

From Colonial Map to Visitor's Parcours: Tourist Guides and the Spatiotemporal Making of the Archaeological Park of Angkor

Michael Falser

[now we have to follow] the goal to make the ancient temples of Cambodia known to our readers who have not yet seen them and to enlarge their desire to visit them. On site, the access and conditions of a stay at the ruins improve very fast [...] Now we hope that the numbers of visitors increase in proportion to the sacrifices of the administration for making an excursion interesting. What we need now is that everybody who takes his journey to Angkor itself has a certain notion what he is supposed to see and that he is not left alone in the unknown world. ... [The visitor has to have] a general impression about the ruins of Cambodia [...] we need to publish vulgarizing notes on Angkor. [...] we have to develop] a method to gradually constitute a homogeneous ensemble and to adopt a rational program [...] a chronological order (Commaille 1910, 1–2)¹ (Jean Commaille, the first Conservator General of Angkor, 1910).

Abstract This paper discusses the spatiotemporal formation process of the Archaeological Park of Angkor near Siem Reap in current day Cambodia. Within the time frame of the French rule in Indochina, it focuses on the first travel guidebooks created between 1900 and 1950, the most important of which were written by the first Conservators General of Angkor, Jean Commaille, Henri Marchal, and Maurice Glaize. This paper argues that these guidebooks were a powerful control tool used by the colonial authorities to realize a gradual and finally almost all-encompassing figuration of the spatiotemporal facets of the park for tourism purposes. Accompanying the administrative and legal delimitation of the park and within a traceable development from undefined conventions (1900–1909) and early attempts of vulgarization (1909–1913), to mechanization (1920s–1930s) and finally standardization (1940s–1950s), these guidebooks developed graphic maps, walking diagrams, circuits, itineraries, and a time-dependent *parcours* for

¹ All translations of French and German sources into English are by the author of this article.

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the park and inside the temples to regulate the visitors' object selection, body movement, time management, and visual orientation. Together with the structural conservation work affected in situ by the scientific staff, these guidebooks contributed considerably to the progressive decontextualization of the Angkorian temples from a living site of local social practice and (trans)regional Buddhist pilgrimage to a stylized heritage reserve of dead colonial archaeology—a conflict that became even more visible with the effects of globalized mass tourism after the inscription of the Archaeological Park of Angkor to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1992.

Keywords Tourist guide • Archaeology • Architectural conservation • Parours • Archaeological Park of Angkor

On Spatial and Topographical Turns and Tourist Guides in Colonial Contexts

In his introduction to *Topographien der Literatur*, the German art theorist Hartmut Böhme defined topographies (*topos* = location; *graphein* = inscribe/describe) as power- and control-related operations through which spaces are marked, prefigured, or prescribed towards time-dependent action, movement, performance, and routine. According to Böhme, cultural topographies—focusing on literary works with spatial descriptions (this is how we conceptualize tourist guides² for the Archaeological Park of Angkor)—generate spatiotemporal patterns of perception, mental orders, and cognitive maps as a result of cultural learning processes (Böhme 2005, xi–xxii). Following on the heels of what is being called a “spatial turn” (Bachmann-Medick 2009, 284–328) in cultural studies, space is not only the physical-territorial construct itself, but can be seen in relation to (in this case French-colonial) politics and territorial power. For the latter, techniques of spatial representations are central to the cartography/mapping of colonized space (or a space to be colonized) and remained, in this case, in direct combination with verbal commentaries for a leisure-oriented travelling public—one of the most common imperial strategies for the appropriation of space.³ From this perspective, maps speak a cartographic

²For an interesting overview on travel-based literature on Angkor see Rooney (2001).

³“As much as guns and warship, maps have been the weapons of imperialism. Insofar as maps were used in colonial promotion, and lands claimed on paper before they were effectively occupied, maps anticipated empire. Surveyors marched alongside soldiers, initially mapping for reconnaissance, then for general information, and eventually as a tool of pacification, civilisation, and exploration in the defined colonies” (Harley 1988, 282). Editor’s note: From this perspective, guidebooks for the popular tourist industry explaining “dead ruins” follow a comparable strategy as “prescriptive texts” of colonial instructions for conservators (compare the contribution by Sengupta in this volume), picturesque photography (compare the contribution by Weiler), and hybrid temple reconstitutions of plaster casts from Angkor in occidental museums (see Baptiste in this volume). All these typically colonial modes of “archaeologizing” heritage, as it is indicated by

language with “hidden political messages,” are rhetorical images with an “ideological filtering” (Harley 1988, 292), and can generally be conceptualized as a social product.

This is what is most important in the context of early travel guidebooks to Angkor (compare introductory quotation): through the process of enframing, spatial descriptions and graphical maps helped the visiting tourist in “making the world intelligible as a systematic order [...] a hierarchically ordered whole” (Gregory 1994, 36) (a) to create, in his preparation at home or during his week-long boat travel to the site, the geographical imagining of an imperial entity between the European metropolitan centre and its Asian colonial margin; and (b) to conceive on-site with an inside and outside-construction the nature of a colonial possession—in this case the proclaimed cultural heritage objects inside an imaginary museum without walls or a culture reserve typified as a legal/administrative, aesthetic/geometricized entity called the Archaeological Park of Angkor. Following Lefebvre’s approach of *The production of space*, the production mode of the colonial space of Angkor was threefold: The Angkor Park was (a) symbolically perceived as a “space of representation” of colonial power; (b) physically conceived as the “representation of space” through concrete boundary-making as a protected zone by the colonial administration; and (c) lived by the “spatial practice” of its users—in this case by the colonial visitors (and not the local stakeholders which follow until today quite different concepts of space and spatial circulation).⁴ Based on the mental map of the 2D stage (the park) by the time of arrival and during his stay with the guidebook as script, the visitor’s spatial practice (navigability) was—and this will form the main discussion of this paper—increasingly predetermined and therefore controllable as far as movement, time management, and visual regime (arrangement of views) were concerned. In the tradition of Foucault’s analysis of space as an exercise of power and of the relationship between procedures in space (Foucault 1984), Michel de Certeau discussed the transmission of a cartographic a-perspectivity into a performative action—from “space” (*espace*) to “place” (*lieu*). He also talked about the relations of a map (“a plane projection totalizing observations”), graphic trails on a map as circuits and itineraries (“a discursive series of operations, chains of spatializing operations”) and pathways and parcours (as a “spatial acting-out of the place”). De Certeau’s spatial actions of “going” with the organisation of movements in relation to borders and barriers (Borsò 2004) were combined with speed indications (“velocities and time variables”), the calculation of distances and preselected views (the “knowledge of an order of places by tableau-like seeing”).⁵ Guidebooks

this volume’s title, serve as a good basis for discussing the actually circulating virtual models of architectural heritage (compare the other case-studies in this volume).

⁴ This threefold approach towards the production of space was convincingly introduced by the groundbreaking 1974 publication by Lefebvre. The quotations refer to Lefebvre’s introductory chapter “Plan of the present work” (Lefebvre 1991, 1–65).

⁵ All these quotations are from part III, chapters VII (Walking the city) and IX (Spatial stories) (de Certeau 1988, 91–127).

on the Angkor Park, as travel guidebooks do in general to this day, predefined the visitors' selective reading competence of culture heritage, and predefined and dictated his on-site practice (from "route" to "routine"), but they also had a particularly devastating effect as powerful tools of colonial hegemony: they decontextualized the delimited park area from its larger sociocultural environment and eliminated the perception of Angkor as a site of 'living heritage'.⁶ Maps and descriptions in the early guidebooks—and almost all of them were written by the so-called Conservators General of Angkor themselves—consciously ignored the existing socio-cultural fabric and spatial practices of Khmer villages in the surroundings of the temples, which had never ceased to be local and regional sites of veneration and pilgrimage. These guidebooks helped to 'archaeologize' Angkor, i.e. to perpetuate its image, surviving to this day as an empty, isolated, and dead site of forgotten ruins in the jungle that were rediscovered by the colonial power.

The Historic Context of the Spatiotemporal Figuration of the Angkor Park

The programmatic position of the introductory quotation (see above) was determined in 1910 by the former civil servant Jean Commaille who was appointed the first Conservator General of the temple group of Angkor in 1908 by the *École française d'Extrême-Orient* (EFO), at the newly established French institution for the research and preservation of Indochinese heritage. In consideration of the fact that the French protectorate in Indochina was established in 1863, one wonders why such a proposal to vulgarize the European gaze on Khmer heritage *in situ* was announced comparatively late. Early images on Angkor Wat demonstrate aspects of the cultural-political perception of Khmer heritage in France before 1900. After first depictions by Henri Mouhot and in Francis Garnier's *Voyage d'exploration en Indo-Chine* from 1873, Louis Delaporte's *Voyage au Cambodge. L'architecture Khmer* from 1880 popularized Angkor for a larger public (Delaporte 1880). Delaporte was part of the explorative Mekong-mission in 1873 and saw Angkor Wat in an overgrown and decayed state partly occupied by the monks' wooden houses (compare Fig. 4). However, in his own book from 1880 Delaporte published an idealized reconstruction drawing of the temple (he called it "vue reconstituée") with an imagined lively and local traditional crowd on the central causeway⁷ (Fig. 1).

⁶ Editor's note: New approaches in conservation and architectural preservation discuss the aspect of living heritage in a very different way and try to incorporate local knowledge into new strategies of conservation (see the contributions by Warrack, Chermayeff, Sanday in this book) and describe the local stakeholders inside the park as dynamic users of the ancient land-use patterns (see the essay by Luco in this volume).

⁷ See Delaporte's drawings in the essay by Pierre Baptiste in this volume.



Fig. 1 One of the earliest depictions of the temple of Angkor Wat, in Louis Delaporte's *Voyage au Cambodge. L'architecture Khmer* of 1880 (Source: Delaporte 1880, 206–7)

This folkloristic scenario inhabiting the central perspective towards a fully reconstructed temple silhouette (the real monks' houses, however, were eliminated both in picture and reality) strongly predefined the visitors' expectations of the real site in the years to come. The perspective of the so-called archaeological heritage of Cambodia changed considerably in the three decades after the 1870s. On the archaeological survey map of the ancient temples by Lunet de Lajonquière, the captain of the colonial infantry, in 1901, the temples of Angkor still belonged to Siam (today Thailand) (Lunet de Lajonquière 1901) and the French appropriation of this much desired heritage through the process of mapping hardly touched upon the real temple site (Fig. 2a). However, by 1907 the Franco-Siamese Treaty had brought the north-western provinces of Battambang and Siem Reap (with Angkor) into the French protectorate of Cambodia. As a consequence, the temples of Angkor were not only converted into the propagandistic showcase of the French *mission civilisatrice* through the applied sciences of archaeology and architectural preservation (Fig. 2b shows Lajonquière's 1907/1911 inventory of a densified archaeological mapping which was conceptualized as the Angkorian temple zone, see the red-lined rectangle) but also into a major travel destination for the fast-growing transcontinental tourist industry.

In this latter project, three points of observation structured the following argumentation: First, it is an often-discussed fact that universal and colonial exhibitions in the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century in Europe displayed colonized (appropriated) heritage from overseas colonies in a supposedly

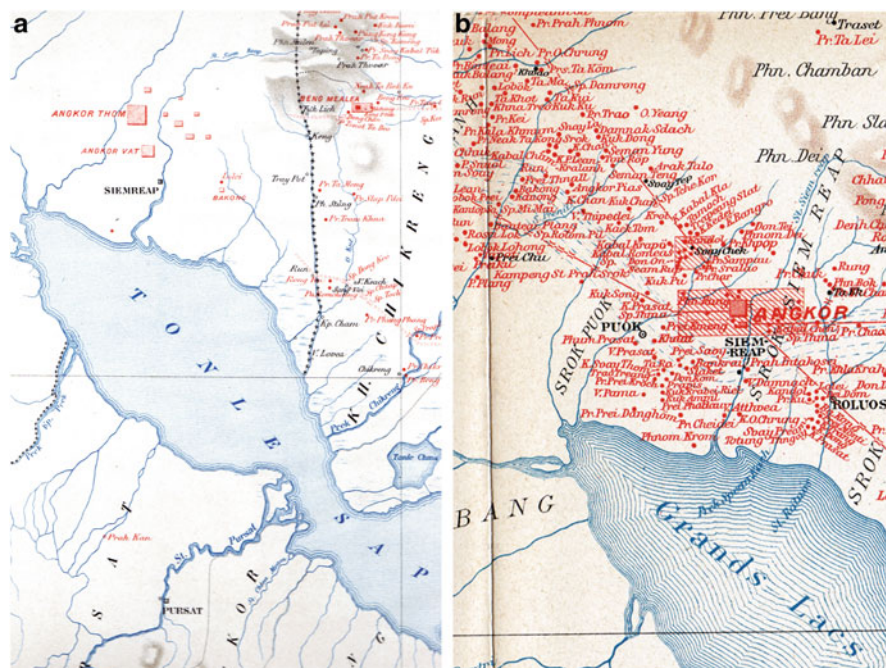


Fig. 2 (a, b) Lunet de Lajonquière's archaeological mapping of the Angkorian temples before (left) and after their retrocession from Siam in 1907 (right) (Source: (left) Lajonquière 1901, map (detail). (right) Lajonquière 1911, map (detail))

scientific and strict visual order. Visitors to these mega-events and all other citizens of colonizing nations were to receive a carefully pre-selected and well-organized notion of the colonized countries, their people, and their heritage before they eventually ventured out to visit these places in their original setting.⁸ Surprisingly, the ordering features and display modes of these European exhibitions of the colonies can be detected in early travel guidebooks, and the French-colonial ones on Angkor are particularly designed for that purpose. Through them a visitor could, either at home or on the week-long boat journey from Europe to Indochina, perfectly prepare himself for what, when, how long, and how to see Angkor's glorious heritage. Second, the so-called vulgarization of the Angkor temples through detailed travel guides was primarily led by the French Conservators General of Angkor themselves and these guidebooks dominated the tourist industry of Angkor heritage until the early post-war period, after the Cambodian independence in 1954 and beyond. Additionally, almost all French travel literature on Angkor was to some degree initiated, published, and/or financed by institutions,

⁸For one of the classic thoughts on preparing the occidental view for oriental sites through exhibitions, see Mitchell (1989).

committees, and societies that had a clear ideological interest in a proper presentation of this marvel of French-colonial *patrimoine* (see Commaille's introductory statement of 1910, compare Rooney 2001). Finally, the third observation: As we focus on travel guides between 1900 and the late 1950s, these early attempts to prepare a supposedly purely *archaeological* temple zone of Angkor for colonial mass tourism underwent four major developmental stages in correlation to the latest technological achievements in the West: from undefined conventions (1900–1909) and early vulgarization (1909–1913), to mechanization (1920s–1930s) and standardization (1940s and later).

Undefined Conventions (1900–1909)

The 1902 edition of the so-called *Guide Madrolle* sent the visitor on a pre-arranged 100-day journey from Marseille to northwest Africa, to India and Indochina, and then to Canton and was published by the *Comité de l'Asie Française*.⁹ At this time Angkor was still on the Siam side and was reached from French-colonial Saigon. The “traveller under time pressure” (limited time continues to be a feature of Angkor tourism to this day) arrived after a tiring journey with the French post boat lines from the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh via the Tonlé Sap lake to the fortified village of Siem Reap, still quite an uncomfortable place to stay. Due to the tight boat schedule, the visitor was given only two days to see the twelfth-century temple of “Ang-kor Vaht” (dated to the first century CE!) and “Ang-kor Thom” (dated to the fifth century BCE!). Even if no round trips were indicated and the map gave an even more ‘lost-in-the-remote-jungle-without-people’ impression (Fig. 3b) than the original map in Garnier’s 1873-publication (Fig. 3a), Angkor Wat was described as a lively pilgrimage place containing a Buddhist sanctuary with camping pilgrims and resident monks who were in charge of the care of this well-preserved temple and its idols.¹⁰

The topos of the actively venerated and locally visited site at Angkor with its lively celebrations by caring monks and believing Cambodians was reconfirmed in several publications like *Les ruines d'Angkor* by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux in 1908¹¹ but declined sharply when the official guidebooks came into being. Only in very few popularized photographs of this time, like the well-known trilingual

⁹ This committee published its first *Bulletin* in 1901 and tried to cover all sorts of economical, diplomatic, ethnic, social, and religious information about the French world overseas (Zimmermann 1901).

¹⁰ “Ang-kor Vaht. Le ‘temple de la cité royale’ est encore de nos jours un sanctuaire du bouddhisme, là campent des pèlerins dévots et un peuple de bonzes. Ce sont ces derniers qui sont chargés de l’entretien des ruines et de la garde des idoles. Ang-kor Vaht est le monument khmer le mieux conservé” (Madrolle 1902, 54–55).

¹¹ Even if he admits “to have understood nothing,” Carpeaux reports of hundreds of monks and Cambodian people in the famous cruciform gallery of Angkor Wat during New Year celebrations with “représentation théâtrale, chants, danses, et comédie” (Carpeaux 1908, 225–227).

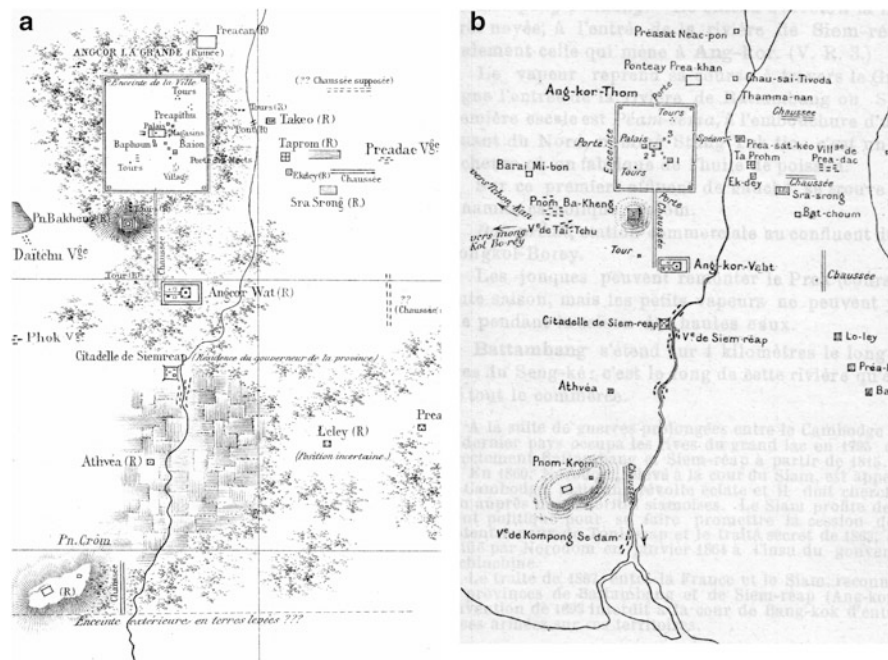


Fig. 3 (a, b) The temples of Angkor on a map of Francis Garnier's *Voyage d'exploration en Indo-Chine* of 1873 (left) and in *Guide Madrolle: De Marseille à Canton* of 1902 (right) (Source: (left) Garnier 1873, part 1, plate I, (right) Madrolle 1902, 50–51)

publication *Indochine pittoresque et monumentale. Ruines d'Angkor* by Pierre Dieulefils in 1909 (Fig. 4), can one see that dominant parts of Angkor Wat were still occupied by the monks' houses: even the eastern end of the central passageway that had been iconized by Delaporte's 1880 visionary perspective was still occupied. Another image by Dieulefils shows the wooden house of the Angkor Conservator Jean Commaille who came to the site in 1908.

The 'archaeologizing' attitude towards built cultural and living heritage was in first full swing around the same time that Lajonquière was working on his third volume of an archaeological inventory on Indochinese temple structures (this time including the newly colonized territory around Angkor) and transferred the supposedly propagandistic number one temple of Angkor Wat into an abstract inventory list with a rationalized number of "497" (Lunet de Lajonquière 1911, 91–116 on Angkor Wat)—next to the unknown little temple of Ta Prohm Kel with number "498". Dieulefils probably published, together with images on the Angkor temples, the first popular version of a colonial classifying gaze on Khmer cultural and physiognomic expressions (Dieulefils 1909). The colonial appropriation through listing, mapping, and textual and photographic inventories comprised archaeological and social dimensions alike—Angkor and its famous Apsara dancers being no exception. As one of the last examples of the experimental phase of visualizing



Fig. 4 The temple of Angkor Wat with wooden houses of Buddhist monks in Dieulefils' *Ruines d'Angkor* of 1909 (Source: Dieulefils 1909, 11)

Angkor, one should mention the imagined sketchy aerial perspectives of Général de Beylié's 1909 publication *Les ruines d'Angkor* (Fig. 5), which took the early aerial perspectives of Delaporte's drawing from 1880 a bit further (de Beylié 1909).¹² The axial orientations of a site with no traces of any human settlements were monumentalized ad infinitum. And whereas the real aerial shot of the Angkorian territory was still missing, the first detailed map of the whole Angkor region had been established in 1908 by the geodesist Buat and the topographer Ducret: the fully archaeologized vision of the Angkor temple site was established (Fig. 6).

Early Vulgarization (1909–1913)

Jean Commaille was educated as a soldier. He joined the Cambodian militia in 1896, worked as civil servant for the French protectorate, became involved in the EFEO in Saigon and Hanoi, executed archaeological surveys in Cambodia, and

¹² Editor's note: These first virtual versions of aerial views and ideally reconstituted temple structures are quite comparable with actual virtual models derived from aerial photographs (compare Gruen's essay in this volume, also the Angkor images in Nguonphan's contribution).

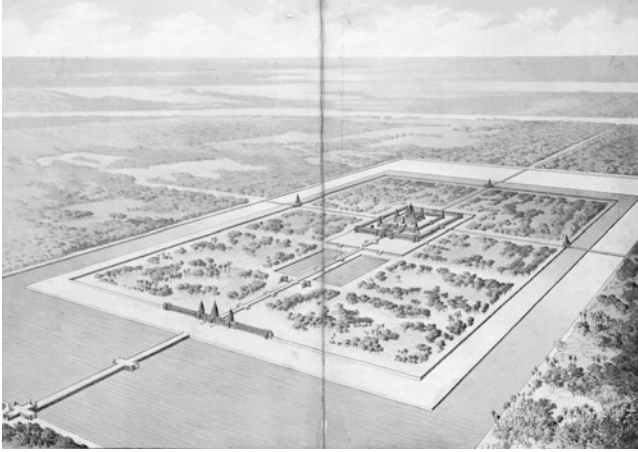


Fig. 5 Angkor Wat in an imagined aerial perspective (*vue cavalière*) in Beylie's *Les ruines d'Angkor* of 1909 (Source: de Beylié 1909, n.p.)

finally became the first Conservator General of Angkor in 1908—just one year after the so-called ‘retrocession’ of Angkor from Siam to French-Cambodia.¹³ Together with Lajonquière and the chief archaeologist of the EFEO, Henri Parmentier, who strongly supported the idea of bringing international “globe-trotters”¹⁴ to Angkor (comparing it to existing tourism at the Egyptian pyramids or the Javanese temple of Borobudur in the Dutch Indies) drew up a twofold plan for Angkor: (1) the so-called vulgarization of Angkor for a larger, international forum through the print media; and (2) the establishment of a fast

¹³ A short biography on Commaille in: Drège 2002, 107–110.

¹⁴ “Assurer l’existence et les moyens d’étude à Angkor aux visiteurs n’est pas suffisant, il faut faciliter le voyage, encore aujourd’hui difficile et seulement possible pendant une courte partie de l’année [...] Il est inutile d’insister sur les avantages qu’il y aurait pour toute l’Indochine et en particulier pour Phnom-Penh à attirer sur Angkor la visite des globe-trotters. Or, à cette heure, peu de visiteurs étrangers font ce voyage. Alors que j’ai vu les registres du Boroboudour couverts de noms non seulement Hollandais, mais Anglais, Américains, Allemands, etc., les Français, et à cause seulement de leur présence en Indochine, représentent la grande majorité des rares visiteurs d’Angkor. Il y a à cela plusieurs raisons; la première, c’est l’ignorance même de ces ruines; [...] Mais c’est aussi, même auprès des gens éclairés, la difficulté d’atteindre Angkor; c’est aujourd’hui presque une exploration, et tandis qu’on sait d’avance, en quittant Londres ou New York, à quel moment et comment on pourra aller visiter les Pyramides ou l’île de Philé en Égypte, l’on ne sait d’Angkor ni à quel moment ni comment on pourra s’y rendre. Obtient-on des renseignements détaillés? Le délai est si court pendant lequel on peut faire agréablement cette excursion, qu’il est difficile d’enfermer cette date précise, dans le cadre d’un grand voyage. Il faut donc pour attirer les visiteurs étrangers: 1° faire connaître l’intérêt des ruines, et c’est à la Société d’Angkor qu’une telle tâche revient naturellement; 2° établir une communication aisée avec Phnom-Penh; 3° faire qu’elle soit permanente” (Parmentier 1908, 68).

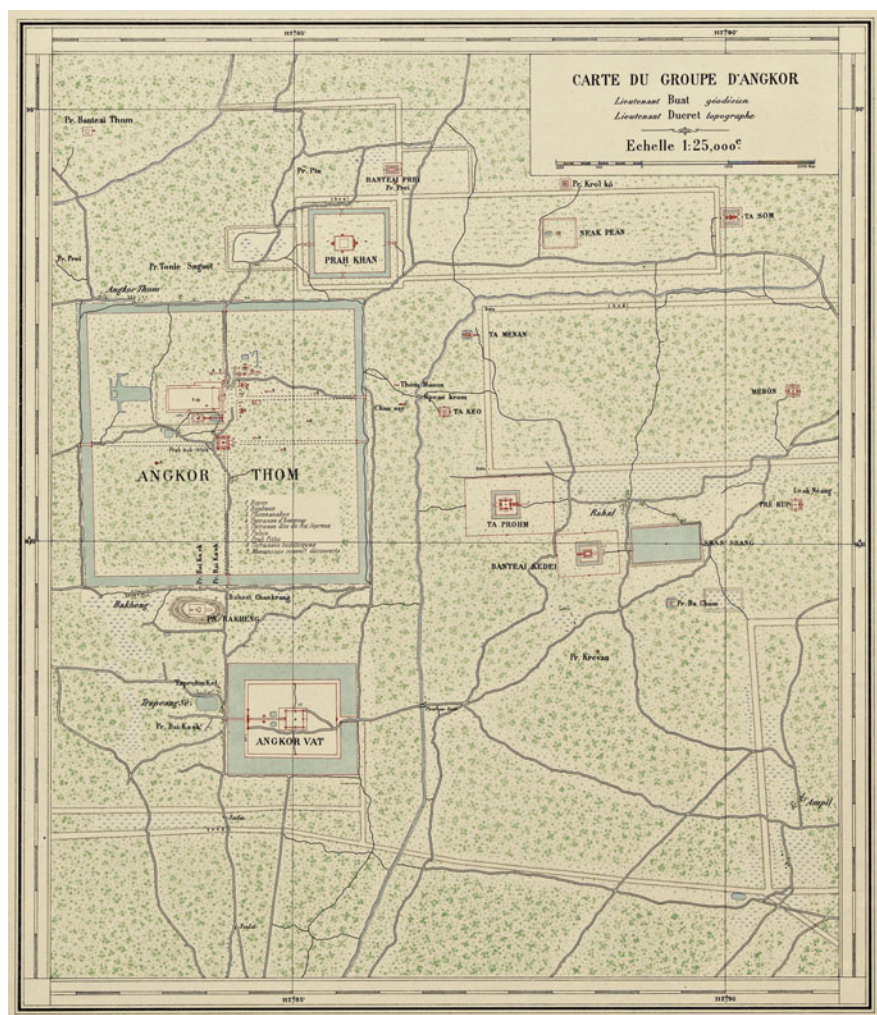


Fig. 6 The first detailed map of the Angkor region by Buat/Ducret for the EFEO in 1909 (ANOM Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence)

and representative access to the main temples including a functioning tourist infrastructure. His work reports from 1907 onwards¹⁵ show that, besides works in the temple city of Angkor Thom, he primarily focused on Angkor Wat's central axis where he even set up his own house. The early turning point in the French-colonial translation of the temple as a living social site into an object of 'dead' colonial archaeology was, without a doubt, the enforced resettlement of the

¹⁵ Chronique (Cambodge). 1907–1909. *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 7: 419–423; 8: 287–292 and 591–595; 9: 413–414.

Buddhist monks from the western second enclosure because they supposedly blocked the “vue générale”¹⁶ from the entry gate as Delaporte had introduced it to the Western world thirty years before. The newly founded *Société d'Angkor pour la conservation des monuments anciens de l'Indochine* financed this undertaking.¹⁷ In 1910, Lajonquière published his travels to Indochina in the popular *Journal Tour du Monde* and conceived Angkor, comparable with the Madrolle-guide of 1902, as an important tourist stop through Southeast Asia. One year later, he presented his third inventory on Khmer temples after 1902 and 1907, which finally covered the Angkor region and was consequently incorporated into the cataloguing and classifying heritage protection system of the French-colonial administration. According to Lajonquière, it was he who had proposed the name *Parc d'Angkor* for supposedly the “most beautiful of all archaeological possessions in the world.”¹⁸

The first comprehensive *Guide aux ruines d'Angkor* was published in 1912 by the Conservator General Jean Commaille. It comprised 243 pages, 154 engravings and three plans, seven chapters with information on the travel access from Saigon via Phnom Penh by boat, the history and architecture of Angkor, seventy six pages on Angkor Wat, and ninety pages on Angkor Thom. Besides an old-fashioned map with a clearly pronounced road network between the temples and an imagined aerial perspective (this dimension was still not accessible in reality), he could finally—in combination with the new medium of photography—offer the tourist world a giant overall central perspective of the temple from the western entry gate that was totally cleared of vegetation and human beings (the rituals and preserving

¹⁶ “Pour rendre à l'ensemble du monument son aspect primitif, on devait d'abord songer à reconstituer l'unique avenue dallée. Il fallait aussi envisager la nécessité de déloger les bonzes dont les habitations masquent toute la face Ouest de la première galerie, dite ‘galerie historique’, et interdisent une vue générale. Nous espérons qu'il sera possible de les décider à transporter leurs demeures au Nord ou au Sud, en dehors de la terrasse de pourtour” (Chronique (Cambodge). *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient* 8 (1908): 593).

¹⁷ See their constituting guidelines in *Bulletin 1* (1908), edited by *Société d'Angkor* in Paris. Editor's note: This issue of relocation from so-called heritage sites is a common feature in colonial and other violent regimes (compare Pichard's essay on Pagan under the military regime in this volume). Over the course of the last decades, a new appreciation of the local stakeholders, has, however, changed these severe actions (compare the contributions by Warrack and Luco in this volume).

¹⁸ “Ma première étape doit être Angkor. Les grandes ruines de l'ancienne capitale cambodgienne ne sont plus siamoises, elles nous appartiennent maintenant, de par le traité de mars 1907: Tout le monde est pris d'un beau zèle: la Société d'Angkor s'est fondée à Paris pour veiller sur elles; l'EFEO assumera la charge de leur conservation; les Beaux-Arts songent à en dépouiller les Colonies et le Gouverneur général vient de me donner à leur sujet plusieurs instructions: dresser une carte, débroussaillage [...] Le Traité de 1907, en nous remettant la garde de ces oeuvres d'une école architecturale disparue, nous a créé des grandes obligations: celle de les conserver, celle de les faire mieux connaître, celle de les rendre aisément accessibles à tous. C'est à l'EFEO, gardienne née des richesses archéologiques de l'Indo-Chine française, que sera confiée la mission de parer à ces obligations. Elle a vaillamment conquis son rang parmi les milieux scientifiques et on peut être assuré, si les moyens financiers ne lui sont pas trop mesurés, qu'elle mènera à bien cette tâche” (Lunet de Lajonquière 1910, here 386 and 397).

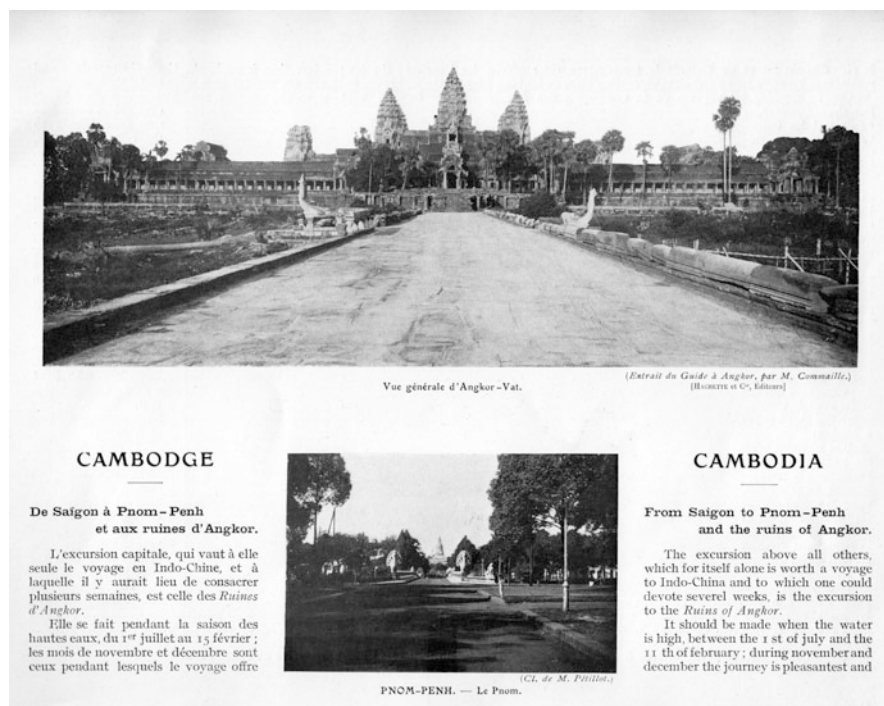


Fig. 7 The giant and 'civilized' central causeway of Angkor Wat (*above*) by Commaille in the publication *L'Indo-Chine. Guide-Album à l'usage des touristes* by the Touring-Club de France (1911) and the newly designed central axis of colonial Phnom Penh by architect Fabre (*below*) (Source: Touring-Club de France 1911, 11)

actions of the monks were now criticised)—a French-colonial jewel that, according to Commaille, easily surpassed all “architectural treasures of British-India and the Dutch Indies” (Commaille 1912, 32). His aesthetic creation of a civilized and tamed Angkor Wat was even incorporated into the French and international tourist industry some months before his own guide: in a publication by the French Touring-Club/Committee of Colonial Tourism of 1911, Commaille’s purified 350-m long *grande axe du monument* (Commaille 1912, 32) was directly set in relation to the modern axial urban and Khmer-stylized plans of the French architect Fabre in Phnom Penh (Touring-Club de France 1911) (Fig. 7).

Commaille’s vulgarizing approach to Angkor included simplified and almost comic-like sketches of the general building techniques of Khmer temples. He introduced new ways of guiding the visitors’ movements and visual attention through the enormous ensemble with details of floor plan sketches that correlated to his guiding text passages in the “now we follow... now we ascend, turn left, now look here”-style (compare with de Certeau’s theory of *parcours* above). Approaching from the western entry gate the visitor had to circulate within the

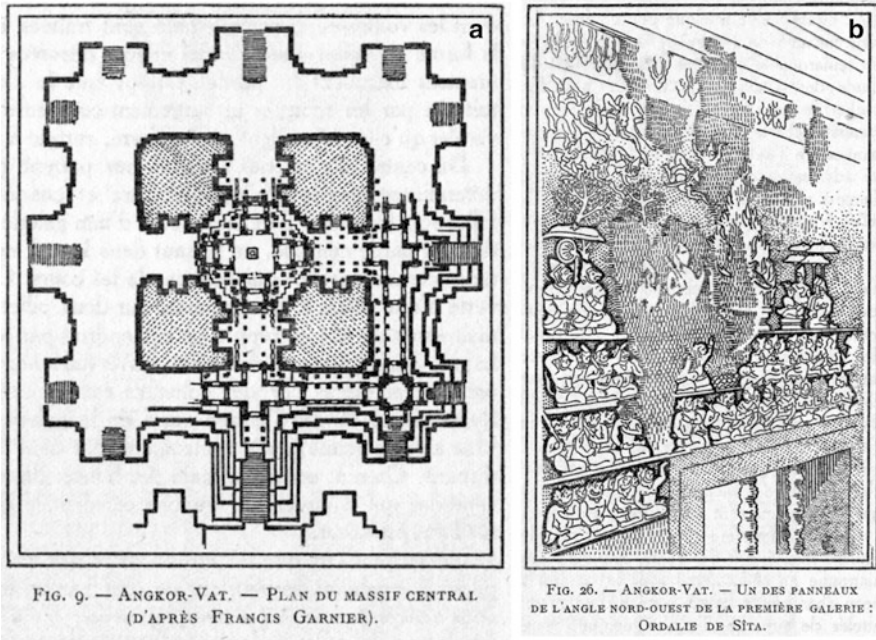


Fig. 8 (a, b) Sketch maps of the ground plans (*left*) and perspective drawings of the bas-reliefs (*right*) of Angkor Wat in Commaille's *Guide aux ruines d'Angkor* (1912) (Source: Commaille 1912, 35 (Fig. 9), 87 (Fig. 26))

two inner enclosures until reaching the very top of the sixty-five metre tall central tower to finally enjoy the spectacular view over the civilized ensemble in the middle of dense tropical forest. Additionally, Commaille now introduced page-long explanations of the bas-reliefs with their mythological scenes, battles, and religious scenes. Along with some detailed photos, he added perspective and interpretive sketches on the bas-reliefs that guided and even preselected the gaze of the visitor toward the smallest detail (Fig. 8a, b). Along with this love of archaeological details, Commaille's guide introduced a critical undertone against any social action on site by the present monks of the temples as unscientific and harmful,¹⁹ a significant contrast to earlier publications where the monks had been seen as daily guardians and preservers of the temples.

In the same year of 1912, more guides and travel literature in French, German (Suter 1912), and English were published—some of them in clear reference to Commaille's publication—even *National Geographic* published a photo-essay on

¹⁹ It is interesting to note Commaille's remark that the replacement of missing parts of Angkor Wat with re-used round columns taken from other parts of the temple was a harmful and primitive intervention by the actual monks. In reality, these interventions had already been undertaken in the sixteenth century CE when Angkor experienced a cultural and religious (Buddhist) revival.

the *Forgotten ruins of Indo-China* written by Jacob E. Conner. Commaille himself popularized his work in the German *Ostasiatische Zeitung* in 1913 with a two-part publication comprising sixty pages (Commaille 1913). Finally—and this marked the endpoint of the first phase of vulgarization of Angkor in the tourist sector—the *Guide Madrolle* issued a new and updated version of its Indochina guidebook, with Angkor now being touted as the final goal of travel. This guidebook announced that the journey from Saigon had shrunk to a two-day journey, that a road connection for automobiles now existed, and that a comfortable hotel had been built in front of Angkor Wat. The *aller-retour* trip was now possible in one week (in 1902 it was eleven days), but the stay at Angkor itself was still advertised as a hurried two-day visit. However, the tourist map of the so-called *Parc d'Angkor*²⁰ reached an unseen precision, even if an almost obligatory pathway through the temple field was not yet officially established.

Mechanization and New Dimensions (1920s–1930s)

The late 1920s and 1930 were the pre-war heyday of conservation work in Angkor. The first phase of clearing the temples of vegetation and getting the overall area under control was finished, and the institution in charge, the EFEO, could undertake specific and more detailed tasks. As a tragic side story, Jean Commaille had been assassinated by bandits in the Angkor Park in 1916 and Henri Marchal²¹ (Paris 1876–Siem Reap 1970), a trained Parisian École des Beaux-Arts architect, became the Conservator General of Angkor in the 1920s. Marchal's *Guide archéologique aux temples d'Angkor* from 1928 (published in English in 1930 and 1933) fit perfectly into the established tourist routes around Indochina (Marchal 1928, 1930). Inside the park, picturesque and camera-ready landscaping was initiated and the iconic repertoire of Angkor Wat was enlarged with a new and, to this day, very popular tourist perspective: the off-central pathway motif with the mirroring of the five tower silhouette in the northern or southern water basins, including branches of carefully preserved individual trees (Fig. 9). Just a few years before these emerging efforts of staging the Angkorian ruins as a park-like design in the mould of European viewing habits, the park itself was officially created as an administrative entity: On 30 October 1925, the *Parc archéologique d'Angkor* (“une zone réservée comprenant les principaux monuments archéologiques du groupe d'Angkor”) was established by decree (*arrêté*) of Maurice Monguillot, *Gouverneur général de l'Indochine*. Its limits were fixed one year later by decree

²⁰ The section on Angkor covers eighteen pages with several unfolding plans of selected temples (Madrolle 1913, 35–52).

²¹ A short bibliography on Henri Marchal, see Drège 2002, 117–120.

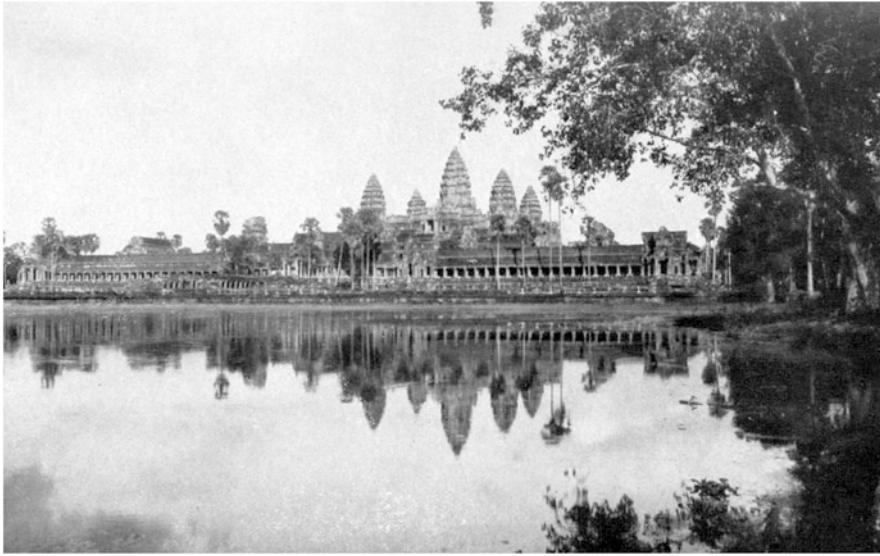


Fig. 9 Angkor Wat's newly invented picturesque perspective in Henri Marchal's *Guide archéologique aux temples d'Angkor. Angkor Vat, Angkor Thom et les monuments du petit et du grand circuit* from 1928 (Source: Marchal 1928, 49)

on 16 December 1926 by François-Marius Baudoin, *Résident supérieur au Cambodge* and a map published in 1930 (Fig. 10).²²

Whereas the tourist's circulation radius in Commaille's guide from 1912 was intended for the age of ox carts, horses, and elephant riding, the concept of Marchal's guide in 1928 was based on new transportation and research means: the car and the airplane. Aerial photography had been introduced as the third dimension for archaeological research via war-related reconnaissance flights. Orthogonal aerial shots were puzzled into a coherent map of Angkor that helped to form an understanding of the ancient settlement and water system and a complete visitor's circulation system was established (Fig. 11a, b). Henri Marchal invented the so-called *Petit Circuit* and *Grand Circuit* that perfectly catered to time-pressed tourists rushing from one temple to another. In comparison to the first detailed Angkor map in 1909, which at least partially mapped the existing road and path system of the local inhabitants, Marchal's map strongly "geometricized colonial space" (Dünne 2009, 57) with his new touristic-archaeological access system made of a rectangular grid of roads. Furthermore, the automobile was a newly introduced

²² Both documents, *Arrêté créant le parc archéologique d'Angkor* (30 octobre 1925) and *Arrêté délimitant le parc d'Angkor* (16 décembre 1926) were published in *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient* 26 (1926): 677–678 and 680–681. The map see in *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient* 30 (1930): plate XXXII (242–243).

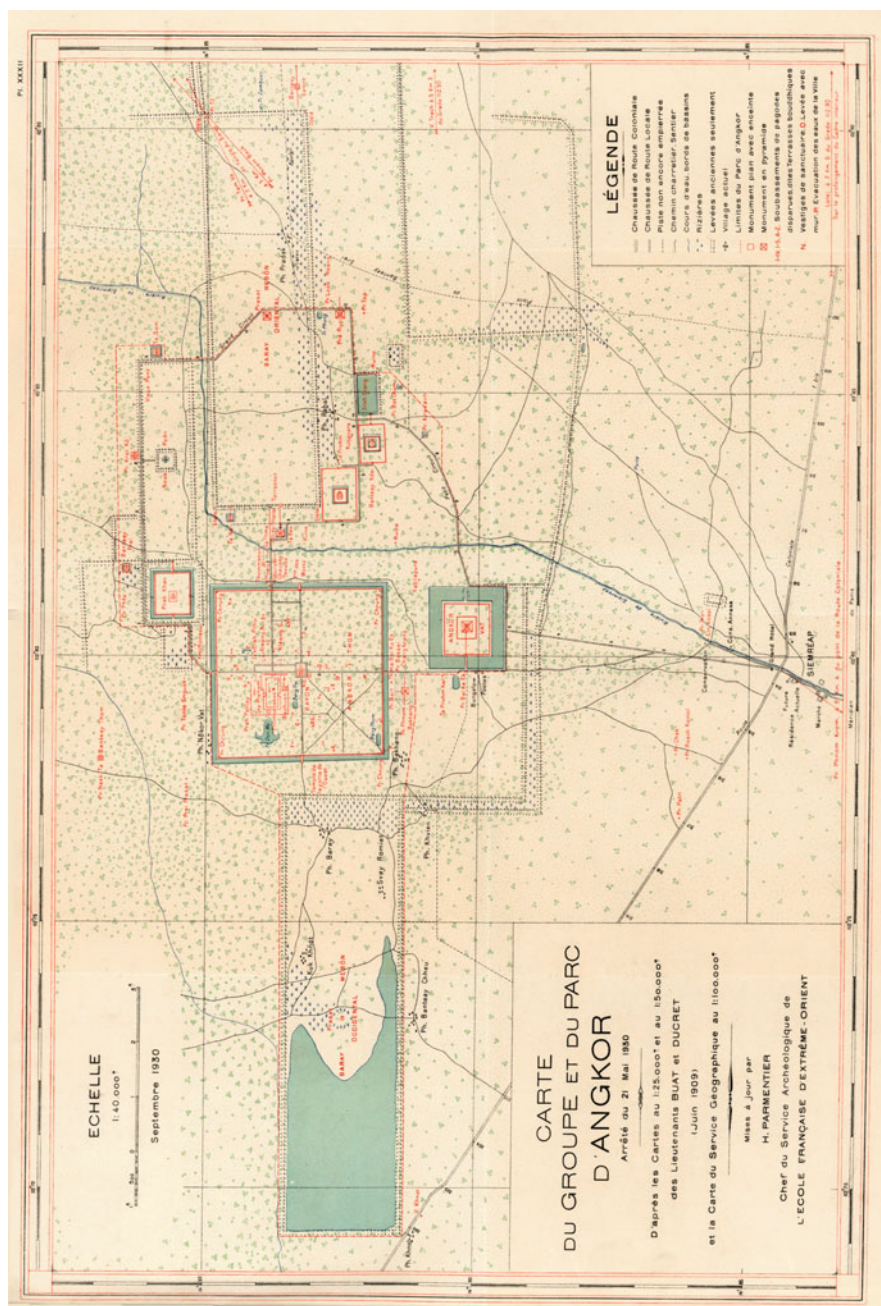


Fig. 10 The delimitation on the *Carte du groupe et du parc d'Angkor* based on the area map of 1909, updated by Henri Parmentier, Chief of the archaeological service at the EFEO on the base the governmental decree of 21 May 1930 (Source: Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 30 (1930): 242 (Planche 32))

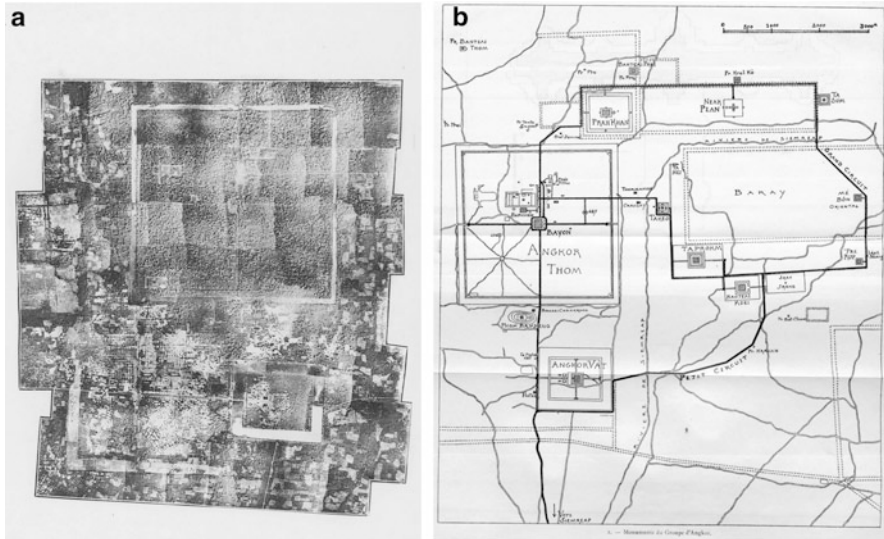


Fig. 11 (a, b) The zone of Angkor in a photo puzzle taken during reconnaissance flights (left) and the invention of the visitors parcours as *Petit et Grand Circuit* (right), presented in Henri Marchal's *Guide archéologique aux temples d'Angkor. Angkor Vat, Angkor Thom et les monuments du petit et du grand circuit* from 1928 (Sources: 11a: EFEO Archive 12544. 1, 11b: Marchal 1928, 220)

means of transport and Marchal's guidebook indicated the distance of each temple from the bungalow near Angkor Wat.²³ In order to extend the actual visiting time during a two-day Angkor tour, Marchal suggested highlights for a visiting programme that included the hill temple of Phnom Bakheng for sunset and Angkor Wat (after it had been cleared of its living Buddhist monastery) or Bayon during a full moon. Nevertheless, Marchal regretted the never-ending tourist rush and proposed—as a vernacular side stop mentioned for the first time in a guidebook on Angkor—a visit to the “indigenous villages with their stilted houses necessary for inundation in the season of high water [...] a *tableau rustique* and amusing for

²³ Or as Marchal himself put it: “That means that one can see more in the same limited time [...] I just give some special indications, how to get there, distinguishable characteristics of the individual temples and details of special attention. [...] The tourist under time pressure who cannot visit all temples can focus on every temple's speciality and make his choice according to his taste.” And furthermore he stated: “Fifteen years ago one could not imagine finding his way—then only with a lot of time and with the only transport available with a bull carriage or a horse—through the meandering pathways which lead through the diverse monuments of Angkor. Today, a network of roads navigable by automobiles links all the principle monuments of the Angkor group and allow the visitor to reach even the furthest temples in a minimum of time: they are inscribed in the so-called Large and Small Circuit. That means one can see much more in the same limited time” (Marchal 1928, v–vi).

the lovers of exotic spectacles” (Marchal 1928, 203).²⁴ However, the enforced speed of this early kind of mass tourism had its downside in the one-dimensional focus on a purely “archaeological” heritage. Marchal discovered a certain indifference and disrespect towards the temples on the part of visitors and mentioned legal punishment for any kind of vandalism, graffiti, and theft. He also announced that original pieces and moulded copies of original statues were on sale by the EFEO in a pavilion in front of Angkor Wat or at the Musée Albert Sarraut in Phnom Penh.²⁵

But even the advent of faster boats from Saigon and two paved circuit roads for automobiles in the Angkor Park did not seem enough to satisfy the growing tourist industry. In order to “satisfy the universal desire to visit the famous ruins” (Bontoux 1929, 3) and to overcome the time-consuming boat travel still required between Saigon and “the remote civilization of Angkor,” the Saigon head office of Tourism Indochina launched aerial tourism in 1929. In a bilingual English–French PR brochure, the third dimension—until now only accessible by military reconnaissance flights—was for the first time available to tourists. After a one hour and forty-five minutes flight from Phnom Penh, the act of landing with a hydrofoil airplane right on the moat of Angkor Wat reduced to mere toy miniatures (along with the other cities on the way) this and other temples, which only twenty years before had been inaccessible to human beings in their supposedly impenetrable forest (Fig. 12a, b). As the brochure stated:

To arrive over Angkor in full flight, at a thousand metres of height, to see below in striking miniature and like a precise synopsis, the stately ruins developed in the folds of the millenary forest [...] An infinity of sensations of which nothing else can give an idea [...] There is, perhaps nothing more splendid than to take in at a glance the whole spectacle. (Bontoux 1929, 11)

From this date, the aerial perspective on archaeological heritage was popularized in Indochina, which was by that time already completely connected and accessible for mass tourism by boat, train, road, and airplane²⁶ (Fig. 13).

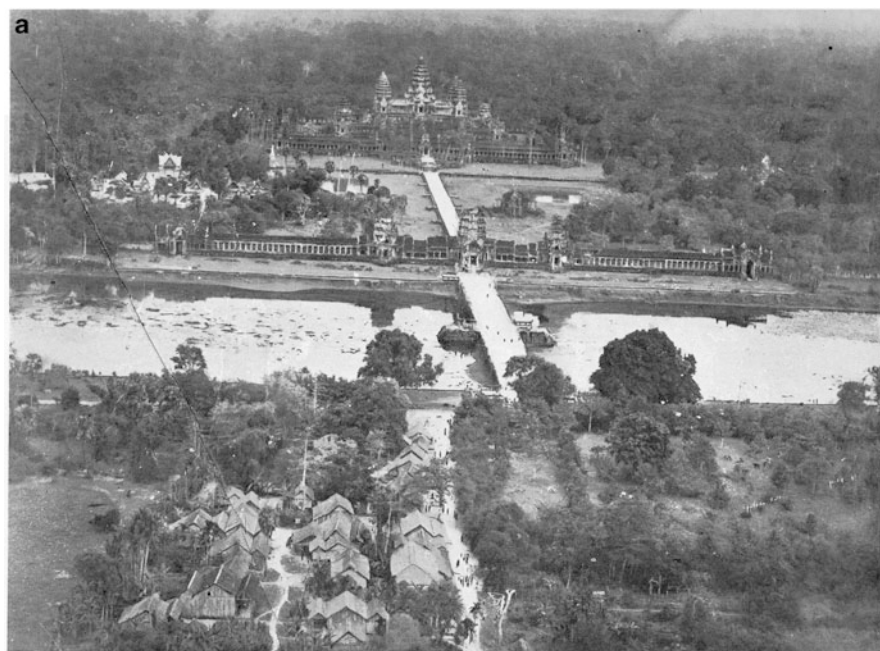
Standardization (1940s–1950s)

The last phase of the great Angkor guidebooks during the 1940s and 1950s brought only a few important innovations but standardized the visiting behaviour of the growing, now internationalized, tourist masses in the post-war period to come.

²⁴ Editor’s note: This banalization of the local scene as *tableau rustique* was also introduced by picturesque photography (compare the contribution by Weiler in this volume), but continues, to a certain extent, today in the global tourist industry (compare Chermayeff).

²⁵ Compare Baptiste’s discussion of plaster casts in this volume.

²⁶ Two publications, above all, exemplify the highly individualized touristic circulation using many folding maps of overall travel routes inside Indochina (including their international connections to Thailand, Malaysia, and even China) and individual tour suggestions with detailed individual maps and information about hotel, restaurants, scenic spots, and even gas stations (Nores 1930; Gauthier 1935).



EXTREME-ORIENT — R. L.

Vue générale d'Angkor-Vat.



L'hydravion arrivant de Saïgon survole les ruines d'Angkor-Vat avant d'amérir.

Fig. 12 Angkor Wat in one of the earliest aerial views for the emerging tourist industry in the brochure *Tourisme aérien en Indochine* (1929) (Source: Bontoux 1929, 9, 11)

Maurice Glaize (Paris 1886–La Rochelle 1964), the Conservator General of Angkor between 1937 and 1947, was an *École des Beaux Arts*-trained architect from Paris. He focused his work on many other temples in the greater Angkor area and published his guidebook *Les monuments du groupe d'Angkor* in 1944 (second edition in 1948) with an already canonized choice of illustrated viewpoints. Glaize's



Fig. 13 Angkor (see upper left part of the map) established in a dense sight-seeing network of motorways between Cambodia and the Cochinchine in Nores' *Itinéraires automobiles en Indochine* (1930) (Source: Nores 1930, map)

guide completely reframed the tourist's time management plan and visiting behaviour, confessing that in order to appreciate the charm and particularities of each of the (now!) year-round accessible temples, one week was the perfect time scale for an Angkor visit with a selected visit of two or three temples maximum per day. Now the choice of temple sites had become too large. To quote Glaize: "Do not have the pretention to see them all" (Glaize 1948, v). As a consequence, he introduced eight so-called itineraries ("itinéraire-types"), which included indications of the circulation distances in kilometres for the stressed tourist. The itineraries ranged from only one morning or one afternoon stays to one to five and more than five-day programmes with an incredible average radius of thirty kilometres per day (maximum seventy kilometers), including sunrise and sunset spots, full moon watching, dance performances inside Angkor Wat (Falser 2013), and elephant rides up the hill temple. Interestingly enough, even in the one-week tour plan to out-of-circuit temples ("hors-circuit") not a single comment was made about the local population, village, and pagoda activities. Glaize introduced a new guiding system for the larger archaeological sites being indicated by a dotted line on the folding plans. His introductory statement for an unstressed viewing of the specific charms of each temple did not necessarily include individual discovery by chance since everything was mapped out

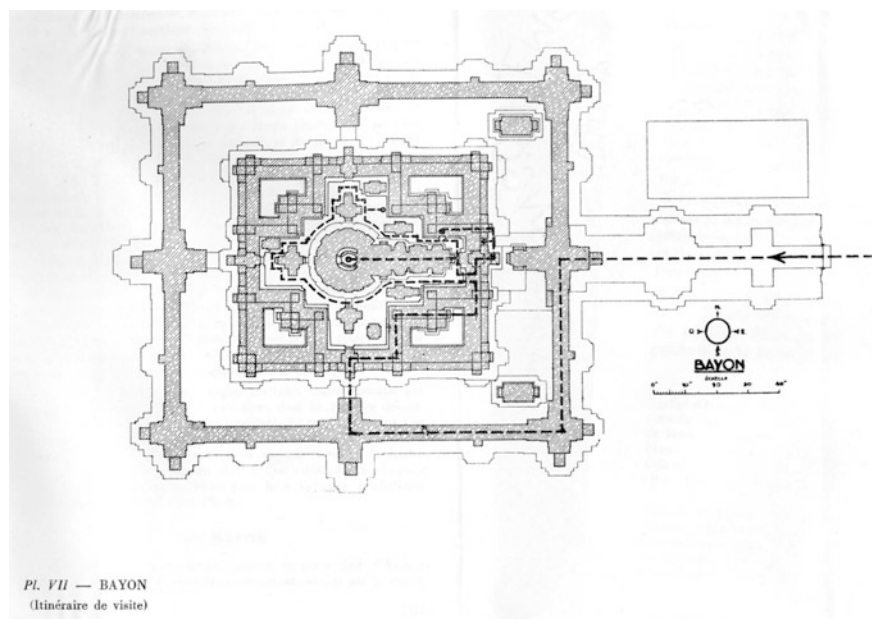


Fig. 14 A new tourist guiding system (*itinéraire*) by dotted lines on the temples' floor plans in Maurice Glaize's *Les monuments du groupe d'Angkor* of 1944 (Source: Glaize 1948, 108)

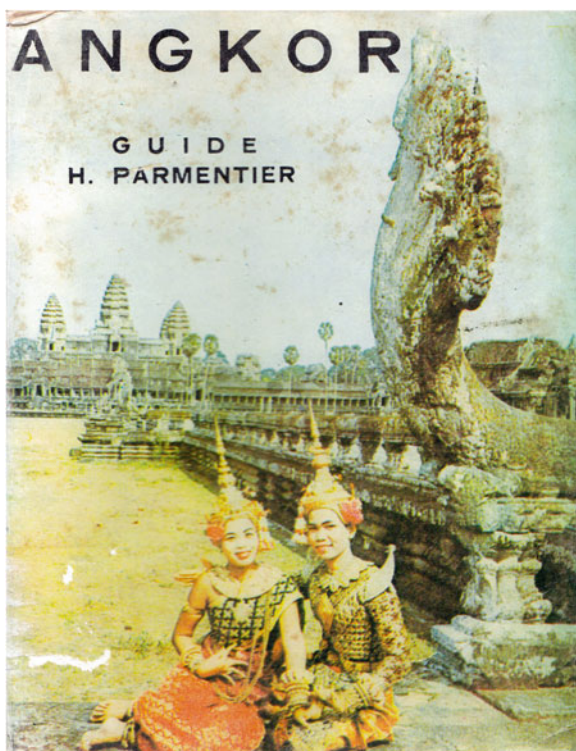
by the guidebook (Fig. 14). To follow up on the long-established colonial tradition of appropriative cataloguing and comparative listing of cultural heritage, Glaize added illustrative charts on the development of lintel decoration styles to his tabled chronology of the kings of Angkor.²⁷ The last guide in the line was published by the EFEO chief archaeologist Henri Parmentier in 1950 (republished in 1960), which focused more on building and ornamentation styles and was less useful as a practical guidebook; nevertheless, the folkloristic touch of the cover of his book left no doubt about its purpose for use in the fast growing tourist industry (Fig. 15).

Final Remarks

It seemed that everything about the archaeological heritage of the Angkor temples has been said, from the smallest details of the bas-reliefs of Angkor Wat and circulation plans, to the placement of the Angkor region in an increasingly detailed network of tourist sites all over Indochina, which have lately (accelerated by the

²⁷ This comparative styling system that had been introduced in the late 1920s by an art historian from the Parisian Musée Guimet, Philippe Stern and his student, Gilberte de Coral-Remusat on the basis of photographs without even going to the temples themselves (Stern, Philippe. 1927. *Le Bayon d'Angkor et l'évolution de l'art Khmer*. Paris: P. Geuthner, and de Coral-Remusat, Gilberte. 1940. *L'art khmèr, les grandes étapes de son evolution*. Paris: Les Éditions d'art et d'histoire).

Fig. 15 The cover of *Angkor. Guide Henri Parmentier* of 1960 with Khmer dancers next to the central causeway of Angkor Wat (Source: Parmentier 1960, cover)



updated versions of these guides after Cambodian independence in 1953) included wildlife hunting and beach hopping. All sorts of time and space ordering features were introduced for the Angkor park: the pre-directed visitors' movement, the time budget, and preselected visual perspectives, and the classified and hierarchized heritage material. It became a perfect example of colonial "time-space compression" (Harvey 1989) of cultural heritage and guidebooks of early mass tourism.

To sum up: by the circulating tourist guide books,²⁸ the area of the Angkor temples was aesthetically and physically converted from a lightly populated but nevertheless lively place of local worship that formed a part of the daily lives of its inhabitants, into a dead heritage park of colonial archaeology, suitable for the fast-growing and even globalizing tourism that came to an abrupt and dramatic end with the civil war after the *coup d'état* against Norodom Sihanouk in 1970, the Khmer Rouge terror between 1975 and 1979, and the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia until 1989. However, he who believes that the perceptive scale of Angkor's archaeological heritage and the techniques of its visualization has come to an end, has not considered the events of the globalizing 1990s when the so-called *Archaeological Park of Angkor* was nominated in 1992 as a UNESCO World Heritage Site within the same core zone designated seventy years earlier. Whether satellite images

²⁸ Tourist guide books count as another sort of "prescriptive colonial texts", compare Sengupta's contribution in this volume.

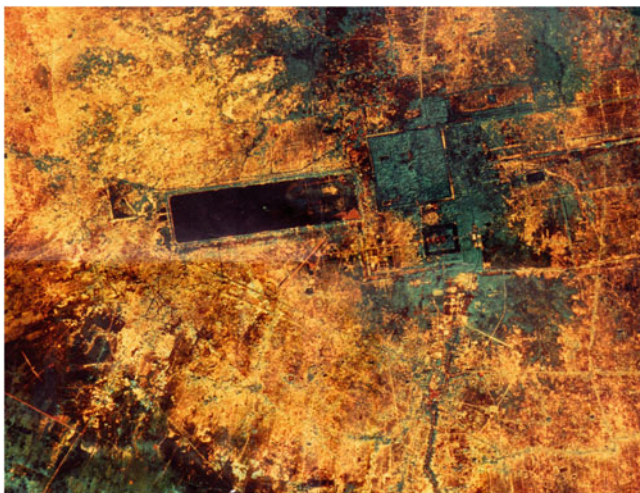


Fig. 16 Satellite image of the zone of Angkor, introduced for the *Zoning and Environmental Management Plan for Angkor (ZEMP)* around 1993 (Source: *Zoning and Environmental Management Plan for Angkor*. Executive Summary, prepared by ZEMP expert team, Sept. 1993 (UNESCO Archives Phnom Penh))

(Fig. 16) or virtual 3D-temple images will help us to finally understand the intertwined physical *and* social complexity of Angkor seems doubtful.²⁹

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²⁹ Compare the different sections on the virtual models in this volume.

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