

In Focus

The Center for Khmer Studies

Thai and Cambodian Participants in the Khmer Silk Workshop in front of the CKS Conference Hall in Siem Reap

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Mission Statement

CKS is an independent American Overseas Research Center supported by international foundations, educational institutions, scholars and individuals. It is a non-profit corporation incorporated in the state of Delaware, USA. It receives partial support for overhead and American research fellowships from the U.S. Government. Its programs in the social sciences, arts and humanities are focused on Cambodia and are privately funded.

CKS seeks to:

- Promote research and international exchange through programs that increase understanding of Cambodia and its region both within Cambodia and at American universities.
- Strengthen Cambodia's cultural and educational structures, and integrate Cambodian scholars into regional and international exchange.
- CKS's programs are administered from its offices in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh. It maintains a small administrative office in New York and a support office in Paris, Les Amis du Centre d'Études Khmères.

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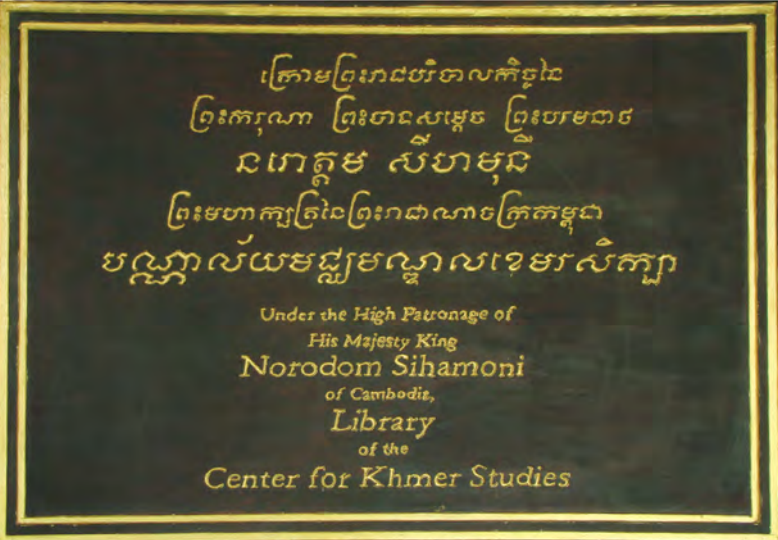
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Audience with H.M. King Sihamoni, January 2019

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Welcome to CKS!



CKS was created 21 years ago to kindle a new scholarly interest in Cambodia, its past, its dramatic recent history, its religion, its people and the myriad subjects that are grist to the humanist scholar's mill. The country had been virtually inaccessible for 15 years following the Khmer Rouge revolution in 1975, and after that, welcoming only to those with a total disregard for creature comforts, and, given the odd stray KR guerrilla and a splendidly unpredictable landmine pattern, a certain light-heartedness concerning personal safety. During that time, Cambodia was not an obvious career choice for young scholars. First under the World Monuments Fund, but soon independent, led by Lois de Menil and Olivier Bernier, CKS was relaunched as an American Overseas Research Center and began creating scholarly programs featuring Cambodia.

The **Senior Fellowship Program** provides research grants to scholars needing to spend time in Cambodia. CKS became a member of CAORC, the Council of American Overseas Research Centers then led by our President Mary Ellen Lane-- which opened the door to US Government funding of American scholars. French scholars were first sponsored by the Florence Gould Foundation and then by a French family foundation. Board members generously fund Cambodian research scholars.

The **Junior Fellowship Program**, funded by a devoted private donor, draws together for six weeks during the summer 15 undergrads from France, America and Cambodia for a full program of language study and immersion in regional history and contemporary Cambodia.

The **Khmer Language and Culture Program**, in collaboration with the University of Hawai'i, brings to Cambodia individuals wishing for intensive in-country Khmer language study and to discover Khmer culture.

Finally, CKS increasingly hosts **Study Abroad Programs**. CKS has a very long association with Cornell University, whose CKS board members initiated and continue its for-credit three-week intensive introductory course. When not discovering temples or the local night life, students attend lectures, which CKS hosts in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh. The idea of Cambodia as a destination for Study Abroad programs was then adopted by several community colleges.

Cornell Tompkins Cortland Community College has been sending groups to CKS for several years now. This project was then adopted by Northern Illinois University's Sauk Valley and Waubonsee Community Colleges. As a result of last year's trip, two of its students decided to make Cambodia the focus of their studies. Future CKS board members?

And we shall need them. CKS is now 21, and we had the sadness to lose one of our earliest Board members, Ambassador Benny Widyono this spring. Benny brought to CKS a wealth of knowledge and contacts, which immeasurably helped establish CKS in its early years. He had been UN governor of Siem Reap Province and then UN Ambassador to Cambodia. Dr. Widyono lectured at Cornell and Stamford, as well as later teaching economics at Connecticut College. Friend and scholar, he helped to organize the popular Beer Fest every January for alumni and Fellows of CKS. We plan to organise named lectures on diplomacy and education in SE Asia in his honor.

CKS also contributes to intellectual life in many other ways, through **Public Lectures, Workshops and Conferences**, and collaborations with several Cambodian universities. The most visible of these ongoing efforts is the **CKS Library**-- 15,000 references, free, open to all, a delightful building on our Buddhist pagoda campus. Probably the most peaceful place in the middle of bustling Siem Reap, it is popular among students, schoolchildren, monks, tour guides, visiting scholars and countless others. Our librarians also organize book exchanges with other libraries, and training courses for librarians.

CKS's **conference hall** is put to good use, with well-attended **lectures, workshops and conferences**. We ask our Senior Fellows to present their research projects, and invite passing experts to share their knowledge.

Another important program open to Cambodians is the **Academic English Class**. Two weeks of intensive language polishing that have helped several alumni to apply for and receive fellowships abroad.

These are some of the myriad activities of the Center. While hoping CKS will have the pleasure of your visit to Cambodia, you can read more about them in the following pages.

Welcome to CKS!

Jacques Hennessy, Chairman

President’s Letter



Dear Friends,
Because of my recurring illnesses this past year, most of my duties fell to my fellow board members, particularly to Chairman Jacques Hennessy and to Lois de Menil, founding President and Chairman of the Board, who contributed so much of her time and energy to launching, nurturing, and supporting CKS. She is an amazing act to follow, and we are lucky that she continues to work actively on behalf of CKS. We especially miss the comradeship and support of Benny Widyono, who passed away in March. His experience, discretion, and kind humor can never be replicated.

In this time of political uncertainty, when the future of government funding is unclear, when China’s increasing presence in Cambodia remains troubling, and when the Cambodian government remains as entrenched as ever, CKS remains the shining beacon for important US-Cambodia engagement, and your support is as important as ever.

Our American, Cambodian, and French CKS Fellows are conducting innovative research into topics as diverse as representations of the life of the Buddha at Angkor; Khmer arts and the reworking of Cambodian history; Chinese literature in Cambodia; musical traditions in Cambodia; field experiments on water scarcity and cooperation among Cambodian farmers; the evolution of Portuguese-Khmer culture; the empowerment of indigenous peoples and women in Cambodia and Myanmar, and other topics contributing to the growing field of Cambodian studies.

In the 2018-2019 year, our flagship programs – the summer Junior Resident Fellows, Khmer Language and Culture Program, Graduate and Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships, and our ongoing workshops and public lecture series– have been going as strong as ever! But we are also extremely proud of some of our new initiatives.

CKS is moving ahead with a significant project on urban sustainability, a problem that anybody who has visited Phnom Penh or Siem Reap in the last few years can understand only too well. This three-year project brings CKS together with the University of Chicago and the US Department of Energy Argonne National Laboratory with a goal of preventing the kind of urban development that will hurt Cambodia’s environment, threaten its unique cultural heritage, and hasten economic inequality.

CKS has been working very closely with two key movers and shakers at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, Professors Ang Choulean and Un Leang, to develop a Khmer Studies Ph.D. program as well as a graduate-level comprehensive Khmer

Studies curriculum. We see this as an important project that will reverse the trend toward national amnesia about the recent (and not-so-recent) past and provide the scholarly infrastructure necessary for Cambodians to prevent losing their historical and cultural heritage.

Back at home, new Board member Anne-Marie Murphy has become our secret weapon in building CKS into the ever-growing New York Southeast Asia network and in providing fresh leadership and wise counsel among our scholar Board members. And vice-president Andrew Mertha continues to draw from CKS to inform his contributions to US policy debates on Cambodia from his perch as director of China Studies at the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, in Washington, DC.

Our relationship with Cornell University remains particularly robust, especially with Art History Professor Kaja McGowan now on the CKS Board. We continue to partner with them on the Cornell in Cambodia initiative. Meantime, our outreach to a diverse array of institutions in the United States remains strong, as we continue our engagements with Tomkins Cortland Community College, the University of Wisconsin – Madison, the University of Hawaii, and Lewis and Clark College. We have increased our network this year to include Illinois’ Waubensee Community College (“Go Chiefs!”).

And our three libraries (research, general use, and children’s) continue to be the best in Cambodia!

Happily, in the midst of government budget cuts, we were successful once again in maintaining our funding from the State Department and the Department of Education that partially supports our staff and research fellowship program. We are poised to expand our advancement of Khmer studies and provide further opportunities for American and Cambodian students. The CKS team in Cambodia, under the leadership of director Natharoun Ngo, is working steadily to carry out our mission. Our seminars are over-subscribed, our programs continue to promote a new generation of scholars of Cambodia as well as scholars in Cambodia, while contributing significant knowledge to fields in the humanities and social sciences.

As always, I deeply appreciate all the support you offer CKS. We are only able to continue our programs because of you, and I and the entire organization are deeply grateful.

I hope we can count on your continued support.

With my very best wishes,

**Dr. Mary Ellen Lane, President
CAORC Executive Director Emerita**

Director’s Note



When I first encountered CKS, I was deeply moved: moved by its story and by its people, especially by CKS’ founders and board members. The personalities, characters, visions both differed in emphasis and yet converged toward the same goal-- to support a better understanding of Cambodia and Cambodians. The secret ingredient that maintained the balance was generosity. A blunt, raw and genuine kindness that moved the organization across time and difficulties. Keeping generosity close to heart, I wish to dedicate this note to our late Trustee, Dr. Benny Widyono, whom I had the privilege to know and work with. He sadly left us in March 2019. I appreciated his boundless sense of humor, his human touch and admirable talent with people, a natural trait he honed through his many years as a UN diplomat. Discreet, with indefectible support of CKS and its founders, he helped to move CKS through good times and stormy weather.

CKS grew into a strong institution because it has been supported by people with incredible traits of humanity. Whether they are from the US, France, Cambodia, or anywhere else in the world, they contribute to building CKS. It has been 2 years now since I joined CKS as Director. We now enjoy higher levels of collaboration and trust within and outside the organization. This has translated directly into a wider reach and increased success of our programs. Applications numbers have increased by 3 times for some of our programs. The number of activities and events we run in-country has also multiplied, as well as the number of participants, which demonstrates an increasing interest in our events. We will not rest here, but in Cambodia, as well as the board can be justly proud of what they have so far accomplished. It has been a long road. Nearly 22 years!

In 2019, we will initiate a new Urban Research Program, framed around a social science core, to offer what we like to call “people-centered” research. Over the past 10 years, even as Phnom Penh has burgeoned, most of the urban research conducted in Cambodia has focused on high-level urban politics, infrastructure



Director meeting with officials at Phnom Penh City Hall

and planning, seldom taking into consideration the most important element: the inhabitants of the city. We hope to break this mold and bring in a variety of experts, many from prestigious US universities, together with Cambodians, to help us understand complex urban dynamics such as mobility, air pollution, and city gentrification. Those will be better understood if urban specialists and social scientists from a variety of backgrounds work together, so that cities, where more than 90% of the world population will live in the next 30 years, can grow with more balance and equity.

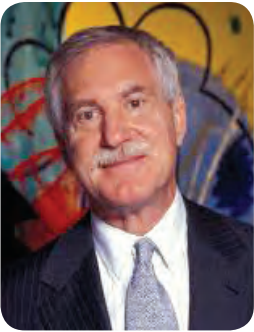
Thank you to all of our friends and partners, and to our CKS donors for making it possible for us to pursue research projects that matter!

Natharoun Ngo, Director



CKS Headquarters at Wat Damnak, Siem Reap

KHMER SCULPTURE: TRANSFORMATIVE BEAUTY



A tall, slender, energetic figure, unstoppably moving forward, an irresistible blend of elegance and strength: the Goddess Durga, as she appears in the pre-Angkor era sculpture, had reached a new home after long travels. She came from India. She reached the early Khmer states, and was reborn in a series of stone masterpieces. Of course, she had not come alone. Other Hindu deities, Vishnu, Shiva, often pictured together as Harihara, had also crossed the sea as they made their way from South India. With them, they brought Sanskrit and one of the world’s oldest and richest cultures.

Khmer Hinduism, however, was no mere copy of its Indian version. It is one of the miracles of the two distinct, but linked phases of Khmer culture, pre-Angkor before 802, Angkor after that and until the 15th century, that original sculptures and reliefs of extraordinary beauty were created. It was not a case of imitating Indian models. Durga defeated the Buffalo Demon who ravaged the earth and whom the Gods had been unable to stop. She is the same Goddess in both cultures, but the South Indian Durga, riding a lion, is a thoroughly athletic figure, muscular, powerful, highly impressive. The Khmer Durga is an elegant standing figure, identifiable by the small relief of a buffalo on the base and without the lion: she has been re-invented, created anew.

And she has been shaped by sculptors of genius.

The same is true of the two most important male Gods, and of their combined form as Harihara. In Hinduism, all the Gods and Goddesses are manifestations of a supreme God, a spiritual being who is beyond form, and who, therefore, cannot be represented. Shiva and Vishnu both have essential tasks, Shiva as the Great Teacher, Vishnu as the Preserver of the world in a variety of crises. Both Gods are represented. Harihara, in Khmer culture, however, appears as early as the 7th century; In India, his images are not seen until much later -and look very different from their Khmer equivalents.



Durga, South India

That is no surprise. From the time the pre-Angkor culture began, its priests and its artists rejected imitation in favor of creation, and they ended up with an esthetic which, to Western eyes, presents itself as a paradox. The early Greek kuroi are short and chunky; Greek classical figures embody perfect proportions; Hellenistic figures are exaggerated in order to achieve greater expressiveness. The reverse is true of Khmer art; The early, pre-Angkor sculptures are tall and slender. The sculptures of the 10th century are perfectly proportioned; those of the 12th, if not short, are decidedly chunky.

A similar kind of transformation is noticeable in the decorative details to be seen around the principal figures on the walls of Khmer temples. In India, temples are protected by a figure, the Kirtimukha, who is so greedy that, after having eaten the entire world, he eats himself and only stops when he has devoured his lower jaw; the same figure appears on Khmer temples, but there, he is far more stylized: bulging eyes, a snout-like nose and sharp teeth make him a far more lively creature. In India, he is placed in a plain surrounding; in Cambodia he is surrounded by leafy patterns which can be seen at their most intricate and elegant in the monuments of Banteay Srei.

That apparent contradiction is, in fact, one of the great innovations of Khmer art: the direct, almost brutal face is surrounded by delicately shaped and complex leaves: each gives the other greater impact. The same is true of the pairing of sculpture and architecture. The majestic temple of Angkor Wat, which consists of a series of rising, concentric structures culminating in the great central tower, can never be seen in its entirety: each level of the building is revealed separately as we move up toward the center. The great bronze figures (now to be seen in Myanmar) that once dominated its entrance owe their impact to their size and majesty. Here again, two opposites come together in the most sophisticated and unexpected of combination.

We are lucky, today, that monuments, sculptures, carvings have survived the passage of time and the invasions and cataclysms which, repeatedly in the last few centuries, have ravaged Cambodia. It is not just that these remains give us a fascinating picture of a great civilization: they also teach us that, in art at least, transformation and re-invention are in themselves an act of creation.

Olivier Bernier, Vice-President



Pre-Angkor Durga at the National Museum in Phnom Penh



Harihara at the National Museum in Phnom Penh

Thank you to our 2018-2019 Annual Donors!

The Center for Khmer Studies wish to thank H.M.King Norodom Sihamoni for his continued support.

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Inside CKS Library in Siem Reap



Public--students, scholars and researchers using CKS space for their self-learning, Siem Reap

We are grateful for your support!

Support CKS Library Fund

CKS’s library is the largest free public library outside Phnom Penh, open to all. It offers unparalleled educational facilities to students of every age, as well as the general public and visiting scholars.

- **Support Basic Operations:** Contribute to our Annual Fund.
- **Support** acquisition of books (\$15,000 per year)
- **Donate a new computer** for our library reading room–annual updating (\$1,500)
- **Reading room** (\$1,500 per year to connect the **Library to the World Wide Web**) Free internet connection.

Sponsor the translation of essential books into Cambodia’s native language Khmer

In the absence of books in Cambodia’s native language, CKS translates and publishes key texts. A donation of \$10,000 will defray costs for an average 300-page book and will be acknowledged in the publication (\$10,000 contributions).

Sponsor a Cambodian-American undergraduate to attend our intensive 6-week in-country summer Junior Resident Fellows Program (\$3,500 each).

Support Travel Grants to enable Cambodians to participate in regional conferences (\$1,000 each).

Sponsor a young Cambodian’s PhD thesis Research (\$5,000 each)

Support CKS public outreach: regular workshops, our Director’s talks at US universities and community colleges.

Support any CKS program in **honor of the late Dr. Benny Widyono.**

IN MEMORIAM

DR. BENNY WIDYONO (1936 -2019)



With deep regret, CKS honors the passing of our distinguished board member, the Hon. Dr. Benny Widyono, on March 17, 2019, surrounded by his family, in Stamford, CT. Born an Indonesian of a prominent Chinese Catholic family, Benny had proudly become an American citizen last year. He spoke Khmer and loved Cambodians and Khmer culture.

Following a long and distinguished career at the UN, in retirement, Benny served on both corporate and non-profit boards in Cambodia, notably Leopard Capital (makers of Kingdom Beer) and CKS. He dedicated his retirement years to Cambodia. Growing up in Indonesia, Benny had lived through a genocide against ethnic Chinese Indonesians even before encountering the Khmer Rouge. As UN Governor of Siem Reap Province after the Paris Peace Accords, his life was threatened multiple times by the Khmer Rouge, as he recounts in his engaging biography, “Dancing in the Shadows,” published in English, French, and Chinese, and finally in Khmer in 2011 by CKS. He was a courageous leader, who wrote and spoke his mind.

Benny Widyono held a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Texas. Upon retirement, he returned to teaching as Professor of Economics at the University of Connecticut, near his home. Dr. Widyono was a major contributor to the Center for Khmer Studies for over 12 years, giving countless public lectures and serving on the executive and finance committees of its board. He enjoyed being with people, both the powerful and the young.



Dancing in the Shadows

Sometimes one meets a truly exceptional individual. Benny was such a person -- his wit and intelligence, his compassion and generosity, his nuanced reasoning and expert diplomatic skills, his open mind and his sense of fun, his curiosity, his patience, and his humor. He was a kind, gentleman, gracious and modest. He was always ready to listen to others and hear their ideas.

It is not surprising that he got along so well with those much younger than him and enjoyed their company. He was forever young. He was intensely observant and a remarkable judge of people. He had a nimble mind for detail, catching things that many missed.

Benny had a keen sense of purpose to his life. He was driven by a passion to make the world more peaceful and fair, and to help people build a better life. During his UNTAC years and his service to the Center for Khmer Studies and the People’s Improvement Organization (PIO) in Cambodia, he worked to rebuild and repair the damage wrought by two civil wars and the murderous Khmer Rouge regime. His impulse to educate and share his knowledge and wisdom was expressed through his teaching, writings, and lectures, which were always delivered passionately, with a sense of purpose, and always spiced with a joke or two.



Benny Widyono at launch of Khmer edition

Benny was a counselor, proffering sage advice to many, and was always eager to hear the views of others even when he disagreed. He was a dear friend. We will miss him terribly.

Because of his deep love for Cambodia, Benny’s family has decided to commit his ashes to Wat Damnak, the Buddhist Monastery that is home to the Center for Khmer Studies.

Lois de Menil, Ph.D.
Eve Zucker, Ph.D.

FEATURE ARTICLE

The Importance of CKS to my Career as a Scholar



Dr. Kosal Path (first from left) at his book launch

As a political scientist specializing in international relations, my scholarship focuses on the Third Indochina War between China, Vietnam, and Cambodia 1975-89 as well as genocide and transitional justice in Cambodia. My teaching expands on these topics of war, genocide, and conflict resolution, situating them globally and seeking to understand and explain these phenomena from different theoretical vantage points. CKS offers junior scholars like myself research funding and resources to launch early academic careers. The CKS fellowship I received in 2012 enabled me to conduct my field research on post-genocide transitional justice in Cambodia and to publish my research. For me, CKS has been ever since a focal point of my academic networking and in sharing research findings with other scholars in the United States and Cambodia. Since becoming a CKS board member, I organized a CKS-sponsored panel at the Association of Asian Studies meetings in the Spring of 2019. CKS has played a

key role in promoting new voices and perspectives on Cambodia at major international conferences.

Kosal Path, Ph.D., Brooklyn College
CKS Trustee



With S-21 survivor Chum Mey and Brooklyn College students

Remembering the Cambodian Genocide in the Digital Age: A CKS Trustee’s Research



The Khmer Rouge regime was a dark chapter in Cambodia’s past. Approximately 1.8 million Cambodians perished—24 % of the population. The country was left with a starved, traumatized population and most of its infrastructure destroyed. Now, nearly 40 years after the collapse of the Khmer Rouge regime, the country has moved on. However, the memory of past violence remains and the process of remembering, interpreting and memorializing the tragedy continues. Until now, much of the scholarship on the memory and memorialization of the Cambodian genocide has focused on official state-sponsored projects and their accompanying narratives such as the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, national monuments and museums like the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide, the stupa at Choeung Ek, and the ceremonial activities on the “National Day of Remembrance”. There have also been a number of studies that took a more local approach, focusing on the ways in which individuals and communities rebuild their lives in the wake of violence, how religious communities help heal the trauma of the living and the dead, and how families work to reconstruct their lives and remember their loved ones. My earlier research, “Forest of Struggle: Moralities of Remembrance in Upland Cambodia” is one of these studies. These state and individual scholarly undertakings have made important contributions to understanding how Cambodia is

healing from its past and is able turn toward building a future. And yet, there is another significant dimension to this ongoing process of making sense of the past and preventing its recurrence in the future—that is, the domain of digital technology. To date, despite the profound expansion of digital media and technology worldwide and within Cambodia, there is only marginal understanding of how these phenomena may contribute to contouring present and future knowledge, including understanding of the Khmer Rouge past. My current research focuses on how digital and online factors influence the relationship to Cambodia’s Khmer Rouge past. The questions I ask include: what practical and ethical issues emerge from expanded use of digital technology and media in understanding and narrating the past? How might the Cambodian state, corporations, or other powerful entities influence the shaping of the past through digital technology and how might official narratives be contested? Moreover, how might digital tools be used by individuals and groups to approach the questions and issues raised by the Khmer Rouge period? In so doing, I hope to illustrate the multiple challenges pertaining to the preservation, transmission, accessibility and veracity of archives, testimonies, media and other repositories of history and social memory.

**Eve Zucker, Ph.D., Yale University
Member, CKS Executive Committee**



DR. SOPHAL EAR AWARDED THE 2019 TOBIS MEDAL

CKS Board Member, Dr. Sophal Ear, has been named the recipient of the 2019 Tobis Medal. Given annually by the UC Irvine Interdisciplinary Center for the Scientific Study of Ethics and Morality, the award honors people prominent in their chosen field for their professional integrity, concern for social justice, and humanitarianism. Previous winners have included President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama.

China and Cambodia: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

What a difference a year makes! 12 months ago, I wrote about the opportunity for friends of Cambodia to help the country in conjunction with Chinese efforts to help develop parts of the Kingdom. Today, the rose-colored glasses come off and we find ourselves facing a crisis. Cambodia, a country with a deep, rich culture that has attracted each and every one of us is now even more in the orbit of Chinese development and influence. The US Government has made efforts to mitigate these changes, but ultimately, it will be up to those of us who are passionate about Cambodia to provide the support necessary to stop the damaging tide



Van Molyvann architecture in Phnom Penh (Photo: Internet)

of runaway development and homogenization. The universally admired mid-century architecture of Van Molyvann and the ubiquitous open-air markets of Phnom Penh and other cities in Cambodia are being drowned in a sea of sterile shopping malls and designer shops catering to a tiny fraction of the population. The elegant boulevards of Phnom Penh are being choked by unregulated traffic and shoddily built apartment complexes. The real estate and commodity markets have been overtaken by foreign investment, increasingly Chinese, as Cambodia become a key link in the Southeast Asian node of the Belt and Road Initiative, an \$8 trillion Chinese infrastructure and development plan that will dwarf the Marshall Plan in scope and bulldoze any cultural, historical, or educational speed bump that stands in its way. Urban planning is desperately needed in Cambodia. Nor is the Cambodian government able to stop such an onslaught. Hun Sen has to some extent been able to keep the Chinese at bay by playing Washington against Beijing, the strategy of all small countries that see themselves as blades of grass situated under two fighting elephants. With a singular lack of resources or attention by the US Government, however, Cambodian officials have no ballast to withstand Chinese demands or inducements. It is, therefore, critical that we step up to fill this dangerous void—

for us, as friends of Cambodia, to provide the leadership necessary to move the pendulum into balance so that Cambodia can enjoy the fruits of development without sacrificing the rich historical culture that is the envy of the world. CKS has been a constant presence in helping Cambodia develop an infrastructure of students, scholars, intellectuals, artists, and other practitioners able to succeed the intellectual class that was destroyed by the Khmer Rouge or left to atrophy since 1979. CKS has been more active than ever in bringing Cambodia’s rich cultural heritage not simply to the outside world but to Cambodians themselves as they reacquaint themselves with an unsurpassed artistic and cultural legacy. Whenever I walk around the universities in Phnom Penh or elsewhere in Cambodia, part of me laments their state of disrepair, the lack of support services, and the desperate financial needs of educational institutions. At the same time, I also see the intense enthusiasm and commitment of the students and faculty and take some comfort that CKS has contributed significantly to this positive energy. And then I think about my recent trips to China, where the old traditional walkways and local dwellings, let alone the period-specific architecture of past decades, centuries, and millennia have devolved into a landscape of modernist homogeneity that makes the ugliest forms of Brutalism seem aesthetically pleasing. I hope that you will support CKS’s passion for preserving Cambodian culture by joining our efforts to avoid Cambodia’s becoming just another strip mall along China’s Belt and Road scheme.

**Prof. Andrew Mertha, Johns Hopkins University/SAIS
Vice-President**



Ongoing construction projects in Phnom Penh (courtesy of Phnom Penh Post)

Cornell's COLLABORATION WITH CKS CONTINUES TO FLOURISH

Performing Angkor: Dance, Silk and Stone



Prof. Kaja McGowan
Cornell University

Cornell University’s on-going collaboration with the Center for Khmer Studies continues to flourish and bear fruit much like the gestural progression shown on the lacquerware plaque from Artisans of Angkor. Hand gestures in Khmer classical dance are called kbach. In combination with the feet, kbach can convey anything from tendrils extending infinitely through time and space to the mysteries of flight.

As the force that evolves the form, kbach is pervasive in Cambodian culture, transferring from a dancer’s flickering fingers to the foliate patterns on her silk embroidered waistband. It extends as well to traditional architectural elements in wood and stone and to linguistic embellishments. As a generative form, kbach is well suited to the new iteration of “Performing Angkor: Dance, Silk & Stone”, the two week Cornell in Cambodia (CIC) course offered for the second time to nine undergraduates in collaboration with CKS in 2019.

This winter, a two-week intensive experience abroad was tucked sequentially between a 1-credit “Jumpstart” language course taught by Cornell’s Senior Khmer language instructor Hannah Phan in the Fall, and followed in the Spring by a 2-credit course



CIC Students attempting to “take flight” in Cambodia Living Arts Master Class

taught by Professor Kaja McGowan that included seven weeks of course meetings to accommodate the required number of contact hours, while giving students the extended time to explore, digest, and reflect on their experiences in-country. Among the many assignments, students visited sacred sites, weaving workshops, observed dance classes, and performances, visited Cambodia’s National Museum, the Royal Palace, and the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes (S-21). The course addresses in a variety of ways the densely textured interplay between memory and place.

In Siem Reap, students were introduced to Angkor Thom/ Bayon, Banteay Srei, Ta Prom, Banteay Samre, and Kbal Spean, where the class of nine undergraduates can be seen here enjoying the cooling effects of a sacred waterfall.



Under the waterfall below Kbal Spean

Thanks to the exceptional organizational skills of CKS Chief Administrative Officer, **Tith Sreypich**, students were able to learn first-hand from Cambodian Deputy Director of the Department of Conservation of the Monuments Outside Angkor Park, and Apsara National Authority, Dr. Ea Darith, archaeologist, professor, and photographer, seen here providing an engaging lecture at Angkor Wat.

Students were also introduced to Artisans of Angkor workshops for stone, wood carving, lacquerware, and weaving. Throughout the course, lectures and writing prompts were introduced by Dr. McGowan, combined with a guest appearance by Professor of Government (and CKS Board Member), Dr. Andrew Mertha. A highlight of our time in Phnom Penh was our visit to Koh Dach, an island famous for silk weaving in the Mekong river, where Hannah Phan read from a draft of her illustrated children’s book, *Sokha Dreams of Dolphins*, performed on the very banks of the river that inspired her story.



Dr. Ea Darith lecturing the students at Angkor Wat

As we took the ferry back to the city, we could see along the banks the braided bamboo fishing baskets called Chhneang and the bell-shaped fish traps are known locally as Ang Rut. We were to reconnect with these culturally gendered woven forms during a lively performance later that evening by dancers from Cambodia Living Arts of a popular Khmer folk dance called Robam Nesat (Khmer Fishing Dance). After the performance, students and faculty alike re-enacted the romantic conclusion of the fishing dance on face boards provided at the event. And like silverfish caught in bell-shaped scoops and baskets, here are a few students’ recollections of their experiences.

Prof. Kaja McGowan, Cornell University
CKS Trustee

Students' Voices



Students in Cornell-in-Cambodia course

Alina Amador-Loyola: When you are restricted to a classroom at Cornell, learning about something that is far off, knowledge remains one dimensional. However, when I was in Cambodia actually witnessing how textile had woven its way into material culture, how nature had influenced traditional dance and how religion had manifested itself in the stonework of Angkor Wat, I was not only learning about the material, I was living it.

Luke Bowden: Cornell-in-Cambodia reinvented my way of thinking through an experience unique to the program. Rather than traveling to a single city or region, studying in a predetermined field, Cornell-in Cambodia allowed students to interact with multiple locations and in multiple disciplines including art history, law, urban planning, biology, traditional medicine, and international aid. Each of these topics and each of the Cambodian people we met through our guides from the Center for Khmer Studies created new research interests which all participants are excited to continue exploring.

Willa Tsao: To Mr. Pheng, your knowledge of medicine and local botany is truly amazing. Thank you so much for teaching us about various plants and remedies, and making sure that everything went smoothly.

Stephanie Bell: My Cornell-in-Cambodia experience felt like it fit seamlessly into my other major areas of study. As a History and Asian Studies major with a focus on Japan and China, a trip to Cambodia felt a bit out of my usual area of focus. However, both during the trip and in the seven-week course afterwards, I was able to draw connections between Cambodia and Japan to pull together a research project that fit perfectly with other research I am already doing. I know others on the trip felt the same freedom to draw connections, as the research presentations contained topics related to medicine, human rights, NGOs, and urban planning as well. The Center for Khmer Studies encouraged all of us to apply for the summer program, and I know several of us began to view the Cornell in Cambodia experience as a gateway to future learning in Cambodia.

Alexis C. Vinzons: With Prof. McGowan's art history background and visual eye, Prof. Darith’s expertise in Angkorian history and modern day preservation, and Ms. Phan's language knowledge and personal experiences living in Cambodia, it was a privilege to travel with and be lectured by such great minds. This program and the professors and lecturers who led it encouraged a curiosity and open-mindedness that I will apply to every field of inquiry I pursue.

Issue on Archeometallurgy

The important international conference, Archeometallurgy in Cambodia: Current Research and Future Prospects, held in Siem Reap in 2011, was a joint collaboration of the Center for Khmer Studies (CKS), the École Française d’Extrême-Orient (EFEO) and the APSARA National Authority. Led by ethnologist Bernard Dupaigne, an expert in Kuay iron metallurgy, this conference was the first specifically devoted to research on archeometallurgy during the Khmer empire.

The organizing committee’s original idea was to report on the recent boom in field research on metal production sites, on laboratory technical investigations, and conservation of metal objects from excavations and museum collections. These developments represent a new research impetus and take account of the emergence of a significant number of Cambodian and foreign scholars working in the field of archeometallurgy. Paradoxically, however, while this very young discipline is focused on the characterization of the material remains of metal production and processing-- that is, the study of metal from its raw state to finished product-- it has yet to be fully appreciated or officially recognized as a discrete discipline within Khmer studies.

The purpose of the conference, including workshops and field visits, was twofold: to bring together specialists, researchers and students sharing an interest in the metallurgy of ancient and modern Cambodia, in order to forge the first scholarly network dedicated to archeometallurgical research; and to disseminate as widely as possible the research topics and methods of archeometallurgy both to a new generation of Cambodian archeologists and to the scholarly community involved in the preservation, conservation and study of Khmer heritage.

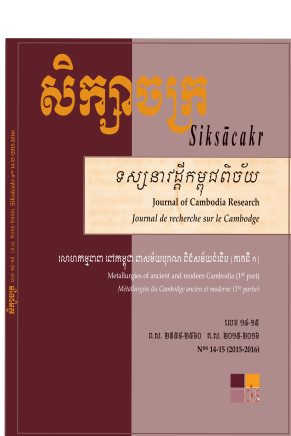
Given the success of this event, the idea immediately arose to publish the conference proceedings, or at least a selection of



Bronze workshop near Wat Thmei, Siem Reap (Courtesy of Brice Vincent)

papers, in CKS’s academic journal Siksācākṛ: Journal of Cambodia Research. The editorial project was immediately accepted by its editor-in-chief, French scholar Michel Antelme, and by the Chair and Board of Directors of CKS.

Following the 2011 conference, a second major international workshop on archeometallurgy was convened by CKS and EFEO in 2015, with support by the Asian Cultural Council. This workshop, held at CKS headquarters in Siem Reap, focused specifically on the Khmer Road to Wat Phu (now in Laos) and the bronze making there during the Khmer Empire. It was the initiative of Dr. Brice Vincent, former CKS Senior Fellow, now on the staff of EFEO, and gathered Lao officials as well as scholars from far and wide, who had written on Wat Phu, in the hope of a future archeological project exploring bronze making at Wat Phu.



Siksacakra: Journal of Cambodia Research is a peer-reviewed publication that seeks to bridge the worlds of Khmer, Francophone and Anglophone scholarship on Cambodia. Siksacakra means the “Wheel of Knowledge” and reflects the journal’s ambition both to circulate new scholarship and to turn wheels of access and scholarly communication. CKS has just published the special edition of Siksacakra on metalloarcheology reflecting the work in this new area, and our investment in it.

Articles submitted to Siksacakra in English and French appear both in their primary language and in Khmer translation. In parallel, Khmer articles are translated into either English or French.

Siksacakra can be purchased through CKS’s website: www.khmerstudies.org. Proceeds are used to support CKS’s publishing and translation program.



Archeometallurgy workshop, CKS Conference Hall

How to Protect and Preserve Library Collections



Workshop participants in front of CKS Library, Siem Reap

In March 2019, CKS’s Library organized a one-day workshop on “Library Preparedness –How to Protect and Preserve Library Collections” in the Conference Hall at CKS headquarters in Siem Reap. Twenty-three librarians from universities and high schools in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, as well as partner organizations in Kampong Cham and Battambang provinces, attended the workshop. The presenters at this workshop were CKS’s Head Librarian Sivleng Chhor, CKS Library Consultant Daraneth Um and Ms. Louise Dahlberg, librarian at Sweden’s Umeå University Library, who is also a CKS research associate working on a Masters in Library Science at Boras University. This workshop aimed to make librarians aware of risks and to suggest measures to preserve their collections. CKS librarians shared with participants how CKS operates its library, and the importance of the library

to research. Ms. Dahlberg described library operations and risk management at UMEA University and shared practical advice about how to prepare for the worst.



Workshop Round Table



CKS Head Librarian and Library Consultant presenting CKS Library and the relationship between research and reading

She also led group discussions and encouraged participants to share the practice of their libraries in responding to the risks such as flood, bugs, fire, stealing and challenges of library management. Everyone was actively engaged in discussions in workgroups. Active participation made this workshop particularly successful and assured that everyone left with new practical knowledge as well as a network that will benefit their library work in the future.

Khmer Silk Culture: Weaving and Wearing in Cambodia and Thailand



CKS Senior Fellow Alexandra Dalferro

CKS Senior Fellow Alexandra Dalferro did her fieldwork in Thailand and Cambodia on the history and contemporary landscape of Khmer sericulture and weaving. This CKS workshop brought together weavers and others in the silk industry-- from Takeo, Siem Reap, and Phnom Penh, Cambodia; and Samorn, Saen Suk, and Kratom, Surin Province, Thailand--for a day of lively panel discussions, presentations, and displays of silk at CKS Headquarters in Siem Reap, to reflect on shared Khmer weaving heritage and to imagine silk’s role in the future.

CKS 2018 Junior Fellow Maland Kim provided an overview of the current state of silk production in Cambodia. His presentation was followed by a panel discussion: “From Weaving to Wearing: Youth Perspectives,” in which young people from Surin and Phnom Penh shared their generation’s sentiment about wearing silk and its significance in rituals and ceremonies. In the afternoon, participants spent time looking at, touching, and eventually trying on silks from



Panel discussion on youth involvement in silk, including young people from Cambodia and Surin,Thailand



Dying silk yarn before weaving (coutersty of Silk House)

Surin and Phnom Penh, and this direct engagement with the textiles and their makers enhanced their understanding of how silk is woven and what some of the patterns represent. Three weavers from Surin, Thailand, and a weaving master from Takeo, Cambodia, expanded upon these technical and cultural characteristics in a panel discussion: “Change, Continuity, and Commodification.” Cambodian and Thai women silk entrepreneurs closed the workshop with a presentation on successes and challenges in marketing and selling silks, and their search for ways to respect and protect the material’s cultural heritage while also addressing new approaches to production, design, and marketing.



Surin weaver discussing their silk products with participants

This workshop epitomized the concept of “Interwoven Heritage”, as CKS’s conference hall resonated with the sounds of Surin Khmer, Central Khmer, and Thai languages all mixing together, vibrating with excitement over discovery of similarities and differences. Kong Kuntheary, a textile conservator from the National Museum of Cambodia, confessed she felt as if she were surrounded by បង្កំ--brothers and sisters—who finally had the opportunity to come together and speak to one another after a long time apart.

Smart Cities: An Innovative Model from the University of Chicago and What Phnom Penh May Learn from It



Chicago Computer Scientist Charles Catlett with CKS Director

“The Array of Things” is a system that provides urban data with greater spatial and temporal precision than is currently available to understand air quality, microclimate, vibration, noise, and other factors, providing measurements from hundreds of locations throughout the City of Chicago.

AoT devices include embedded and remotely programmable AI capabilities “edge computing” to process images, sound, vibration, and other data within the installed devices, creating measurements that cannot be obtained from traditional sensor networks. AoT is being implemented in a growing number of cities around the world through a formal partnership program.

CKS’s Public Lecture and Discussion Program, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), invited Computer Scientist Charles Catlett to share with university students, professionals and experts in Cambodia how and why the Argonne National Laboratory and the University of Chicago created the Array of Things, how they designed, piloted, and scaled up this innovative urban measurement system that has now spread

to over a dozen partner cities throughout the world. The event, on May 8, 2019, elicited strong interest among the 57 attendees, excited to discover the existence of such innovative technology and how it might be applied to Cambodia and its bustling capital Phnom Penh. Charles Catlett addressed all inquiries from the audience, from AoT-associated risks and benefits, data privacy, artificial intelligence capacities and its durability, security, capacity and adaptability as applied to a Cambodian setting.

Charles Catlett is the founding director of the Urban Center for Computation and Data, Urban CCD. He was the CIO at Argonne National Laboratory and Director of the National Science Foundation's Tera Gridinitiative. This public presentation was part of a larger scoping mission, a component of CKS’s new Urban Studies Research Program.



Inside the lecture

Led by CKS Director Natharoun Ngo, in collaboration with the UNDP, this exploration included-senior level consultations, including the Dean of the Royal University of Phnom Penh, the Senior Minister of Public Works and Transportation, and the Vice-Governor of the city of Phnom Penh, among others.



A participant raising a question in post-lecture discussion

Cooperation in Natural Resource Allocation

Lecture by CKS 2018 Senior Fellow Tum Nhim



Resource Governance: Insights from a Field Experiment in Cambodia.”

Mr. Nhim explored a phenomenon common to many Asian countries, especially Cambodia. Cambodia lacks the institutional framework to monitor allocation of natural resources. Instead, distribution relies largely on informal contracts between rural groups and villages. This is a common method of resource allocation in countries where informal social networks of communal cooperation exist, in the absence of a Government framework. These informal agreements are non-binding and therefore unenforceable. This creates a potential for free-riding, a problem especially prevalent in the fair distribution of public goods and services, and therefore pertinent to governance. Mr. Nhim found that,



Nhim Presenting at Royal University of Agriculture, Phnom Penh

indeed, in some areas, this method worked reasonably well and water was allocated efficiently. However, other areas were prone to conflict because some groups were taking more than their agreed share.

Tum Nhim’s research explored a variety of approaches to resolve this free-rider problem, using the methodology of economics, notably game theory modelling. He is specifically interested in analyzing the circumstances in which groups

are willing to ensure fair allocation by means of payment. His project, therefore, surveyed farmers in over twenty villages in Kampong Chhnang province, sounding them out regarding two proposed institutional frameworks to resolve the problem of inefficient/unfair allocation. The first scenario proposed a tax framework, which ensured that each community member contributed equitably towards water, as compared to an untaxed voluntary contribution system. The second scenario involved producing an expensive monitoring framework, which discouraged using too much water more informally by implementing a free, but not necessarily efficient, monitoring system to discouraged using too much water.



Nhim sitting on the ground and his research assistant demonstrating an example of risk elicitation game to research participants in the village

When given the choice between both scenarios, participants often chose the more expensive option, which fostered a sense of even-handed cooperation, over a framework that was costless but inefficient. Participants clearly wish free-riding to be eradicated from their respective villages. These findings will be useful in promoting future cooperation when distributing other natural resources, and preventing free-rider problems in the future.

CKS wishes to express gratitude to the Cambodian Royal University of Agriculture for hosting this event and inviting their students to participate. CKS is also grateful for Mr. Tum Nhim’s efforts, and wishes him success in his future endeavors.

By Project Director Dr. Chhany Sak-Humphry



Students during class

The CKS summer Khmer Language and Culture Program (KLCP) is a collaboration with the University of Hawaii’s Advanced Study of Khmer (ASK) program, headed by Dr. Chhany Sak-Humphry. Both programs provide the opportunity to gain in-country linguistic training and cultural exposure, at different levels.

Both programs have grown substantially since their introduction in 2009. KLCP initially consisted of a few American researchers with an interest in Cambodia working with assigned Khmer translators. Ten years later, in addition to support for research, participants receive daily instruction by local Khmer professors skilled in teaching Khmer to foreigners, stay with local Khmer families and visit a variety of cultural heritage sites.

This year’s participants include thirteen undergraduate and graduate students-- six in KLCP and seven in ASK. Their interests range from education, linguistics, anthropology, ethnic studies, the arts to Chinese business.

Both eight-week immersion programs are equivalent to a year’s academic credit at university level. Four-hour morning intensive language sessions are followed by afternoon and weekend excursions, which provide opportunities for application of language learning.

Students are routinely examined on speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Both courses implement six



Students of both programs with a Cambodian rural family in Siem Reap after learning how to make the palm leaf roof



A student receiving a blessing from a Cambodian elder

instructional modules based on World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages and American Council on Teaching Foreign Language (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines.

Upon completion of these programs, students return with the foundation necessary for academic growth, research skills, and future career opportunities, while also contributing to the critical need in the United States for experts on Southeast Asia.

Both programs respond to demand resulting from the absence of Khmer language instruction in the United States. All participants have a direct academic interest in Cambodia. Some students grew up in the U.S. with immigrant or refugee parents and want to learn more about their Khmer identity. KLCP and ASK are devoted to these students’ current success and support their future research endeavors locally, nationally and internationally.

We at CKS are deeply grateful to you, our funders and private donors, who sustain our mission and join hands with us to strengthen the quality of our educational language and cultural offerings in Cambodia and knowledge of Southeast Asia among a new generation of Asian and Western leaders. Our ambition is to expand our support for Khmer studies in the U.S. and to providing further opportunities for American and Cambodian students.



KLCP student making palm leaf roof for a villager's house

CKS’s annual summer Junior Resident Fellowship Program provides undergraduate students with intensive academic exposure to Cambodia. This program takes place on the CKS campus in Siem Reap, and in Phnom Penh.

Each year’s cohort of Jr. Fellows is composed of fifteen students-- five from each of the United States, Cambodia, and France. The program is focused around classes, lectures, seminars, field trips to remote areas, film screenings and a variety of hands-on experiences, as well as daily intensive Khmer language classes. Class field trips include visiting a number of archaeological sites with representatives of APSARA Authority (responsible for the management, interpretation, maintenance, and conservation of Angkor), visiting the Angkor conservation facilities, commented class visits to the National Museum of Cambodia and the Royal Palace. Students also visit Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the Choeung Ek Killing Fields, in Phnom Penh.

International students are given intensive daily training in the Khmer language; local students are offered academic English writing skill training. Networking is a key element of this program. Student interaction is encouraged in the hope that relationships will continue far beyond the duration of the program. This year’s program was led by Napakadol Kittisenee, a Thai anthropologist specializing in Cambodia, who also acted as the students’ research advisor.

An essential element of the Jr. Fellows Program is a research



Emma Leslie led the group at Tuol Sleng



Visit to Angkor Conservation

project on a subject submitted by applicants, including a multimedia report at the end of the program to present their findings. The Class of 2019 had quite varied interests, including the role of plants in Cambodian life, grammatical passive voice in Khmer, climate change, contemporary issues concerning land privatization and microfinance in a fishing community. Others have focused on a lot of deported Cambodian-Americans, public transport in Phnom Penh and an analysis of the effectiveness of the Cambodian high school curriculum. Fellows enjoy full access to CKS resources, as well as to the National Archives of Cambodia.

Despite limited time and resources, Fellows managed also to produce a public lecture series at CKS. In these lectures, many Fellows orchestrated their research findings in both oral and multimedia presentations to reach a wider audience of Khmer students and scholars. This gave participants the opportunity to practice their academic presentation skills, as well as an opportunity for Khmer students and academics to interact with foreign participants.

Without the generous support of CKS donor--Louis Sarofim and staff, this invaluable program would not have been possible. The program has been both popular and successful, contributing importantly, as well, to the study of Cambodia. Congratulations to the Class of 2019, and we hope to see you again.

Napakadol Kittisenee, Program Instructor



Robes offered during a rain retreat at Wat Botum

2019 Junior Fellows’ Voices

Helena Caramelle

This program allowed a full immersion in Cambodian society for 6 weeks. I decided to apply to learn more about Khmer history and culture, and to share experiences with fellows from the US and from Cambodia.



The most exciting events have been visiting Angkor Wat and its neighboring temples, pagodas and museums in Siem Reap, as well as the capital city Phnom Penh! I highly recommend this program for those who want to discover Cambodia both academically and culturally. It is an amazing opportunity to conduct in-depth independent research on a topic of your choice. You can take initiatives to conduct your own research and also obtain valuable advice from academics!

Sievlan Len

Every day I fall more in love with this program. It has a good balance of learning, exploring, and having fun! I have been re-immersed in my own culture through the study of folktales, historical site visits, and answering other fellows’ questions about Cambodia and Khmer culture.



My peers make this experience truly unforgettable. They are intellectually diverse and outspoken, which helps facilitate fluid class discussions.

I hope this program will be open to more nationalities in the future so they can have the same experiences as we are having.

Genna Brizendine

Though we’re only halfway through the program, I can already tell the CKS Junior Fellows program will be one of the most impactful experiences I have in my academic career. From the interdisciplinary and deeply collaborative environment it fosters to the way it incorporates both academic study and applied research, this fellowship has helped me cultivate skills I’ll need for graduate and post-graduate studies. Additionally, CKS’s unique and valuable connections within both academic and professional communities in Cambodia have introduced me to organizations and individuals I likely never would have met otherwise. This whole experience has already been invaluable, and I would recommend it to anyone interested in spending 6 weeks immersing themselves in Cambodian history, culture, and study.



Peosamnang Soth

Each day I find myself more interested in the Junior Fellowship Program. It provides the opportunity to learn, have fun and explore. This program allows me to rediscover my own culture by studying Khmer folktales, archaeology and history, and to enjoy the opportunity to answer my peers’ questions about Cambodia.



I am particularly interested in this program because it provides me an opportunity to write a research proposal specific to a personal topic of interest. Traditionally, this has been difficult for me. However, this program enables me to practice these skills.

Elodie Coles

In just two weeks I am already starting to get a clear view of Cambodia's history and current struggles. We have been studying through the lens of adopted historical and anthropological viewpoints. I hope we will be able to explore geo-political aspects as well.



I feel very privileged to be taking part in this program, and hope there may be more Khmer participants in the future! It is important to strengthen the capacity of domestic scholarship.

Benjamin Ross

I am a second-year history major at the University of Chicago and a summer Junior Resident Research Fellow at the Center for Khmer Studies. The program brings together five students from France, five students from the United States, and five students from Cambodia to conduct independent research on a wide array of topics and to learn about contemporary Cambodia in a comprehensive, hands-on way that very few academic programs offer. The program has allowed me access to a wide range of educational opportunities that I would be hard pressed to find elsewhere, from lessons by world-class scholars on Cambodia to access to CKS’ magnificent library and even the National Archives in Phnom Penh. Indeed, it’s a program second to none for those seeking to learn about Cambodia.



2019 CKS SENIOR FELLOWS

One of CKS's core programs is the Senior Fellowship Program, intended to support scholarly research on Cambodia, including Ph.D. dissertation research. CKS receives funding for these fellowships from a sub-grant of the U.S. State Department Bureau of Economic and Cultural Affairs through the Council of American Overseas Research Centers for American scholars; from the Scaler Foundation for French scholars; and from Board of Directors' contributions for Cambodian scholars. Awardees are chosen from among numerous applications by CKS's Fellowship Committee of scholars, headed by CKS Senior Scholar Prof. Alan Kolata (University of Chicago).



Anne Hansen is Professor of Southeast Asian History and Religious Studies at the University of Wisconsin Madison. Her research investigates Buddhist prophecies about moral decline that have served as powerful and pervasive responses to social turmoil and changes in socio-political order in Southeast Asia. As a CKS Fellow, she is examining the importance of Buddhist ideas of prophetic temporality during two critical periods of the Cold War period in Cambodia, arguing for their importance in the decolonizing the Theravada world in relation to nation-building, regional Buddhist networks, anti-communism, and as a means to interpret the traumatic history of the 1970s.

Alexxandra Salazar is a PhD candidate in anthropology, at SOAS University of London. Her research focuses on the living heritage of Khmer shadow puppet theater (lakhon sbek thom/sbek touch) and how it is performed and transformed. Her project explores how the label of "heritage" and attitudes about preservation affect the growth of "traditional" performing arts within the context of an increasingly globalized Cambodia. The focal point of her research is how current performers of Khmer shadow puppet theater navigate issues relating to conceptions of traditional versus contemporary art, cultural identity, economic sustainability, cultural change, globalization, and tourism.



Dr. Tuchman-Rosta is Adjunct Assistant Professor in Anthropology at CUNY York College. Her topic, "Gender and Class: How Difference Affects the Corporeal Economy of Classical Dancers" is at the intersection of performance theory and political economy. The project traces the life and work of Cambodian classical dancers to explore how their bodies become value-laden commodities within a global economic structure. It examines how gender and class differences affect artists' experiences and their attainment of capital.



Katherine Culver is a Ph.D. candidate in linguistic anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania. Her dissertation research concerns ongoing efforts to build legal infrastructure and rule of law in Cambodia today, with a focus on Cambodia's young legal professionals. The research will explore the complex process of rule-of-law building: for example, how education and early career experiences contribute to young legal professionals' perceptions of the rule of law; and how a desire to contribute to establish the rule of law may shape these professionals' career trajectories.



Emily Howe is a PhD Candidate in Ethnomusicology at Boston University, Boston, USA. Her dissertation examines the politics of development and social change in contemporary Cambodia through analysis of music and dance. Deeply committed to public scholarship, Emily has also used her fieldwork period as an opportunity to spearhead collaborations with Cambodian schools and produce a collaborative audio/visual exhibition about the lives of women artists in collaboration with photographer Neak Sophal and Mirage Contemporary Art Space in Siem Reap.



Dr. Gabrielle Abbe holds a PhD in history of international relations from the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. Her subject is Khmer heritage management in the colonial period and the Service des Arts created by George Groslier (1917-1945). Her works focuses on the place of museums, artistic heritage and archaeology in the field of international relations. Her post-doctoral project will study the history of the National Museum, of Cambodia and the Royal University of Fine Arts. She will create a web document on the occasion of the centenary of these institutions, in 2019-2020.



Adélaïde Martin is a PhD candidate in political science at the University of Paris. Her research topic is: "The Role of Foreign-educated Returnees and the Diaspora's 'Remigrants' in the Post-Khmer Rouge State". Her research will focus on how these Cambodians take advantage of their expatriation to gain positions of power and increase their social resources. Setting as a starting point the underlying dynamic access to government and administrative positions, and a social capital of technical training acquired abroad, she will develop an analysis of the socio-political processes in the contemporary period.

Hunter Ian Watson holds a BA in Philosophy from America and an MA in Oriental Epigraphy Thailand. He studies the ancient scripts of South and Southeast Asia, with a focus on inscriptions in Sanskrit, Pali, Thai, Mon, and Khmer. Hunter is currently a PhD candidate at the National University of Singapore, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, researching the pre-modern history of Thailand and neighboring countries, using a multidisciplinary approach involving historical archaeology, art history, epigraphy and paleography.



Dr. Yen Yat is a Cambodian Postdoc at the College of Urban and Environmental Science, Peking University, China. His post-doctoral research is "Making Phnom Penh a Liveable City: A City Plan for Pedestrians and Cyclists." The research will propose policy scenarios for Phnom Penh that could promote walking accessibility and safety.



William Kwok is a PhD candidate in political science at Yale University. His dissertation "The Banality of Organization: Mass Killings as a Coordination Problem in the Shadow of War" is a comparative study of the political organization of mass killings in Southeast Asia, with an empirical focus on Cambodia. His research in Phnom Penh consists of archival work and computational "content analysis" of CPK state policies during the Cambodian genocide. He has given several invited talks on genocide and mass killings and has written a book chapter and is working on papers on the issue. He is fluent in Chinese, proficient in Khmer, and intermediate in Bahasa Indonesian. He holds an MPhil and MA in political science from Yale and a BA in political science and film and electronic media from Bard College.



Sound and the Politics of Development



Discourse lamenting Cambodia’s lack of development date to the French colonial era. From the international-oriented “modernizing” projects of King-Father Norodom Sihanouk to the nationalist agrarian “developments” of the Khmer Rouge regime, Cambodia’s fraught post-colonial history has been shaped by pitch over argument about how the nation should develop. At present, Cambodia’s ostensible underdevelopment has precipitated a development consciousness permeating all levels of society. Prime Minister Hun Sen’s Cambodian People’s Party runs on a platform of “Santepheap neng Aphivoat” (“Peace and Development”), and numerous international development initiatives are premised on the nation’s



Howe during her field work

alleged backwardness and brokenness. And through it all, “development” is invoked as a mantra, an imperative, and a frontier; a horizon that is perpetually being pursued, but which can never quite be reached. And music and sound have been key modes of articulating this frontier.

My dissertation project titled *Animating the Stone: Sound, Embodiment, and the Politics of Development in Contemporary Cambodia*, elucidates the nature of development discourse and initiatives in contemporary Cambodia through exploration of embodied practices, including music and dance. Based on historical and ethnographic research, with divers actors including government officials, community activists, spirit mediums, and pop stars, the project considers the shifting priorities, landscapes, and sounds of development in Cambodia from the colonial era to the present. Analyzing expressive practice against a backdrop of widespread development and anxiety about cultural loss, I

explore how artists are negotiating their identities as inheritors of tradition and creators of new sounds, movements, and ontologies.

After setting forth Cambodian ideas about time, development, and the arts historically, I present contemporary case studies illuminating connections between sound, the body, development, and the nation. The first case discusses development themes in the music of the Cambodian state; the second explores the effects of deforestation on rural spiritual beliefs and music; the third considers how women are challenging gender norms through engagement with music and dance; and the fourth explores youth nationalism within a burgeoning “original song” movement.

Exploring the ways in which the expressive dimension of sound affects development, we come to understand the broader social



Dancers from Siem Reap's New Cambodian Artists present contemporary dance theater

and cultural effects of the development enterprise as a whole. For whether or not musical practice is able to bring about the long-term positive change heralded by many music institutions, musical practice does affect human subjectivity. Through musical culture, identities are explored, communities formed, ears tuned, and bodies disciplined. These are the effects that I aim to explore by focusing on bodies, sound, and the gaps emerging at the frontiers of development in contemporary Cambodia. By exploring how identities are formed and how sound affects the body, my dissertation contributes to demonstrating the potentials and limitations of music and dance to catalyze meaningful social change.

Emily Howe, U.S. Senior Fellow
PhD Candidate in Ethnomusicology, Boston University

City Planning for Pedestrians



It was a great opportunity for me to have been selected as a CKS Senior Fellow from March – September 2019. CKS provided not only grant funding and facilities for my research, but also opened opportunities to meet distinguished experts and scholars whose guidance helped me overcome challenges with my research. My research topic is “Making Phnom Penh a Walkable City: City planning for Pedestrians”. The objective is to propose policy scenarios that could transform Phnom Penh into a liveable city, one with safe walking environment.

Safe and walkable streets are one of the key factors of urban liveability and play an essential role in reducing automobile-dependency and harmonizing city life. Cities that are only optimized for motorized traffic will impose dangers on pedestrians and cyclists. To ensure safety for pedestrians, it is crucial to provide a physically separated, protected walking infrastructure on major streets with high-volume vehicular traffic. Also, providing sufficient infrastructure, including, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, ramps, signage and, calming traffic on neighborhood streets, providing greenery on streets, and improvement of safety at edges and intersections would encourage more walking. My study, therefore, first examines the drivable street networks (DSNs), walkable street networks (WSNs), and bikeable street networks (BSNs) for urban accessibility to walking and cycling. Second, the study assesses people’s perception of the walkability of the streets in their neighborhoods. Third, the study reviews existing laws and urban development policies, planning, land use, construction, and the transportation system. Finally, the study suggests a policy scenario that might retrofit the streets in Phnom Penh for safe and accessible use by pedestrians.

Since I am writing at the midpoint in my research timeline, in June 2019, only some results are in hand. My first paper analyzing the DSNs, WSNs, and BSNs of Phnom Penh has already been published in *Urban and Environmental Planning B*, a highly respected SSCI journal¹. This analysis sets forth the urban forms and characteristics of three types of street networks in Phnom Penh. The second paper, a comparative analysis of street networks of the 51 largest cities in ASEAN, is currently under review at *Transport Reviews* (ID TTRV-2019-0119). Meanwhile, my third paper, a topological and geometric analysis of street networks of

26 pilot cities of ASEAN smart cities network (ASNC), was just presented at the 2019 World Transport Convention (WTC 2019) in Beijing, China, in June 2019. The 2nd and 3rd papers give a broad view of street networks and urban forms of the majority of cities in the Southeast Asian region.

I also wrote four articles for *Freshnews*, one of which was about street safety for schoolchildren in Phnom Penh. A survey of people’s perceptions of the walkability of the streets in their neighborhoods is in process. So far, around 370 samples have been collected from people living in the capital. In addition, with the assistance of the UNDP, I was able to join in several important meetings with government officials, the UNDP team, and CKS colleagues to learn what the governments have been doing and what the challenges they are facing. I also used this opportunity to request available data from the governments. Of course, data is a big challenge for me. However, I have now collected some



Dr. Yen attending a meeting on urban planning with CKS staff at Phnom Penh City Hall

secondary data and materials for the desk review. Last but not least, I have just attended the 2019 “International Conference on Urban Development—Paradigm Shift to Quality Urbanization” organized by Peking University and the University of Hong Kong. This conference was useful with regard to themes related to urban land use, transport planning, and public welfare.

In short, my research aims to promote sustainable urban mobility, in which walking accessibility is the main focus. Some of its main objectives and activities, within the scope and timeline of the study, have already been achieved.

Cambodian Senior Fellow Dr. Yen Yat
Peking University, China

¹This paper can be found at <https://journals.sagepub.com/epint/6GZCQ9NKS6FCAMWZP7T/full>



Students in 2019 Khmer Language Program visiting Sambor Prei Kok temple, one of The World Heritages in Kampong Thom, Cambodia

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