



Lexicon

of Angkor-related architectural, cultural, historical and religious terms

Khmer (kh), Sanskrit (sk), Pali (pl), Chinese (ch), Laotian (la), Latin (lt), Siamese (sm) Thai (ta), Theravada Khmer(trv), Vietnamese (vn)

A

Acharya (sk 'He who knows the sacred writings' kh អាចារ្យ): knowledgeable person. In modern Cambodia, the **Achar** assists the monks performing rituals for the community.

Adit (sk **aditya**): the sun.

Agni: the god of fire. Guardian of the Southeast.

Ahimsa: (sk 'harmlessness'): the ethic of non-violence adopted by many of the ascetics of North India to counter the aggression of the new states.

Airavata, Ayravata, Airavana (kh អ៊ែរវត្តា): sacred elephant, vehicle of **Indra**, generally represented with three heads. Also one of the elephants supporting the four quarters of the world.

Akusala: 'unskillful' or 'unhelpful' states, which will impede the quest for Enlightenment.

Alangkar (sk *alamkara*, kh អលង្ការ): ornament, in a king's name.

Amitabha: Buddha of the higher spirit, represented on the headdress of bodhisattvas.

Amrita: elixir of life, the nectar of immortality created from the **churning of the Ocean of Milk**.

Anatta: 'No-Soul', the doctrine that denies the existence of a constant, stable and discrete personality.

Ananta: the multi-headed serpent on which **Vishnu** reclining during his withdrawal from the world. Also called **Cesha**.

Anantasayin, Anantasayana (sk 'sleeping on the Ananta'): epithet of **Vishnu** when resting on **Ananta**.

Anastylosis: archeological method used in Java since 1903 by the Netherlands Indies Archeological Service, by which ruined monuments were rebuilt by assembling the original stones one by one in their original order. Applied by Henri Marchal to Angkorean structures in the 1920s and 1930s, and modified by B.P. Groslier later, adding backup reinforced masonry behind the original construction.

Añg, Ang (sk.) : body, member, manhood, Śiva's *linga*, also a prince honorific title since the middle period.

Angada: the monkey warrior son of **Valin**.

Ang, Angka (sk *anga*, kh អង្គ): body, person. **Preah Angka** (kh ព្រះអង្គ): a king's name.

Aṅgar, Angkor (sk. Nagara, kh អង្គរ, jp アンコール, ch 吳哥): city, capital city, kingdom. Traditionally, Angkor Thom, 'The Great Angkor' represents the former Khmer capital city, a group of monuments centered around the Bayon, while Angkor Touch, 'Small Angkor', represents Angkor Wat. The word also exists in Khmer as **nokor** (នគរ). Thai sources record in 1632 Angkor Wat was called "**biṣṇuloka**", "**mahā nagara**", or "**braḥ nagaravāt**," literally "the temple city" or "the city of temple(s). Also called "**brah jetabal**" or "jet bray" at that time, a corruption of **Jētavana Vihāra**, monastery built for the Buddhā, term also used by Japanese pilgrims in 17th century.

Anjali (kh អញ្ជីលី): 'grand salute', dance motion-posture expressing reverence, devotion, adoration.

Anicca: the state of 'impermanence', constant and fleeting change.

Antarala (sk): a small corridor linking the god's shrine to the **mandapa**.

Antefix: pinnacle or other ornament that stands on a parapet. Also called **Acroter**.

Apsara (kh អប្សរា): celestial dancer, portrayed dancing in the skies. These celestial water nymphs and sacred dancers are often depicted as the consorts of the **Gandharvas** (celestial musicians).

Arahant (kh អរិហន្ត): an 'Accomplished One,' who has attained **Nibbana**.

Arana (sk 'place of stillness'): a garden dedicated to meditation.

Arcature: niche.

Ardhamandapa: shallow porch over a **mandapa**.

Areca palm (sk puga kh ដើមស្លា ch 檳榔 fr aréquier): also known as 'betel tree', *Areca catechu*, in Khmer 'flowered palm tree'. Palms, flowers and nuts are often used in ancient and modern Khmer religious rites.

Arjuna: central character in the **Mahabharata**, the king of the Haihayas, of the Pandava tribe. **Pandu**, his real father, chose **Indra** as his 'godly' father. Also, the tree *Terminalia Arjuna* (arjun tree) symbolizing the achievement of enlightenment in **Theravada** Buddhism.

Arogyasala (sk 'sickness-free pavilion', 'health pavilion', kh ផ្ទះពេទ្យ, មន្ទីរពេទ្យ, 'medical house'): Ancient name of the hospitals built in Angkor and across the Khmer Empire, especially at the end of 12th century, under the rule of Jayavarman VII.

Arthashastra (sk 'The Treatise on Profit'): probably written in the second century AD and attributed to **Kautilya**, it expounds all aspects of practical action, including technology, economy, and public and military administration.

Asana: the correct position for yogic meditation, with straight back and crossed legs.

Asrama, Ashram (sk): a kind of monastery or retreat to which men retire when they consider that their active life is over, in order to prepare for their future existence. In ancient Angkor, the **asrama**, or **vidyasrama**, or **varnnasrama**, were educational colleges with teachers were called **adhyapaka**, and heads of association often called **kulapati** (cf. **varnnasrama**).

Ascetic: sage who practiced austerity.

Asura (sk): a class of 'demons-monsters', the **devas**' foremost enemies.

Atman: the eternal, unchangeable Self sought by the yogins, ascetics and followers of the Samkhya philosophy. For the **Upanisads**, identical to brahman status.

Avlokiteshvara (sk 'The Lord who looks down'): the most famous of all **bodhisattvas**, also called Lokeshvara. Pictured with four arms and carrying the **amitabha** (attributes) on his head-dress: a lotus, a rosary, a bottle and a book.

Avatara, Avatar (sk 'descent'): the word is most frequently used to refer to the various incarnations of Vishnu, as he descends to earth to save the world from some danger.

Avasa: rural settlements, often built from scratch each year by Buddhist monks for monsoon retreats.

Ayatana: successive meditative planes achieved by a really advanced **yogin**.

Ayodhya, Ayodhya (sk a+yodhya, 'not to be fought, invincible'): the capital of **Ramayana's Kosala** kingdom which was ruled by Dasharatha, Rarna's father. Currently a city of India's Uttar Pradesh, with an ongoing interfaith dispute (Hinduists and Muslims) over a sacred site.

B

Bhaisajyaguru (kh វេជ្ជសាស្ត្រព្រះពុទ្ធ) : the Buddha of healing and medicine in Tantric Buddhist tradition. Also called the **Medicine Buddha**. Often represented with two Bodhisattva, his representative disciples.

Balaha: the horse who saved the merchant Simhala and embodied one of the previous incarnations of the Buddha.

Balang (kh បាលង្ក): pedestal.

Balarama: an avatar of Vishnu in human form, and Krishna's elder brother. He is portrayed holding a ploughshare.

Bali: a king of the demons. The '**green monkey**' (kh ស្វាបៃតង) in **Ramayana** tradition.

Baluster: a cylindrical column, often forming the 'rails' or windows.

Balustrade: railing or similar in which balusters are the uprights surmounted by a beam.

Bana: the asura who fought against Krishna. Son of **Bali**.

Banteay (kh បន្ទាយ): Khmer term for citadel, fortress or fortified palace.

Bantul (kh បន្ទូល): Royal word or order.

Baray, Paray (old kh *vrah anray*, kh បារាយណ៍): artificial reservoir enclosed by raising dams and/or dikes. Rectangular and of varying dimensions, the largest one being the **West Baray** (kh បារាយណ៍ខាងលិច) at Angkor.

Barmeisaur (sk parama + isvara): 'The Sovereign', honorific names of Siva, Brahma, and Vishnu.

Barom (sk parama): the supreme one, honorific name of a king.

Baromintea (sk paramendra): honorific name of a king.

Bat (sk pada, kh បាត): foot, in the name of kings.

Bayon, Pâyân(p Vejayanta, kh បាយ័ន្ត): terrestrial replica of Indra's palace ; name of the great Jayavarman VII monument in Angkor Thom.

Bejayant (sk. vajayanta, pl vejayanta): the celestial palace of Indra, the earthly replica of which being Angkor Thom palace.

Beng (kh បឹង): a natural pond.

Bhikkhu: an 'almsman,' a mendicant monk who begs for his daily food; the feminine form is **bhikkhuni**, nun.

Bhu (sk): the Earth goddess, a spouse of Vishnu. She is portrayed at Vishnu's feet as he sleeps on the primeval ocean.

Bhnam, Phnom (old kh ភ្នំ) : hill, mountain, temple or sanctuary (cf. **Phnom**).

Bhnam Jisur, Phnom Chisor (sk.) : name of a temple founded by Sûryavarman I (cf. Suryaparvata).

Bhnam Ruñ, Phnom Rung (old kh ភ្នំរុង): 'the large hill'; name of several temples, including the famous **Phnom Rung** in modern Thailand.

Bhumisparsa Mudra: gesture of the Buddha, left hand in his lap, right one touching the ground.

Bimán, Pimean (sk.): Celestial chariot or palace, the abode of the Blessed Ones. Also **Bimânâkâs, Pimeanakas**.

Birun (sk varuna): name of a god.

Bishma: a son of Santanu and 'grandfather' of Kauravas.

Bisnukâr (sk.): Khmer name of the divine architect who erected sacred buildings on earth, in particular Angkor and its Bayon.

Bisnulok (sk.): Khmer name of Angkor Wat since the middle period. (cf. **Paramavisnuloka**).

Blind Door or Window: while Khmer religious buildings usually open to the east, 'fake' windows and doors built on the other sides to ensure symmetry.

Bodhisattva (pl **Bodhisatta**): a man or woman called to obtain enlightenment but delaying it through compassion for suffering beings. One in the process of becoming a Buddha. The Khmers were most familiar with the *bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara* (or **Lokeshvara**).

Book (kh សៀវភៅ siew pheu from ch 書簿 syu bu): Printed and bound books seem to have been introduced in Cambodia from China, since the Khmer word has a direct Chinese origin.

Bopitr (sk pavitra): 'The Pure One', used in a king's name.

Brah Dharani: goddess of the Earth, who witnessed the Buddha's enlightenment.

Brah Go: 'the God's Bull', in particular **Nandin, Shiva's mount**. (cf. **Pâgo**).

Brah Indakosiy, Preah Enkosei (pl) : name of a temple with a modern monastery.

Brah Khan (sk jâyasrî), **Preah Khan** (old kh ព្រះខែ្មរ) : the King's sacred and victorious sword; name of a temple founded by Jayavarman VII.

Brahma (sk): the creator-god of the Brahmin 'trinity'. He was born from a lotus growing from **Vishnu's** navel, and is portrayed with four faces looking out to the cardinal points. Mounted on the **Hamsa** (swan or sacred bird.)

Brahmasariya: the holy life of chastity, the quest for enlightenment and liberation from pain.

Brahman: the fundamental, supreme and absolute principle of the cosmos in Vedic and Upanisadic religion.

Brahmin: a member of the priestly caste in Aryan society, responsible for sacrifice and the transmission of the Vedas.

Buddha (sk 'The Enlightened One' kh ព្រះពុទ្ធ): an enlightened or awakened person. The one who has achieved ultimate wisdom. The founder of the Buddhist creed was Siddhartha **Gautama**, an Indian prince living in the 6th to early 5th centuries BCE. In the **Mahayana** Buddhist tradition, there are an infinite number of Buddhas.

C

Capital Cities: the centers of power for the various theocratic or semi-theocratic kingdoms that raised and disappeared in North Cambodia. Their historic sequencing has been established as follows: 1)

Indrapura (Jayavarman II, Thbong Khmom District) 2) **Hariharalaya** (kh ហរិហរាល័យ) (Jayavarman II, in the Roluos area) 3) **Amrendrapura** (Jayavarman II, West Baray area) 4) **Mahendraparvata** (kh មហេន្ទ្របវរីក) (Jayavarman II, Kulen Mountain) 4) Both **Hariharalaya** and **Mahendraparvata** (Jayavarman II, III) 5) Extension of **Hariharalaya** to Indratataka, Bakong, Preah Ko (Indravarman I) 6) **Yasodharapura** (kh យសោធរបុរៈ) (Yasovarman I, Bakheng area) 7) **Angkor Thom** or **Nokor Thom** (Jayavarman VII). Prior to Angkorian dynasties, there was also **Isanapura**, the **Chenla capital city** at Sambor Prei Kuk (kh ស្រីសោយន្តរៈ) (Isanavarman I, Kompong Thom area).

From pre-Angkor to modern eras: “*Funanese*” *Period 1st century BCE – mid-6th century*: **Oc-Eo** (Mekong Delta) in relationship with **Angkor Borei** (South of Cambodia); *Pre-Angkorian (6th – 9th century)*: many capitals and cities divided in political unities, especially **Angkor Borei** (in particular 6th century) and **Sambor Prei Kuk** (in particular the 7th century); *Angkorian (9th – 14th century)*: generically, “**Angkor**” [**Mahendraparvata** (Phnom Kulen), **Hariharalaya** (Roluos), **Yashodhara**] with a brief period in **Chok Gargyar (Koh Ker)**; *14th – mid-15th century*: **Angkor**; *mid-15th century – mid-16th century*: **Srei Santhor** (Sithor, Basan), **Chaktomukh** (Phnom Penh), and **Srei Santhor**; *mid-16th century – 1594*: **Longvek**, with a royal sojourn at Angkor; *17th – 19th century*: **Oudong** [some authors include **Sambor** (north of Kratie) as a royal capital city]

Chakravartin: Indian royal title meaning 'universal sovereign'. Also **Cakkavatti**, the World Ruler who in the Indian folklore would govern the whole universe and impose justice and righteousness by force.

Cham (kh ចាម): the inhabitants of **Champa**, kingdom of the Hindu civilization on the central and southern coast of contemporary Vietnam, southern coast of Cambodia. The term also refers to the Malayo-Polynesian language spoken there. In modern Cambodia, the Chams are an important minority embracing the Muslim faith, also called ‘Khmer Islam’ (kh ខ្មែរឥស្លាម).

Champa (kh ចំប៉ា, old kh ចាម្ប៉ា, sk Nagaracampa नगरचम्प, vn Chiêm Thành or Chăm Pa, ch Zhànchéng 占城, It Ziamba, old fr Champe or Ciampe, old it Cianban): a country which existed along the coastal strip of what today is central and southern Vietnam. It consisted of several kingdoms sometimes united but often independent. There are many surviving vestiges of the original Cham architecture. Champa was progressively conquered by the Vietnamese from the 15th century, reduced to the principalities of Panduranga and Kauthara at the beginning of the 17th century. Kauthara was annexed by the Vietnamese in 1653. The last remaining principality of Champa, Panduranga, survived until 1832.

Chan (sk candra kh ចន្ទ្រ): the moon. Honorific in the name of a king or prince. Girl’s given name.

Chan (sk candana kh ចាន់): *Santalum album*, Indian sandalwood.

Chandaka: the Buddha's squire who accompanied him initially when he left the palace to seek enlightenment.

Chandrasasa (sk ‘the glittering scimitar’): **Ravana**’s sword, which he received from **Shiva**.

Chara (sk): scout who also acted as a military spy.

Charaka Samhita (sk 'wandering healer's compendium'): the first treatise of **Ayurvedic medicine**, compiled between 100 BCE and 200 CE. This sum of eight books and one hundred twenty chapters was edited by **Dridhabala** in the 6th century. The treatise includes recommendations on nutrition, physical exercise, sexual health and medical education. Along with the **Susrutha Samhita**, another ancient medical treatise, it has inspired **Khmer herbal medicine**.

Chaturmukha (sk catur + mukha kh ចតុមុខ): the four faces (for the four rivers), a name for Phnom Penh.

Chau (sm 'chao', lord): honorific title in the name of princes. **Chau Fa**, title of a high mandarin. **Chau ku**, 'my master', name given to a monk.

Chedei (Sk saitya, kh ចេតិយ): reliquary, funeral monument, **stupa**.

chmur, -Chmar (kh ឆ្មារ) : small, less important.

Cella: Inner part of a temple. This Latin word (or the Greek *naos*) is more often applied to Roman or Greek structures, yet some archeologists use it while describing Southeast Asian temples.

Ceto-vimutti (sk 'the release of the mind'): a synonym for enlightenment and the achievement of **Nibbana**.

Chedei (kh ចេតិយ): Khmer name of a **stupa**.

Chenla, Zhenla (kh ចេនឡា, ch 真腊): Chinese designation of a confederation of principalities upon which reigned King **Mahendravarman** and his successor, **Isanavarman I**. Originally a province controlled by the **Funan** rulers, Chenla conquered the Funan area around 627 CE.

Chestha (sk jyestha kh ចេត្តា): 'the strongest, greatest, eldest', in the name of a king or prince.

Chey (sk jaya, kh ជ័យ): 'The Victorious', in the name of a king or prince.

Chipor, Chivor (sk civara, kh ជីពារ, ចីវរ): robe, priest's garb.

Chitralkha: **Usha's** friend.

Churning of the Ocean of Milk (sk samudra manthana kh ក្នុងសមុទ្រទឹកដោះ): one of India's greatest myths. Desiring to secure their immortality, the gods churned the Ocean of Milk to generate **amrita** - the elixir of eternal life. They turned the sacred mountain **Mandara** upside down and used it as a dasher, and for a rope they used the serpent Vasuki. Vishnu incarnated himself as the turtle Kurma to serve as a pivot at the base of the mountain. On Angkor Wat famous bas-relief, 88 *asuras* and 92 *devas* with crested helmets are seen churning up the sea.

Citrugupta: the record keeper of human deeds and misdeeds.

Cochinchina: (ch 交趾支那 [translit. Tchen-tching, Jaozhi Zhina], kh កសាំងស៊ីន, vn Nam-Ky, Gia-Dinh, Nam-Bo) is the old name given to the lands south of the Gianh River, an area often contested by modern Cambodia and Vietnam. The origin of the term is also contested, some sources attributing it to the Portuguese (Ko-Chen-China, 'the Cochinchina of China', to distinguish it from the Indian Cochinchina), while some linguists have offered the poetic etymology of 'Given Daughter of China'.

Colonette (fr 'colonnnette'): small column, usually decorative in Khmer architecture, standing at either side of a doorway.

Corbel Arch: the technique of arched **passageways** used by Khmer builders, less sturdy than the 'true arch'.

Cornice (fr 'corniche'): decorated projection that crowns or protects an architectural feature such as a doorway. The cornice level is the one immediately above the lintels.

D

Damrei, Dombrei (kh ដំរី): elephant.

Dasharatha: king of Kosala and father of Rama.

Davantaka: a rakasha warrior.

Deva (kh ទេព tep): a deity. An inhabitant of the heavens, sometimes called 'angel'. Like men, the deva are created beings, but their faculties are more powerful and they live much longer.

Devadatta: envious cousin of the Buddha.

Devaputtas: flying male celestial beings.

Devaraja (sk 'god who is king'): the God King, the essence of royalty, supposed to reside in the royal **linga**. Also, the divinity ruling the country. The Sanskrit word corresponds to the Old Khmer phrase **kamrateng jagat ta raja**.

Devata, Tevoda (kh ទេវតា): female deity. Often misnamed as **apasara**, celestial dancer.

Devi (sk 'goddess'): title given to Parvati, wife of **Shiva**. Used as a suffix in Khmer queens' names, i.e. Indradevi.

Dharana (sk 'concentration'): yogi term defining the process of internal visualization, during which the yogin becomes conscious of his own consciousness.

Dharma, Dhamma (sk dharma kh ធម៌ [**Thmo'**, also a king's name]): originally, the natural condition of things, their essence, the fundamental law of their existence. By extension, religious truth, sacred law and path, the doctrines and practices that make up a particular religious system.

Dharmasala (sk 'house of fire' kh សាលាឆន្ទានីស sala chhortien): shelter for the free use of wayfarers or pilgrims, still a feature of Khmer villages. Originally, the 'fire shrine' was used to safeguard the Sacred Fire which was always carried in procession by troops on their campaigns and by the retinue of kings on royal progresses. They are often of laterite or sandstone.

Dhyana Mudra: meditative posture of the Buddha with hands crossed in the lap.

Doem (kh ដើម): plant, trunk.

Dvarapala: A guardian of the temple (**deva** or **asura**), mainly found at entrances.

Durga (sk 'The Unapproachable'): name of a goddess of terrifying aspect, sometimes characterized as one of the spouses of Shiva. She is however often venerated as a separate deity in her own right, notably as Mahishasuramardini, 'She who crushed the asura Mahisha'.

Dukkha (sk 'flawed, unsatisfactory'): the suffering inherent to human condition. The **Pali** canon defines no less than thirteen forms of '**dukkha**', from the physical strain inflicted by natural causes to the spiritual 'unease' of the one fighting his or her negative pulsions.

Duol, Tuol (old kh ត្នោត): hillock, mound.

Dham, Thom (kh ធំ): large, imposing, awesome.

F

Face-Tower (kh ប៉ែប៉ុប៉ុន 'tower with 4 faces') : tower with four faces, the "artistic revolution", "invention with no past nor future bridging sculpture and architecture" in Khmer temples from the 9th until the 13th century", according to George Groslier. Held as the apex of **Tantric Buddhism** architecture.

Faux vaulting: the stones of opposite terraced wall sections that reach each other at the apex.

Ficus Religiosa (kh ដើមពោធិ៍ doem por): sacred tree in Buddhism.

Funan (kh ហ្វួណន, ch 扶南): name of a compound of Indianized states preceding the Angkorian kingdom, on the coast of modern Cambodia and Vietnam. First conquered by Chenla's King Isanavarman I around 627 CE. It has been interpreted as a Chinese transliteration of the Khmer word '**Phnom**', mountain. Also known as **Nokor Phnom** (kh នគរភ្នំ 'Mountain Kingdom') in Khmer.

G

Gajasimha: lion with a snout.

Gambhiresvara (sk 'Lord of the Depths'): one of Shiva's many names.

Ganesha, Ganesh, Ganapati: (sk 'Lord of obstacles'): **Shiva**'s son, the fat-bellied elephant-headed god with a broken tusk. An important deity in the everyday lives of the people, since he is also the god of intelligence. According to one tradition, **Shiva** had beheaded his son by mistake; upon realizing his error, he could only save his son's life by quickly using the head of a nearby elephant.

Ganga: one of the wives of Shiva, goddess of the Ganges River.

Garuda (sk, kh ក្រុន្ត krat): a mythical being, half-man, half-bird, enemy of the **nagas**. **Garudas** are often portrayed on Khmer monuments as telamons, holding up the world of the gods, and nowadays supporting the pagoda roofs. As a proper noun, **Garuda** is the name of the 'vehicle' of the god **Vishnu**.

Garbhaghra (sk 'womb house'): inner chamber of a shrine. In a Khmer sanctuary, it is usually a square cell.

Gautama (fr Gotacma): original name of the 'historic' Buddha.

Ghlâmn, Khleang (dravidian) : storage place, hole housing precious artifacts in a temple ; outbuilding of a larger temple.

Giants (kh យក្ស yeak): an imaginary or mythical being of human form but superhuman size.

Gopura (hybrid of sk and tamil, from tamil *gopuram* according to Saveros Pou): the entrance pavilion or gateway to an Indian or Khmer temple. Often topped with a tower.

Govardhana (sk): the mythical mountain lifted up by **Krishna** to safeguard his shepherds and flocks who were threatened by the furious storm unleashed by **Indra**.

Guhâ, Kohéa, Kohe (sk.): grotto, hole, inner part of a smaller temple, or a smaller temple itself.

Guk, Kuk (from ch 孔) : jail, cell, round cavity in the ground for ritualistic or domestic purposes; inner part of a smaller temple; name given to smaller Khmer temples.

Gupta: a dynasty which ruled northern India in the fourth and fifth centuries. Also, the period which saw the development of one of the finest styles of Indian sculpture, named after that dynasty. **Gupta** style had a profound influence on the early art forms of Indianized Southeast Asia.

Guru (sk kh គ្រូ): 'master', especially as 'spiritual guide'.

H

Hamsa: sacred goose, the mount of Brahma.

Hanuman (kh ហនុម៉ាត): 'The White Monkey' (kh ភ្នំស្រី), chief of the monkey army in the **Ramayana** epic.

Harihara: a god unifying in the same figure Hari (**Vishnu**) and Hara (**Shiva**).

Hevajra: Tantric divinity.

Hinayana (sk 'The Lesser Path'): a name given by Mahayana Buddhists to one of the two main Buddhist traditions, **Theravada** Buddhism. Also know as 'the little vehicle' as opposed to the Mahayana, 'the Great Path'. It is preferable to use the term **Theravada**.

I

lévarapura (sk.) : ancient name of the Banteay Srei Temple site.

Iddhi: The dominion of spirit over matter; the miraculous powers supposedly bestowed by proficiency in yoga, e.g. levitation or the ability to change shape at will.

Ihana (sk dhyana): a yogic trance happening in four distinct stages.

Iina: a 'conqueror', honorary title of Buddha.

Isur (sk) : 'The Almighty', name of Shiva in ancient Cambodia.

Indra (sk, pl **Inda** or **Sakka**): 'king' of the gods, most often portrayed astride his 'vehicle', the three-headed elephant Airavata. **Indra** is the god of extreme weather, causing torrential rains. He is also the 'Regent of the East'. Also '**Mahendra**', the great Indra.

Indraprasth, Intoprasth, Indiprasth, Entrapah (sk Indra + prastha): name of the terrestrial realm of Indra and of its capital city. As **Indapatth, Entabat**, pali name designing Angkor as built by **Bisnukàr** as instructed by Indra, and by extension medieval Cambodia.

Indrapura (1) or **Amarendrapura**: according to inscription on the stele of Sdok Kok Thom, Indrapura or Amarendrapura was the first capital of Jayavarman II reign about 781, before the foundation of Khmer Empire. George Coedes and Claude Jacques identified it with Banteay Prei Nokor, near Kompong Cham, while Michael Vickery assumed it was closer to Kompong Thom. Some scholars have proposed Ak Yum as the center of Amarendrapura. **(2)** name of one of the **Champa kingdom (or principalities) capital cities**, located according to Henri Parmentier Charles Carpeaux at the site of Dong Duong in modern Vietnam.

Indresvara (sk): former name of the Bakong temple, from its founder Indravarman I.

Indriya (pl): faculty, capacity.

Isanapura (Kh: វ្លសានបុរៈ): capital city built by King **Isanavarman I** (7th century, kh វ្លសានវរ្ម័ន, pre-angkorian kh វ្លសានវរ្ម័ន, also known as **Ksatriya Isana**) as the center of the **Chenla** (kh ចេនឡា) confederation of principalities.

Isar, Içar, Eisaur, Issur (Sk isvara): Lord, attribute of Shiva.

J

Jataka (sk and pali 'birth'): important collection of tales and stories related to **Gautama Buddha's** previous births and lives. Part of the collection are the **Mahanipata Jataka** (kh វេសជានិកក tousandok), *The Ten Great Birth Stories of the Buddha*.

Jaya (kh ជ័យ): ‘The Victorious’.

Jomneang Pteas (kh ជំនាងផ្ទះ): the female spirit of house.

Jayasrt (sk): the royal attributes, in particular the sacred sword (cf. **brah khan**).

K

Kabandha: **asura** (demon) slain by **Rama**.

Kailasha: sacred mountain dominating the Himalayas, abode of **Shiva**. In Khmer and Cham traditions, the Dangrek mountains are related to the myth of primal flood, 1) the landing of the boats carrying the first Khmer 2) the shipwreck of the King of Champa the year of Buddha’s death (543 BC). The legend of **Ravana** shaking the Kailasha mountain is depicted in Angkor. Another legend states that “the daughter of the mountain” (Kailasha) married Shiva, and the Khmer dance form **robam kailas** is supposed to perpetuate this story.

Kala: face commonly appearing over doorways, perhaps representing **Rahu**.

Kalanemi: an **asura** enemy of the gods.

Kaliya: **naga** wounded by Krishna.

Kalpa: a cycle of time.

Kama: god of love.

Kambu (sk kamboja kh កំបូ): A 10th century Khmer inscription states that the Indian hermit **Kambu Swayambhuva** and the celestial nymph **Mera** united, thus establishing the Cambodian royal dynasty (Kambu-Mera), that begins with the **Chenla** ruler **Srutavarman** and his son **Sreshthavarman**. In the Vedic tradition, Kambu Swayambhuva was the ancestor of the Indian **Kambuja** tribe and king of **Aryadesa**.

Kampuchea, Kambuja (sk कम्बोज kambuja, old kh កម្ពុជ, kh កម្ពុជ្ជា): name of the people and country before the **Chenla** and **Funan** kingdoms. The ancient name for Cambodia, lit. ‘offspring of **Kambu**’, the country’s mythical founder. **Name of the Khmer Empire** in various languages (Italian, Spanish, Portuguese Kamboya or Kamboja, French Camboge or Camoge, Old Javanese Kamboja). Also **Kambujadeśa** (Sanskrit: कम्बुजदेश, old kh កម្ពុជទេស, kh កម្ពុជទេស).

Kamrateng jagat ta raja (kh កាព័តនចាកាតាតារាជ្ជា): ‘the god who is king’, reigning over all the local divinities, whether that of a kingdom or the deity of the whole Khmer empire. According to other interpretations, celestial equivalent of the earthly king.

Kamsa: uncle of Krishna who attempted to kill him when he was young.

Kanaka: king of Mithila, father of Sita.

Kandha (pl ‘heap’, ‘lump’): the five constituents of human condition in the Buddhist concept of **anatta**: body, feelings, perception, volition and consciousness.

Kandrajit: son of Ravana.

Kanloñ (old kh): cavity, chamber, inner part of a small temple ; the temple itself; treasure kept in a temple; archives.

Katayus: the king of vultures.

Kanthaka (kh កណ្ណក): the Buddha's horse.

Kantuy Krapoe (kh កន្ទុយក្រពើ): *Aquilaria Aloexyle*, aloes wood. The Khmer name means ‘crocodile tail’.

Karma (sk karman pl **Kamma** kh កម្ម kam): actions or deeds which determine one being's subsequent existences.

Kaundinya (pl kondañña chhun tein): the first Indian prince to set foot in Cambodia, according to an oral and written tradition. Smitten by the daughter of the Naga King whom he saw dancing on the sand, he married her (**Neang Neak**) and the Khmer people are their offspring. Eponym of a famous brahmin among the first disciples of Gautama Buddha, or perhaps his reincarnation. See also **Preah Thaong**.

Kauravas: the tribe who fought the **Pandavas**.

Kavindrarithana (kh ការិន្ទ្រវិមាថាណ): a Buddhist minister of King Rajendravarman, in charge of the construction of several temples around Angkor in the 10th century. He is the only “architect” namely mentioned in inscriptions that have come to our knowledge.

Kbach (kh ក្បាច់): decorative elements in Cambodian architecture and sculpture, mostly inspired by natural motives (flowers, etc...). Also, in Khmer classical dance, any dance gesture, distinct style or rhythm: **Kbach Rongvoel** (kh ក្បាច់រង្វើល) ‘slow’, **Kbach Banchos** (kh ក្បាច់បន្ទះ) ‘fast’, **Kbach Lea** (kh ក្បាច់លា) ‘farewell’, **Kbach Choet** (kh ក្បាច់ចិត) ‘flying’, **Kbach Smeu** (kh ក្បាច់ស្នើ) ‘entering and leaving’, **Kbach Mul** (kh ក្បាច់មូល) ‘gods’ round dance’.

Kdei Ang, Ktí aṅg: a linga sanctuary (cf. aṅg).

Keo Fiy: title of the king's eldest son.

Ker (kh កេរ្តិ៍): glory.

Ketu: a monster who creates comets and meteors, born from the tail of Rahu.

Ketumâlâ (sk.): in medieval Angkor, name of the legendary first sovereign of the city erected by Bisnukâr as instructed by Indra.

Khandha (sk 'heaps, bundles, lumps'): the constituents of the human personality in the Buddha's theory of anatta, The five 'heaps' are body, feelings, perception, volition and consciousness.

Khnar (old kh ខ្មែរ) : protection, protective ; qui protège ; outer walls of a town or a temple.

Khmer or Angkorian Architecture (kh ស្ថាបត្យកម្មខ្មែរ): architectural styles and techniques developed by the Khmer people from the 8th to the 15th centuries, with three main building materials: bricks, laterite and sandstone.

Khnyum (kh ខ្ញុំបម្រើ khnyom bomrer): slave, especially 'slave of the gods' when in temple service.

Kinnara, Kinnari (sk, kh កេណរ kenor): male and female flying demiurges often depicted as a frieze of winged human figures, as at **Banteay Chhmar** (kh បន្ទាយឆ្មារ). In Indian art, they are shown as winged horses. In Cambodia's **Reamker**, they often appear in dance tableaux.

Kiyr (sk kara): act, deed.

Kiratas: hunters.

Kok (kh កុក): numerous.

Koh (kh កោះ): island.

Koh Ker, Koh Ker (old kh *gargyar* កោះកេរ្តិ៍) : the *Hopea odorata* (Dipter.) tree; according to Saveros Pou, derivative name given to the group of temples erected by Jayavarman IV northeast of Angkor.

Kolthida (kh កុលធីតា): Khmer proper name, meaning "daughter of a respectable family".

Kompong, Kampong (kh កំពង់): bank of a river. Riverside town or village.

Komsan (kh កំសាន្ត): relaxing time, rest.

Kosal (កុសល): Khmer proper name, meaning "good deed".

Kosala: the legendary kingdom in **Ramayana** epic.

Kosiy (p): alternative name for the Buddhist Indra, present in scriptures and folktales.

Kravann (kh ក្រវាស់): "cardamom" in Khmer.

Krei, Krei Sneung (kh ក្រែ, ក្រែស្នែង): bed, **palanquin**, movable litter sometimes shaded with awning.

Kresna (kh គ្រីស្នា): *Aquilaria Agallocha*, eagle wood.

Krishna (sk): the eighth and best-known of Vishnu's **avatara**, Krishna is a god who has many human adventures. In the **Mahabharata**, he is the one who recites the great Hindu devotional poem, the **Bhagavadgita**.

Krong, Kurung (kh ក្រុង): king, capital city, kingdom. **Kurung** was the title used by the kings of the Angkor period to refer to previous Khmer monarchs.

Kru (kh គ្រូ): teacher.

Kru Baramey (kh គ្រូបារមី, Rub រូប, Memot មេមត់): someone who acts a medium between human beings and spirits, helping to connect and communicate with each other.

Ksatriya: The caste of warriors, noblemen and aristocrats responsible in Aryan society for government and defense.

Ktî, Kuti, Kdei (sk.) : monastic cell, in particular in Buddhist monasteries ; a niche in a temple; a smaller temple.

Kubera: Lord of Wealth, Men and Genii. Guardian of the North.

Kukkucca (pl): remorse, afterthought after doing something negative or missing the opportunity of a good deed.

Kumbha: rakshasa, son of **Kumbhakarna**.

Kumbhakarna: rakshasa, brother of **Ravana** who attempts to kill **Rama**.

Kuoy (kh ក្លុយ): an ethnic group speaking a language related to Khmer and living mainly in the region of Kompong Svay, some 90 kilometers east of Angkor. They specialized in ironwork.

Kumpeak (kh កុម្ភៈ): "February" in Khmer.

Kulapati (sk, kh XX): head of a learning association, or asrama, in Ancient Angkor.

Kurma: king of tortoises, one of the **avatars** of **Vishnu**.

Kusala: The 'skillful' or 'helpful' states of mind and heart that Buddhists should cultivate in order to achieve enlightenment.

L

Lakhon, Lokhon (kh ល្ខោន): Khmer ceremonial dance dating back to the reign of Jayavarman II, Angkor sovereign also named **Preah Ket Mealea** or **Paramesvara**.

Lakshmana: one of **Rama**'s brothers and his chief companion in his exile and battles.

Lakshmi (sk): spouse of Vishnu, the goddess of beauty, fortune and wealth. She automatically became a 'wife' of the Khmer kings when they accessed to the throne.

Lanka, Langka (kh លង្ការ): kingdom ruled by **Ravana**, a rival of Rama.

Laterite: porous, reddish, easily extracted rock containing iron.

Leap (kh លោក): "good luck, success".

Li (ch): a unit of length which varied over time. In the third century AD it is estimated to have measured about 375 meters, whereas Beal, in his translation of the early fifth century 'Pilgrimage to India' of the Chinese Buddhist, Fah Hian, calculates it as circa 322 meters.

'Libraries' (sk granthalaya, kh បណ្ណាល័យ 'bandaly'): structures separated from the main buildings, usually found in pairs in front of the main entrance leading to the temple to a yard. More probably shrines than storage places for sacred texts, they almost always open to the west. It seems that these structures served, at least partly, as 'Fire shrines'. Also called 'Thormatrai' (probably from 'hotrai' in Thai).

Lintel: stone or masonry block bridging two entrance pillars, either structural or purely decorative element. The **structural lintel** is the load-bearing upper member of a stone doorframe, usually concealed for the most part.

Linga, Lingam: phallus symbol representing the procreative essence of Shiva. Adopted by the Khmer kings as the palladian of the kingdom.

Linga (sk): an icon in the shape of a stylized phallus, worshipped as a deity symbolizing Shiva but also as the pillar which shores up the earth.

Lingaparvata (sk 'the mountain of the linga'): the sacred mountain at **Wat Phu** (modern Laos).

Lok (Sk loka, Kh លោក): man, lord. In modern Khmer, 'Mister' or 'Sir', or priest.

Lokapalas: guardians of the cardinal directions.

Lokeshvara: another name for **Avalokitesvara**, preferred by the Khmers.

Lokeshvara (sk 'Lord of the World'): an alternative name for the bodhisattva **Avalokitesvara**.

Lolei, Lalây (sk. hariharâlaya): the abode of **Harihara** ; name of one of Jayavarman II's capital city; current name of the Lolei Temple.

M

Mahabharata (sk): one of the great Indian epic poems. Its 120,000 stanzas contain a myriad of different tales but the main theme is the power struggle between the five Pandava brothers and their cousins the Kauravas.

Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī (pl, sk **Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī**): the Buddha's adoptive mother and first **bikkhuni**.

Mahaparinirvana: attainment of extinction of the self and cessation of the cycle or becoming.

Maharajadhiraja (sk 'Supreme King of Kings'): title first adopted by Jayavarman II in 802 AD and used by all subsequent Khmer kings.

Mahayana (sk 'The Great Path'): in Buddhism, it contrasts with 'Hinayana' (**Theravada**) code which preceded it historically. Mahayana is a development of the Buddhist creed in which the **Buddha** and the **Bodhisattvas** are venerated with rituals which are close to those of Hinduism.

Mahendra (sk ma+Indra): 'the great Indra'.

Mahii, Mohii (sk, pl): 'great'.

Mahiparvata: sacred mountain.

Mahishi (sk 'cow-buffalo'): the enigmatic title given in some inscriptions to refer to the senior wife of the Khmer king.

Mahout (sk 'Mahamatra', ta Kwan Chang): the man who drives the elephant.

Mahunagar (sk.): 'The Great City', name given to the Angkor group.

Majapahit (old jv 'bitter maja (local fruit)'): perhaps the greatest of the early Indonesian kingdoms, it was founded in 1293 in East Java by Wijaya, who defeated the invading Mongols. Under the ruler Hayam Wuruk (1350-89) it expanded across Java and gained control over much of present-day Indonesia—large parts of Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi, Borneo, Lombok, Maluku, Sumbawa, Timor and other scattered islands. Trade relations were established with Cambodia, Siam, Burma and Vietnam. According to the **Nagarakretagama** (Desawarñana) written in 1365, Majapahit was an empire of 98 tributaries, stretching from Sumatra to New Guinea. It is sometimes seen as the precedent for Indonesia's modern boundaries.

Makara (sk kh មករា): crocodile (or fish-based composite monster), sometimes characterized as the 'vehicle' of Varuna, god of the oceans. Sculptural motive largely present at Banteay Srei. In Khmer architecture, often a hybrid mix of crocodile, fish, tapir, bird and elephant.

Mandapa (sk): antechamber, pavilion preceding the temple's main shrine, sometimes connected to it via the antarala passageway. In **Shiva** temples it may house the god's 'vehicle' - the bull Nandi.

Mandara: mythological mountain of the gods, the king of mountains at the center of the Ocean.

Mandir (sk.): palace, prince's residence, or large public building.

Mara: the god who rules over the world of desire, enemy of the Buddha.

Mariea: the demon transformed into a deer or gazelle to distract **Rama**.

Mayavati: the reincarnation of Rati, the wife of Kama.

Mebon (kh មេបុណ្យ): Ceremonial place, always built as an artificial island in the center of a water reservoir.

Meru, Mount Meru (kh មេរុ ភ្នំមេរុ): in the Hindu worldview, the center of the universe, home of the gods. This mountain of Indian cosmology has five peaks, hence the five towers of **Angkor Wat**.

Mesa (kh មេសា): the month of April.

Methea (sk medhii): wisdom.

Metreypheap (kh មេត្រីភ្នំ): Female Khmer proper name, meaning "friendliness".

Metrey, Maitreya (sk maitreya kh មេត្រី): name of a famous bodhisattva.

Minea (kh មីនា): the month of March.

Mitona (kh មិថុនា): the month of June.

Mitthapeap (kh មិត្តភាព): Khmer proper name, meaning "friendship".

Modaka: a sort of sweetmeat favored by **Ganesha**.

Mohodara: a rakshasa from the Battle of Lanka.

Mokot (sk mukkuta kh មកុដ ឬ មង្គដ): conical head-dress worn by the apsaras. Crown, tiara.

Mon (pl ramanna kh មន): large ethnic group initially inhabiting parts of modern Burma and Thailand.

Mon-Khmer (kh មន-ខ្មែរ) is a linguistic group of Austroasiatic languages.

Monorom (kh មនោរម្យ): Male Khmer proper name, meaning "delightful".

Montrei (pl, sk **Mantrin**, kh មន្ត្រី): minister, or some sort of high-ranking office. Via the Portuguese language, it gave the Western idioms the word 'mandarin'.

Mony (kh មណី, មុនី): Khmer proper name, from មណី ("precious stone") or មុនី ("scholar").

Muchalinda: The **naga** king who sheltered the Buddha while he meditated.

Mudra: hand or body gesture.

Muka: a demon.

N

Naga (sk naga, kh ណាហ្គា): mythical serpent-guardians of the nether regions and eternal foes of the garuda. The most prominent enjoy semi-divine status such as Shesha, companion of Vishnu, and Vasuki who acts as the rope in the **Churning of the Milk Ocean**. Ubiquitous in Khmer art, the naga is portrayed as a cobra with five or seven heads. Their female equivalents are the nagi (water-nymphs with human bodies and snake-tails).

Nagar (sk): city, kingdom. **Nagara: Angkor**.

Nalgiri: mad elephant sent to kill the Buddha by his jealous cousin.

Nandi: the sacred bull of **Shiva**.

Naraka: a demon slain by **Indra**.

Narantaka: one of Ravana's sons.

Navagraha (sk "nine celestial bodies of the Universe"): the nine celestial bodies-deities in Hindu astrology: **Surya** or Ravi (the Sun), **Chandra** or **Soma** (the Moon) **Mangala** (Mars), **Budha** or Budh (Mercury), **Dev Guru** or **Brihaspati** (Jupiter), **Shukra** (Venus), **Shani** (Saturn) **Rahu** (Ascending Lunar node), **Ketu** (Descending Lunar node).

Nbom (pl): name of a prince.

Neak (kh ង្គក): human being. **Anak sanjak** (men) seems to be a specific term to describe some sort of 'royal praetorian guard'. Angkorian kings' female guards are called in Khmer ឆ្មាមស្រី (chhman srei).

Neak-ta (kh ង្គកតា): local deities associated with particular places.

Neang Neak (sk soma ch liuye kh នាងនាគ): in Khmer mythology, the daughter of the King of the Nagas whose union with **Preah Thaong (Kaundinya)** gave birth to Cambodia. According to Chinese chronicles, as Queen Soma or Liu Yeh in Chinese, she was the first ruler of **Funan**.

Nikumba: rakshasa son of **Kumbhakarna**.

Nikaya: 'Collections' of discourses in the **Pali** Canon.

Nilaphat: the monkey general of **Sugriva's** army. 'Black Monkey' (kh ស្លាខ្មៅ) in the Reamker.

Nirrti (Kh នីរតី): god of misery, guardian of the Southwest.

Nirvana, nibbana (sk निर्वाण *nirvāṇa*, kh និព្វាន *nippean*): the liberation of the repeating cycle of birth, life and death, **samsara**.

Niyamas: The bodily and psychological disciplines which are a prerequisite for yogic meditation.

Nokor (sk nagara kh នគរ): town, royal town, Angkor.

O

Obareach, Oppariij (sk upa+riija kh ឧបរាជ): title of the elder brother of the king, or second king.

Oknea, Oknya (sk ukna, kh ឱកញ៉ា): title of a grandee.

Oksakphear (kh ឱសកា): the month of May.

Omreth (kh អម្រឹត): "immortal".

Ongkiir, Ongkara (sk om + kiira): sacred word, royal order.

Ong, Ang (sk 'oil'): title of a grandee.

Outey (sk udaya, kh ឱទ័យ): sunrise, name of a king or prince.

P

Pa (sk Pii, kh ប៉ា): father.

Pabbajja: 'Going Forth', the act of renouncing the world in order to live the holy life of a monk. Later, the first step in Buddhist ordination.

Pachem (kh បាគីម): west.

Pâgan, Bakong (old kh *vakori* បាកុង): species of lily, *Crinum asiaticum* (Amaryll.); ancient name given posthumously to the Indresvara temple, found by Indravarman I.

Pâgo, Bako (kh ប្រាសាទ): Shiva's bull, Nandin ; name given to the Bako temple.

Pákhaeñ, Bakheng (kh brah khaeñ) : sacred manhood, Shiva's linga ; name given to the temple founded by Yasovarman I, Yasodhareévara (sk) or Vnam Kantal (old kh).

Palanquin (sk palyanka, pl pallanko, 16th century Portuguese 'palanquim'): couch, litter carried on shoulders or domesticated animals

Pali (kh បាលី): best-known among a group of Indian languages known as the **Prakrits**, **pali** is the religious language in the canon of Theravada Buddhist scriptures used in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia.

Palmette (fr palmette): a motif in decorative art resembling the fan-shaped leaves of a palm tree.

Pandava: found in the name of a king; also the name of Srei Santhor.

Pandavas: the tribe who fought the **Kauravas** in the Battle of Kurukshetra.

Pandày, Banteay (kh បន្ទាយ): **outer wall, fortification, fortress, military barracks. For instance in Banteay Kdei.**

Pandita, Pandit (sk): sage, man of letters.

Pandu: father of **Arjuna**, head of the **Pandava** tribe.

Panha (pl pañña kh ប្រាណៈ): knowledge, wisdom.

Parashurama (sk 'Rama with an axe'): **Vishnu**'s sixth avatara and the brother of **Rama** and **Balarama**. He descended to earth to put an end to the oppression of the Kshatrya (the 'nobles' caste). His weapon is the axe, a gift from **Shiva**.

Paramavisnuloka (sk.): posthumous name of Suryavarman II, founder of Angkor Wat then named Bisnulok.

Parinibbana: the 'Final Nibbana', the ultimate rest of an enlightened person achieved at death, since he or she will not be reborn into another existence.

Parvati (sk 'She from the mountains'): daughter of Himavan, god of the Himalayas, Parvati, also known as **Uma** or **Devi**, is Shiva's main consort.

Patimokkha (pl pati 'protect' + mokkha 'liberation'): Summary in form of 227 rules of the **Vinaya**, the Theravada canon. Also, a ceremony whereby the early monks came together every six years to recite the Buddhist Dhamma; later, after the Buddha's death, this became a recitation of the monastic rule of the Order and a confession of transgressions, which was held once a fortnight.

Pancha Yatana: in Hindu religious architecture, a temple with a main central sanctuary surrounded by four other shrines and connected to them by cloisters.

Pediment (fr 'fronton'): triangular structure above a lintel, the external, decorated surface of which is called **tympanum**.

Phalla (kh ផ្លា, sk. Phala): fruit.

Phanet (kh ផាណិត): sugarcane.

Pheakdei (kh ភក្តី): devotion, respect, loyalty.

Phkeak (kh. ផ្កាក): a billhook, characteristic Khmer weapon, long handled club with two blades inserted at an angle.

Phnom (kh ភ្នំ): mountain, hill, hillock.

Phum (kh ភូមិ): village.

Pilaster: square- or rectangular-sectioned pillar that is actually engaged in the wall, becoming a projection.

Pinda (sk): ball of rice offered to the ancestors.

Piñ Mâlâ, Beng Méaléa: derivative name of a temple east of Angkor.

Plauv, Plu, Pleuh (or Thnal) (kh ផ្លូវ): road – or street in modern Khmer -, Old Khmer term ascribed to the royal roads leading from Angkor to other parts of the Khmer Empire, such as **Pimai** to the north-west and **Wat Phu** to the north-east.

Ponhea, Pnhea (kh ព្រហ្ម): princely title, referring to pre-Angkorian times.

Portico: a columned hall at the entrance of a building.

Pradakshina (sk): ritual circumambulation of a temple or statue, in India and Southeast Asia, always keeping the venerated object to one's right.

Pradymna: son of **Krishna** and **Rukmini**, the goddess of fortune.

Prahasiteshvara: (sk 'The Smiling Lord'): one of **Shiva**'s many names.

Prajnaparamita (sk 'prajna' (wisdom) 'paramita' (perfection), kh ប្រាជ្ញាបារមីតា): the 'Perfection of Wisdom', a collection of some 40 **sutras** considering the transcendent wisdom and its personification as 'God Mother'. Among the oldest known **Mahayana** sutras. **Prajnaparamita** was revered as a goddess. The **Ta Prohm** temple near Angkor Wat is dedicated to her, and her representation there is believed to reproduce the facial traits of **Jayaraçudamani**, Jayavarman VII's mother.

Prajiaparamita: the female version of the **bodhisattva**.

Prajnyaparamita (sk 'Perfection of Insight'): the female personification of the Bodhisattva's qualities.

Praktri: Nature, the natural world.

Pralamba: a mystic mountain.

Prali: roof finial.

Pranayama: the breathing exercises of yoga, which induce a state of trance and well-being.

Prang (kh ប្រាង្គ ta prang): tall spire, usually intricately carved, characteristic of Khmer devotional architecture. With its many niches ornated with devotional statues, the **prang** is characteristic of the rise of Theravada Buddhism in the Angkorean sphere. Several **prasats** (Brahmanic temples) have been modified into **prangs** in the last centuries of the Angkorean era (end of 12th-15th centuries). Also, a large stupa.

Prasat (sk prasada kh ប្រាសាទ): sanctuary or palace in form of a tower, architectural style from South India widespread around Southeast Asia. **Prasat Andet** (syn. **Biman**) is the temple or palace floating in the air. **Prasat Krol Ko** (temple-stables) is the name of a smaller temple northeast of the Bayon, reputedly having housed the sacred bull, first guardian of Angkor.

Prasathani (sk raja + dhani): royal town, in the name of a king.

Prasavya: a funerary rite.

Prataw (kh ប្រដៅ): to teach, to discipline.

Pratyahara: in yoga, a 'withdrawal of the senses,' the ability to contemplate an object with the intellect alone.

Preah, Prah, Pra (kh ព្រះ): pertaining to anything sacred, holy. As a noun, associated to 'Put' in 'Preah Put', the Buddha's name in Khmer.

Preah Ket Maelea (kh ព្រះកេតមាលា): 'Blossoming Light', name given to the first sovereign of Angkor, Jayavarman II who, according to a Khmer legend, was sired when Indra let drop a 'rain of flowers' over the body of his childless mother, fecundating her.

Preah Noreay (sk niiriyana kh ព្រះនរាយណ៍): name of Vishnu (kh វិស្ណុ), a king or a prince.

Preah Thaong (kh ព្រះថោង 'the Prince of Faraway Land'): In some Khmer traditions, name of an Indian prince who came to a new land called **Chroy Sovannapumi** (kh ជ្រោយសុវណ្ណភូមិ 'Cape of The Golden Coast'), Kampuchea or Cambodia), which was originally known as 'Norkor Kok Tlok' (kh នគរគោកឆ្នុក 'Kingdom of the Dry Tlok Tree').

Prè Rup, Praeh Rup (kh ប្រែរូប) : funerary ritual aimed at recreating the form (*rup*) of the deceased with his or her ashes after cremation; name given posthumously to the monument erected by Râjendravarma, probably in tribute to his ancestor Visvarûpa.

Proh (kh ប្រុស): man.

Prolang (kh ព្រលឹង): soul or spirit (according to Cambodian tradition there are 19 major and minor souls which inhabit the human body).

Puri, Borey (sk) (kh បុរី): space enclosed by a fence or outer walls, by extension a village, a small town or a fortified temple.

Purohita (sk 'superintendent'): the king's closest assistant. Also, the **brahmin priest** in charge of royal rituals.

Purusa: The Absolute Spirit that pervades all beings in the philosophy of Samkhya.

Put (sk **buddha** kh ព្រះពុទ្ធ): the Buddha.

Q

Quincunx: architectural arrangement of five objects in which four occupy the corners and the fifth the centre. Also **Pancha Yatana**.

R

Rahu (kh រាហូ): mythical demon said to cause eclipses of the sun or moon by eating it, assuming the shape of a meteor.

Raja (sk 'King', kh រាជ): as used by the Khmers, it refers to a minor potentate.

Rajaputra (sk 'king's son'): used to designate the male offspring of the supreme king as well as that of other royal lineages.

Rajahota: royal priest.

Rajalalisatana: a way of sitting with one knee propped up, used mainly by princely people.

Rakshasa: demon.

Rakshini: female rakshasa, demoness.

Rama (kh រាម Ream): the seventh and one of the best known of Vishnu's **avatara**.

Ramayana (sk kh 'Reamker' រាមកេរ្តិ៍): Major Indian epic poem which remains very popular in Southeast Asia, narrates the adventures of **Rama** and his spouse **Sita** whose kidnapping by the demon **Ravana** and imprisonment in (Sri) Lanka sparks a ferocious war with Rama and his monkey army commanded by its semi-divine general, **Hanuman**. Generally attributed to Maharisi Valmiki ('Adi Kavi', 'the first poet'), it is one of the two major Sanskrit epics with the **Mahābhārata**.

Rambha: a nymph with whom **Viradha** fell in love.

Rapala: guardian deities of doors and entrance ways.

Ravana: the demon king of **Langka**. As a powerful demon-king he is depicted with six, eight or ten heads and twelve, sixteen or twenty arms. Brahma had granted him immunity from the gods but he had been too proud to ask also for immunity from men and animals. This was to prove his downfall, dramatically narrated in the Ramayana epic.

Rattha (pl rattha, sk rastea, kh រត្នា): country, land, kingdom.

Reach, Reachea (sk raja, kh រាជ, រាជ្យ): kingdom, king.

Reamea (sk rama kh រាមា): **Rama**. Also, name of a king or prince.

Reamker, Ramakerti (kh រាមកេរ្តិ៍ 'the glory of Rama'): Khmer version of the **Ramayana** epic.

Redenting: architectural treatment of a structure in plan whereby the corners are indented (cut back) into successive right angles.

Rig Veda: collection of sacrificial hymns dedicated to a pantheon of gods, composed from 1200 BCE.

Rishi: a great sage or illuminated being.

Roloeng (kh រំលើង): uprooted.

Rolung (sk ralun): grand, imposing. In Khmer, the suffix run, -rung (khm.) means 'large', 'high', 'imposing'.

Roluos (kh រលួស) : the Erythrina indica tree, coral or butterfly tree, present in Indra's paradise; name of the historic site including Bako, Bakong and Lolei.

Rudra: a Vedic god from the **Rig Veda**.

Rup (pl rupa sk riipa kh រូប): form, shape.

Ryodhalla: the wicked eldest son of King **Ritarashtra** who precipitated a major battle with Bhima.

S

Sabha (sk): The general word for an assembly, of whatever nature.

Sacred Furrow (kh ពិធីប្រគំព្រះនង្គ័ល): an annual Khmer ceremony in which the monarch ploughs the first furrow to bless and symbolise the beginning of the paddy-sowing season. The rite is also performed in India.

Sak (sk sakti, kh សក្តិ): rank, honor.

Saka: the Indian era most commonly used in the inscriptions, preceding the Christian era by 78 years.

Sakhi (sk sakha): monk. Also from sk **saktisiddhi**, 'endowed with spiritual power'.

Sakra: the wheel of the Buddha, signifying immortality and power.

Sakti: the female consorts or feminine energy of the Hindu pantheon.

Sakyamiini: 'The Sage of the Republic of Sakka,' a title given to the Buddha.

Samiidhi: yogic concentration; meditation; one of the components of the Eightfold Path to Enlightenment.

Samkhya (sk 'discrimination'): a philosophy, akin to yoga, which was first preached by the sage **Kapila** in the 7th century BCE.

Samdach, Sdach (kh សម្តេច, ស្តេច): powerful, power holder. Royal title preceding the name of a dignitary or eminent person.

Sampati: The vulture brother of **Jatayus**.

Samphea (kh សំពះ): salutation, for instance in 'Pithi Samphea Kru', the salutation to the dance masters before a performance.

Sampot (kh សំពត់): short skirt worn around the waist. Also **sarong**.

Sampur, Sambor (sk): derivative from Śambhupura, Shiva's city.

Sampur vraï kuk, Sambor Prei Kuk: name of the pre-Angkorean temple, derivative from Isanapura, Isanavarman I's capital city.

Samsara (sk 'Keeping going'): the cycle of death and rebirth, which propels people from one life to the next; the transience and restlessness of mundane existence.

Sangreach, Sangkhareach (sk samgha+raja, kh សង្ឃរាជ): chief Buddhist monk.

Sangha: Originally a tribal assembly, an ancient governing body in the old republics of North India; later a sect professing the dhamma of a particular teacher; finally, the Buddhist Order of Bhikkhus.

Sankhara: (sk 'formation'): the formative element in **karma**, which determines and shapes one's next existence.

Sanskrit (kh សំស្ក្រឹត): considered the 'perfect' sacred language of India. The Khmers used it in preference to their native tongue to address the gods.

Sarabhanga: ascetic group visited by **Rama**, **Sita**, and **Lakshmana**.

Sarasvati: spouse of Brahma.

Sarnma Sambuddha: 'Teacher of Enlightenment', one of whom comes to humanity every 32,000 years; Siddhatta Gautama is the **Sarnma Sambuddha** of our own age.

Sastra (often in kh សាស្ត្រាស្តីករិក 'sloek rith'): dried palm leaf manuscript, a medium used since medieval times to write down oral traditions, medicinal treatises. In 2009, there were about 4,000 sets of palm leaf manuscripts at the Saravoan Techo pagoda, 2,000 in the National Museum and 2,500 in the National Library, and many more in pagoda or private libraries around the country.

Satha, Sadha (sk sastar, pl sattha kh សេដ្ឋា): 'he who governs', name of a king.

Satyabhama: wife of **Garuda**.

Satyavati: step-mother of **Bishma**.

Satyabhama: wife of **Garuda**.

Satyavati: stepmother of **Bishma**.

Sedei, Stupa: a funerary or commemorative monument usually containing the remains of incineration.

Sek, Seksa, Ses (sk sisya): disciple, novice.

Serna, Sema (sk sima, kh សីមា): boundary stone, frontier.

Shaivism (sk शैवसम्प्रदायः Śaivasampradāyah) is the major Hindu tradition that worships Shiva, also called Rudra as the Supreme Being. One of the largest Hindu denominations, it includes many sub-traditions ranging from devotional dualistic theism such as Shaiva Siddhanta to yoga-oriented monistic non-theism such as Kashmiri Shaivism. Shaivism arrived in Southeast Asia around the 11th century CE, inspiring thousands of Shaiva temples around Indonesia, Cambodia and Vietnam, and co-evolving with Buddhism in these areas.

Shambara: the demon of drought, enemy of **Indra**.

Shastra (kh សាស្ត្រា): Indian architectural treatises.

Shikara: pointed tower in Indian architecture; a tapering superstructure to the chamber of a sanctuary originating from Orissa.

Shiva (sk 'The Auspicious One' kh ព្រះសិវៈ): god of the ascetics, of cosmic destruction and creation. The Hindu god who creates through destruction, particularly revered among ancient Khmer people. Part of the Brahmanic trinity, the Creator and Destroyer, mounted on **Nandin** (the sacred bull), generally with a third frontal eye and a crescent on the chignon, worshipped in the form of the **linga**.

Shuddhodama: King Father of the future Buddha.

Shurpanakha: rakshini, sister of **Ravana**.

Shuddhodama: King Father of the future Buddha.

Sinha, Singha, Singh (sk 'lion blood'(bravery), kh សិង្ហ, ch 獅 (shī): The Guardian Lion, a stone sculpture adorning many palace and temple entrance).

Sikhara, Shikara (sk. Śikharah), a tall, often beehive-shaped superstructure set above the inner sanctum of a Hindu temple in northern Indian temple design. The towered temple style evolved from one to three, four or six towers.

Sita (sk 'The Furrow' kh សីតា): wife of **Rama**, daughter of **Janaka**.

Skanda: the god of war, son of Shiva.

Soma: god of the moon, guardian of the Northeast.

Somasutra: gargoyle, or spout, through which lustral water runs outside from the shrine. Often ending with a carved *makara* head at the spout. Indicative of a **Saivite** temple.

Soryotei (sk siirya + udaya, kh សុរិយោទ័យ): honorific name of a king or prince.

Soryopor (pl siiryabar, sk surya + varman, Kh សុរិយោពាណី): name of a king or prince.

Spean (kh ស្ពាន): bridge.

Srah (kh ស្រះ ta 'sa'): pond, water basin.

Srau (pl srirv, kh ស្រូវ): rice before germination; **sreu loeng tam tuk** (kh ស្រូវឡើងតាមទឹក) rice which rises with the water.

Srei (sk sri, kh ស្រី): woman, girl, princess.

Srī Sundhar, Srey Santhor (sk): medieval form of Yasodharapura; name of a capital city in the 16th century.

Stele: stone slab standing vertically, with sculptural designs or inscriptions.

Stucco: ornamental plaster covering wall surfaces. Also called **render**, it is a construction material made of aggregates, a binder, and water, which is applied wet and hardens while drying.

Stung (Kh ស្ទឹង): river.

Stupa (kh ចេតិយ): Buddhist reliquary shrine in the shape of an upturned begging-bowl.

Sugriva, Sukhreeb (kh ស្វិត្រីវា): a monkey king – 'Red Monkey' (kh ស្វិត្រីវា) who allied himself with **Rama** to attack **Ravana**. His half-brother **Valin** had deposed him, but Sugriva regained power by killing him in hand-to-hand combat - a popular episode in the Ramayana, often shown in Khmer and Southeast Asian art.

Sujata: the young girl who presented a gift to the Buddha before his enlightenment.

Sukhonthor (sk Sugandha kh សុកន្ទ្រិន្ទា): 'The Fragrant One', in the name of a king.

Sumadei (sk sumati, kh សុមាតី): 'The Benevolent', in the name of a king.

Sunda: the asura who fought with Upasand and caused havoc on earth.

Surya (kh សុរិយា, សុរិយា): god of sun, father of **Sugriva**.

Sûryaparvata, Suryâdri (sk) : hill and temple founded by Suryavarman I, known as **Phnom Chisor** in modern times.

Sushena: monkey general, father of **Tara**, **Valin**'s wife.

Sutta (pl **Sutta**, sk **Sutra**): a discourse, a reasoning. In Pali language, literally means 'the common thread'

Swayamvara: a ceremony where a bride can choose her consort.

T

Tanha (pl kh លោភលន់ lophon): the 'craving' or 'desire' which is the most powerful cause of suffering.

Tantric Buddhism (also called **Vajrayana**, **Tantrayana**, Mantrayana, and in Japan Mikkyo 'secret teachings'): originated in medieval India, esoteric spirituality focusing on meditation and visualization of deities and Buddhas. King Jayavarman VII was a preeminent follower. **Cakrasamvaratantra** is one of the main roots texts of the Buddhist esoteric wave.

Tantrism: a form of Buddhism which grew from the Mahayana and favored the use of magic formulae (mantra), symbols (yantra), and diagrams (mandala) to compel the gods to bestow magic power on the worshipper.

Tapas (pl): asceticism; self-mortification.

Tara: wife of **Valin**.

Tataka: rakshini, mother of **Marica**.

Tathagata: 'Thus Gone,' the title given to the **Buddha** after enlightenment, sometimes translated as 'the Perfect One.'

Techo (sk tejas, pl tejo, kh តែចេរ): honorific title of a grandee.

Tenon (fr 'tenon', 'mortaise'): a projecting piece of wood or masonry made for insertion into a **mortise** in another piece. Several smaller statues in Khmer temples have a **tenon** in their base.

Tep Roam (Kh ទេពរាំ): the spirit of dance.

Tep Monorom (kh ទេពមនោរម្យ): a female group dance with expresses courtship and the happiness of gods and goddesses.

Thani (sk dhani): town, city.

Theravada (sk vada path + thera ancient, 'The Path of the Elders'): disparagingly referred to by its opponents as **hinayana** ('the inferior or lower path') this major sect of Buddhism flourishes nowadays in Sri Lanka and mainland Southeast Asia. Its adepts maintain that they practice accordingly to the original teaching of Buddha, contained in the **Pali canon**, the **Tipitaka**.

Threach (sk adhi+raja, kh ធ្មីរាជ): supreme king, in the name of kings.

Thom (kh ធំ): large, big.

Thommo (sk dharma, kh ធម្ម): the law, the holy law; a name of a king.

Thupdei (sk adhi + pati kh ធ្មីបតី): supreme master, in the name of kings.

Tilottama: female deity created by the gods to pacify two fighting **asuras** who were wreaking havoc on earth.

Tipitaka, **Tri-pitaka** (pl 'Three Baskets'): the three main divisions of the **Pali Canon**.

Tonle (sk danle, kh ទន្លេ): lake.

Toych (kh តូច): small.

Tral: boat.

Tramak (kh ព្រះដំរី moh domrei): mahout.

Trapeang (kh ត្រពាំង): small tank or pond, usually man-made. Often followed by a proper noun identifying a particular source of water.

Trei (kh ត្រី): fish. **Reach sramut** (sk raj sramut 'king of the sea', kh រាជសមុទ្រ): the 'royal sea fish', tuna.

Trijata: a rakshini who spoke in favor of **Sita**.

Trimukha (sk 'three-faced'): three-lobed design of a platform or structure seen in plan.

Trivikrama: epithet of **Vishnu** when making three steps.

Tuk, Toek (kh ទឹក): water.

U

Uccaishrava: the white horse of **Indra**, bred from the **Churning of the ocean of milk**.

Udom (kj ឧត្តម, la, from sk uttama): 'abundant, superior, supreme' in Lao and Khmer.

Uktyean (kh ឱត្យាន): 'garden'.

Uma: daughter of the god Himavan, wife of Shiva. Also known as **Parvati**.

Upanisad: The esoteric texts that developed a mystical and spiritualized understanding of the **Vedas**, and which would form the basis of Hinduism.

Upasunda: an **asura** who fought with **Sunda**.

Upiidiina: 'clinging', attachment; it is etymologically related to upadi, fuel.

Uposatha: the days of fasting and abstinence in the Vedic tradition.

Usha: beautiful daughter of **Bana**.

V

Vahana (sk 'vehicle'): a term which indicates the animal or avian mounts or vehicles of the gods, e.g. Skanda's peacock, Shiva's nandi...

Vaisya: The third caste of farmers and stockbreeders in the Aryan system.

Vaisravana (sk vaisravana, pl vessavana): one of the 'Forth Heavenly Kings'.

Vajra (sk "weapon"): ritual weapon manifesting the purity and strength of the diamond and thunderbolt. **Vajrayana**, the 'Diamond or Thunderbolt Way', is the main spiritual trend in Tantric Buddhism.

Valin: in the **Ramayana**, king of the monkeys, son of **Indra**, half-brother of **Sugriva**, and husband of **Tara**.

Valmiki: the sage who compiled the **Ramayana**.

Vantail: leaf of a door.

Varman (kh វរ្ម័ន៍: 'Protector'. **-varman** (sk 'protection, breast-plate') is a suffix for the royal names of almost all the Khmer kings; thus 'Jayavarman' means 'protected by Victory', 'Indravarman' 'protected by (the god) **Indra**'.

Varnnasrama (sk varnna 'caste' and asrama 'retreat, monastery'): teaching societies in Ancient Angkor, defined by linguist Philip Jenner as 'corporation colleges'.

Varuna: God of the ocean and guardian of the West.

Vasana: The subconscious activities of the mind.

Vasudeva: Father of **Krishna**.

Vasuki: great king of the nagas.

Vault: arch extended in depth.

Vayu: guardian of the North West.

Veda: the inspired texts, recited and interpreted by the brahmins, in the Aryan religious system.

Vibhishana: 'The Terrifying', rakshasa brother of **Ravana**, who left Lanka to join **Rama**.

Vihara, Vihear (sk and pl 'secluded place', kh វិហារ): an ascetic's cave or retreat, and also a name given to temples or monasteries in Theravada Buddhism. Rectangular building housing a Buddha image.

Vimana: celestial palace of the gods.

Vimaya, Pimai (sk): name of a mahayanic Buddha ; name of a 11th-century Khmer temple in modern Thailand.

Vinaya: the monastic code of the Buddhist Order; one of the 'Three Baskets' (Ti-pitaka) of **Pali** Canon: **vinaya-pitaka, sutta-pitaka, abhi-dhamma-pitaka**.

Viradha: Rakshasa who attempted to abduct **Sita**.

Vishnu (sk 'The Pervader', kh វិស្ណុ): one of the main Hindu deities, Maintainer of the Universe. Hinduism's supreme deity, yet less widely-worshipped than **Shiva** by the Khmers. He is the Divine Preserver of the earth and heavens, whose extent he measured in three giant steps. Through his **avatara**, he intervenes to restore order when there is chaos. His mild and peaceful nature the perfect counterbalance to Shiva's destructive wrath. In Khmer art he is portrayed with four arms, the upper two holding the god's 'attributes' of the *conch* and the *discus*, the lower two the *orb* (symbolizing the Earth) and the *club*.

Vishvamita: a sage.

Visvakarman (sk) : name of the divine architect, author of numerous celestial and terrestrial residences and palaces. **Bisnukar** is the Khmer derivative name of the legendary architect of Angkor.

Visvampa (sk) : one of Vishnu's names ; name of one of Rājendravarma's ancestors worshipped to these days in the Pre Rup temple; another name of the latter temple.

W

Wat (or **Vat**) (sk vastu, pl vatthu, kh វត្ត): temple, pagoda, Khmer Theravada monastery consisting of the religious buildings and the monks' cells. **Angkor Wat**, originally dedicated to **Vishnu**, has since become known as 'the city which is a (Buddhist) monastery'.

Wiang (ta เวียง): fortified temple. In Lao language, a city, like in *Wiang Chan* (lao ວຽງຈັນ), Vientiane, the capital city of Laos.

Y

Yaksha: half-human and half-godlike being, associated with **Kubera**.

Yama: The 'prohibitions' observed by yogini and ascetics, who were forbidden to steal, lie, have sexual intercourse, take hallucinogens, kill or harm another being.

Yama (kh យមរាជ): king of the Dead, son of **Surya** reigning over the subterranean world, guardian of the South.

Yasoda: Krishna's adoptive mother.

Yasodharapura (sk) : 'The Glorious City' founded by Yasovarman I: Angkor.

Yassa (kh ឆ្នាំរៀនស្រូវ): the spiritual retreat during the monsoon rains, from June to September.

Yatra (sk 'journey'): Hindu procession or pilgrimage.

Yekagrata: In **yoga**, the concentration of the mind 'on a single point.

Yoga (kh យូហ្គា): The discipline of 'yoking' the powers of the mind in order to cultivate alternative states of consciousness and insight.

Yogin: A practitioner of **yoga**.

Yoni (pl gabbhaseyya 'womb', sk yoni, kh យូនី): womb, female genitalia and by extension the female sexual principle, holding the **linga** in Brahmanic representations. When the **linga** is ceremonially lustrated, the water thus becoming holy, runs down the **yonis** and flows out through its spout(s), allowing



Yuga (kh យុគ): an age of the world.

Yuvaraja (sk): crown prince.

*Sources: **Angkor Database Team** research, and lexicons from various books at [Templation Angkor Resort Library](#).*

Thank you for mentioning this document source for online or print use: ©Angkor Database

[Contact](#) | 1s publication (RF001): Nov. 2019