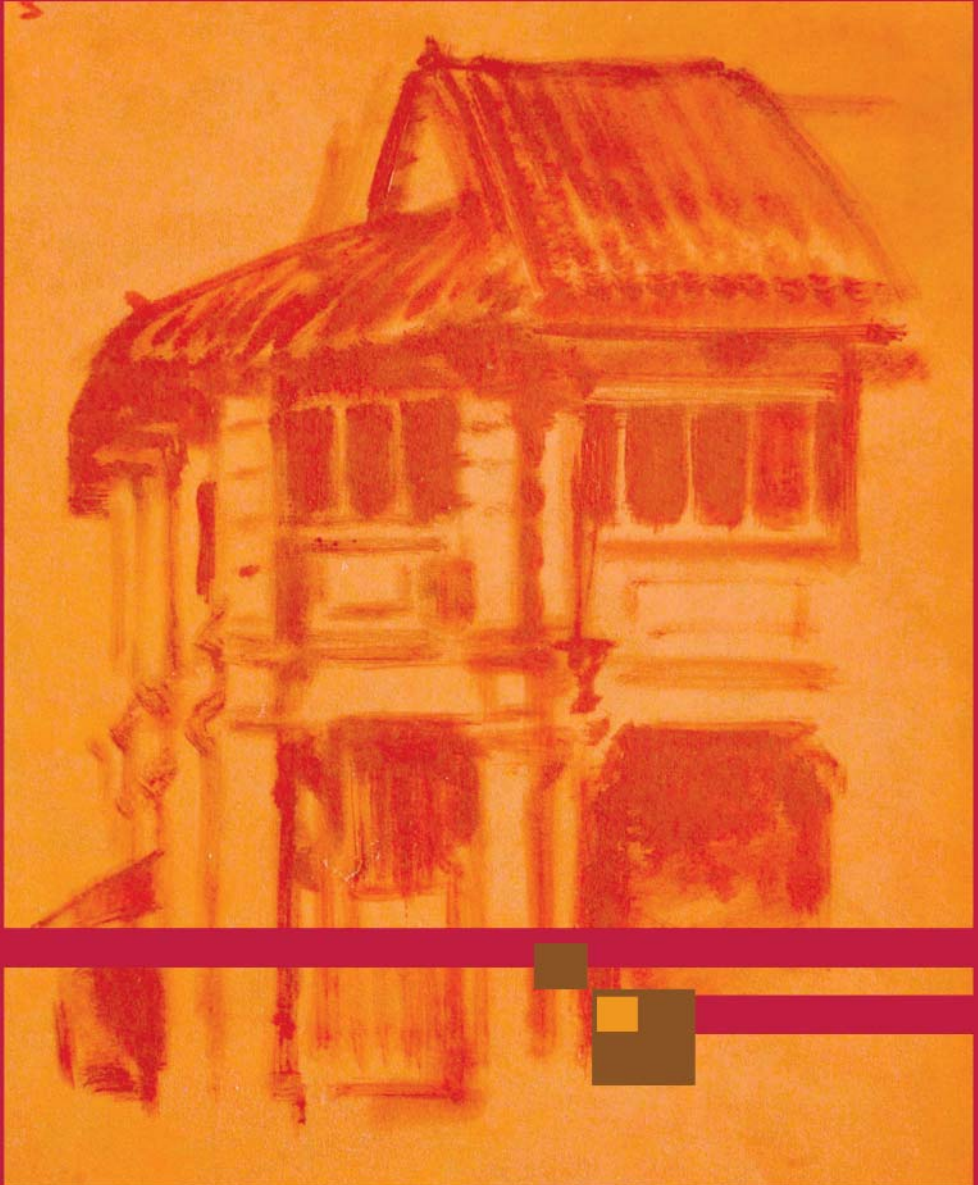
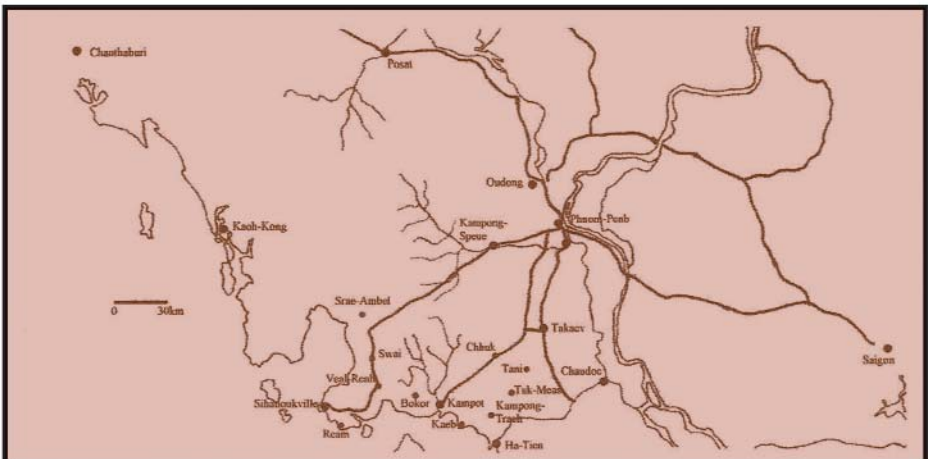


Kampot Regional Museum Project



In this brochure, the region of Kampot refers to a natural entity of which the historical and geographical limits go well beyond the present province of Kampot and include the two new provinces of Kep and Kampong Som as well as parts of coastal Vietnam.

More precisely, the boundaries of this region are: the town of Tani in the north, the sea and the islands (including Koh Trâl–Phu Quoc) in the south, Ha Tien (nowadays in Vietnam) in the east, and the foothills of the Cardamom Mountains in the west.



The identity of this region is heavily influenced by the history of its turbulent relationships with the authorities of the kingdoms of Cambodia from the beginning of the common era, periods of integration will be followed by periods of isolation.

During the pre-Angkorian period, this region was a part of the kingdom of FUNAN. This is exemplified by the presence of three main troglodyte temples (Phnom Chhngok, Phnom Totoeung and Phnom Khjang) and a significant number of minor shrines. Different from neighboring Takeo province, where shrines would be built after the 9th century, the history of Kampot “stops” with the 9th century inscription of Yaçovarman 1st (K 45), with no further written documentation surviving prior to the 15th century.

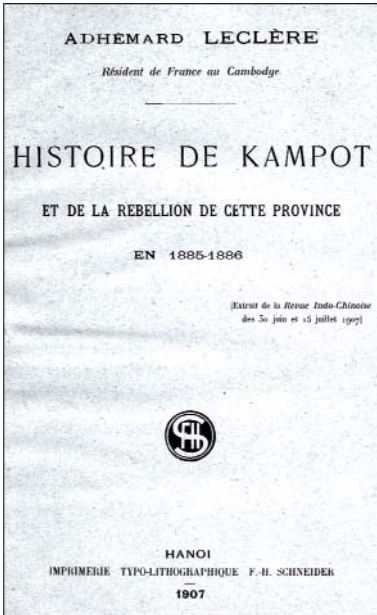
The region was the object of considerable rivalries which, from the 18th century, would oppose the Cambodian central power to the Vietnamese. Mass

arrivals of Chinese from the island of Hainan to develop pepper cultivation would have important political consequences. This population was more prone to obey its own leaders than the authorities of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

The importance of the region



was emphasized during the reign of King Ang Duong (1796-1860), who built a harbor in Kampot and a road to link his capital Oudong to Kampot. Kampot then began the main port of entry and exit of Cambodia.



In the beginning of the French protectorate with the construction of a new road from Phnom Penh to Oudong, the economic importance of the region was confirmed for a short period. However, the protectorate authorities soon preferred



Cholon, in what is now Vietnam, to export Cambodian rice. Economically weakened, the region of Kampot then experienced a wave of pirating. The insecurity peaked in the 1885–1886 rebellion, which was more violent than in other provinces. Tourist and economic development of the 1930s would be followed by a long period of insecurity when France once again attempted to get a foothold in Indochina after the World War II. The region was the stronghold of a Khmer Issarak–Viet Minh guerilla movement which would only end after independence in 1953.

The Sangkum Reastr Niyum (1955-1970) carried on the work of the protectorate in developing and urbanizing the region: the Kampot exhibition hall, infrastructure development in Kep and the construction of the Phnom Penh–Kampot–Kompong Som railroad. However, two years after Lon Nol's coup d'état (March 1970), the region would be isolated till the UNTAC intervention (1991-1993), due to growing unrest and insecurity.

The role played by commercial exchanges together with the various rebellions which isolated the region from the central power, opened up the Kampot region to the outside world. One of the consequences is the remarkable ethnic diversity of the region. There are not less than six ethnic groups: S'aoch, Cham, Chvea, Vietnamese, and Hainan and Teochiu Chinese. These various ethnic groups specialize in their own particular products and, by doing so, have shaped the economic scene of the region. The religious diversity is also considerable: Buddhism, Islam and a very special form of Taoism.

To these historical and cultural characteristics, we have to add an exceptional natural environment. The Elephant Mountains, the rain forests around Kep, and the beauty of the Opal Coast will greatly contribute to create tourist destination of a high quality. In order to protect and promote this heritage, it is therefore essential to create a museum to account for the characteristics of this region.



The Association for the Cultural Development of Kep (ACDK) will hire a permanent consultant and will call on all people and institutions specializing in the history and ethnography of Cambodia to organize and improve the ACDK permanent collections.

This museum will draw its inspiration from successful concepts such as already established museums of arts and popular traditions. To a continuously enhanced permanent exhibit will be added temporary exhibits. It will be also a place of lectures and exchanges.

Content

Based on the collections currently owned by the ACDK, it is already possible to give an insight into the museum areas.

Entrance

The entrance area will display general information about the region: population, economy and the mapping of administrative divisions until the 21st century. A three-dimensional map of the area will also be displayed.

Area 1

This area will present the pre-Angkorian period in the region till the 9th century. It will show panoramic photographs of the three pre-Angkorian temples, Phnom Chhngok, Phnom Khyang and Phnom Totoeung, with explanations about the context of their construction and the doctrine of çivaism.



Phnom Chhngok.

Facsimiles of three inscriptions (K 44, K45, and K46) will be displayed together with translations and comments. The religious function of the caves, very characteristic of the region, will be analyzed and explained.

Several pre-Angkorian objects will also be displayed.

Area 2

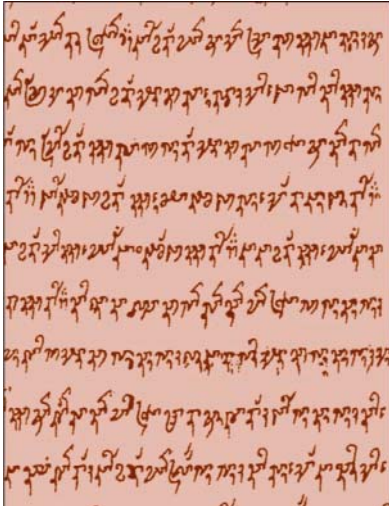
This area will be about three ethnic minorities: S'aoch, Chvea and Cham. It will present the various hypotheses about their origin and will describe their activities.

The S'aoch Ethnic group, now endangered, will be presented through photographs of their present village, Samrong Loeu, and their former village, Lon Lê, and through various interviews. Their origin will be explained with ethno-linguistic maps to localize the various branches and divisions of this ethno-linguistic group. The descriptions of foreign authors (Zhou Da Guan, Gagelin, Adhémard Leclère, etc.) who wrote about the S'aoch will be introduced through excerpts and photographs. A typical traditional hut of their now disappeared village, Long Lê, has already been recreated and will be displayed with various objects characteristic of their daily life.

The Chvea ethnic group is a Muslin minority which has not retained its original language. They were generally called “Malais” by the French who first wrote about them from the first half of the 19th century. The various hypotheses about their origins will be explained and the special



architecture of their mosques will be illustrated.



The Cham are an important ethnic group of the Kampot region. A historical approach will explain the origin of the Cham ethnic group in Cambodia and the current divisions between the Bani Cham and the Malayu Cham. Their two scripts (Jawi and Indic) will be explained and facsimiles of manuscripts exhibited.

Fishing activities being essentially Cham, a great care will be taken in presenting the making of nets and keepnets and the techniques of boat construction.



Area 3

This area will illustrate Chinese life, mainly of the Hainan Chinese minority. The migrations from the island of Hainan to Cambodia will be documented and explained as well as the Hainan Chinese local system of political power once represented by Mac Cuu (1671-1735), who dominated a huge territory which stretched from Ha Tien to the present Kompong Som.



This ethnic group has played a considerable part in the development of pepper cultivation, as will be explained. The housing system, Chinese



schooling and local cults of Bentougong will be described and explained. Various objects of the Chinese daily life such as vases, religious altars and pieces of furniture will be exhibited.



Area 4

This area will present the history of the region starting from the period preceding the arrival of the French in 1863 and the 1885–1886 uprising. The geopolitical and economic aspects of Kampot will be explained and illustrated: construction of the Kampot harbor and the Phnom Penh–Kampot road during the reign of King Ang Duong.



The changes which occurred at the beginning of the French protectorate and the 1885-1886 revolt will be described through engravings and texts.

Archival material will present important personalities of the French protectorate such as Auguste Pavie and Adhémard Leclère, whose writings offer the best access to Kampot life of the time.

Area 5

This area will be dedicated to the history and development of the region from the 1920s to the present. It will be mainly about Prince Sihanouk's Sangkum Reastr Niyum.

Photographs and archive documents will present the urbanization of Kampot from the 1920s, the construction of the various buildings on Bokor Mountain, the



development of Kep, the construction of polders and the construction of Kampong Som.

Slide shows and films about the Sangkum Reastr Niyum will be shown.

Area 6

Temporary exhibits will take place in this area, where a lecture room will also be located. The monthly lectures will be about the ethnic groups of the region, the sources of regional history and their interpretation, etc.

The temporary exhibits will be about all sorts of subjects: Khmer script, Khmer theatre, Khmer music, Cambodia and the sea, etc.

Viability

The project goes hand in hand with the current development of tourism in Kep, Kampot and Kampong Som. The various bodies working for the promotion of tourism in Cambodia will be brought together into our approach: travel agencies, cultural associations, ministry of tourism, ministry of culture, etc. Organizations such as UNESCO, EFEO, local and international universities and research centers will be approached.

Guided tours will be organized by specially trained personnel.

A series of lectures planned every year will be offered.

Far from being a mere exhibition, our ambition is to give rise to new ideas and to share them. A partnership will be created with the local authorities who care about the development of high quality tourism. Every visitor will be offered a chance to extend the visit by becoming a member of the museum friends' association. A web site and a newsletter will be among the tools for the promotion of the museum.

A shop selling products of the local crafts industry, a bookshop, and a cafeteria will be included in the museum premises.

The money raised will be used for the wages of personnel, the running costs of the building, enriching the collection, and creating temporary exhibits.



