

ROSE DE BOKOR

UN FILM DE NORODOM SIHANOUK
CAMBODGE, 1969



ROSE OF BOKOR

A film of NORODOM SIHANOUK of Cambodia.
Made in 1969, in colour Eastman (Kodak). Format 35m/m
Editing and Sound in the D.P.R. of Korea (1979).
In Korean with English and French sub-titles.



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Bokor (in Khmer language: "bump of the ox") is the name of a mountain of an altitude of about 1.100 metres in the Cardamon Mountains, in the South West of Cambodia.

On the plateau of Bokor, a small town stands, frequently visited by the people of the plain, tourists and foreign residents, who came during the hot season, to search for the coolness and to admire its very beautiful scenery overlooking the sea. The plain's inhabitants were farmers, specialising in the cultivation of vegetable gardens.

Towards the end of the second world war, on the 9th March 1945, Cambodia saw the Japanese Imperial Forces overwhelm the French forces and put an end to the Protectorat established upon the country since 1863.

On 13th march 1945, the Japanese military authorities made the King of Cambodia proclaim the National Independence of the country. The latter carried out this proclamation, but he hastened to request the Government of Tokyo to recognise "de jure" the newly independent Cambodia.

The Japanese Government never took the trouble to reply to his request.

On 16th August 1945, after the United States used the atomic bomb against it, Japan surrendered.

The day after this capitulation, British forces arrived in Cambodia to disarm the Japanese. The French followed soon after their allies from across the Channel and did their utmost to re-establish their Protectorat over Cambodia.

But the Khmer people refused to return to the "statu quo ante". It was determined to re-establish its homeland in freedom and sovereignty.

T. S. V. P.

A. G. L.

SYNOPSIS OF THE FILM

FIRST PART

I. Bokor, before the take over by the Japanese, is a charming and peaceful town. There lives a nice Franco-Khmer family, of which the most pleasant representative is a *demoiselle*, Rosette, affectionately called by the people of the area: "our Rose".

Rosette and her brother Paulo have as father a French settler, deceased after a long illness, and as mother a Cambodian woman, Madame Sopha. It is Rosette, whom in place of her regretted father, takes care of the family's "chamcars" (fields), where magnificent vegetables, flowers and fruits, notably strawberries, grow.

The other members of Rosette's family are her uncle Georges, a bachelor, (French) commander of Bokor's "Garde Indigène"; Kalyan, the Cambodian wife of Paulo; and Sita, their daughter. This Franco-Khmer family will experience a dramatic fate owing to the occupation of Bokor by the Japanese army.

SECOND PART

II. When in February 1945, the Japanese sent forces to Bokor, they are commanded by Colonel Ichiro HASEGAWA. The latter negotiates the purchasing, for his troops, of products from Rosette's fields. He falls in love with the beautiful *demoiselle*, but Rosette gives him a rather cold welcome.

THIRD PART

III. On 9th March 1945, on the instructions of his superiors, HASEGAWA launches his troops against the small garrison of Bokor.

After heroic but unequal fighting, the latter is defeated. Rosette's uncle, Georges, is killed leading his men.

FOURTH PART

IV. Paulo and his wife decide to join, in the jungle, the anti-Japanese resistance forces. HASEGAWA sends soldiers from his regiment to chase them. Kalyan is killed, Paulo is imprisoned.

FIFTH PART

V. The "Return of Cambodia to Independence". In Bokor, a ceremony is organised to celebrate the "return of Cambodia to Independence". On this opportunity, the Mékhum (Cambodian Mayor) of Bokor, demands to Colonel HASEGAWA, on behalf of his constituents, to request to his Government the "de jure" recognition of the newly independent Kingdom of Cambodia, in order to prevent a possible return of French colonialism.

A Khmer collaborator of the Japanese then violently slaps the Mékhum in the face and tells him, in the presence of HASEGAWA, that the French will never come back to Cambodia and that the Kingdom's Independence is sufficiently guaranteed by the presence in their homeland of "the glorious and invincible armed forces of the Empire of the Rising Sun".

T. S. V. P.

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SIXTH PART

VI. Several months after, on 16th August 1945, Japan surrenders to the allied powers. The British get ready to come to Cambodia to disarm the Japanese forces.

HASEGAWA let Paulo free. Rosette thanks him and allows him to call on her to say goodbye.

SEVENTH PART

VII. When the French, at their turn, return to Cambodia, Paulo, who feels more French than Khmer, raises the French flag in the pole of his late uncle's barracks.

Rosette, who feels more Khmer than French, joins the population of Bokor to salute the Cambodian colours and listen to the patriotic speech of the Mékhum (Mayor) who, on behalf of the Royal Khmer Government, invites all citizens of both sexes to unite around their King, to fight with him for an independent, sovereign and neutral Cambodia.

THE END

CAST

ROSETTE SICOT (ROSE)HRH PRINCESS MONIQUE SIHANOUK
COLONEL ICHIRO HASEGAWA.....HRH PRINCE NORODOM SIHANOUK
THE MAYOR OF BOKOR.....MR OR PHO (PROFESSIONAL ACTOR OF KHM
CINEMA)
PAUL SICOT.....MR BRUNO FORSINETTI (AMATEUR ACTOR)
MADAME SOPHA SICOT.....HH PRINCESS SISOWATH PORACSI
(AMATEUR ACTRESS)
MADAME KALYAN SICOT,
Wife of Paulo.....Miss BOPHA (STUDENT OF THE ROYAL
UNIVERSITY OF FINE ARTS)
THE LITTLE SITA.....THE LITTLE PRINCESS NORODOM SITA
FORSINETTI
COMMANDER GEORGES SICOT.....MR RENÉ LAPORTE (AMATEUR ACTOR)
THE PRO-JAPANESE KHMER.....MR YEAK KAVA (PROFESSIONAL ACTOR OF
CINEMA)
MAJOR SUZUKI,
Deputy to Col. HASEGAWA.....MAJOR YOK HANG (OFFICER OF THE ROYAL
KHMER ARMY)
THE CAPTAIN OF THE KEMPETAI
(Japanese Military Police).....Captain Ang KHUN (OFFICER OF THE ROYAL
KHMER ARMY)
THE BRITISH MAJOR.....MR HAMAOU (AMATEUR ACTOR)
THE FRENCH CAPTAIN.....PROFESSOR J. DARCHE (AMATEUR ACTOR)
THE DIRECTOR OF THE BOKOR PALACE..MR SPACCESSI (AMATEUR ACTOR)

u.c.c.