

IN FOCUS

The Center for Khmer Studies

Koh Ker Temple built in the 10th century was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage in 2023.

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MISSION STATEMENT

CKS is an independent non-profit corporation incorporated in Delaware, USA. It is supported by major international foundations, educational institutions, scholars, and individual philanthropy. It receives partial support for overhead and research fellowships from the U.S. Government. Its social sciences, arts and humanities programs focus on Cambodia and the Mekong region.

CKS seeks to:

- Promote research and support international scholarly exchange through programs that increase understanding of Cambodia and its region, both within Cambodia and at US 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, Cambodia.

CKS is a member institution of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC).



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CKS Board and staff in front of CKS Reading Room.

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Jacques Hennessy

Dear Friends,



When CKS was founded twenty five years ago, the detritus of Cambodian education was everywhere at our feet -- the structures of education deliberately destroyed by the Khmer Rouge-teachers killed or emigrated to save their lives . No schools. No books. Few American scholars of the region.

The original concept was to encourage French and American scholars interested in Cambodia - a rare breed at the time, after twenty five years of the most brutal and difficult times any country has been through-- to contribute to the rebuilding of Cambodian education. CKS gave grants, first funded by the Luce and Rockefeller foundations, to scholars who needed to spend some months in Cambodia to complete their research. They were asked at the same time to help conduct training programs for young Cambodians.

Over the years, in addition to well-established scholars, the number of younger applicants increased, until, to our delight, so proving their energy and resilience, we also received applications from young Cambodian students. The Fellowship Committee now approves several each year, who are now funded thanks to the generosity of board members.

Since then, other programs-- the Khmer Language Program, the Junior Resident Fellows summer Program, which mixes French, American and Cambodian undergraduates, as well as Study Abroad trips organised by Cornell and American community colleges have allowed hundreds of students to discover Cambodia and Khmer culture. Some then go on to make Khmer studies their main interest.

We also run programs turned towards Cambodia. While the CKS library is normally a haven of peace in busy Siem Reap, sometimes welcoming the odd celebrity visitor. It becomes wildly overcrowded in June, during the CKS Mini Book Fair, when over thirty exhibitors are discovered by 6,000 visitors. This event which our Head Librarian Chor Sivleng invented, is now in it's third edition and becoming an institution.

More academic, but very much in line with our original purpose is the Ponlok Chomnes Research Fellowship Program. Up to 20 students have weekly research classes over four months under the tutelage of a first-rate scholar.

So there you have CKS today: Occasional home to scholars, meeting point for researchers and students, destination for anybody curious

about the rich Khmer culture, and hopefully a source of knowledge to many.

All this is made possible thanks to the energy and devotion of our staff in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, to the generosity of our board members, who give unstintingly of their time and knowledge, and obviously, to the largesse of our donors, many of whom have supported CKS from its start.

To all, my thanks. What has been achieved thanks to you is remarkable, and we hope you will accompany CKS for the next twenty-five years.

Welcome to CKS!

Jacques Hennessy
Chairman



Nobel Laureate Prof. Jeffrey Sachs, world-famous American economist, visiting CKS Library in Siem Reap in early 2024.



Eve Zucker, Ph.D.

Dear Friends of CKS



The year 2024 begun with the auspicious celebration of our 25th anniversary. Held in the gardens of Phnom Penh’s Sosoro Museum, it was a joyous occasion bringing together friends, fellows, and colleagues with a mutual enthusiasm and commitment to Khmer studies. CKS’s contributions and successes over the past 25 years are a testament to the vision and hard work of CKS’s founder and first president, Dr. Lois de Menil.

Now, deep into 2024, we are in the midst of another busy and productive year with several new activities and programs. CKS held its inaugural CAORC Overseas Faculty Development Program with CKS’s sister organization in Myanmar, INYA. The two-week program hosted a cohort of faculty members from U.S. community colleges in Cambodia for an immersive learning experience that they can later bring to their classrooms. In addition, under our Australian-sponsored Asia Foundation grant, CKS initiated a special fellowship to explore the state of research capacity in the social sciences, arts,

and humanities in Cambodia. This will ensure that CKS is meeting the current needs of Cambodian scholars and gaining a sense of the landscape in humanities and social science research in Cambodia’s higher education sector. The CKS Library held our third annual two-day “Mini Book Fair,” drawing approximately 6,000 visitors to our Siem Reap campus at Wat Damnak. We will also be running our popular library workshop, training Cambodia’s librarians and archivists in the latest cutting-edge library technologies and practices. Additionally, our Head Librarian, Sivleng Chhor, will once again be traveling to the University of Michigan to help with UM’s Cambodia collection and receive training in text preservation and digitization.

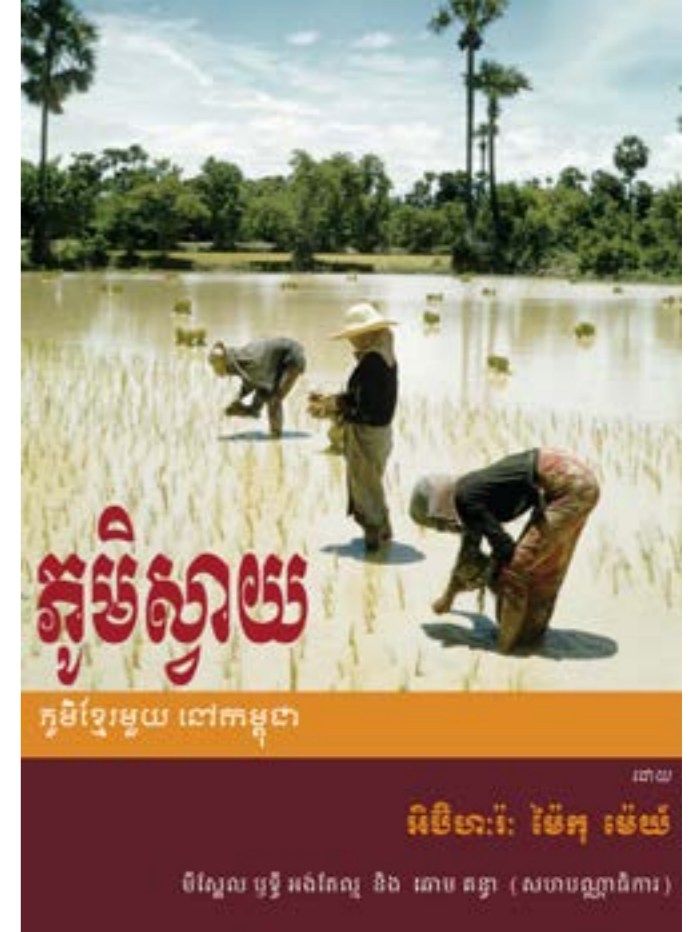
I am particularly pleased to share that we have completed and published a Khmer translation of the late May Ebihara's seminal work "Svay," an ethnographic study of a Cambodian village in the late 1950s. Her landmark study forms the foundational core of Cambodian rural village studies and has been influential and invaluable in studies since (including my own work!). The translation is drawn from the edited English-language volume of "Svay," which is a rendition of Dr. Ebihara's dissertation edited by Professor Andrew Mertha that includes an introduction by Anthropologist Judy Ledgerwood. Professor Michel Antelme completed the meticulous translation with support from Dr. Kunthea Chhom.

CKS’s orbit continues to expand. This year, we made several new acquaintances and built connections with universities and colleges, particularly in America’s Northeast, the site of this year’s annual Association of Asian Studies Conference. In Cambodia, our outreach activities now include universities in the rural provinces beyond Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, reaching a wider sector of Cambodia’s population by making our library resources accessible to all through outreach and building our digital collections, participating in book fairs, running a special research capacity-building training program for Cambodian master’s students (beginning this Fall), and training interns and volunteers. Moreover, we nurture a love for learning among local children and youth through our monthly activities at our library and our collection of books and resources for children. These efforts are crucial for fostering a vibrant intellectual community within the country.

Despite these accomplishments, our work is far from complete. Khmer language courses and Cambodian studies options are increasingly limited. CKS remains one of the few international forums dedicated to Cambodian and Southeast Asian studies, and our immersive, in-country language program continues to be a cornerstone of effective cultural and linguistic education.

Looking forward CKS will continue to find new ways of engaging young generations in Cambodia, the U.S., and elsewhere to support the study of Cambodia and its remarkable region. This endeavor would not be possible without the generous support of our friends, colleagues, and partner organizations who share our vision.

Eve Zucker , Ph.D.
CKS President and CEO



Newly released in Khmer, CKS publication, Svay.



Khmer Language and Culture Program Instructor (right) and fellow touring CKS facilities in Siem Reap.



Junior Fellows 2024 and their instructor, Napakadol Kittisenee at the National Museum in Siem Reap.

2023–2024 Annual Fund Donors

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Support CKS

Support CKS’s Library -- Open to all, CKS’s free library is the largest library outside Phnom Penh. It offers unparalleled educational facilities to the general public, students of every age, and scholars from all countries share our reading room.

- **Support acquisition of books** (\$15,000) line up bullet
- **Donate a computer for our library reading room—annual updating.** (\$1,500)
- **Support free access to internet.** Connect the Library to the World Wide Web. (\$1,500)

Sponsor translation of essential books into Khmer, Cambodia’s native language. In the absence of university-level books in Khmer, CKS translates and publishes key texts. A contribution of \$10,000 will defray the cost for an average 300-page book and will be acknowledged in the publication.

Sponsor a Cambodian-American undergraduate to discover Cambodia’s history and culture by attending our 6-week in-country summer Junior Resident Fellows Program together with French and US undergrads. (\$3,500 each).

Support modest Travel Grants to enable Cambodians to participate in regional academic conferences (\$500 each).

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

Support CKS’s public outreach: regular in-country workshops, and lectures at US universities and community colleges. (\$ 5,000 each)

Support CKS lecture programs in honor of our late Trustee Dr. Benny Widyono and our late President Dr. Mary Ellen Lane, whose service we honor. (\$ 3,000)

Keeping Finances Responsible

One of the challenges in opening a non-profit in an unstable country, without a reliable political economic, or court system, as Cambodia was, in 1999, when our Board of Directors was just taking charge, was how to handle the funds that enable the new institution to function. We made an early decision to establish our banking in the US and to transfer funds, as needed. We opened an in-county bank account to receive transfers. All were done by hand. We were fortunate that we had a professional accountant on our Board of Directors, and she agreed to teach our new employees how to manage our simple books and administer our small payroll, as needed; while back in the US, we could keep our more complex fundraising, taxes, and grant administration responsibly in hand, while we applied for certification as a 501(c)(3). When we had small surpluses back then, they stayed in our bank account. But as CKS became more complex, we began to deal with our cash flow.

Our employees were fastidiously honest. They were proud to be part of our mission to their country. A few trustees began contributing to a small “reserve fund”, as we then called it. We kept our budget tightly under control, even counting how many water bottles we consumed in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh. There came the point where our reserve fund became large enough that we had a small ‘endowment’. Once that happened, we decided to invest it with another trustee, Mary Porter, an investment professional. Our first ‘endowment’ was a few thousand dollars. Then trustees and friends began contributing. We kept it very separate from our programs and other expenses--funding provided by grants that require meticulous accounting

Then, the world of technology arrived. And not long after, with advancing age, I decided to step down as President and Chair and to hand CKS management to a younger generation. When our wonderful President Eve Zucker took charge, she brought with her the best contribution CKS has yet received, in the form of her close friend TJ Rutkowski, an accomplished young techie, who donated valuable time to various charitable causes. At about that time, our devoted Treasurer of many years, Gaye Fugate, encountered health issues that led to her retirement. TJ stepped up enthusiastically to assume responsibility for CKS finances, first as head of the Finance Committee and then as Treasurer. He traveled to Cambodia for long stints, during which he taught our in-country personnel to use modern financial software, such that with a click they share information with the US, transparently tracking CKS finances in real-time. Sreypitch Tith, who began working at CKS from its start, became the Finance Officer. CKS now has a stable investment portfolio in the US; it sure helped during COVID-19.



Sreypitch (left) and TJ during the CKS annual reception in Cambodia.

CKS assets are invested in the US, with a local Cambodian bank that receives monthly transfers for in-country expenses. TJ watches over all this with a precise eye and passion for the cause. He has since moved to Oregon, and our Finance Committee meetings are often on Zoom. This herald of technology has given CKS a whole new way of looking at its finances. They are safe. They are responsible. Our investment portfolio is still in the hands of Houston-based Mary Porter. When you donate to CKS you can be sure that funds are responsibly tracked, and that overhead is responsibly kept in check.

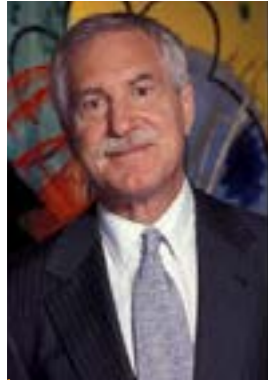
Thank you, TJ! Thank you, Sreypitch! Thank you, Mary!

**Lois de Menil, Ph.D.
Honorary President**

Support our Annual Fund

Sustains our annual budget and provides overhead for all CKS activities.

CELEBRATIONS



Olivier Bernier

The Adventure

It was an adventure; it was an invention: fragile, improvised, a paradox at a time, twenty-five years ago, when the very act of going to Cambodia made many people say: “How can you want to go? It isn’t safe!”. And they were not altogether wrong. Many parts of the country were indeed dangerous; there were still landmines in great numbers and in many places. At Angkor, I was told by my guide: “Always walk behind me: I know where the landmines are”.

As for the murderous Khmer Rouge, they remained in many places, they were indeed as close as the very periphery of Siem Reap. And then, there was the state of the country in which almost everything was lacking, from schools to safe roads to enough food to feed the people. Not, one would have thought, not, many people said, the right circumstances for the creation of a scholarly entity dedicated to the study of Cambodia, its history, its art, its people, its former greatness.

That, of course, is when CKS was founded. “Founded” might seem to imply a great crowd of people; in fact, our first President, Lois de Menil, with the help of the World Monuments Fund, saw that although there were great difficulties, there was also a great opportunity, a great need, a task which must be accomplished. A place must be found; a (tiny) staff must be hired; scholars must be identified and encouraged to be part of what, at first, might seem an almost reckless adventure. And not least, funding must be raised. All that happened twenty-five years ago.

The place was found: one of the buildings -one hall, with not a great deal of space- on the grounds of a Buddhist monastery in Siem Reap. It became the office, the Library, the meeting-room, the entire space of the brand new Center for Khmer Studies. There was a fresco on one wall, partly disfigured because the Khmer Rouge had shot some of their victims in front of it. Soon, however, there were two desks and a few shelves with fewer than a hundred books. We also had a Director, Philippe Peycam, who worked with, at first, a single employee.

And so it was that, one day, I heard about this new venture. I went;



and in the courtyard, there was a man standing. “Where”, I asked “is the Center for Khmer Studies?”

“Here”, he said, pointing to the one-room building behind him. We talked; I asked what the Center did, what it needed. “Well,”, he said, “We’d like to have a History of Cambodia, published in Cambodia, and available to interested readers”. The book was published. It was a beginning.

Since then, the Center has grown in many directions: research, publications, public programs, a Library with almost 30,000 books, relationships with other scholarly bodies. It is an important part of the international scholarly community. And perhaps best of all, while it makes the rich and important Khmer culture available to all of us, it helps give back to Cambodia, after the destructions of the wars and the Khmer rouge, what, at one time, it seemed to have lost, a sense of its culture and its identity.

Olivier Bernier
Vice-President Emeritus

Au Revoir, Olivier!

While we celebrate, we also say farewell. Olivier Bernier, art historian and longtime Lecturer at the Metropolitan Museum, was co-founder and Vice-President of CKS until now. Olivier was a fundraiser extraordinaire though his wide circle of friends and admirers--a devoted companion and fellow traveler in the adventure of creating CKS. He has sadly announced to us that the constraints of dwindling health would require his stepping down as a CKS Trustee. To have visited the National Museum with Olivier was an experience like no other. It was to fall in love. Au Revoir, Olivier. Godspeed!

A Milestone

The Center for Khmer Studies (CKS) marked its 25th anniversary in 2024 with events and initiatives to showcase its impact in the region. Over the first six months of the year, CKS engaged in-person and online audiences in various activities, highlighting its past achievements.

During the Annual Reception at the Sosoro Museum in January, more than 100 guests, including representatives from ministries, embassies, and partner universities and institutions, gathered to celebrate CKS' important milestone. The event was presided over by Jacques Hennessy, CKS Chairman, and Dr. Eve Zucker, CKS President.

Anniversary celebrations continued throughout the first six months of 2024, on social media and the CKS library while CKS fellows and staff celebrated through video testimonials. CKS also organized a contest inviting former and current fellows, event attendees, and library users to submit original works based on the theme "Reflecting on the Road Traveled." The contest encouraged participants to present their stories through formats, such as photography, posters, paintings, drawings, poetry, and reflections that celebrated Khmer Studies in line with CKS's mission.

CKS's 25th-anniversary celebrations commemorated the organization's past while encouraging future innovation, and collaboration in Khmer Studies enhance academic capacity in the region.



Videos of CKS fellows and program instructors expressed their appreciation to CKS and the donors.

Thank-You messages from our fellows and program participants.



Annual Reception 2024 and the Celebration of the 25th Anniversary

25th Anniversary celebration in Phnom Penh, January 2024



The University of Oregon and the Center for Khmer Studies are pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to strengthen research and educational activities in Southeast Asian studies!

The MOU is a significant step forward in CKS's commitment to promote cultural understanding and academic exchange between the United States and Cambodia. We believe that this partnership will not only benefit students and faculty, but also contribute to a deeper understanding of the Southeast Asian region and its rich cultural heritage.

FEATURES

Koh Ker's Road to World Heritage List

Located a hundred kilometers northwest of Angkor and buried in a deep jungle, the Koh Ker temple site was the former capital of the Khmer Empire in the 10th century CE during the reign of king Jayavarman IV and his son Hashavarman II. It is one of the sacred architectural capitals in the world and is dedicated to Trimurti: Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma. Koh Ker's architecture and art are grandiose: the Prasat Prang royal temple, located in the compound of Prasat Thom, is built in the shape of a pyramid with 7 tiers, measuring 35 meters high. The architectural style, decorations, and life-like sculptures are the result of unprecedented creativity and combination of art and religion that served to influence later periods of Khmer artistry. As a result, the Koh Ker site holds an important role both in Khmer history and universally.



Map of Royal Roads Network and Koh Ker Site

1. Preparation of Dossiers and ICOMOS Evaluation

In 2019, the National Authority for Preah Vihear started the application process to include Koh Ker on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Application documents were submitted in January 2021 and an International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) technical evaluation mission visited the Koh Ker site for two weeks later that year. ICOMOS subsequently requested additional information, such as identifying and mapping of attributes, visitor and tourism management plans, Heritage Impact Assessment, and further research. The requested information was provided and ICOMOS approved the report on March 9th, 2022.



Cambodian delegation at Saudi Arabia

2. Criteria Under Which Inscription is Proposed

The Koh Ker site is nominated for inclusion on the World Heritage List on the basis of cultural criteria. ICOMOS considers the Koh Ker style a product of the fusion of Indian religious symbolism with indigenous cultural values and traditions. The Koh Ker style subsequently exerted a strong influence on the art and architecture of the later dynasties of the Khmer Empire and in the region beyond, illustrating an important interchange of values. The Koh Ker site also exhibits a marked difference from previous cities and towns of the Khmer Empire in terms of its urban design, religious symbolism, artistic expressions, construction techniques and scale of buildings. The use of megalithic stone blocks for construction made the grand scale of buildings possible, which established a prototype of city construction that transformed the urban landscape of later periods, culminating with the architectural marvel of Angkor Wat in the 12th century.



At the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, Saudi Arabia Wows International Delegates.

3. Integrity, Authenticity and Boundaries

The site's integrity is based on the wholeness and completeness of the urban center of Koh Ker, as demonstrated by the spatial relationship between temples and sanctuaries, archaeological remains, and hydraulic structures. All the elements that contribute to the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property are included within the property area, buffer zone and satellite zone. The authenticity of the Koh Ker site is high. It escaped from later modifications and has effectively preserved the original landscape, location and layout of the city. The management zone of Koh Ker was divided into three areas, covering a total of 8,789.43 hectares.

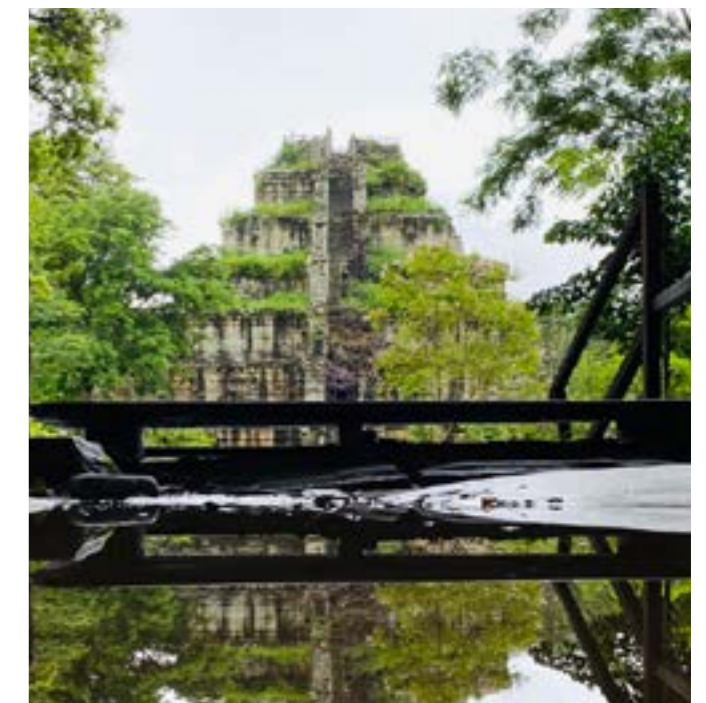
4. Inscription of Koh Ker on UNESCO World Heritage List

Koh Ker: Archaeological Site of Ancient Lingapura or Chok Gargyar was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List on September 17th, 2023 at the 45th meeting of World Heritage Committee in Riyadh city, Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Darith EA, Director
Department of Conservation and Archeology, NAPV
CKS Board Member



Monolith Statue of Garuda, Prasat Thom Complex



Prasat Prang, 7 Tiers, 35m High



Prof. Andrew Mertha

A Changing Narrative

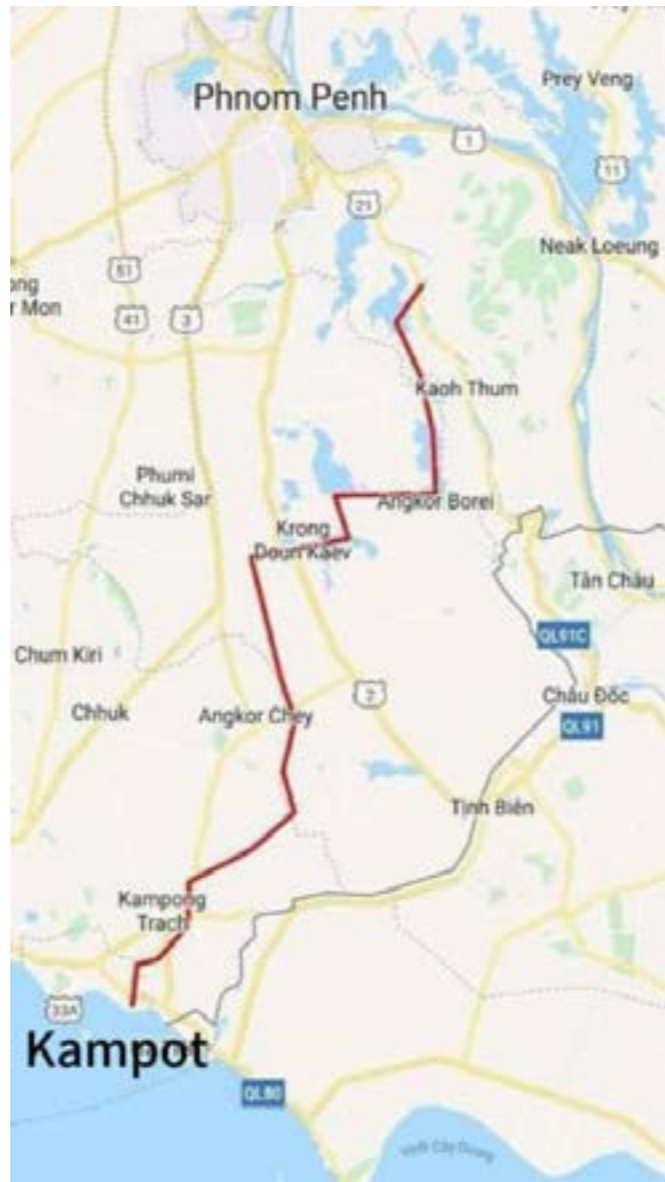
For many years, the Cambodian narrative was dominated by two broad ideas: first, that it is an innate purveyor of the most exquisite fine arts and, second, that it is the site of unimaginable horror and recent suffering by its people. These may have receded some from public consciousness as they are joined by a third, more pressing and timelier one: Cambodia as an extension of China’s influence in the region.

A few years back, I was hopeful (or hopelessly naïve), when I thought the influx of the Chinese into Cambodia would help launch its economy and society out of the shadow of the near do-well “death parts” that had made Kampong Som their somewhat grubby home. But, as the old chestnut has it, China never loses an opportunity to lose an opportunity. Rather than act as a bridge to greater economic development and global integration, China has allowed various elements of the Chinese state and Chinese society to undermine the Cambodian economy and, by extension, Cambodian society.

Cambodia’s leaning into China’s regional hegemony is due in no small part to China’s opportunistic exploitation of US lack of interest in (or understanding of) the strategic importance of Cambodia. Washington’s insistence on distancing itself from Phnom Penh until it becomes more democratic reminds one of Proust’s observation “to communicate where no communication is possible is merely a simian vulgarity”: to refuse to communicate when such communication is necessary, even vital, is equally so.

Given Cambodia’s central location within Mainland Southeast Asia and its increasingly close ties with China, Cambodia punches well above its weight in terms of regional significance. Beijing recognizes this: we occasionally receive stories about the Ream naval base on its south coast, along with whispered rumors about China’s desire to use it as a military outpost. But there’s much more. There are plans afoot for a 180 km \$1.7 billion Funan-Techno Canal that will divert Cambodian exports from their traditional point of export in southern Vietnam -- as well as undermine the ecology of the lower Mekong region because it will bring more saltwater upriver- - while offering China easy access both to the Ream base and to the Gulf of Thailand.

For the Cambodian people, the threat is more proximate-- and devastating. Chinese expatriates have already created a parallel economy that outcompetes the indigenous Cambodian one in terms of scale and integration. Chinese in Cambodia have (and frequent) their own shops, utilize their own services – from restaurants to remarques



Red line represents the canal to Kampot



(tuk tuks), to real estate, effectively boycotting Cambodian goods and service providers. Most chilling are the Chinese-run, heavily fortified call centers, employing unwilling human-trafficked indentured servants from all over the region to scam vulnerable pensioners around the world out of their life’s savings.

As a bridge to the arts, or as a conduit to memorializing (and recovering from) Cambodia’s horrific genocidal past, CKS once again and continuously remains a beachhead for US and democratic values, as exemplified by its support of scholarly and artistic freedom in Cambodia. In a sense, CKS operates vigorously where US policymakers fear to tread. We have been an essential friend to Cambodia. We need to extend and maintain that friendship through your generous donations. This is one of those rare instances where you can see your goodwill translated into immediately positive results. As a contributor, you are not simply a highly valued friend to CKS, you are also a lifeline to a better Cambodia, within an increasingly fraught and challenging international context. Join us!

**Andrew Mertha, Ph.D. CKS Trustee
Professor of China Studies
School of Advanced International Studies
John Hopkins University**



Billboard announcing Chinese Casino Fang Tong, in Sihaoukville.



Ream Naval Base in Kep, Cambodia.

PROJECTS AND EVENTS



Prof. Sophal Ear

Resilience and Renewal

Cambodia's Journey in Modern Times

The Center for Khmer Studies (CKS) was established, in 1999, with a mission to promote research and scholarly exchange focused on Cambodia and the greater Mekong region. This year, as CKS celebrates its 25th anniversary, it is a poignant moment to reflect on Cambodia's journey of resilience and renewal, and how CKS has played a pivotal role in this transformation.

Cambodia's recent history is a tale of endurance and recovery. After the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime in 1979, the nation faced the enormous task of rebuilding from the ruins left by years of genocide and civil strife. The Vietnamese occupation that followed and the tumultuous period of United Nations intervention in the early 1990s marked significant, albeit challenging, phases in Cambodia's path to stability. It was during this fragile period that CKS emerged, embodying a vision of hope and a commitment to academic excellence.

One of the defining aspects of CKS's mission has been to foster international scholarly exchange, to integrate Cambodian scholars into the global academic community. Through its fellowship programs, CKS has enabled countless scholars from Cambodia, the United States, France, and other countries to conduct research that bridges cultures and expands knowledge about Cambodian history, culture, and society.

The transformation of Cambodia's educational landscape is evident in the success stories of CKS fellows. Junior Resident Fellows Program has been instrumental in nurturing young scholars. This program not only immerses participants in a rigorous academic program, but also provides them with a profound understanding of contemporary Cambodia through field trips and hands-on experiences. The impact of this program is seen in the diverse range of research projects undertaken by the fellows, which include topics such as water management in Angkor, the evolution of Khmer classical dance, and

the socio-economic changes in rural Cambodia.

CKS's dedication to education is also reflected in its support for the Khmer Language and Culture Program. This intensive eight-week summer program equips scholars with the linguistic skills and cultural knowledge necessary for their research. In this manner CKS ensures that the next generation of Cambodia experts is well-prepared to contribute to the field.

As Cambodia continues to navigate the complexities of modern development, CKS remains a beacon of scholarly excellence and cultural preservation. Its extensive library, one of the largest outside Phnom Penh, serves as a vital resource for researchers worldwide. By providing access to rare and valuable materials, CKS not only preserves Cambodia's rich heritage but also facilitates new research that can inform the nation's future.

In celebrating a quarter century of CKS, we honor not only the institution's achievements but also the resilience of Cambodia and its people. The journey of recovery and renewal continues, and with the support of CKS, Cambodia's rich history and vibrant culture will be preserved for generations to come.

Sophal Ear, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Thunderbird School of Global Management at
Arizona State University
CKS Board Member



Stuart Cochlin

Giant Puppet Project 2024

Siem Reap

The Giant Puppet Project proudly returned once again to the streets of Siem Reap in February 2024! A record-breaking 600+ participants took part in the puppet-making workshops, and an impressive 25,000 spectators turned out to see the parade. This year's event shattered previous records, with visitors drawing from near and far regions for the must-see cultural event. The Giant Puppet Project unfolded in two distinct phases: first, puppet artist-led workshops engaged over 600 children from local schools and NGOs in and around Siem Reap to create Giant Puppets. Nine workshops were held over three weeks, resulting in the crafting of nine magnificent Giant Puppets. CKS played a pivotal role as the main sponsor, generously providing workshop space and facilities at Wat Damnak. Following the intensive three-week workshop period, the culmination of the children's efforts was showcased in the grand finale: the Street Parade.

This year's puppet theme was dinosaurs. As rock-stars of Earth's ancient history, dinosaurs spark curiosity, imagination and wonder in us all. A perfect blend of education and fun, this parade was of prehistoric proportions. Nine dinosaurs paraded the streets of Siem Reap, including a T-Rex, Stegosaurus, Triceratops, Diplodocus and Pterodactyl. Thousands of spectators flocked to cheer on the throngs of children, musicians, and performers as they paraded through the

streets. Their contagious joy and creative achievements electrified the night, serving as a powerful reminder of what it truly means to be alive.

Established in 2007, the Giant Puppet Project has flourished, now boasting a robust team of 20 individuals encompassing puppet workshop artists, electricians, and support staff. At the helm of this dynamic team are Co-Directors Oun Savann, an artist, teacher, and owner of the Made in Cambodia Market, and Stuart Cochlin, a seasoned UK architect with 17 years of experience in architectural practice in Cambodia. The two have been a part of the project since its inception and lead the event together.

Stuart Cochlin, Founder

"Community support and building relationships are vital to The Giant Puppet Project's success and future growth. Youth development and enriching Cambodia's cultural and artistic landscape are shared values we have with CKS. Its support as Main Sponsor for many years is very much valued." S.C.



Giant Puppet Project on CKS lawn, Wat Damnak campus, Siem Reap



The parade of the Giant Puppets along the river in Siem Reap. Photo courtesy: Phalla Aloo



Jeff Badger

CAORC-sponsored Overseas Faculty Development Seminar in Cambodia

A Transformative Experience for American Scholars

Funded by a program of the Council of America Overseas Research Centers (CAORC), in collaboration with the INYA Institute, a member center in Myanmar, and the Center for Khmer Studies launched the Overseas Faculty Development Seminar (OFDS) in Cambodia. The initiative is designed to provide American educators from community colleges and minority-serving institutions (MSIs) with an in-depth introduction to the history, culture, and contemporary issues of the region.

The two-week seminar, entitled "Between Political and Climate Change in Southeast Asia," was attended by fourteen U.S. faculty members representing a broad spectrum of institutions and disciplines

from across the U.S. The program began at the CKS Office in Phnom Penh, continued to Battambang, and ended at CKS Headquarters in Siem Reap. The program was disseminated virtually and included talks by both Burmese and Cambodian key speakers. Discussions were complemented with field visits to cultural and historical sites across the three cities. The insights gained during the seminar will enable participants to present a more nuanced and informed narrative of Cambodia and Myanmar's history, culture, and contemporary challenges. This, in turn, fosters a greater appreciation for the region's complexity in pursuit of broader institutional goals -- promoting global awareness and cultural competence among students and faculty.



OFDS group at CKS Office in Phnom Penh.



OFDS participants witnessed the performance about life under the Khmer Rouge regime on Remembrance Day at Boeung Cheung Ek, a killing field. Remembrance Day is celebrated every year on May 20th, in homage to those who were murdered or lost their lives under the Khmer Rouge regime between 1975-1979.



OFDS participants joined the Cambodian crowds at Boeung Cheung Ek.

The opportunity to engage directly with Southeast Asian culture and history has a lasting impact, inspiring new research projects, publications, and educational initiatives. Moreover, the connections made with fellow participants and Cambodian counterparts often lead to enduring professional relationships and collaborative endeavors. Past participants of this program often describe the experience as transformative, both professionally and personally.

I can personally attest to the program's transformative impact. As a young community college professor in the field of Fine Arts, I participated in a faculty development seminar in Guanajuato, Mexico. I returned to my campus—Southern Maine Community College—inspired to advance international opportunities for my students. I created our college's first for-credit study abroad courses, and eventually established a Global Studies Center to advance

international curricula and opportunities across the system, often working collaboratively with our local universities and private colleges. My motivation to advance international education on my campus led me to join the CAORC team in 2022 as Director of the Overseas Faculty Development Seminar program. In addition to our seminar in Cambodia, we also offer programs at our centers in Bangladesh, India, Mexico, Mongolia, and Senegal. These programs are generously supported by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, allowing CAORC to fully fund the seminar for all participants.

Almost half of American college students are studying at a community college or an MSI, but many of these schools lack international curricula, study abroad opportunities, and support for faculty research. By equipping educators with international experiences, these seminars contribute to the development of globally informed curricula and encourage the incorporation of diverse perspectives in academic discourse. This exciting hands-on experience in Cambodia will encourage faculty from traditionally teaching-focused institutions to pursue research and scholarship, opening new pathways for academic exploration and professional development.

Jeff Badger
Program Director,
CAORC



OFDS participants attending a talk held at the CKS Conference Hall in Wat Damnak, Siem Reap.

Cornell in Cambodia

2024 Exploring Contemporary Cambodia:

Labor, Development and Society

This January, the “Cornell in Cambodia ” Program* took a new turn, when Cornell’s School of Industrial and Labor Relations, in collaboration with its Southeast Asia Program (SEAP), and CKS provided an opportunity to nine students at Cornell majoring in Industrial and Labor Relations, Fiber Science and Apparel Design, Asian Studies, History, Global Development, Global and Public Health Science, to learn about Cambodia’s labor, development and society. The program was designed by Professor Vida Vanchan, Director of the Global Studies Institute and Professor of Geosciences at SUNY Buffalo State University and co-taught by Scheinman Instructor and Institute Advisory Board member Richard Fincher.

The students were immersed in a comprehensive two-week winter abroad course that examined Cambodia from past to present, focusing on how people, culture, religion, environment, politics, history, and the economy help shape society, its labor, and development. With labor being a focal point of the course, this multi-faceted approach, supported by the unique expertise of Professors Vanchan and Fincher, enabled in-depth analysis critical to understanding labor relations and development in Cambodia.

The course began in Siem Reap, learning about the country’s rich history, culture, people, and society through lectures and site visits. Students visited historic temples, local organizations, and labor unions before traveling by bus to Cambodia’s capital, Phnom Penh, with a pit stop to the historic site and ancient Khmer city of Sambo Prey Kuk. The journey allowed students the time to reflect on previous readings, lectures, and site visits while observing the country’s diverse geography and the rural-urban dichotomy.

While in the capital, the group benefited enormously from meetings with high-ranking officials, learning about Cambodia’s past and current challenges, development, politics, and future vision; as well as visits with stakeholders including garment workers, factory, trade associations, unions, the US embassy, and others. Experience was enriched by lectures on internationalization of firms and geography of production along with case studies of supply chains, that offered both theoretical and applied knowledge crucial to the course. There were also visits to the Royal Palace, Sosoro Museum (museum about Cambodia economy and money), the Documentation Center, and local markets. Overall, the course provided both knowledge and experiences that extend beyond a usual abroad program.

“I cannot convey how comprehensive this course was. [...] I’m incredibly thankful for the wonderful group of students and professors on this trip. I cannot thank everyone involved in this program enough, as it served not only as the highlight of my undergraduate experience, but also as inspiration for a future career in international labor.”

Alyssa Brundage, participant



The students at Angkor Wat, Siem Reap.



The class visiting Wat Phnom, for of Phnom Penh was named, and a historical site that symbolizes Khmer national identity in the Capital City of Cambodia.



TC3 program visiting temple in Siem Reap.

Tompkins Cortland Community College

Winter Semester Study Abroad 2024

For the first time since 2020, Tompkins Cortland Community College has the opportunity to partner with CKS in a two-week study abroad program that took place in January 2024. The TC3 class consisted of ten students and two English professors, Angela Palumbo and John Troyer. We studied Cambodia and its culture for ten weeks in the fall semester, and then travel to Siem Reap and Phnom Penh during our winter break in January 2024.

During our classes before the trip, we looked at a variety of content relating to social work being done in Cambodia. We focused on initiatives to promote education and general well-being among children and youth in Cambodia. These studies led us to many NGOs in both Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, where students had the chance to interact with locals in a meaningful and uplifting manner. As part of the cultural exchange, students had the opportunity to share thoughts, aspirations, food, music, traditions and customs, in what will be a life-changing experience.

In addition to visiting the famous temples of Angkor, trip highlights provides full cultural immersion. We spent time in a rural village as well as a floating village, we visited local markets, NGOs and schools. Students were able to apply what they had learned prior to the trip to what they were experiencing while in the country.

Thanks to our partnership with CKS, we have had the great pleasure of bringing a group of students to Cambodia four times, and we plan to continue doing so in the future. Our students immediately fall in love with Cambodia. Two students have returned as a result of their positive experience with the program: one has changed his career path after realizing he enjoys working with children and another is returning in the summer to volunteer at an NGO in Siem Reap. The lasting impact of this study abroad program and the incredible effect Cambodia has on students is clear. We look forward to returning and again having the immense privilege of working with CKS and exchanging memories with the wonderful people of Cambodia.

John Troyer, Professor of English

Students’ Voices

“I don’t think I’ll ever find the same sense of discovery and wonder that I found in Cambodia.”

“I’m so content here.”

“By the end of everything, I felt amazing. I think we all did.”

“It is a beautiful country with a rich culture, awesome religious monuments, and above all, incredibly wonderful people.”



The TC3 program visiting PEPY, a local non-profit and Non-Governmental Organization providing personal and professional development training to rural youth in Siem Reap.

* Read her full article via the link, <https://www.ilr.cornell.edu/scheinman-institute/blog/education/learning-about-labor-relations-cambodia>

Cambodian Scholars Travel Grant

The CKS Travel Grant is intended to help Cambodians invited to present their research at regional conferences in Southeast Asia with partial travel expenses, to help them participate. Grants provide up to \$500 for travel to help Cambodians to make their work more widely known, and to network with other regional scholars, gathered for conferences.

From following Covid, CKS immediately received numerous applications. After consideration by our fellowship committee, grants were awarded to three Cambodian scholars, who presented papers at the Jakarta Asian Conference 2023 and SEAMEO SPAFA 2024 on three topics: “Government Ownership of Banks: Diversifying of Potential Products and Factors to Subsidize Agriculture”; “From Rice Cultivation Rituals to Cultural Identity: Practice and Value of the Khmer Rice Field”, and “Social Interaction through Ceramic Use and Production during the Late Angkorean Period (13th-15th

centuries CE): A Case Study from Buddhist Terrace ‘ATV009’ east of the Bayon Temple, Angkor Thom”.

This important program to help Cambodian scholars participate in regional networks of scholars is self-funded by CKS. It provides only partial support, for travel. Conferences are the heartbeat of research scholarship. We invite you to contribute to making this opportunity available to more Cambodian scholars through your generous support.

“With researchers delving into arts, culture, religion, identity, memory, history, and politics offering valuable insights, these discussions highlighted the significance of exploring these topics, shedding light on their intrinsic importance for comprehensive research and societal development.”

Kosal Nith



Presenters of political economy-related topics: Kosal Nith, Travel Grantee, first from right.



Dr. Theara Thun

A CKS Success Story:

Luce Southeast Asia Research Fellow Dr. Theara Tun

Cambodian historian, Theara Thun, Ph.D. is a CKS success story. Now a post-doc scholar at the University of Hong Kong, Dr. Tun has been an associate of CKS for almost fifteen years. He first joined the Junior Resident Fellows Program in 2008, and subsequently participated in four other CKS programs. Most recent was his 2021-2022 CKS-Luce SEA Research Fellowship, which provided support for his post Ph.D. research on the Elizabeth Becker Archive and other materials at the Bophana Center in Phnom Penh. Dr. Thun embraced many CKS activities-- publications, conferences, workshops and webinars. CKS strengthened his research, critical thinking and writing skills, and provided links to professional networks, and other Cambodian and international scholars and institutions. These experiences have contributed to his success in obtaining two competitive graduate fellowships, enabling him to pursue, first, a master’s degree in Thailand and then a Ph.D.

Dr Tun’s CKS-Luce SEA Fellowship research examined the politics of collective memory in post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia, through biographies, monuments, and films. Examining both the ambitions and limitations of this historical representation, his research contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the Cambodian government’s role in shaping the national cultural memory of mass violence, and how this memory contributed to a broader collective understanding of the Khmer Rouge period among Cambodians.

In March 2024, Dr. Thun presented a paper entitled "Only the Victor Can Write History: Archiving Memorials of Post-War Cambodia" at the "Contaminating Archives" conference held at the University of Washington Libraries. Supported by the CKS-Luce SEA Research Fellowship, Dr. Thun conducted three months of field research in Cambodia in 2022, and nine days of archival research at the University of Washington libraries, in 2024, focusing on the Elizabeth Becker Collection. Elizabeth Becker is an American journalist, who covered Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge period, and wrote the book, *When the War Was Over: Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge Revolution**.

“Thanks to my CKS-Luce Fellowship, I was able to explore a variety of research-related activities during my time in Cambodia. These activities included archival research at the Bophana Center and CKS Library. I also had the privilege of serving as a guest lecturer at esteemed academic institutions including the Royal University of Phnom Penh. I took advantage of my stay in Cambodia to visit significant Khmer Rouge memorial sites, including the Win-Win Monument, the S-21 Museum, and the Choeng Ek Memorial,” CKS takes pride in its support for Dr Tun’s academic achievements.



Dr. Thun presenting a paper in Seattle in March 2024.

* Becker, E., PublicAffairs, 1998

LIBRARY

The University of Michigan Library Exchange Program

In the dynamic world of academia, it is critical for librarians to pursue ongoing professional development. As a result of the collaboration between CKS and the University of Michigan, CKS was invited to participate in a library exchange program funded by the University of Michigan. Eager to benefit from this opportunity, CKS Head Librarian, Chhor Sivleng, embarked on a four-week program at the University of Michigan in October 2023.

The library exchange program offered a meticulously designed curriculum, fostering a well-rounded understanding of the University's extensive library system. The program served as a springboard for Sivleng's professional growth, equipping her with a wealth of knowledge and innovative practices. Over the course of 4 weeks, Sivleng had the privilege of learning how to preserve and conserve fragile printed books and archival materials. She also had the opportunity to expand her knowledge of other vital library skills, such as the theory and hands-on practice of paper mending, book repair, box making, and digitization. In addition, she was able to assist the Southeast Asian librarian with Khmer language-related materials at the university's Hatcher Library, as well as join library Zoom meetings of the Khmer Romanization working group, along with other Southeast Asian librarians from university libraries.

As a finale to the program, Sivleng gave a hybrid presentation on the collaboration between CKS, the University of Michigan Library,

and the Center of Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS). The presentation described the work CKS has been doing, its programs and library activities, along with what Sivleng had been doing at the University of Michigan during the 4 weeks. The presentation was held in Hatcher Library's International Studies Meeting Room, assembling 42 participants, of which 26 joined by Zoom.

Participating in the University of Michigan Library's exchange program was a transformative experience for Sivleng. The program's comprehensive structure, insightful presentations, and collaborative environment provided a wealth of both knowledge and experience. Without a doubt, this new experience will lead to improvements in the services provided by the CKS library. The program's overwhelming success highlights the positive role that exchange programs play in enabling librarians to improve their skills in the dynamic field of information stewardship.

In addition to the professional benefits, Sivleng also had the opportunity to delve into the diversity of American culture, while sharing Cambodia's culture with her counterparts.

**Sivleng Chhor,
Head Librarian**



Sivleng at the Hatcher Library, University of Michigan, assists the SE Asian librarian with cataloguing Khmer language-related materials.



Sivleng shared a hybrid capstone presentation on the collaboration between CKS and CSEAS, U. Michigan that she has supported during her exchange at U. Michigan.



Visitors pictured next to the decorative initials of the 3rd Mini Book Fair.

3rd CKS Mini Book Fair:

"Open a book, broaden your mind!"

Motivated by CKS' commitment to promote literacy and knowledge among Cambodian youth in Siem Reap, CKS's Librarians organized the 3rd CKS Mini Book Fair on May 4th and 5th, 2024. The two-day event was held at CKS Headquarters in Wat Damnak, and once again brought together more than 5,000 participants from a variety of backgrounds -- bibliophiles, authors, publishers, representatives of educational institutions, and all those who cherish reading.

The first Mini Book Fair was launched in 2022 to a similarly wide-reaching audience and brought the community together in the aftermath of COVID isolation. Since then, the Mini Book Fair has strengthened connections between Cambodia's reading communities and the individuals and organizations that shape the publishing landscape. Building upon the remarkable success of the previous two years, CKS proudly announced the 3rd Siem Reap Mini Book Fair with the theme: "Open a book, broaden your mind."

The 3rd Mini Book Fair hosted 42 booths, showcasing a wide range of book offerings, and attracted some 6,550 visitors over the two-day event. The fair incorporated an engaging program of events and activities intended to complement book displays. Storytelling sessions captivated young imaginations. Panel discussions on in-country scholarships for high school graduates sparked meaningful conversations among attendees. A workshop for children with drawing, coloring and origami helped to cultivate a taste for reading and writing among younger participants. Public speaking sessions that promoted youth empowerment were offered by well-known speakers, such as Nak Oknha Quach Mengly and many more. The daytime activities were followed by an evening outdoor performance of traditional Cambodian theater --"Lakhon Yike"-- and traditional

music, which inspired a spirit of cultural exchange within the young generation and foreign visitors.

The success of the 3rd CKS Mini Book Fair is a testimony to the growing appreciation for literature in the region. The Mini Book Fair enjoyed a wide variety of media coverage- including Thmey Thmey News, Go Global TV, Mengly J. Quach Media, Dear Thort, and others. By providing a platform for discovery, interaction, and sharing knowledge CKS's library successfully fosters love for reading. The fair's popularity suggests that this annual event will continue as well to nurture in the city's vibrant literary scene. Special thanks to our CKS team and the 15 young volunteers, who contributed their time and energy to making this event so successful.



Public speaking sessions and scholarship talks offered by guest speakers.

ANNUAL PROGRAMS

Khmer Language and Culture Program 2024

Since its founding, the CKS Khmer Language and Culture Program (KLCP) has been providing advanced students and scholars from U.S. and international universities with the opportunity to participate in an intensive eight-week in-country intensive Khmer language program, and to experience the vibrant culture of Cambodia in Phnom Penh, with side trips to historical sites in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.

This summer, CKS again had the pleasure of welcoming a new cohort of KLCP students to its office in Phnom Penh. Our cohort consisted of eight undergraduates and Ph.D. grad students from U.S. and European universities, representing multiple academic disciplines. Their research interests spanned a wide spectrum, from archeology to Khmer Rouge to library study in Cambodia.

The 2014 KLCP was led by Mr. Thorn Bunthen, an esteemed language instructor with 15 years of Khmer experience teaching Khmer to foreigners; along with a teaching assistant and a Program Coordinator. Following an assessment of their Khmer language skill level, fellows attended intensive Khmer language classes from 8:00 am to 3.30 pm each day to develop their Khmer-language reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, with daily homework assignments and ongoing assessments. In addition to the busy class, fellows cultivated a deeper knowledge of Cambodian culture and history through presentations by guest speakers and field visits to cultural and historical sites in and outside of Siem Reap, a floating village on the Tonle Sap Lake, Angkor Wat and other temples, and then spent a week in Phnom Penh visiting the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, the National Archives of Cambodia, the Royal University of Fine Arts, the Bophana Audio



KLCP fellow learning how to write Khmer alphabet.



Visual Center. Six of fellows completed the program successfully after a final exam.

Reflections from our participants this summer:

“The KLCP program is unique, and being able to attend the program is an unexpected moment for me since it is competitive to be accepted.”

“I am so grateful to be selected as a KLCP Fellow for 2024, because it is an opportunity of a lifetime to focus fully and invest in myself as a Khmer heritage speaker. KLCP is a platform for me to do the internal work of trying to reconnect with my ancestral roots and history. I fully look forward to learning with curiosity, moving with humility, and engaging in constant self-reflection during what I know will be a truly transformative summer for me. The staff and instructors have been wonderful and encouraging support in our individual journeys and I am deeply honored to learn from -- and be in community with--my fellow brilliant Khmer people.”

Junior Resident Fellows Program 2024

One of CKS’s first core programs, the Junior Resident Fellowship Program focuses on “Junior” scholars-- meaning undergraduates. It envisaged a competition to send these “Juniors” on a summer fellowship to the CKS campus in Siem Reap, Cambodia with the purpose of cultivating future graduate students, scholars, and experts in the region-- to interest them in Southeast Asia. Especially Americans, whose university curriculums are still largely dominated by offerings on Europe and the US. But how to do this, when major funding sources are all focused on graduate student and senior scholar programs? How to ‘recruit undergraduates to graduate school’? We turned to private philanthropy and were soon rewarded by an American philanthropist, who recalled the mistakes of the Viet Nam war and was inspired by our bold ambition. The JRFP was born. We decided to make the program 1) ambitious academically, and 2) international— open to 5 Cambodian, 5 French, and 5 American students, who all live together at a local hostel. That is part of its magic.

Junior Fellows see Cambodia through a historical lens. The program is centered around assigned readings, in daily classes at our campus in the Buddhist monastery of Wat Damnak, in Siem Reap. Classes include occasional guest lectures by prominent scholars. Afternoons, they observe first-hand the splendors of the nearby Ancient Angkor archeological sites in accompanied visits, and also monuments of Cambodia’s tragic Khmer Rouge recent past.

The daily curriculum centers about a course on the history and culture of Cambodia from ancient times to the present, followed by a daily



Fellows in the classroom taken place at CKS Headquarters, Siem Reap.

course in intensive Khmer, to give participants an increasing ability to interact with the locals. The 5 Cambodian students study English at this time. They are also studying their Western classmates.

Upon completion of the 6-week curriculum, Fellows present their research term papers at a public presentation in our conference hall. Topics range from multifaceted studies of Angkor, to teaching math in Cambodia, to daily livelihood on the Tonle Sap Lake, nearby. The format of their research projects can range from traditional academic term papers to podcasts, to photo essays. Upon return, they can submit their certificates of completion of this curriculum to their home universities for credit.

“The Junior Resident Fellows Program is excellent if you want to dive deep into the culture of Cambodia and its way of life, living like a local while learning about Cambodia. The program helped me expand my understanding of Cambodia, even though I am Cambodian. I learned more about my country’s history and the significance of preserving our culture and heritage.” 2023 JRFP Fellow.

“Commitment, compassion and creativity” are the words that Fellows often use to describe this program. As CKS now celebrates its 25th anniversary, these keywords help us to imagine the future of Khmer Studies at CKS. Your generous financial support would assist us to continue and to expand this exceptional program.

**Napakadol Kittisenee,
Instructor**



Fellows visiting the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh.

Senior Fellowship Program 2024-2025

U.S. Fellows



Leslie Barnes, Associate Professor of French Studies at the Australian National University. Her project will produce an orally transmitted history of the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center, co-authored with a network of filmmakers, technicians, scholars, and audiences who have contributed to Bophana's mission over the past two decades. Combining participatory dialogue, archival work, and textual analysis, the project aims to further efforts to archive Cambodian cultural memory and provide a model for collaborative research design and co-authorship.



Tiyas Bhattacharyya, Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology at the University of Oregon. Her dissertation research will examine faunal assemblages within cemetery and residential/industrial contexts from the Protohistoric/Iron Age (500 BCE-500 CE) center of Angkor Borei. By investigating questions related to the animal economy, ritual use of animals, and ecologic/environmental shifts, she aims to explore the role of specialization in large-scale societies and the relationship large-scale societies have with their environment as land use practices intensify.



Emily Howe is an ethno-musicologist, conductor, and music educator currently serving as Assistant Professor of Music at Curry College in Milton, MA. Her research project explores the role of music and dance in the Cambodian government's efforts to imagine and develop the postcolonial nation during the Sangkum Reastr Niyum period.



Emily Mitamura, the 2023-4 Shauna M. Stark '76, P'10 Postdoctoral Fellow at Brown University, is a poet and scholar of race, gender, and film. Her research explores narrative afterlives of mass violence in Cambodian life - in particular, how the history of violence is negotiated, contested, and rewritten by survivors and their kin. She received her PhD in political theory from the University of Minnesota. She is currently co-editing a forthcoming special project on the political economy of racialized death and haunting methodologies.



Derek Richardson is a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at Indiana University Bloomington. His dissertation research, "Credentials, Charisma, and Health Care: How Expertise is Constructed and Applied in International Aid Initiatives" examines international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) in Cambodia that provide health care services. He uses ethnographic observations and in-depth, semi-structured interviews to compare large-scale, professionalized "traditional" INGOs to small-scale, amateur "grassroots" INGOs to understand how organizational personnel define and apply different kinds of expertise and how organizational structures facilitate perceptions of expertise among personnel and beneficiaries.

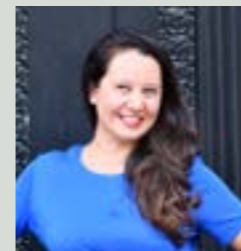


Brian Veasna Sengdala, a PhD candidate in performance studies at Cornell University. As a performance theorist, he is studying second-generation Cambodian-American performance as memory work, through literature, theatre, sounds, and minefields et alia. His article, "Cambodian American Listening as Memory Work," about his family's lives in Khao I Dang refugee camp was published in *American Music*. Prior to Cornell, he began doctoral studies in ethnomusicology at Rutgers, with previous degrees in musicology, sacred music (conducting), and voice performance. He also has a background as a professional singer and conductor in New York and the metropolitan area.



Hunter Watson is a Lecturer at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia, Mahidol University. His research investigates the early historic period of Mainland Southeast Asia, combining approaches from archaeology and linguistics. His current project, "The Thai-Cambodian Trans-border Region: a window into ancient inter-cultural contact," is a study in the socio-cultural dynamics of a region on the ancient boundaries of two larger political and cultural areas. His work is archival, using GIS technology to construct archaeological maps, supplemented by field surveys, to consider the extent of ancient cultural areas and assess evidence of cross-cultural exchange.

Cambodian Fellows



Candice Tep, PhD student in Psychology at the University of Paris 8, St Denis, Laboratoire Psychopathologie et Processus de Changement (LPPC), Ecole Doctorale 'Cognition, Langage, Interaction' Her thesis, entitled "Psycho-anthropological study in Cambodia: the place of lullabies in the construction of the bond between the child and family environment among villagers in Takeo province", explores family and cultural representations and beliefs conveyed by lullabies, as well as their role in the construction of mother-grandmother-baby interactions and the child's modes of transmission and cultural affiliation.



Sokro Suong is a Ph.D. candidate in historical anthropology at INALCO, Paris. His dissertation, "Historical Anthropology of Therapeutic Practices within Buddhist Royalty: the case of the Khmer Kingdom (late 15th century-early 21st century)," aims to grasp the evolving meaning of Cambodian therapeutic practices within a Buddhist royalty that has reigned for almost a thousand years. The very rich epigraphic corpus of Jayavarman VII, a selection of the main post-Angkorian treatises on medicine, and ethnographic studies in traditionalist monasteries and villages in the eastern part of Angkor region will form the main sources and terrain of this historical anthropology essay.

French Fellows



Alicia Landbeck, PhD in clinical psychology and psychopathology, has carried out several research projects, since 2015, on the specificities of the psycho-trauma clinics and the evaluation of care systems for children in Cambodia. Her current project focuses on idiomatic benchmarks of mental health in child psychiatry in rural Khmer environments, and on local care systems. She will spend time immersed in and observing rural homes, and conducting clinical research interviews with families and children. Her work seeks to open to a multidisciplinary dialogue between psychology and anthropology.



Théphanie Sieng, Associate Researcher with UMR DEVSOC and UR LIMEEP-PS, holds a Ph.D. in Human and Economic Geography from INALCO, Paris. As a social scientist, she is currently working on health research projects, notably on infectious diseases and antimicrobial resistance with the Institut Pasteur du Cambodge and CIRAD. She is conducting a study on "The impact of population behavior on disease spread and antimicrobial resistance development in Ratanakiri and Takeo provinces". Her research, based on One Health approaches, focuses on social determinants of risk exposure, healthcare pathways, spatial transformations, population behavior and acceptability of public health measures in Cambodian communities.



Photo: CKS

Nokor Bachey Temple built in the 11th century is an attraction point for tourists in Kampong Cham Province.

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