

Indochina, ‘Greater France’ and the 1931 Colonial Exhibition in Paris: Angkor Wat in Blue, White and Red

by *Marco R. Deyasi*

In 1931 the newspaper *Le Figaro* published a special issue of its illustrated magazine to celebrate the newly opened colonial exhibition in Paris. Entitled ‘Scènes de l’époque coloniale’, it showcased the centrepiece of the exhibition, a monumental reconstruction of the ancient Cambodian temple of Angkor Wat (Fig. 1). The temporary structure was vast and superbly detailed (Fig. 2). The care, attention and money spent on this pavilion indicate that Angkor had become a powerful symbol for the French colonial regime. Wanting visitors to see Angkor as a patriotic symbol, the organizers of the exhibition bathed the pavilion in blue, white, and red lights and flew the tricolor from its uppermost spire.¹ Some commentators claimed that the five towers represented the five ‘nations’ of Southeast Asia – Cochinchina, Annam, Tonkin, Cambodia, and Laos – united under French guidance as the Union Indochinoise.²

While the exterior of the building celebrated the ancient past, the interior promoted the imperial future: inside was an exhibition of art produced by students of the new Fine Arts School of Cambodia (l’Ecole des Beaux-Arts du Cambodge), as well as didactic displays detailing French educational reforms in the colony.³ The new art produced under French guidance was presented as a triumph of colonial power, linked to France’s archeological knowledge of the Khmer culture of Angkor. The interior and the exterior of the Angkor pavilion worked in concert to promote the colonial messages of the exhibition: France’s intimate knowledge of Indochinese culture and the beneficent guidance that preserved and renewed it.

The popular illustrated weekly, *L’Illustration*, went still further: the Angkor pavilion proved that, ‘we are – we French of Asia, we Western pacifiers of the Far-East – the *legitimate inheritors* of the ancient Khmer civilization’.⁴ For this commentator not only was Angkor a French possession, but France itself had become an Asian nation – not simply helping Cambodians to revitalize their art and culture, but the direct inheritor of that civilization. While this claim may sound strange to a twenty-first-century reader, the 1931 colonial exhibition promoted the empire as a racial



Fig. 1. Paris Colonial Exhibition in the Bois de Vincennes, 1931. Policemen watch a painter sketching the replica of Angkor Wat during its construction. Photograph.



Fig. 2. Paris Colonial Exhibition in the Bois de Vincennes, 1931. View of the decorative details of the replica of Angkor Wat with other exhibition buildings in the distance. Photograph.

union between France and its territories, providing 'a new definition of what it meant to be French'.⁵ As Herman Lebovics has pointed out, we tend to forget how much the colonial authorities worked to convince the metropolitan population to accept their 'destiny' as colonial masters.⁶

This essay explores one aspect of colonial culture: the state propaganda aimed at a domestic population in the metropole and the ideological assumptions that underlay it, part of the larger pattern of 'selling the colonies'. While this is a well-known feature of colonialism in general, the specific example of the Angkor pavilion reveals the depth of the cultural interrelation between colony and metropole, a depth that is easy to overlook in our twenty-first-century moment. Our post-colonial culture is shaped in part by these earlier efforts. Indeed, the example of Angkor pavilion in 1931 helps to demonstrate the mutually-constitutive relationship between colonizing and the colonized cultures in the modern period.

In what follows, I argue that the figure of Georges Groslier is emblematic of French efforts to develop a colonial interpretation of Khmer culture. Groslier began his career as an artist and later became a powerful colonial arts administrator, founding an institution that embodied his thought and life's work, the Fine Arts School of Cambodia. His ideas helped ensure that Angkor Wat was transformed into an over-determined signifier of France's colonial mission in Indochina, ultimately becoming a symbol of France itself.⁷ Groslier's knowledge of the ancient Khmers was central to the mission of his school: because the French understood the essence of Khmer civilization, they could teach it to modern Cambodians as a means to regenerate their culture. Groslier presented himself as the saviour of Cambodian art with the knowledge and skill to return Khmer culture to the centre of all art production in the country.⁸ His efforts to do so are an example of the interleaving of the sciences with colonial culture; Groslier's Fine Arts School was part of a disciplinary complex that included anthropology, archeology, philology, sociology, and other social sciences that shaped knowledge of Cambodia in support of empire.

My argument continues the emphasis of recent scholarship that explores the cultural inter-relationship of metropole and colony, what Catherine Hall calls 'the mutual imbrication of self and the racialised other'.⁹ My own scholarly field, art history, has not adequately addressed the influence of colonialism on the European corpus (the fine arts and visual culture) that it studies. Instead, most art historians tend to separate the visual culture of France from that of its empire, despite the widespread influence of postcolonial theory and postcolonial studies and the ways in which they dismantle the artificial binary of 'us and them'. This paper is about the emergence of a particular set of messages from the colonial exhibition, ones representative of the effort to redefine French identity for an imperial age, a redefinition that not only absorbs the colonized 'Other' but is transformed by it.

UNIVERSAL AND COLONIAL EXHIBITIONS

The 1931 colonial exhibition was one of a series of international ‘world’s fairs’ from the mid nineteenth century into the twentieth. These enormous and temporary installations were efforts to promote the manufacturing, exports, design, arts, and culture of the host nation on the world stage. Often emblematic of Western modernity, these necessarily ideological projects provide scholars with fertile ground to explore the cultures of colonialism (including the visual and material cultures). As researchers like David Ciarlo have demonstrated, the discourses that we see embodied in exhibitions suffused the larger visual culture of colonial nations.¹⁰ Similarly, Yaël Simpson Fletcher has shown how the message that colonial products ‘naturally’ appeared in Marseille also implied that colonial peoples were likewise at home there.¹¹

However, the political messages of exhibitions were far from hegemonic. As Patricia Morton has pointed out, the 1931 colonial exhibition was a site where ‘the norms, rules, and systems of French colonialism both emerged and broke down’.¹² Developing and building a world’s fair meant co-ordinating and harnessing multiple competing interests among the economic and governmental elite. The many participants did not necessarily share interests or perspectives. Nicholas Thomas has suggested that, in studying colonialism, it is essential to study it ‘from the inside’ (from the perspective of its key actors) so as not to risk flattening out the complex stories and motives into a single, monolithic (and false) narrative.¹³

Further, the different audiences for world’s fairs also interpreted their messages in diverse ways. Not only did tourists from across the nation and the world join metropolitan Parisians, but imperial subjects in France (such as Vietnamese and Algerian students) and their compatriots in the colonies also responded to the exhibitions.¹⁴ Like European anticolonial activists among the anarchists, communists, and socialists, they protested, contested, and subverted the legitimacy of the exhibition’s messages.¹⁵ For instance, a cartoon by the young Ho Chi Minh (then using the name Nguyen Ai Quoc: Nguyen the patriot) which satirized the 1922 colonial exhibition in Marseille was published in *Le Paria*, a French-language anticolonial newspaper funded by communist front groups. Among the symbols in the cartoon are a set of unbalanced scales as the ‘appareil de justice’ and a cannon as the ‘moulin à loyalisme’, while the ‘liens de fraternité entre les races’ are a set of chains.¹⁶

FRANCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: CONQUERING ‘INDOCHINA’

French conquest of Indochina was uneven and complicated, the result of multiple competing interests.¹⁷ Until the mid nineteenth century it was Catholic missionaries who sought to develop a relationship between Vietnamese governments and France. Later, French military interests began to dominate in order to compete with Great Britain’s maritime empire, especially as it concerned China. Southeast Asia was France’s path towards both its territorial ambitions in China and its efforts to contain

Britain's imperial progress in Asia. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the French state made a concerted military effort to invade and control territory in Asia. Treaties solidified control of trade routes and ports: 1862 in Cochinchina, 1863 in Cambodia, and by 1884 for Indochina as a whole. Indigenous empires and historical conflicts were exploited by French actors to their benefit. For instance, Cambodia had often been occupied or annexed by its more powerful neighbours, Thailand and Vietnam, since the end of the Angkorean period in the fifteenth century; the Cambodian king signed treaties with France as part of the same strategy of self-protection that he used against these other empires.¹⁸

During this time, earlier missionary and colonial efforts tended to be recast as part of a grand plan that would inevitably put France on the world stage as a great imperial power.¹⁹ As French control over territory solidified, conquered lands were slowly transformed legally and institutionally. French rule was sometimes direct (via the designation of 'colony') and sometimes indirect (when territories were made 'protectorates'). Industrialization, settler colonialism, and economic development were among the priorities. As a result of the growing economic importance of Indochina and settler colonialism, direct French control expanded, especially in Vietnam and especially in the South ('Cochinchina'). Cambodia, by contrast, was less important economically but became more and more prominent in the French consciousness as a synecdoche of the colony as a whole. By the time of the Second World War, France had profoundly reshaped Southeast Asia in almost every way.

CAMBODIAN HISTORY AND FRENCH IMPERIALISM: CREATING A DISCURSIVE 'KHMER'

As some scholars have recently argued, in a very real way it was French art history (along with related fields like archeology and anthropology) that created the 'national tradition' now defined as classical Cambodian culture. These scholars have approached classical Cambodia not as a transhistorical reality but instead as a site of contested meaning that both colonizers and the colonized sought to define and shape according to their own changing needs over time.²⁰ Penny Edwards, in particular, argues that indigenous anti-colonial nationalists did not simply identify a 'national culture' with which to resist colonial domination, rather, the 'elaboration of a national culture by French and Cambodian literati eventually produced nationalists'.²¹ She documents how Cambodians began to appropriate and claim this tradition in the 1930s and after. This process – indigenous people appropriating and inhabiting a culture that was defined by their former colonial masters – is not unique to Cambodia.²² The Vietnamese Prince Buu-Lôc told an audience in Paris at an event celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the Ecole Française de l'Extrême-Orient (EFEO):

For more than twenty centuries, the Vietnamese people have always lived within the brilliant civilization that is their own, but without thinking

about it. . . . Finally the *École* came, bringing with it a Western mode of analysis. . . . The civilization of our country . . . was then projected outside of us, brought before our eyes, . . . giving us a self-consciousness about ourselves.²³

Edwards's arguments about Cambodian culture and national identity are the counterpoint to my argument here that focuses on France; indeed, this essay investigates the same dynamic where national identity is fundamentally intertwined with empire, within the imperial relationship of centre and periphery. The Angkor pavilion at the colonial exhibition of 1931 embodied a definition of 'French-ness' that appropriated and redefined the visual culture of Cambodia. Here, the French state not only constructed and deployed a discursive 'Cambodia' as a means of conquering and managing Indochina, it also constructed a colonial interpretation of French identity in the service of empire.

CAMBODIA REPRESENTED IN FRANCE

The creation of a colonial interpretation of Cambodian culture began with the ersatz 'Cambodia' displayed at the universal and colonial exhibitions in the decades leading up to 1931. These temporary installations also demonstrate the multiple discourses that were pulled into the orbit of colonial culture: art, architecture, museums, and social sciences like anthropology were both supported by empire and supportive of it.

The earliest presentation of Khmer culture at a French universal or colonial exhibition was at the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1867, when plaster casts made by the explorers and geographers Doudart de Lagrèe and Francis Garnier were exhibited. Apparently, they went largely unnoticed.²⁴ From 1889 to 1931, Cambodia was represented with its own pavilion at each of the universal and colonial exhibitions. Nearly all of these pavilions were fanciful Orientalist creations that scarcely resembled Khmer architecture.²⁵ The Cambodian pavilions were created and built exclusively by French architects and workers, in contrast to others that were either built by visiting Vietnamese craftspeople or constructed in the colony and shipped to France in pieces to be reassembled.²⁶ Cambodia appeared in the 1889 exhibition in the form of a 'Pagode d'Angkor', a hodge-podge of 'Oriental' forms that at best evoked some elements of Khmer architecture. The body of the 'pagoda' was a tower with repeating pediments and sculptural decoration, vaguely resembling Hindu architecture; the structure was topped with a tall *stupa* form. Yet, contemporary commentators described it as an authentic reproduction of Angkor Wat, as seen in prints based on the descriptions provided by French explorers.²⁷ Despite the liberties taken in the representation, the press consistently described them as authentic reproductions of the 'lost' civilization of the Khmers.

Indochinese displays at exhibitions before the turn of the century focused on the recent conquest of Vietnam, which had incorporated Tonkin as late

as 1885. The 1889 exhibition thus highlighted the nation's recent colonial successes with prominent displays of Northern Vietnamese craftspeople and colonial troops. The Vietnamese staff and troops ate most of their meals at a Vietnamese restaurant, which opened as an attraction in itself.²⁸ A Buddhist temple was erected, wherein services by Vietnamese monks were performed for the indigenous staff of the exhibition only; they were not a spectacle for Parisian visitors.²⁹ One of the pavilions that attracted Gauguin's attention was the replica Tonkinese village, populated with Vietnamese people working in their traditional occupations; one commentator decried the inauthenticity of this village, but acknowledged that it would help educate French audiences.³⁰

At the 1900 Universal Exhibition in Paris, Cambodia was made more prominent. It was represented by a recreation of the Wat Phnom from Phnom Penh, the capital.³¹ Angkor, however, was literally submerged, being depicted through a subterranean 'ruin' underneath the ersatz Phnom.³² Inside the artificial ruin were plaster sculptures in a Khmer style and paintings by modern French artists like Louis Dumoulin, mostly picturesque images of Indochinese people and scenery such as Ha Long Bay.

The 1906 exhibition was the first of the exhibitions to feature a reconstruction of Angkorean architecture, imaginative though it was. As Morton has noted, the 1906 pavilion was actually a reconstruction of a fragment of the Bayon from Angkor Thom, near Angkor Wat.³³ This 'Cambodia pavilion' was largely a conventional beaux-arts style building with a colonnaded entrance under a pediment – except that in place of the classical ornamentation there were Khmer-style ornaments and relief carvings. The most distinctive element of the Cambodian pavilion was the massive tower that rose from the central crossing; this included monumental relief sculptures of faces on each of its four sides, and used the distinctive repeating pediments of Angkor Thom's own towers.

At best, the pavilion merely evoked the ornamentation and traditions of Cambodian religious architecture. However, as with the Indochinese pavilions in previous exhibitions, it was described in the press as authentic.³⁴ Two French architects, Lagisquet and Vildieu, designed it; as Ingrid Muan notes, qualified Cambodian architects were snubbed although Cambodian workers were apparently brought in to complete the actual construction.³⁵ Two French sculptors, Brobeker and Raynaud, made the mouldings, following the plaster examples of Khmer art in the Trocadéro museum, themselves cast from originals still in Cambodia.³⁶ By using only French artists and directors for its ersatz Angkor, the organizers of the 1906 exhibition sent a subtle message that would become overt over time: that France hoped to master Cambodian culture and understand it completely.

The other pavilions in the Indochina section in 1906 represented each individual nation in the 'Union indochinoise'. The main entrance was through a bridge with a Cambodian theme, the 'pont des Najas [sic rather than Nagas]'; two 'Annamite' bridges flanked it.³⁷ This time, the Vietnamese

restaurant and theatre were arranged together on a 'Rue de Saigon-Cholon', suggesting to visitors the experience of walking on a street in a Vietnamese city. Along this were displays of arts and crafts being made by indigenous artisans,³⁸ and visitors could travel down the street and through the exhibition in rickshaws pulled by 'Vietnamese coolies', to get the full experience of being served by Vietnamese workers – as though they were expatriates in the colony itself.³⁹ A contemporary cartoon shows the sculptor Auguste Rodin in just such a rickshaw, pulled by a Vietnamese worker while King Sisowath looks on from his chauffeured automobile. The joke revolves around the question of which figure is modern and which is 'primitive'.⁴⁰

The emphasis on Cambodia that emerged at the 1906 exhibition is demonstrated by the disparate response and publicity surrounding the *cambodgiennes* and a competing troupe of performers from Laos.⁴¹ These representatives from that largely rural and agricultural land occasioned very little publicity and their presence was almost entirely eclipsed by that of the Cambodians.

GROSLIER AND THE 'VANISHED RACE' OF KHMERS

Around 1905, French colonial propaganda began to focus on the ancient Khmer culture of Angkor, unlike the earlier representations that highlighted Vietnam or the Cambodian Royal capital of Phnom Penh. This new focus on the Khmers appeared around the time that France began to negotiate with Thailand for the return of three provinces to Cambodia: Siem Reap (including Angkor), Battambang, and Sisophon.⁴² Sisowath's visit spurred a variety of government and colonial agencies to focus their attention on Angkor and Khmer culture.

The essential idea underlying the new focus on Cambodia was enunciated as early as the 1860s: that modern Cambodians were degenerate keepers of monuments made by a great and 'vanished race' of Khmers.⁴³ The 'science' of race permeated the social sciences in the early twentieth century.⁴⁴ Despite being utterly discredited today, its influence manifested itself in French studies of Southeast Asia, just as elsewhere in the West. Scholars sought to explain the rise and fall of ancient cultures in Indochina through race and ethnicity. The EFEO's categorization of the historical periods of ancient Cambodia shows this influence: for instance the pre-Angkorean period was thought to be dominated by ethnically Chinese peoples, while the Angkorean culture supposedly emerged due to the rise of an ethnically distinct 'Hinduized' society.⁴⁵ Similarly, non-Thai communities in Siam were reclassified belonging to a race of 'Tai' peoples supposed to be biologically distinct from the inhabitants of contemporary Thailand and were identified as in need of 'protection' by the colonial government of Indochina.⁴⁶

This idea came to the fore in the 1900s and 1910s, notably articulated by Paul Doumer, then governor-general of Indochina: he asserted that modern Cambodians were not descended from the ancient Khmers and must instead

be debased because they were ignorant of Khmer culture.⁴⁷ As Edwards describes, Khmer culture became central to the notion of 'Cambodiansness'; without a cultural understanding of the Khmers, one could not claim to know what it meant to be Cambodian. The exoticist writer Pierre Loti even went so far as to claim that the ancient Khmers were a branch of the 'Aryan' race and thus related to Europeans.⁴⁸

Anthropologist Susan Bayly further argues that French concerns with the racial health of the metropole were exported to the colonies and shaped scholarly discourse on the history of Cambodia, Vietnam, and their art. She points out that French anthropological writings were particularly focused on national polities that were riven with division and contestation, especially where the transition to modernity was accompanied by profound cultural ruptures – issues which also characterized France itself at the turn of the twentieth century.⁴⁹

Similar influences can be seen in the study of Cham art and architecture from Vietnam. The ancient Cham were understood to be a racially composite nation; their empire seemed to be a testament to a kind of hybrid vigour, a characteristic that commentators also claimed was characteristic of France itself with its union of 'Celtic' and 'Latin' ethnicities.⁵⁰ Likewise, Indochina in general was described as a cultural and ethnic crossroads, a hybrid between the civilizations of China and India (as indicated in part by the name France gave the colony).⁵¹

GROSLIER AND HIS IMPACT, 1905–20s

Georges Groslier developed and promoted this racialized conception of Cambodia. The son of a civil servant, Groslier was the first French baby born in Phnom Penh. He trained as an artist, studying in Paris at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts; between 1908 and 1910, he exhibited paintings with the Société des Artistes Français.⁵² When Loti's book on Angkor appeared, Groslier had returned to Cambodia and was already formulating similar ideas; he became a 'Khmerophile', dedicated to 'saving' Khmer culture.⁵³ Groslier probably saw himself as a kind of hybridized Franco-Asian, representative of a new 'Greater France' that did not simply conquer and co-opt indigenous elites (like the British Empire), but incorporated colonized peoples into *La Mère Patrie*.

Groslier's texts in support of this project were carefully crafted publicity pieces. When Groslier declared a 'crisis' in the Cambodian arts, he was making a rhetorical ploy to justify his initiatives both to the colonial government and to the general public. As Muan described, his 'crisis' consisted mostly of an alarmed response to Western influence on Cambodian artists and artisans; he decried hybrid forms and arts as evidence of cultural decline, thereby justifying his own project for cultural revitalization.⁵⁴ Groslier believed that 'peoples' had an unchanging national essence that they expressed through art. At one point, he declared that he could never teach at his own school, since he was not Khmer; of course, this did not stop him

from administering and managing the curriculum of the Fine Arts School of Cambodia.⁵⁵

Groslier's developing ideas about authentic Khmer culture and Cambodian-ness can be seen in his book, *Danseuses cambodgiennes anciennes et modernes* (1913).⁵⁶ He spent seven months in the court of King Sisowath, observing and sketching the dancers, noting details of their lives.⁵⁷ The lavish illustrations in black and white and full colour, combined with the exaggeratedly poetic text, reveal that Groslier was trying to present himself not as a social scientist studying the dancers, but as an artist who was responding aesthetically to their inspiration. The book was a detailed and accessible volume that presented the dancers to a popular audience, simultaneously satisfying a widespread interest in the dancers themselves and using them as symbols of the colony. As art, the illustrations are conventionally representational and allow the audience a comprehensive look at the royal dancers and the details of their costumes.

Groslier's book focused on the royal dancers as the last surviving form of Khmer culture, a culture that he imagined was an unchanging tradition transmitted through the generations since antiquity.⁵⁸ For him, Sisowath's dancers were living fossils, representatives of Angkorean culture itself and belonging to an ancient past that was rapidly disappearing. In numerous passages, he deplored the impending doom of Khmer culture and its traditions of dance, declaring that contact with French modernity would inevitably destroy them. Most of these passages are overblown and exaggerated: 'They are dying! They are dying, these charming traditions and poetry of times past!'⁵⁹ The text emphasizes how the dancers were disliked by ordinary Cambodians, implicitly supporting the notion that contemporary Cambodians were culturally separate from the ancient Khmers.⁶⁰ He described the dancers as childlike, naïve performers who did not understand the sophistication of what they did on stage and who were unselfconscious about presenting their 'natural' selves. 'Their gestures are naïve like the gestures of children And the modern Cambodian people could never conceive of or create the least beautiful among them'⁶¹

In a second book, *A l'Ombre d'Angkor: notes et impressions sur les temples inconnus de l'ancien Cambodge* (1916), Groslier established his archeological credentials. The book is a travelogue of a voyage through Cambodia to various old temples between April 1913 and January 1914. He asserted that because modern Cambodians did not understand ancient Khmer culture, their ignorance of it signalled the loss of their cultural essence. His rhetoric elevated Angkorean-era culture as an equal to that of ancient Greece and as belonging solely to the ancient past.⁶² He selectively cited artistic forms as evidence that Angkorean art is the cultural root of the Cambodian people. For instance, he asserted, without evidence, that vernacular architectural forms were based on Khmer temples and remained unchanged for a millennium.⁶³

The tradition of classical Cambodian dance was essential to Groslier's vision. In Groslier's eyes, its rarity outside the royal court showed how the populace had lost Khmer traditions. He spent several pages discussing a dance troupe not affiliated with the royal palace, apparently the only such troupe in the country:

There was a dance yesterday and five young actresses between eight and thirteen years performed their rare gestures before a group of tourists. This troupe of commoners, formed by a retired dancer of [King] Norodom's... is, to my knowledge, the only one that exists outside of the royal ballet of Phnom Penh. It was thus with emotion that I watched... I had at least participated in the healthy joy of the people and found the old beliefs still slightly alive.⁶⁴

His racial ideas appeared in a number of passages in which he denied Hindu influence on Angkor. Although Indian Hinduism profoundly influenced the religion and art of Angkor, Groslier downplayed it. 'In sum, one finds in Cambodia a clearly primitive and native essence that can be immediately recognized if one cuts away from the economic, everything that flows from China; and from the intellectual, everything that is Hindu.'⁶⁵ This strategy enabled him to claim the originality of Khmer culture as a feature justifying its recognition and protection.⁶⁶

Groslier's interpretation of Khmer culture emerged at the right moment. It allowed him to present himself to the colonial government as an expert on – and a champion of – Cambodia at a time when colonial officials had become convinced of its importance. By creating a reputation for himself through his books, Groslier had succeeded in positioning himself so he could effectively respond to this new administrative focus. In 1917, Groslier convinced the Governor General of Cambodia, Albert Sarraut, to found a school for the fine arts of Cambodia. He went on to found the first museum of Cambodian art, named after Sarraut and opened in Phnom Penh in 1920.⁶⁷ The Fine Arts School of Cambodia would later be connected, literally and conceptually, to this museum. In general, the Fine Arts School presented itself in a manner consistent with the emerging notions of regionalism, which celebrated the racialized essence of each local population of France, while still contributing to an overall French patriotism; Lebovics has argued that the 'apprenticeship' in citizenship that France provided to its colonies paralleled the ways that France taught Gascons, Bretons, and so on, to become French.⁶⁸ Here we see those same ideas exported to Cambodia in support of a hybrid 'Greater France'.

Groslier's ideas resonated so powerfully during the 1920s and 1930s because they were consistent with the dominant strands of colonial theory. The theory of associationism was based on the principle that, although France would reform local legal and educational systems, colonial subjects would progress towards 'civilization' at their own pace while avoiding the

supposedly deleterious effects of *métissage* (racial mixing).⁶⁹ Associationism relied on the maintenance of racial and cultural distance between France and its colonies, such as French support for indigenous rulers and power structures.

The alternative Republican model, developed around the turn of the twentieth century, privileged education as a means of elevating or 'civilizing' colonized peoples by exporting French political and social values.⁷⁰ Groslier's racial ideas about Cambodians' degeneration supported this political tendency; as Daniel Pick notes, by the late nineteenth century the discourse of degeneration in France had become allied to the tradition of Republicanism.⁷¹ Republican colonialism aimed to transform living standards in the colonies and 'civilize' indigenous peoples by exporting French culture, but without specifying if the ultimate goal was to make them into French citizens. This ambiguity later gave rise to anti-colonial sentiments throughout the empire, ones that would encourage nationalists to mobilize French ideals of liberty and equality against colonial rule.

The theme of racial revitalization seemed especially important in the aftermath of the First World War and France's terrible losses therein; the colonial lobby argued that the nation could reinvigorate itself through the cultural mixing of a multi-racial empire of Greater France.⁷² By mastering Khmer culture, France could reinvigorate and reconstitute itself after the profound destruction of the World War.⁷³ Thus, odd though it may seem, an ancient Cambodian empire was thought to be significant for the fate of France itself.

GROSLIER'S INFLUENCE ON DISPLAY, 1922 AND 1931

The Angkor pavilions of 1922 and 1931 and Groslier's Fine Arts School were publicized both as celebrations of Cambodian culture and as patriotic symbols of imperial, hybridized France. Albert Sarraut had declared that the French arts should be revitalized by drawing on the very different traditions of its colonies.⁷⁴ He also claimed that French culture needed renewal via its colonies and that the French desire to accomplish this expressed the nation's imperial destiny. For both Sarraut and Groslier, their visions of empire were reformist and humanitarian ones intended to benefit both France and its colonies.

At the 1922 colonial exhibition in Marseille, a key moment, the expression of mastery over Khmer culture came to the fore. Instead of the colony sharing a general 'Indochina' pavilion, it was represented by a vast reconstruction of the top portion of Angkor Wat, complete with the pools and terraces surrounding it. The level of detail in the reconstruction was unprecedented and was made possible by the EFEO's archeological research and conservation, which by then had become quite sophisticated. The architect, Auguste-Emile Delaval, intended the reconstruction to be far more authentic than anything seen thus far; he specifically cited the vaguely exoticizing 'Angkor pagoda' of the 1889 Universal Exhibition as a contrast.⁷⁵ The

unprecedented verisimilitude was even incorporated into the details of the exterior decorations – the outside mouldings were made from plaster casts of Angkor Wat itself.⁷⁶ The reproduction stood 177 feet (fifty-four metres) tall, making it a dramatic landmark.⁷⁷

According to one author, it was the success of the 1922 exhibition's presentation of Angkor that spurred the expansion of Groslier's Fine Arts School of Cambodia.⁷⁸ The School was intended to produce an elite cadre of artists and artisans who would go on to produce commissions for the wealthy (French) citizens of Indochina.⁷⁹ The centrality of Khmer culture to the curriculum was often publicized in materials printed for a French audience; traditional techniques were highlighted, although their refinement through French guidance was emphasized: 'The primitive tools of the Khmers have been preserved but improved'.⁸⁰ Publicity for the School described Groslier as having 'saved' Cambodian art:

To save Cambodian art, it was necessary first to find, reunite, and preserve the forms of ancient local art, which bear witness to the Khmer artistic tradition and are guides and models for the future. . . . From there emerged the necessity for the [French] protectorate to create an entire organization that responded to these diverse needs. . . . This organization was realized beginning in 1917 under the direction of Mr. G. Groslier, archeologist and well-known writer who had studied the foundations [of Khmer art] and suggested strategies of implementation.⁸¹

Groslier's claim to the necessary authority to found the School was based on his self-presentation in his earlier books: his artistic training, his studies of the Cambodian dancers, and his extensive travels through Cambodia. An article of 1928 compared Groslier's Khmer-style villa to a house at Pompeii, since it too was supposedly a fossil from a bygone era: 'All of Khmer art, the eternal stones, the extinguished silks, the enduring jewels. . .'.⁸² Groslier built the new School building as an annex to the Albert Sarraut Museum of Cambodian art, thus causing the building itself to embody the ideological message that French guidance 'saved' Khmer art.

THE 1931 COLONIAL EXHIBITION

The 1931 colonial exhibition in Paris was the pinnacle of France's ideological presentation of itself as an imperial nation. The central concept that unified the otherwise disparate pavilions was the supposedly beneficent Republican model of colonialism. The centrepiece of the exhibition, the reconstruction of Angkor Wat, emphasized Sarraut and Lyautey's humanitarian vision; inside were didactic posters made by graduates of the Hanoi School of the Fine Arts.⁸³ These large, propagandistic posters told viewers about the progress made in establishing schools and other social services; most often, they used simple graphs and numbers taken from administrative reports.⁸⁴ The didacticism of these displays was characteristic of the overall

thrust of the exhibition – public relations to manage popular opinion, especially after the outcry over the brutal reprisals against the Yen-Bay uprising a year earlier.⁸⁵ Morton points out how the exhibition was intended seriously to educate French audiences; carnivalesque elements like rickshaws and belly dancers were forbidden.⁸⁶ However, as Charles Ageron later noted, visitors tended to respond positively to the exoticizing presentation of the colonies and mostly ignored Sarraut and Lyautey's didactic message.⁸⁷

The 1931 Angkor surpassed the 1922 version. This successor was larger, more grandiose, more archeologically accurate, and seen by more people.⁸⁸ No doubt this rankled the organizers of the earlier exhibition, since they saw the port city of Marseille as the 'capital of the colonies' and 'gateway to the East' – despite Paris's power to outdo them.⁸⁹ Designed by Charles and Gabriel Blanche, the pavilion was a life-sized reconstruction of the top storeys of the temple – but without the surrounding landscaping features such as pools, due to cost concerns (Fig. 1).⁹⁰ As in 1922, the exterior of the building was created with plaster casts originally taken from Angkor itself (Fig. 2).⁹¹ However, Morton convincingly argues that the reproduction was not authentic, in that the building itself was designed as a spectacle for French audiences and had interior spaces and skylights that did not exist in the original.⁹² Regardless of these liberties, the pavilion often appeared in publicity images in a manner suggesting its authenticity – for instance alongside photos of the Cambodian dancers.⁹³

The contrast between exterior and interior was dramatic, and conveyed powerful ideological meanings. Ancient culture was referenced on the outside, while inside the colonial present was detailed through propaganda that emphasized the progress of social reforms.⁹⁴ However, ultimately there was no contrast between the ancient and the modern; the pavilion simply embodied the colonial interpretation of Cambodia that developed out of Groslier's ideas: namely, Khmer culture had been 'reconstituted' by French science and regenerated by colonial policy as part of the humanitarian mission of France overseas. The celebration of Khmer culture was itself a patriotic gesture sustaining 'Greater France': Angkor was topped with a tricolor and lit with blue, white and red lights.⁹⁵ Thus, in the imagination of colonial administrators, the ancient Khmer culture symbolized by the Angkor pavilion had become French.

As Morton points out, the French word used to describe the Angkor pavilion at the 1931 colonial exhibition, reconstitution, has connotations of successfully reinventing something that has been lost.⁹⁶ An essay by Guillaume Janneau promoting colonial art schools in Indochina shows how the 'reconstitution' of Angkor enabled the assimilation of Indochinese culture into a hybrid French identity defined by empire.⁹⁷ Janneau asserted that French culture, arts, and even France's place on the world stage would be strengthened by a deep engagement with the arts of its Asian colony. About the past glories of Angkor, he wrote, 'It's this [Khmer]

culture that the motherland, solicitous of the responsibilities that it assumes, and faithful to its civilizing traditions, attempts to re-establish in its beautiful colony'.⁹⁸ Indeed, the word reconstitution may have had even deeper historical resonances. Nicola Cooper suggests that its use in manuals for colonial administrators reveals that the new empire was understood to be a re-creation of and return to the earlier French empire that had been lost.⁹⁹

CONCLUSION

In 1931 no-one could have anticipated the end of French Indochina only a quarter of a century later, nor the subsequent history of Cambodia, nor the struggles of both the French and Cambodians to comprehend it all. The colonial exhibition in Paris was the peak of the French government's propaganda efforts: a coherent and consistent presentation of the Republican *mission civilisatrice* as simultaneously regenerating and modernizing Indochinese culture. The massive Angkor pavilion epitomized this message by combining the detailed reconstruction of the ancient temple with showcases for colonial educational reforms. The apparent divergence between the exterior (celebrating the primitive past) and the interior (highlighting the modern present) is not a divergence at all, for in fact it represents two symbols of colonial success that were united in this interpretation of Angkor. Since contemporary Cambodians were thought to have degenerated beyond the point of understanding Khmer culture, Angkor's restoration was understood as an entirely French achievement, like the construction of the pavilion itself. The cultural modernization through education depicted inside also represents Groslier's use of archeological knowledge to 'reconstitute' Khmer culture and to make it the basis for a revitalized Cambodian aesthetic that was fully authentic yet simultaneously adapted to the modern age. The primacy of Khmer culture in the vision of Groslier's Fine Arts School of Cambodia likewise was a symbol of French colonial success. Thus, paradoxically, an ancient Khmer temple became a resonant symbol of imperial 'Greater France'. Thanks, in part, to Groslier's efforts, Cambodia became French and France became Cambodian.

Marco Deyasi is the art historian at the University of Idaho. His research focuses on the cultural politics of French modern art, especially in relation to colonialism. He is currently completing a book on how 'Indochina' was a site of meaning contested by French artists, who incorporated it into their politicized modernism, and by the colonial state, which appropriated some of their concepts of exoticism and primitivism into a visual interpretation of 'Greater France'.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own. I would like to express my gratitude to Patricia Leighton, who supervised the dissertation research upon which this article is based.

I am also indebted to the other members of my dissertation committee, Mark Antliff, Leo Ching and Kristine Stiles. Many thanks go to Sean Quinlan, whose feedback was essential.

1 Marcel Zahar, 'La Lumière', *La Renaissance* (special issue on the colonial exhibition), 14th year, no. 8, August 1931, p. 237.

2 Maxime Prodromidès, *Angkor: chronique d'une renaissance*, Paris, 1997, p. 123.

3 *Le Figaro artistique illustré*, May 1931, p. 63. See for instance 'Enseignement indochinois en images', 1931, a pamphlet produced for the exhibition, which reproduces a number of posters by Mlle Pho, a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Hanoï: Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer (CAOM), Fonds Ministériels, Agence France Outre-Mer, box 989, dossier 3416. Some of these posters are reproduced in Fig. 5.8 in Patricia A. Morton, *Hybrid Modernities: Architecture and Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris*, Cambridge, MA, 2000.

4 Quoted in Prodromidès, *Angkor*, p. 123. Emphasis added. Norindr has also noted how French propaganda appropriated Khmer civilization as its 'legitimate heirs'. Panivong Norindr, *Phantasmatic Indochina: French Colonial Ideology in Architecture, Film, and Literature*, Durham NC, 1996, p. 27.

5 Herman Lebovics, *True France: the Wars Over Cultural Identity, 1900–1945*, Ithaca NY, 1992, p. 55.

6 Herman Lebovics, 'The Zoos of the Exposition Coloniale Internationale, Paris 1931', in *Human Zoos: From the Hottentot Venus to Reality Shows*, ed. Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel, Gilles Boëtsch, Eric Deroo, Sandrine Lemaire and Charles Forsdick, transl. Teresa Bridgeman, Liverpool, 2008, p. 370.

7 For analysis of Angkor as the symbol of Indochina, see Penny Edwards, 'Taj Angkor: Enshrining l'Inde in le Cambodge', in *France and 'Indochina': Cultural Representations*, ed. Kathryn Robson and Jennifer Yee, Lanham MD, 2005. See also Jennifer Foley, "'Discovering" Cambodia: Views of Angkor in French Colonial Cambodia (1863–1954)', Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2006.

8 Ingrid Muan, 'Citing Angkor: the "Cambodian arts" in the Age of Restoration, 1918–2000', Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2001, p. 28. Prodromidès (*Angkor* throughout) sees Groslier's influence as extensive.

9 Catherine Hall, 'Narratives of Empire: a Reply to Critics', *Small Axe* 7: 2, pp. 168–78.

10 David Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire: Race and Visual Culture in Imperial Germany*, Cambridge MA, 2011.

11 Yaël Simpson Fletcher, "'Capital of the Colonies": Real and Imagined Boundaries Between Metropole and Empire in 1920s Marseilles', in *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display, Identity*, ed. Felix Driver and David Gilbert, Manchester, 1999, pp. 136–54.

12 Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, p. 14.

13 Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel, Government*, Princeton, 1994.

14 The response by Vietnamese and other imperial subjects in France is not well studied. Much work remains to be done here. See, for instance, Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, chap. 3.

15 This topic is too large to be discussed in this paper. As examples, see: Jody Blake, 'Truth about the Colonies, 1931: *Art indigène* in Service of the Revolution', *Oxford Art Journal* 25: 1, 2002; Leela Gandhi, *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-De-Siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship*, Durham NC, 2006; my own work on Occultism and Theosophical anticolonialism and its relation to Symbolist art in France in 'French Visual Culture and "Indochina": Modernism, Primitivism, and Colonialism, 1889–1931', Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, Durham NC, 2007.

16 Nguyen Ai Quoc (Ho Chi Minh), 'Exposition coloniale', *Le Paria* 2, 1 May 1922, p. 2. Other symbols in the drawing/diagram include: 'phénomène mandarin ou caïdal' (a figure with a club with which to beat people in the street), 'cangue', 'clé du paradis' (a Christian cross), 'produits pour alimenter l'intelligence des indigènes' (an opium pipe and a bottle of alcohol), 'liberté de la presse' (an Asian man squashed in a printing press labelled 'Kapitalisme et co.'), and 'bégonias officiels' (a potted plant with the head of an Asian man wearing spectacles).

17 See, for example, Pierre Brocheux and Daniel Hémerly, *Indochina: an Ambiguous Colonization, 1858–1954*, transl. Ly Lan Dill-Klein, Berkeley, 2011; also Nicola Cooper, *France in Indochina: Colonial Encounters*, Oxford, 2001.

18 Penny Edwards, *Cambodge: the Cultivation of a Nation, 1860–1945*, Honolulu, 2007.

19 Cooper, *France in Indochina*, p. 16.

20 Michael Aung-Thwin, 'The "Classical" in Southeast Asia: the Present in the Past', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 26: 1, 1995, pp. 75–91; Gwendolyn Wright, 'National Culture Under Colonial Auspices: the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient', in *The Formation of National Collections of Art and Archaeology*, ed. Gwendolyn Wright, Washington, DC, 1996; Montira Horayangura Unakul, 'Recolonizing Asia: Transnational Politics and the Practice of Preservation', *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 18: 1, 2006, p. 25. Also Maurizio Peleggi, 'From Buddhist Icons to National Antiquities: Cultural Nationalism and Colonial Knowledge in the Making of Thailand's History of Art', *Modern Asian Studies* 47: 5, 2013; Philippe M. F. Peycam, 'Sketching an Institutional History of Academic Knowledge Production in Cambodia (1863–2009) – Part 1', *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 25: 2, 2010.

21 Edwards, *Cambodge*, p. 7.

22 Nora Taylor's ethnography of Northern Vietnamese painters documents a similar process over the course of the twentieth century: Nora A. Taylor, *Painters in Hanoi: an Ethnography of Vietnamese Art*, Honolulu, 2004.

23 Wright, 'National Culture Under Colonial Auspices', p. 138.

24 Isabelle Flour, 'Orientalism and the Reality Effect: Angkor at the Universal Expositions, 1867–1937', *Getty Research Journal* 6, January 2014, p. 65.

25 Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, p. 240.

26 See Dana Hale, *Races on Display: French Representations of the Colonial Native, 1886–1931*, Bloomington, 2007.

27 Hippolyte Gauthier, *Les Curiosités de l'exposition de 1889*, Paris, 1889, p. 117. Morton has also noted how critics described this pavilion as authentic: Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, p. 240.

28 Carle des Perrières, 'Les Troupes coloniales à l'Exposition', *Revue de l'exposition universelle de 1889*, 1889, pp. 265–72.

29 Gauthier, *Les Curiosités de l'exposition de 1889*, p. 112.

30 Pol Neveux, 'Le Village Tonkinois', *Revue de l'exposition universelle de 1889*, 1889, pp. 16–24.

31 Georges Schwob, *Les Missions indo-chinoises à l'exposition de 1900*, Paris, 1902, p. 25.

32 Morton mistakenly identifies the Pavilion des Indes Françaises as the Cambodia pavilion, even including a mislabelled photo of the former (her fig. 6.16). There was no Angkor pavilion at the 1900 exhibition. Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, pp. 242–3.

33 Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, p. 240.

34 Chambre de Commerce de Marseille, *L'Exposition coloniale de 1906*, Marseille, 1908, pp. 80–1. The official report acknowledged that the pavilion was only a fragment that combined Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom, but described it as authentic nonetheless. Commissariat Générale de l'Indochine, *L'Indo-Chine à l'exposition coloniale de Marseille*, Marseille, 1906, pp. 127–8.

35 Muan, 'Citing Angkor', pp. 51–2.

36 Muan, 'Citing Angkor', p. 51, n. 53.

37 Chambre de Commerce de Marseille, *L'Exposition coloniale de 1906*, p. 80. 'Annam' was a French term for what is now central Vietnam. It comes from the Chinese for 'pacified south'; naturally, Vietnamese people found it offensive.

38 Commissariat Générale de l'Indochine, *L'Indo-Chine à l'exposition coloniale de Marseille*, p. 121.

39 Commissariat Générale de l'Indochine, *L'Indo-Chine à l'exposition coloniale de Marseille*, p. 181.

40 'A l'Exposition coloniale', *La Vie Parisienne*, 18 Aug. 1906.

41 *L'Illustration*, 7 April 1906.

42 Col. Fernand Abraham Bernard, *A l'Ecole des diplomates: la perte et la retour d'Angkor*, Paris, 1933.

43 Edwards, *Cambodge*, p. 25. On the widespread resonances of the discourse of degeneration, see Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: a European Disorder, c. 1848–1918*, Cambridge, 1989.

44 See Nélia Dias, *La mesure des sens: les anthropologues et le corps humain au XIXe Siècle*, Paris, 2004; and Alice L. Conklin, *In the Museum of Man: Race, Anthropology, and Empire in France, 1850–1950*, Ithaca NY, 2013.

45 Edwards, *Cambodge*, p. 133.

46 Peleggi, 'From Buddhist Icons to National Antiquities', p. 1,534.

47 Doumer, quoted in 'Un Edifiant jugement', *Le Paria* 4, 1922, p. 2. The editors of *Le Paria* quoted him at length as an example of how French administrators denigrated Indochinese people and culture. They attributed the long quote to a text called 'Le Pays des Khmers' (1905) and may have been referring to a section in Paul Doumer, *L'Indo-Chine française (souvenirs)*, Paris, 1905. They explicitly linked Doumer's words to the emphasis on Angkor in the 1922 colonial exhibition.

48 Pierre Loti, *Un Pèlerin d'Angkor*, Paris, 1912, p. 155.

49 Susan Bayly, 'French Anthropology and the Durkheimians in Colonial Indochina', *Modern Asian Studies* 34: 3, 2000, p. 585.

50 Bayly, 'French Anthropology and the Durkheimians', p. 590. On Celtism and Latinism see Mark Antliff, 'Cubism, Celtism, and the Body Politic', *The Art Bulletin* 74: 4, 1992.

51 Susan Bayly, 'Racial Readings of Empire: Britain, France, and Colonial Modernity in the Mediterranean and Asia', in *Modernity and Culture from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, 1890–1920*, ed. Leila Tarazi Fawaz, Christopher A. Bayly, and Robert Ilbert, New York, 2013, p. 288.

52 Nadine André-Pallois, *Indochine: un lieu d'échange culturel? Les peintres français et indochinois (fin XIXe–XXe siècle)*, Paris, 1997, p. 154.

53 Edwards, *Cambodge*, p. 80.

54 Muan, 'Citing Angkor', p. 28.

55 Muan, 'Citing Angkor', p. 77.

56 Georges Groslier, *Danseuses cambodgiennes anciennes et modernes*, Paris, 1913. The title page indicates that the book was published under the patronage of S. M. Sisowath, M. le Ministre des Colonies, and M. Outrey, Résident supérieur au Cambodge; the publication was supported financially by the Ministry of the Colonies.

57 Groslier, *Danseuses cambodgiennes*, p. 119.

58 Groslier, *Danseuses cambodgiennes*, p. 65.

59 Groslier, *Danseuses cambodgiennes*, pp. 120–1.

60 Groslier, *Danseuses cambodgiennes*, p. 29.

61 Groslier, *Danseuses cambodgiennes*, p. 47.

62 Georges Groslier, *A l'Ombre d'Angkor: notes et impressions sur les temples inconnus de l'ancien Cambodge*, Paris, 1916, pp. 31–2.

63 Groslier, *A l'Ombre d'Angkor*, pp. 168–70.

64 Groslier, *A l'Ombre d'Angkor*, pp. 93–4.

65 Groslier, *A l'Ombre d'Angkor*, pp. 171–2.

66 Groslier, *A l'Ombre d'Angkor*, pp. 168–72.

67 André-Pallois, *Indochine: un lieu d'échange culturel?*, p. 212.

68 Lebovics, *True France*, pp. 79–80. Morton has also identified how regionalism inflected the presentation of the colonies in 1931: *Hybrid Modernities*, pp. 190–5. On regionalism, see Romy Golan, *Modernity and Nostalgia: Art and Politics in France Between the Wars*, New Haven, 1995. See also Shanny Peer, *France on Display: Peasants, Provincials, and Folklore in the 1937 Paris World's Fair*, SUNY series in national identities, Albany, 1998.

69 Raymond Betts, *Assimilation and Association in French Colonial Theory 1890–1914*, New York, 1961.

70 See Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*. On the ideological role of education in French colonial discourse see also: Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda', in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Stoler and Cooper, Berkeley, 1997. Nicola Cooper attributes the origins of Republican colonialism to Jules Ferry after 1885. See Cooper, *France in Indochina*, p. 16. Morton points out the complexities of how associationism was represented in the architecture and displays of the 1931 exhibition: *Hybrid Modernities*, p. 189.

71 Pick, *Faces of Degeneration*, p. 104.

72 Albert Sarraut, 'L'Exposition coloniale', *L'Art vivant* 7: 151, 1931, p. 373. Quoted in Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, pp. 272–3.

73 On the discourses of degeneration and regeneration of the nation, see Mary Louise Roberts, *Civilization Without Sexes: Reconstructing Gender in Postwar France, 1917–1927*, Chicago, 1994, and Bertrand Taithe, *Defeated Flesh: Medicine, Welfare, and Warfare in the Making of Modern France*, Lanham MD, 1999.

74 Sarraut, quoted in Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, pp. 272–3.

75 Catherine Hodeir and Michel Pierre, *L'Exposition Coloniale, 1931*, Brussels, 1991, p. 5.

76 Simone Boulard-Collin, 'Palais et pavillons', in *L'Orient des provençaux: les expositions coloniales*, Marseille, 1982, p. 42.

77 Christine Daffis-Felicelli, 'L'Architecture éphémère', in *L'Orient des provençaux: les expositions coloniales*, Marseille, 1982, pp. 24–7.

78 Arnaud Le Brusq and Léonard De Selva, *Viêtnam à travers l'architecture coloniale*, Paris, 1999, p. 78.

79 *Trois écoles d'art de l'Indochine, Hanoiï, Phnom-Penh, Bien-Hoa. Exposition coloniale internationale de Paris 1931, Indochine Française. Section des services d'intérêt sociale, direction générale de l'instruction publique*, Hanoi, 1931, pp. 30–1.

80 René Morizon, *Exposition Coloniale Internationale Paris 1931. Indochine Française. Monographie du Cambodge*, Hanoi, 1931, p. 188.

81 'Pour sauver l'art cambodgien il fallait donc tout d'abord retrouver, réunir et conserver les formes antérieures de l'art local, témoins de la tradition artistique khmère, guides et modèles pour l'avenir; ... D'où la nécessité pour le Protectorat de créer toute une organisation répondant à ces divers besoins et comportant un Musée, une école d'artisans et un service commercial. Cette organisation fut réalisée à partir de 1917 sous la direction de M. G. GROSLIER, l'archéologue et écrivain bien connu, qui en avait étudié les bases et suggéré les modalités. Il est aujourd'hui encore le directeur au Service des Arts cambodgiens': *Trois écoles d'art*, p. 23.

82 'Tout l'art Khmer, les pierres impérissables, les soieries éteintes, et les bijoux durables...' Groslier himself was described as having a purely intellectual and not sentimental knowledge of Khmer culture. See PEB, 'Notre Indochine: Georges Groslier', *Extrême-Asie* 20 (new series), February 1928, pp. 345–6.

83 For more information on the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Hanoi, see Nora A. Taylor, *Painters in Hanoi: an Ethnography of Vietnamese Art*, Honolulu, 2004, pp. 22–42.

84 Lynn Palermo has argued that French audiences would have seen the social works in the colonies as extensions of social policy in France. Lynn E. Palermo, 'Modernity and its Discontents: Cultural Debates in Interwar France', Ph.D. diss., Pennsylvania State University, 2003, p. 296.

85 See Scott McConnell, *Leftward Journey: the Education of Vietnamese Students in France, 1919–1939*, New Brunswick, NJ, 1989, pp. 131–52; also, Denise Bouche, *Histoire de la colonisation française: fluxe et reflux (1815–1962)*, vol. 2, Paris, 1991, p. 344.

86 Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, p. 120.

87 Charles R. Ageron, 'L'Exposition coloniale de 1931: Mythe républicain ou mythe impériale', in *Les Lieux de mémoire*, ed. Pierre Nora, Paris, 1984.

88 Hodeir and Pierre, *L'Exposition Coloniale, 1931*, p. 40.

89 See Yaël Simpson Fletcher, "'Capital of the Colonies'", on the rivalries between Paris and Marseille; and Anne Dymond's work on the rise of a distinctly Provençal identity embodied in exhibitions: 'Exhibiting Provence: Regionalism, Art, and the Nation, 1890–1914', Ph.D. dissertation, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, 2000.

90 Palermo, 'Modernity and its Discontents', p. 109, n. 37.

91 Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, p. 248.

92 Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, pp. 250–1.

93 For instance, see the pamphlets and posters in CAOM, Fonds Ministériels, Agence France-Outre-Mer, box 989, dossier 3416.

94 Morton notes the contrast: *Hybrid Modernities*, p. 244.

95 Hodeir and Pierre, *L'Exposition Coloniale, 1931*, p. 78.

96 Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*, p. 246. *Le Grand Robert* (2nd edn of electronic French dictionary) defines *reconstituer* as: 'Rétablir dans sa forme, dans son état d'origine en réalité ou par la pensée (une chose disparue)'.

97 Guillaume Janneau, 'Ecoles indo-chinoises d'art decorative', *La Renaissance de l'Art français et des industries de luxe* 5: 4 (special issue: 'Les richesses artistiques de la France Coloniale'), April 1922, pp. 250–4.

98 'C'est cette culture que la mère patrie, soucieuse des responsabilités qu'elle assume et fidèle à ses traditions civilisatrices, s'efforce de rétablir dans sa belle colonie': Janneau, 'Ecoles indo-chinoises', p. 251.

99 Cooper, *France in Indochina*, p. 21.