist *sangha* (Karlström 2009: 146). Despite the influences of Brahmanism evident in many of the Khmer rituals, the Hindu temples are not as spiritually significant as the Buddhist *wat*, as is clear from the locals' treatment of these spaces. While this suggests the possibility of a disconnection some temples and ruined *prasat,* the connections with the *prasat* sites associated with *neak-ta* spirits are indisputable.

It appeared that there was a disconnection in the ritual use of the Angkorian temples; however, when the issue was probed, the cultural connections with the Angkorian temples were clearly evident through the practices of ritual offerings. The average Cambodian villager does not appreciate the temples in the same manner as the researchers or tourists, but they associate with the temples using their own terms of reference. The presence of Hindu divinities in Khmer rituals and the offerings that are made to the *neak-ta* in some of these temples highlight the possibility that some of these Angkorian temples and ruins, once a part of their religious cosmology, continue to exert indirect influence on the locals. Although these connections appear tenuous in the present day, they have survived the changes in religious affiliations since the fourteenth century, the modernisation influences in Buddhism since the late nineteenth century, which negated traditional and animistic rituals as non-Buddhist, and the traumatic years of political instability towards the latter half of the twentieth century. In

view of these findings, it is possible to state that the local Khmers have a very good understanding of the physical landscape in which they live. In addition, they are connected to the material remains in their surroundings through rituals and social practices, although their connections with some of the smaller and ruined Angkorian *prasat* appear to be insubstantial. Even though these connections appear weak, they are nonetheless important in understanding the cultural contexts of the local Khmers.

In contrast to the tenuous connections with the ruined *prasat*, Angkor Wat has an overwhelming significance for the Khmer villagers. The importance of Angkor Wat is unambiguously evident and it is unanimously accepted by all Cambodians as both a sacred space and a symbol of their nation's heritage. This connection was made apparent in one family ritual, *Chah Maha Bang Skol* observed in Phum Stung, where a structure created especially for the ritual resembled Angkor Wat with its five towers and surrounding enclosures. 'In popular imagination, Angkor still lives on as a powerful site of memory, a magical space for whose power and allure science has no answers' (Edwards 2007: 248). The overwhelming presence of Angkor Wat in the Khmer psyche is further emphasised during *Choul Chnam Thmei* or Khmer New Year. The prominent Angkorian temples are completely transformed during Khmer New Year, due to the presence of large numbers of Khmer visitors. For the three days of the celebrations, Cambodians from all over the nation converge at Angkor Park, to visit Angkor Wat, Bakong, Bayon, all other temples and West Baray and they re-possess the landscape temporarily from the authorities and the international tourists. The annual visit, which is both spiritual and recreational, is also a gesture that signals the nation's recovery from a recent traumatic past (Winter 2010). This unregulated event places huge stress on the physical fabric of the temples and the authorities struggle to cope with the numbers. However, it is one time that the Khmers truly consume their national heritage, and confirm Angkor as truly Khmer heritage. The Khmer New Year and the growing number of domestic tourists clearly demonstrate that the local Khmers are socially connected to the more significant Angkorian temples, a connection that is important and needs to be incorporated, for better management of AWHS. Local community values, when acknowledged and included, are bound to engage communities positively in heritage management (Chirikure et al. 2010).

Angkor World Heritage Site is governed by some well-conceived strategies that were prepared to address the ICOMOS recommendations, following its nomination to the World Heritage list, when it was simultaneously listed on the Endangered Sites list. The state party has done a credible job in the enactment of legislation, appointment of APSARA and working with ICC and UNESCO in de-listing AWHS from the Endangered Sites list. The focus of

their energies was directed at conserving the monumental remains and did not pay any attention to monitoring development or guiding tourism. Furthermore, the local communities were not included or even considered in the management of the heritage sites. Following the 2003 Second Intergovernmental Conference for the Safeguarding and the Development of Angkor, the need to incorporate the needs of the local communities and the need to involve them in safeguarding Angkor's heritage was stressed. Community-focused departments were set up and they have undertaken a series of steps to raise awareness amongst the local communities. These include signage, leaflets and public information sessions.

A direct consequence of these efforts is that all the respondents were aware of the APSARA regulations. Although the villagers acknowledged the importance of the Angkorian temples and understood the restrictions, they were unsure as to why their personal lives were bound by these regulations. In other words, the Authority did not engage the community in a dialogue; rather, in its role as the expert, it disseminated the rules as mandatory. In addition, a new department (DOC) created in 2006 was staffed entirely by the army to implement the law through monitoring the AWHS and preventing unauthorised constructions. Such coercion measures are unacceptable and also raise serious concerns regarding the human rights and cultural rights of the local communities who are entitled to a place of residence. Despite these absolute measures, the Authority has not been successful in implementing its regulations. Of the 63 respondents, only one had followed the suggestions of APSARA in constructing her house. APSARA, despite its attempts to close the gap and improve the villagers' awareness of the regulations, has failed to initiate a dialogue with the community due to the 'top-down' system of management. While a system of top-down management is unavoidable (Chirikure and Pwiti 2008) for regulating AWHS and safeguarding heritage, the interests and needs of the local community are equally important.

Two incidents discussed in detail in this study have clearly established the problems of monitoring development and implementing regulations. They were the bulldozing of a *prasat* site, and the unauthorised construction of a residence on a *prasat* site. While the bulldozing was an act that damaged the *prasat* site, the illegal construction concerned a villager building her residence. These two incidents highlight the local perceptions with regards to archaeological sites that are devoid of any material remains. The bulldozing of Prasat Chapou Teng was an intentionally detrimental act where the owners/occupiers were clearly aware of their obligations but were nevertheless fully prepared to carry out their plans. Since the Authority's intervention to stop the bulldozing, the site has been left untouched by the owner, but the owner's long-term intentions for the site are unclear. The construction of a residence, on the other hand, is a fundamental expression of human rights, but viewed within the

framework of tangible heritage protection, both acts were perceived by the Authority as equally detrimental. Complex land management issues are created when managing a large World Heritage site with a growing population of more than 150,000. These incidents highlight the practical problems in monitoring such a large area, and the loss of archaeological sites without any tangible remains is high. The owner who was building a house for her personal use was upset when her fundamental rights were impinged. She was warned, threatened and coerced into signing a promissory note that forced her to comply; nevertheless, she ultimately broke the law and completed her residence. In fact, a large number of houses have been constructed within Angkor Park without the Authority's approval. The Authority has since realised that such coercion measures are unsuccessful (Khoun 2008). Hopefully, this should encourage them to seek consultative measures to overcome such problems.

These incidents bring us back to the issues raised earlier regarding zoning regulations. The highest level of protection accorded to Zone 1 creates many problems for the villagers, whose lives are restricted. Findings from the interviews point out that while most villagers are not aware of the implications of the legislation, even staff members of APSARA are not fully cognisant of the laws. A situation of heritage conundrum exists where the management of heritage is clearly a puzzle for APSARA and the plural legislation complicates the lives of the villagers. In addition, the interviews highlight the resentment towards the Authority expressed by some villagers due to the restrictions. Their frustrations are partly due to their limited knowledge and a lack of community-inclusive mechanisms, which prevent them from voicing their concerns. An important question arises in relation to the cultural and human rights of the local population. Is the safeguarding of material remains more important than meeting the needs of the local communities and allowing them to carry on their normal lives and social practices?

Although the Authority has vested powers, it has been unable to monitor the 400 square kilometres of the AWHS, control the illegal constructions and effectively implement the regulations. Local villagers and monks are unhappy about the restrictions imposed on their lives and find it unjust that the people just outside the heritage zones are not governed by any restrictions—another case of a conundrum, for which the village chiefs and commune chiefs do not have any answers. The findings from the study also highlight the increasing pressures on the land around the zones. APSARA's heritage zones have created a virtual boundary, outside of which the land value has escalated. The APSARA order of 2004 prohibits the buying and selling of land within the zones; nonetheless, land continues to be purchased and sold. While the virtual boundary may not allow any drastic development within Zones 1 and

2, large-scale development outside the zone boundaries is bound to impact on farming activities within the zones and may cause serious problems for the villagers in future. The Golf Course to the north of Phum Lolei, inaugurated in 2009, presents some such serious implications for farming activities to its south and southwest.

In an attempt to address the pressures on land and control population growth within AWHS, the Authority has procured a large area of land in Run Ta-Ek commune (eco-village). Families who wish to build anew or expand their existing properties are expected to be relocated here. The village chiefs and the commune office staff appreciate this proposal, but, they are not willing to move their families. The villages are often clusters of one large extended family, in which almost all the families are related to one another (Ebihara 1968). This will make the lives of the villagers more difficult, as they prefer to live next to their children. In Cambodia, residing with or near children is important when physical support for the elderly are required, and it is also an indicator of well-being (Zimmer et al. 2006: 337). The eco-village project is intended to reduce the land pressures and control the population, but the relocation of villagers is bound to break existing social structures and cause further adversity in the villagers' lifes. The land for the eco-village had been acquired, and infrastructure such as roads was being built in 2008. It is, however, not clear how the transfer will be implemented. A case study of the relocation of local people from the Royal Chitwan National Park in Nepal to promote nature conservation has demonstrated that the relocation had detrimental effects on people's livelihoods, social structures, cultural heritage, jobs and future prospects (McLean and Stræde 2003: 522).

On a positive note, the Authority has proposed some measures to improve the villagers' livelihoods. These projects, part of the Angkor Participatory Natural Resources Management and Livelihoods Program (APNRMLP), are promising as they propose to engage with the villagers and improve their socio-economic conditions based on the villagers' needs. The needs of the local community must be recognised by the heritage managers (Chirikure et al. 2010). Although there is no community consultation involved, community groups have been set up in the model villages to convey the objectives of the APNRMLP projects, and if any of these projects proves successful, it will help the villagers develop trust in the Authority and improve their mutual relationship.

The findings of this study clearly reinforce that the local Khmers are 'connected' to the Angkorian landscape, however tenuous the connections might be, amidst the heritage conundrums. The heritage conundrums highlighted through the findings exist at various levels. There is a tension between the outstanding universal value, which focuses on past

Angkorian achievements and negates the values that exist as a result of continuing living traditions. The focus on the management of tangible heritage guided by the World Heritage Convention creates problems for the local villagers' social practices and rituals. The artificial boundaries created by the heritage zones make it difficult for the village chiefs and commune chiefs to reconcile the concerns of the villagers within the zones as opposed to those just outside the zones, who are less restricted. The local villagers are not fully cognisant of the World Heritage status and the implications of the plural legislation. They are not comfortable with APSARA's high-handed approach and the regulations, and are prepared to default if necessary. These factors, along with the growing pressures of development and tourism, contribute to the heritage conundrums at Angkor.

To clarify how these findings can help improve heritage management, it is important to re-visit the points made earlier in the thesis. While all heritages are emphasised as intangible (Byrne 2009b), heritage as a cultural process is consciously and unconsciously created and re-created by communities governed by the social, political and economic needs of the present (Smith 2006). The various communities, their heritage needs and the often conflicting local and global values are inherently dissonant (Smith and Waterton 2009b). This discordance often results in a heritage conundrum wherein ordinary local communities are unable to assert the significance of their everyday heritage or 'small heritages' (Harvey 2008), as opposed to a growing and powerful expert community with vested interests in the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage, who are by and large directed by their research interests in conjunction with the geo-political and economic needs. Although this disadvantages the ordinary local communities, they continue to create and renew their relationships with heritage, adapting it to their changing social conditions. Despite the natural or forced loss in some cultural connections, the new 'reconnections' forged contribute to an organic and evolving cultural process.

As local communities create and re-create their cultural connections, they should also be allowed to reconnect with the monuments of the Angkorian past. The Angkorian landscape demonstrates that various layers of such reconnections have occurred and are illustrated all through its history by the acts of appropriation and re-appropriation. This step forward, however, can be made possible only if there is a realignment of existing APSARA policies. Concessions need to be made to incorporate local values in the management of the World Heritage. The local communities need to be encouraged to view heritage as a benefit and not a liability, which can only be made possible if the villagers can benefit from heritage conservation (Chirikure et al. 2010). Any amount of public participation and efficient mechanisms devised to manage Angkor successfully can progress further only if the political

will is also aligned accordingly. The Authority needs to incorporate more participative mechanisms through which they can communicate effectively with the villagers. If they do not, all that will remain protected will be an isolated group of temples devoid of their social and cultural contexts.

The problems and issues identified through this study confirm the need for including local communities in managing heritage. Community participation which includes the various interest groups is a powerful tool in safeguarding heritage (Chirikure and Pwiti 2008: 476). While this appears to be an obvious solution, examples around the world illustrate the difficulty of achieving absolute success through community participation (Chirikure and Pwiti 2008; Jameson and Baugher 2007; McManamon and Hatton 2000), due to community interactions being contested, fraught and dissonant (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 138). Such dissonance, however, can be positive as 'it is a process through which those social and cultural values and narratives that help define our identities and sense of place are identified, negotiated and (re)created' (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 138). The expert community therefore needs to open avenues for dialogue, whereby the local communities can participate in a mutually beneficial manner. The linking of local understandings of AWHS, local religious connections to the smaller *prasat* through animistic worship, the locals' functional use of archaeological sites and their daily lives with the heritage management of Angkor is bound to be complex, as these connections and the current heritage management philosophy at AWHS are fundamentally dissonant. However, once the process of incorporating local values in heritage management is started and the problems are clarified, it will be possible to identify solutions for each individual problem. This requires a fundamental re-alignment in the Authority's approach, in which the human rights and socio-cultural values of the local communities are given due merit and precedence over the preservation of material remains. They need to pay attention to 'five key areas: honesty, dialogue, recognition of power, a holistic and integrated approach and a critical regard for the political and social context of community engagement' (Smith and Waterton 2009b: 139). Local cultural values, when duly acknowledged, will help strengthen the post-conflict society and motivate the communities to work with the Authority. Ultimately, the key question is: Is the Authority for the Protection and Management of Angkor and the Region of Siem Reap interested in conserving a living cultural site in which the local communities are culturally connected to the landscape, or in merely preserving the skeletal vestiges of a distant past?

Further research is necessary if the issues raised in this study are to be satisfactorily addressed. One way of moving forward towards a sensitive model of heritage management and interpretation is to understand Khmer connections—other than local connections—that

have not been addressed in this study. The findings of the present study can be expanded upon by including the connections of the staff members of APSARA with AWHS. The custodians of AWHS are bound to be connected to their national heritage through their individual terms of reference. An understanding of their connections can add to the local community connections and help the move towards a better understanding of AWHS's Khmer cultural connections. This will be a challenging exercise, as their opinions are bound to be strongly influenced and informed by national discourses; nevertheless, it will further their understanding of the popular religious culture. An understanding of these connections can also assist heritage managers to re-negotiate their heritage management practices, as they will possibly have a better appreciation of local Khmer cultural connections. This is proposed as a possible future study to fully understand Khmer cultural connections at Angkor. Such a study would also benefit from an understanding of the connections of the people engaged in the tourism industry, including the tour guides, tour operators and tuk-tuk drivers. Heritage management is big politics and big business in Cambodia (Stark and Griffin 2004). By adopting a broad approach, it is hoped that extensive input will contribute to a better understanding of the range of Khmer cultural connections, including the local Khmers who live within AWHS, the Khmer heritage experts and the Khmer tourism experts.

To address another issue, the implications of resettling local communities can be better understood by a study of the villagers who have been relocated from Angkor Park in the late 1980s to the early 1990s (Oum 2006). They were re-settled by the Cambodian Government and were given land in Phum Thmei to the north side of the town. Over time, many of the resettled families sold their allocated land and moved back to their original land holdings within the Park (Howse et al. 2007d: 75). Fieldwork conducted for this research found that some of the villagers from Angkor Park had moved back to their original village and were occupying the land illegally. The experiences of these relocated villagers will help in understanding the issues associated with moving existing communities. This knowledge will help the Authority in re-thinking its eco-village proposal.

Despite the current lack of support for the social values of the local Khmers, evidence of recent cultural reconnections indicate the possibility of forging renewed connections with the temples in future. The recently restored reclining Buddha in the Baphuon temple was re-consecrated in the presence of the Cambodian King. While this clearly indicates a shift in the heritage discourse with regards to tangible heritage conservation in non-Western contexts, it also indicates that if the Cambodian Government so desired, local communities and their needs could be meaningfully incorporated. Cultural reconnections will help in re-negotiating the Khmer identity and strengthening post-conflict Khmer society. This study, realised

through semi-structured in-depth interviews in five study villages, is but a scratch on the surface. The study sought responses from approximately 5.6 % of the total village population within AWHS, around 99 respondents in total. The sample size, although small, is representative and has helped to reveal the complexity that exists at Angkor and the tenuousness of cultural connections that link the local villagers with the Angkorian temples and archaeological remains. This delicate thread of continuity, currently threatened by heritage management restrictions, development and tourism, needs to be nurtured and strengthened. To do this, the Authority must re-negotiate its approach and appreciate and acknowledge the local communities' values and needs. While continuing its efforts to improve the heritage awareness of the villagers, it should also focus on building positive relationships through projects that will benefit the villagers and improve their socio-economic conditions. In addition, the Authority needs to facilitate dialogue with the local communities to understand every issue in its context and to help these communities re-connect with the material remains at AWHS. These will help manage the heritage of Angkor World Heritage Site in a rightful and meaningful manner.

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