

Khmer Heritage Research and Documentation at the EFEO: Building a Digital Corpus of Archaeological and Epigraphic Data

Pierre-Yves Manguin

Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO), Paris

pierre-yves.manguin@efeo.net

The "Ancient Khmer landscapes: building a digital corpus of archaeological and epigraphic data" programme sets itself as a global, interdisciplinary, three year programme (2008-2010) for managing the considerable amount of data on the pre-modern Khmer kingdom kept at and generated by the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO: French School of Asian Studies). The online information system will therefore encompass both the data accumulated over the years in Cambodia, starting in the late 19th century (images, reports, plans, maps, etc.), and the research data now produced by EFEO scholars (most of which is in digital formats: images, databases, CAD, GIS, spreadsheet and word-processor files). System interfaces will be both semantic and cartographic. The programme draws on the experience acquired in more than a century of fieldwork, on cooperative research programmes now being carried out by EFEO scholars with the relevant heritage authorities of Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam; it should also link with international partners in the field. It brings together research scholars active in the field (historians, archaeologists, epigraphers, architects, and art historians), library curators, and experts on databases and geographical information systems (GIS), so as to streamline and standardise the processes involved in creating digital collections, documenting, storing and preserving them, and making them available on line to scholars and to a larger audience. The programme also considers the legal matters regarding these precious heritage collections.