



The Ruins of Angkor

So there I am, standing in front of the linga, or the phcet phum, whatever, the giant stone spire with its very own temple. The camp outside is quiet. The queen and her retinue are in front of me, chanting, unaware of my presence. The holy woman starts dancing with that coconut and palm leaf totem she carries around. I creep up behind them, reaching out to pull the queen away.

The shaman sees me and she grabs the queen's daughter instead, throwing her onto the great stone spire.

There's a terrible roar outside and then the sounds of the camp screaming and scrambling. One voice rises above the others: "You see? You see! I told you it was a stegosaurus!"

WELCOME TO KAMBUJA

You'll find in the following pages a detailed description of the Angkor region of Kambuja, itself a protectorate of the Rattanakosin Kingdom of Mueang Thai. Home of the Khmer people, this region has seen a long history of turmoil and oppression, all against the backdrop of the incredible ruins of a bygone golden age. Now forces and personalities from across the region and beyond are coming to the ruins... for posterity, for profit, and for power. Not everyone is going to get what they're after.

The port-of-call includes six game master characters inbound to Angkor with their own idiosyncratic goals, primed to smash together into a pretty mess, just in time for the picaros to arrive on the scene.

The Ruins of Angkor is a flexible port-of-call ready to welcome experienced picaros into its embrace. The action deals with colonialism, self-determination, art, hope, redemption, and dinosaurs.

THE RUINS OF CAMBODIA — AN EXCURSION

The site of the city is in itself unique. Chosen originally for the strength of its position, it yet presents none of the features which should mark the metropolis of a powerful people. It seems to stand aloof from the world, exempt from its passions and aspirations, and shunning even its thrift. Confronting us with its towering portal, overlaid with colossal hieroglyphics, the majestic ruin of the wāt stands like a petrified dream of some Michael Angelo of the giants—more impressive in its loneliness, more elegant and animated in its grace, than aught that Greece and Rome have left us, and addressing us with a significance all the sadder and more solemn for the desolation and barbarism which surround it.

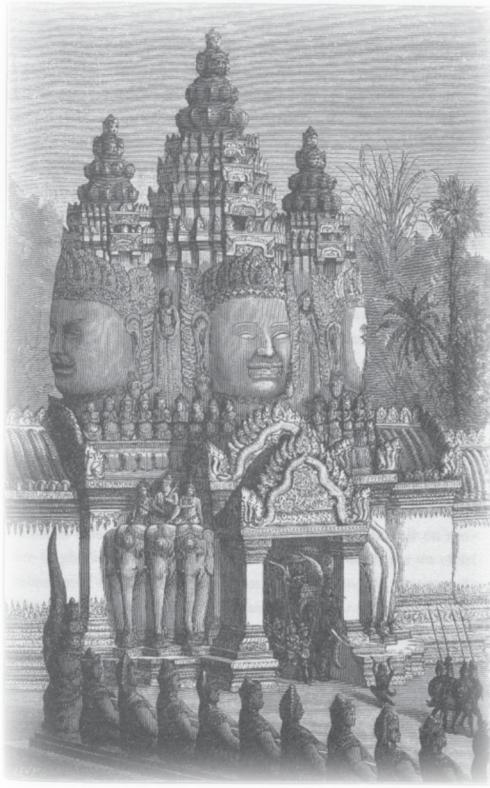
Unhappily, the shocks of war, seconding the slowly grinding mills of time, have left but few of these noble monuments; and slowly, but ruthlessly, the work of destruction and decay goes on.

The statues and sculptures on the walls of the outer corridor are in alto relievo, and generally life-size. The statue of the Leper King, set up in a sort of pavilion, is moderately colossal, and is seated in a tranquil and noble attitude; the head especially is a masterpiece, the features being classic and of manly beauty.

Approaching the temple of Ongkōor, the most beautiful and best preserved of these glorious remains, the traveller is compensated with full measure of wonder and delight for all the fatigues and hardships of his journey. Complete as is the desolation, a strange air of luxury hangs over all, as though the golden glow of sunshine amid the refreshing gloom were for the glory and the ease of kings.

At each angle of the temple are two enormous lions, hewn, pedestal and all, from a single block. A flight of stone steps leads up to the first platform of terraces. To reach the main entrance from the north staircase we traverse a noble causeway, which midway crosses a deep and wide moat that seems to surround the building.

The main entrance is by a long gallery, having a superb central tower, with two others of less height on each side. The portico of each of the three principal towers is formed by four projecting columns, with a spacious staircase between. At either extremity are similar porticos, and beyond these is a very lofty door, or gateway, covered with gigantic hieroglyphs, where gods and warriors hang as if self-supported between earth and sky. Then come groves of columns that in girth and height might rival the noblest oaks. Every pillar and every part of the wall is so crowded with sculptures that the whole temple seems hung with petrified tapestry.



On the west side, the long gallery is flanked by two rows of almost square columns. The blank windows are cut out of the wall, and finished with stone railings or balconies of curiously twisted columns; and the different compartments are equally covered with sculptures of subjects taken from the Ramayâna. Here are Lakshman and Hanuman leading their warriors against Rawana—some with ten heads, others with many arms. The monkeys are building the stone bridge over the sea. Rama is seen imploring the aid of the celestial protector, who sits on high, in grand and dreamy contemplation. Rama's father is challenging the enemy, while Rawana is engaged in combat with the leader of the many-wheeled chariots. There are many other figures of eight-handed deities; and all are represented with marvellous skill in grouping and action.

The entire structure is roofed with tiers of hewn stone, which is also sculptured; and remains of a ceiling may still be traced. The symmetrical wings terminate in three spacious pavilions and this imposing colonnade, which, by its great length, height, and harmonious proportions, is conspicuous from a great distance, and forms an appropriate vestibule to so grand a temple.

Excerpt from Anna Leonowen's An English Governess in the Siamese Court

URGENT BULLETIN TO ALL THAI UNITS

All Thai units active in Kambuja are ordered to form a detail, either in whole or in part of their unit, to canvas their operational domain for the fugitive noblewoman Ang Mey and her co-conspirators.

Ang Mey is an elderly Khmer woman, traveling with at least three other Khmer women. She claims to be the rightful queen of the Khmer; this is patently untrue. This cowardly Annamite puppet was deposed when Mueang Thai liberated the Khmer from foreign oppression. The former queen has escaped her protective custody in Oudong. Now the proper Khmer King Norodom, with the advice and assent of his Thai counselors, petitions the peacekeeping forces of Mueang Thai operating within Kambuja to assist in her recapture.

It is unclear whether Ang Mey is working with her former allies, the hated Annamites, with their French overlords, or some other faction. When apprehended, she is to be sequestered and allowed no contact with others. While she must be returned to Oudong, her location and route must not be broadcast for fear of interference from her unknown allies.

When last seen, Ang Mey was traveling north along the Tonle Sap river, deeper into the Kambuja hinterlands.

Ang Mey's retinue may include a sorceress or she may be receiving sorcerous assistance from other agents. Approach with discretion.

*Phon Tri Sonchai Mookjai, Major General of the
Siamese Occupation Forces*

Names and Places

This port-of-call deals with Thai, Khmer, and Kinh peoples and states, all of which go by different names today and had different names for each other. It can get confusing!

Kambuja, homeland of the Khmer, is now known in the West as Cambodia. The French called it Cambodge.

Annam was a kingdom with Kinh rulers, and is now a part of Vietnam. They spoke Tiếng Việt.

The Rattanakosin Kingdom of Mueang Thai dominated what is now Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. For extra fun, in 1878, everyone who wasn't Thai called it Siam and the people Siamese.



James Fergusson, History of Indian and Eastern Architecture. Vol. 3, 1876

ANGKOR, SIAMESE PROTECTORATE OF CAMBODGE; OCTOBER 25TH, 1878.

We have finally arrived at Angkor. The long voyage from Paris over rough seas—and again I regret my decision not to equip ourselves lightly and thus take an airship—was difficult enough. Then the interminable negotiations with the Siamese king, parlaying our pieces of European art for permission to remove artifacts from the ruins in his domain. Then the river journey up the Mekong and the Tonle Sap, and overland with native assistance from Siam Nakhon to the site. Finally we are here.

Despite the delays, we managed to arrive as planned at the tail end of the rainy season. The ground will be wet and easy to move as we situate ourselves, but we will not suffer the deluge of the summer monsoons. We will suffer the mosquitoes, however, and thus rely on our stocks of Warburg's tincture to stave of the malaria and other fevers endemic to the region.

I have found the ruins much as I left them so many years ago. Then I had mere days to catalogue and illustrate the grandeur of the art found here. Now I find myself giddy with the thought of spending months recording these great sculptures and extracting select pieces to share with the wider world.

We have set up camp in as central a location as we could manage without placing ourselves directly within the ruins. Our collection of tents and stockpiles of supplies lies between the great rectangular moats of Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom, perhaps a hundred meters from the Baksei Chamkrong Temple. This should give us easy access to our reclamation sites and also make simple the inevitable task of keeping our camp and supplies safe from thieves.

I believe we shall make our primary inquiries within Angkor Thom, as sites of interest proliferate within. As throughout the complex, those structures which have withstood the iron grip of time are mostly temples, lovingly constructed from the sturdiest stone available. I expect we shall also find some other ruins, in worse condition, as well: palaces, offices, and no small number of monuments. The massive Preah Khan lies on the far side of Angkor Thom, and Ta Prohm a short distance to our east.

The great reservoirs—both the half-full West Baray and the dry East Baray—are out of sight from us at camp, but within walking distance. I believe we will find no small number of artifacts in the exposed reservoir beds, dropped in when the water was deep and consigned to eternity as an unrecoverable loss. Little might those ancient Khmer have known that such an “eternity” would be only a matter of centuries.



The sizable Khmer town of Siam Nakhon lies an hour's brisk walk to the south. As in the rest of Cambodge, the Siamese maintain their brutal control of the town populated by Khmer locals. The name itself, which translates to "Siamese Town," stands as testament to the nearly fanatical insistence of the present rulers in establishing their dominance. Perhaps they did not care for the original name, Siem Reap, which translates to "The Flat Defeat of Siam" in honor of a near-forgotten war centuries ago. Regardless of their politics, the town is happy to accept francs for supplies and so I expect we will be comfortable here.

— from the Expedition Journal of Louis Delaporte

TO THE CURRENT DIVINE MOTHER EMPRESS DOWAGER OF THE GREAT QING EMPIRE—

It is said, “This generation is entangled in a tangle.” This was said a thousand years ago. It can be said today. It is true again, and still true, and may be forever true. I am a bhikkhuni, a nun of Dharmaguptaka lineage, and the student of many teachers in Joseon. Yet I am now in Kambuja, at the request of a Chinese empress, here to assist the Theravada lineage. There may not be any Theravadins who desire my help; this is but another aspect of the tangle.

The deeds of the Empress are numerous and admirable, and because I know she takes no pride in them, I enumerate them without fear. She has liberated the women of Joseon from the prison of hatred that their fathers and husbands built for them. She has restored the station of the bhikkhuni sanghas throughout the lands she rules. And she has extended her hand to fellow adherents of the Blessed Buddha’s teachings even beyond her borders. I am that hand.



In my travels into Kambuja, I have had opportunity to speak with many Khmer, men and women, learned and ignorant, rich and poor. Most could tell me that they follow the Eightfold Path. Many could tell me that their monks were Theravadin by lineage. Few, however, know why they have no nuns. More than once I was mistaken for a “Mae Ji.” This is a sort of novice nun who may not be ordained.

More Place Names

Joseon and Goryeo were states that ruled the Korean peninsula.

Only a handful of Khmer knew a woman could only be ordained as a Theravadin nun by an assembly of ordained nuns of her lineage. And since there have been no Theravadin nuns for five hundred years, they told me, there will never be nuns in Kambuja again.

How surprised they were when I told them I was here to ordain nuns.

I told them the story of the Dharmaguptaka lineage, how Theravadin nuns were invited to China in distant antiquity, and established a monastery there. I told them how the students of that monastery traveled to Goryeo and built monasteries there. Goryeo became Joseon, the Qing took control of Joseon. One of these monasteries taught me. I watched them as I explained the last part of this tangle. I told them that therefore, while I am a bhikkhuni of Dharmaguptaka lineage, I am also a bhikkhuni of Theravada lineage. Many seemed to accept this conclusion. I have not yet tested the response of Theravada monks.

I have come to Siam Nakhon, a city on the banks of a great lake. The Wat Preah An Kao Sai sits at the northern edge of the city, and itself predates the city by centuries. I have spoken with the monks who live there, introducing myself as an itinerant. I will share my plans with them soon. Before I take them into my confidence, however, they insist I should see the ruins, of which their temple is the southernmost extension, that spreads throughout the jungle to the north. They seem eager to share this local history with me, and I must be a gracious guest. Perhaps this will also make them more amenable to cooperate with my plans.

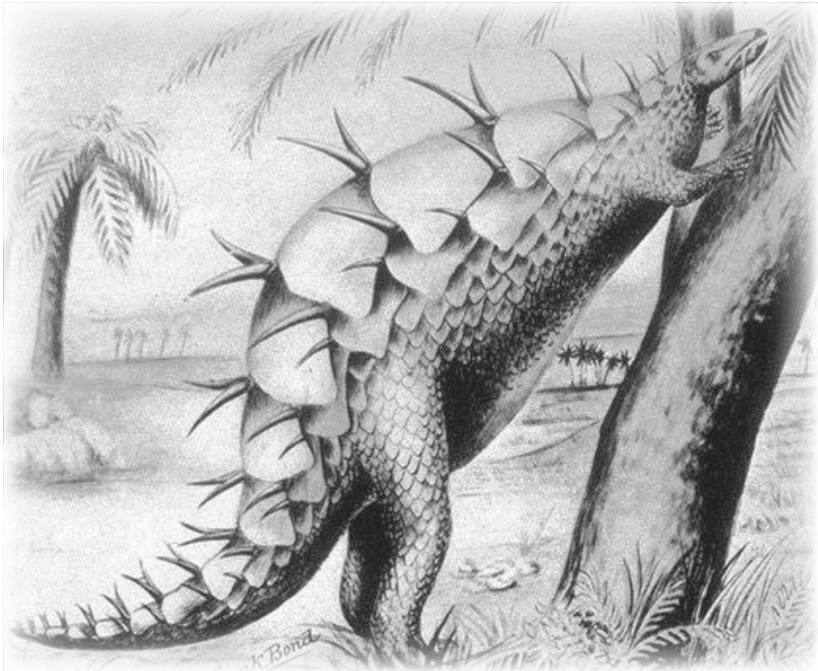
—Bhikkhuni Park Gyeong

TO MSSR. DELAPORTE, SOCIÉTÉ DE GÉOGRAPHIE, PARIS—

Good tidings to you, sir. I hope my missive finds you well and before you take your leave of Paris to return to the East. You see, I have spent many a night immersed in the account of your last expedition up the Mekong with Captain Garnier. The illustrations and engravings produced by your hand have entranced me more than once. So it was last night that, as I forestalled my repose by returning to those pages, I rediscovered the drawing you made of the entrance to the temple Ta Prohm, one you labelled as “A Carving of an Unknown Animal.”

I believe I have identified your mysterious animal.

You may not be familiar with the work of Othniel Charles Marsh, an American naturalist unearthing the fossilized bones of animals long disappeared from our world. He has discovered, assembled, and named a great many of these beasts, one of which is the Stegosaurus. Marsh published a drawing of what this monster must have looked like when it had skin on its bones, in *The American Journal of Science and Arts*. I include in this letter a clipping from that article.



*Othniel Charles Marsh, "American Jurassic Dinosaurs,"
published in the American Journal of Science and Arts, 1877*

While Marsh believed that the bone plates along the creature's back lay flat, overlapping into a hard protective shell, it does not take much imagination to envision those plates standing up, as in the carving at Ta Prohm. Is it inconceivable that the stegosaurus survived, hidden in the jungles of Cambodia, until the raising of that great city that you have studied, and shortly to which you will return?

Is it further possible, I wonder, that some stegosauri still lurk in that jungle? If so, I should like to collect one or more in the interests of science.

While my own writings have been translated into French, that is no guarantee that they have crossed your path. It's quite possible that you have no idea who I am, and I cannot fault you for that. But I have spent years in both India and Africa as well as my native Europe, collecting specimens of every fantastic beast that haunts those lands. There was a great show of them at the Great Exhibition back in 1851.

You see, I have hunted and bagged every great beast on the planet, and I should be remiss if I were to die without shooting myself a Stegosaurus.

I do hope I can join you on your expedition to Angkor, or failing that, to pay a visit to you in your camp. I mean to leave Scotland within the month.

Your servant,

Roualeyn George Gordon-Cumming

MY QUEEN—

You have betrayed your country and your people, it is said. You sold Kambuja to the Annamites, it is said. You failed to defend it from the Siamese invasion, it is said. You sat idly by as Khmer names were replaced with Kinh names, when our clothes were torn from our bodies and foreign clothes were thrust upon us, when Khmer dance and song were outlawed in favor of the arts of Hué and Bangkok. All this it is said.

It is even said that you laid with the Annamite officials and yielded your body to their lecherous appetites. But this last I do not believe. This sounds like a Kinh lie told to make us despair, to make us believe that ever fiber of your being was broken and owned by them.

The Kinh and the Siamese lie. They tell us that the Khmer are an inferior people. They claim that they, the Kinh in the East and the Siamese in the West, have always fought over Kambuja. That they are natural lords and we are natural servants. But this is a lie. Things were once very different.

Have you ever visited the ruins in Angkor, my queen? My Kru Kamnoet, my birth master, the spirit who guides me in all things, took me there. There I saw once-great monuments, temples of staggering size, great bridges standing whole or in part, dry canals leading to reservoirs as wide as seas. There was a mighty city there, long ago. Our people were mighty then; we were not fought over like cattle. We were strong and wise.

My spirit master showed me one more thing, a secret thing. It took me to the temple which shelters the phcet phum, the navel of the city. This was a powerful place when the city stood and it is a powerful place now. The navel, the nexus, the linga—it whispered to me. It waits. It promises to restore Kambuja to its former glory, to make the canals flow again, to inspire our people to throw off the shackles of foreigners.

All it requires, my queen, is one of royal blood. If you have any regret for your part in the destruction of our country, if you have any love remaining for your people, if you have any hope that you might make restitution... come with me, tonight. We will escape the palace and make our way to Angkor.

And there, you will bring about a new golden age for Kambuja.

—Sok Sotby, humble memot of Oudong

COMING TO ANGKOR

While Kambuja has its charms, the ruins at Angkor are decidedly off the beaten path for world-hopping picaros. If our picaresque heroes end up here, they've arrived for a reason. What is it they hope to find in Angkor? What person are they tracking down, or what clue has sent them here?

Here are some ideas:

- A complex set of debt trades with a lady out of the Pacific Mess has left the picaros with an IOU from Louis T Leonowens.
- The vault the picaros need to plunder is inhabited by a vicious and purportedly immortal Avatar of Beasts. There are whispers that the only man who's felled such a monster is Roualeyn George Gordon-Cumming.
- A prophecy insists that the Royal Blood of Kambuja will bring forth a pestilence of beasts upon the world. Which probably means there's some way to make a profit out of that.
- A Tibetan monk is attempting to reassemble the śarīra of a deceased master. Only one pearl is missing, last in the possession of Bhikkhuni Park Gyeong.
- Gordon-Cumming also sent a letter to Othniel Charles Marsh about Delaporte's expedition. While the noted paleontologist cannot absent himself from the Bone Wars, he has made it known that independent operators would be well-compensated for returning a live specimen to his offices at Yale.
- The exiled lords of Joseon have put a sizeable price on the head of Bhikkhuni Park Gyeong—sizeable enough to attract the attention of the bounty hunter the picaros need to question.
- Ang Baen, sister of Ang Mey, faked her death nearly forty years ago in order to escape Kambuja. After a long and very profitable career as a picaro, she did "one last job" too many. Baen named the picaros as the executors of her will and Ang Mey as her only beneficiary.

PERSONS OF NOTE

ANG MEY, DEPOSED QUEEN OF KAMBUJA

While there is no mistaking her years, this queen still retains the grace, beauty, and poise of her youth. Her eyes, especially, speak plainly of her keen observation and wry wit. She dresses in a simple but elegant indigo sampot skirt and matching shirt, over which is draped a shimmering krama scarf. After her trek across the wilds of Kambuja, her clothing shows no small amount of wear—but her demeanor betrays no fatigue.

Now remembered as a sell-out and a puppet, Ang Mey had few other options. Her father the Khmer king dead without a male heir, Annamite advisors in his court insisted on Ang's ascension as a vassal to their emperor. A female monarch would dishearten the Khmer and facilitate the brutal Kinhization of Kambuja. Ang "reigned" in little more than name, punished when she or her sisters disobeyed. On one such occasion she was deposed (and her sister disappeared), only to be restored to quell a popular uprising. The punishment, however, had destabilized the country: Rattanakosin installed its own puppet, Ang Duong, Mey's uncle, in her throne. The capital was moved; she was left in her old palace and reportedly went mad.

Madness was an exaggeration. Angry, powerless, and now fearless of whatever consequences awaited her actions, Ang Mey insulted and abused her Thai handlers at will. It was easy for them to discount her as a crazy woman. The spirit healer Sok Sothy who attended to Ang's "madness" suggested a radical cure: the expulsion of the Thai from Kambuja. The next night, Ang and her daughter escaped with a small retinue and set off to make up for the tragedies that her reign made possible.

Exemplars

- knotted cloth-of-gold krama
- gold-scabbarded sword
- regal carnelian matron

Classes

- Mondaine (Belle of the Ball)
- Ringleader (Eye for Talent)

Approaches

- with Honesty
- with Grace

Languages

- fluent Tiếng Việt
- fluent Khmer
- fluent Thai
- broken French
- broken English

Possible Wants

- a source of power that will allow her to ascend to the throne once again
- to teach her daughter the value of Khmer identity and her role as their monarch
- protect Angkor from foreign pillagers
- use Delaporte's military ties to gain French aid for Kambuja
- recruit Park into her Khmer revolution

LOUIS DELAPORTE, EXPEDITION LEADER

A lean man just entering his middle years, Louis Delaporte cultivates a persona of careful thought and consideration. The twinkle in his eye, however, can betray this careful façade whenever he speaks about Khmer art. His

journal is filled to overflowing with sketches, to the point where the logs are crowded out of space. At his hip bounces an Atlantean device to encapsulate and preserve items in amber; as it's worth half the expedition's budget, he keeps it by his side at all times.

As a young man, Delaporte could not earn a living as an artist and so purchased a commission as a naval officer. Assigned to the expedition to map and explore the Mekong river, Delaporte depicted the ruins at Angkor in a series of sketches and illustrations. When the account of the expedition was published, the sketches became the talk of Europe and made Delaporte a minor celebrity. He used that celebrity to eloquently argue for the beauty, grandeur, and artistic significance of Khmer architecture, placing it on a par with the monuments of Greece and Rome. He had little trouble financing an expedition back to Angkor.

This time, Delaporte's goal is to exhaustively document the ruins, including maps, sketches, and daguerrotypes. He also plans to return to Europe with a few select pieces for museums in the West. While these are his public intentions, his return to Kambuja is also fueled by the secret impulses of his heart. He must return to Angkor to reunite with that part of his soul which never left... not to mention the lover that he hopes waits for him still.

Credit Where Due

All theart in thisport-of-call is taken from Delaporte's book, *Voyage a Cambodge*, unless otherwise noted.

Exemplars

- battered expedition journal
- orichalcum amber sprayer
- gangly ginger-bearded man

Classes

- Mondaine (Rapier Wit)
- Artist (Call of Orpheus)

Approaches

- with Reason
- with Grace

Languages

- fluent French
- fluent Thai
- broken Khmer
- broken English
- broken German

Possible Wants

- a quiet, productive art-salvaging expedition
- a native translator to unlock the secret of Angkor
- protect his lover, Ang Mey
- restore the "stegosaurus" sculpture and conduct it safely to Paris
- extract the linga from its temple

SOK SOTHY, MEMOT OF OUDUNG

Easily overlookable, Sok Sothy is a short, middle-aged woman dressed in simple peasant clothing. Of course, the Khmer sampot she wears is entirely illegal for her to wear, and this rebellious streak also shows in her wry smile and calculating gaze. She carries with her an elaborate construction of engraved coconut shell, palm leaves, and rattan bindings; when asked, she explains it is her Birth Master.

Sok is a memot: a traditional Khmer medium whose personal guiding spirit is powerful enough to be called a Kru Kamnoet. The thing she carries is the spirit's kachom, a physical representation through which she interacts with her "master." For many years, Sok has served her community on the outskirts of Oudung, where the Tonle Sap meets the Mekong river. She conferred blessings, removed curses, and called lost souls back out of the forest. While these were spiritual matters, their cause was more often than not entirely temporal: the cruel repression of the Thai. Khmer fashion, arts, and even their place names had been replaced, by law, first with Kinh and now with Thai counterparts. Her people are forgetting who they are as a people, which has manifested as a sickness of the soul.

One day, her Kru Kamnoet bid her out into the forest, on a long journey that brought her to the ruins at Angkor. She found the ancient city's phcet phum, the sacred place where the old capital connects to the land it once governed. The latent power of the place washed over her, and she knew in a moment that all the blessings she had given and curses she had removed would never fix the real problem. Kambuja must expel its foreign oppressors and be governed again by the Khmer who called it home. She returned home to Oudung to share her vision with the deposed queen Ang Mey.

Exemplars

- simple rust-red sampot
- engraved, rattan-bound kachom
- short brown woman

Classes

- Herald (Speaking in Tongues)
- Hinterlander (Campfire Stories)

Approaches

- with Honesty
- with Grace

Languages

- fluent Khmer
- broken Tiếng Việt
- broken Thai

Possible Wants

- summon supernatural help to elevate Ang Mey to the throne
- sacrifice Ang Mey to unlock sorcerous power for herself
- ingratiate herself to Ang Mey's daughter
- convince Park to ordain memots as nuns
- protect the stegosaurus spirit-beast from Gordon-Cumming

CAPTAIN LOUIST. LEONOWENS, THAI LIGHT CAVALRY

A young man, hale and hearty and bedecked in a resplendent uniform, Captain Leonowens cuts quite a figure. His English complexion has turned to a deep tan in the tropical sun, sharply contrasting with his white-blond hair and mustache. The Thai cavalry uniform, with its leaf-embroidered jacket and sharp lines, suits him, as does the youthful air of command he acquires whenever his men are near. Strapped over his back he wears a rosy and pearlescent gunsword of recent make, which contrasts him from the rank-and-file, armed with carbines and sabers, even more than his captain's hat.

Born in Australia to a mother born in India and a father born in Ireland, Leonowens was raised as an Englishman. After his father died, his mother Anna was hired as a teacher for the Rattanakosin king's 39 wives and 82 children. Louis accompanied her at the age of six and was raised in the palace and educated alongside the royal family. At twelve, Leonowens was sent to England to complete his education. Afterwards he joined his mother in the United States, where she was fast becoming a popular author and lecturer. Leonowens, however, accumulated debts and fled the country. He washed up in Bangkok, where his childhood friendship with the new king earned him a commission in the Thai Cavalry.

While Leonowens is a decided favorite at court, he sees his life in Mueang Thai as an exile from the West. He is ashamed of his inability to support his mother and sister, and is intent on raising enough money to pay his debts and return to New York. He curries favor with King Chulalongkorn, hoping to win a royal trade monopoly that could make him a very rich man. Leonowens knows, however, that such a scheme may not work out, and is constantly looking for any other opportunity.

Exemplars

- embroidered & epauletted uniform
- orichalcum carbine saber
- tan, mustachioed man
- the 12th light cavalry

Classes

- Soldier (Command)
- Mondaine (Familiar Face)

Approaches

- with Force
- with Misdirection

Languages

- fluent Thai
- fluent English
- fluent French
- broken Tiếng Việt
- broken Khmer

Possible Wants

- capture Ang Mey
- extort bribes from Delaporte's expedition
- conduct Ang Mey to safety in French Indochine
- expel the Chinese spy Park
- protect Mueang Thai's endangered stegosaurus population

BHIKKHUNI PARK GYEONG

With first impressions dominated by her shaved head and black robes, it sometimes takes a moment to notice that Park Gyeong is also impressively tall. She moves with quiet, assured grace and speaks with a calm, measured demeanor. Her only ornamentation is the pearl pendant she wears on a coarse buff cord.

Park escaped to the monastery at a young age, fleeing the horrific existence reserved for her as a woman. In her native Joseon, women were treated as chattel property, forbidden from learning to read, and not even given names. The monastery, by contrast, promised Park a life of worthy work, education, and respect. She flourished there, mastering the teachings of the Buddha so thoroughly that she attained the superhuman abilities known as abhijna. Outside the monastery, though, conditions only worsened. Finally, the women of Joseon hatched a conspiracy to hobble the defenses of their kingdom so that the Chinese empress Cixi could invade and liberate them. Park was an active participant in the conspiracy and the invasion.

When the dust settled, Cixi summoned Park and shared the plight of Buddhists in Siam, whose lineage of nuns had died out. She asked that Park travel south and, as a demonstration of goodwill, re-establish orders of nuns there. Park is not naïve, and knows that Cixi's mission is not purely altruistic. The monasteries will retain ties to China and work Chinese goodwill into their local communities. This may even be a prelude to invasion. Park, however, is less interested in the global politics than she is in the very real opportunity to provide for a people who have long gone without.

Exemplars

- lean, amber-skinned bhikkhuni
- coarse black robes
- lustrous śarīra pendant

Classes

- Theurgist (Secrets of the Universe: Mind, Sight, Levitation)
- Duelist (Riposte)

Approaches

- with Grace
- with Reason

Languages

- fluent Pali
- fluent Khmer
- fluent Mandarin
- fluent Tibetan

Possible Wants

- the blessing of Ang Mey for her ordination plans in Kambuja
- to ordain Sok Sothy
- convince Delaporte to leave the Buddhist temple unmolested
- sway Ang Mey away from Sok Sothy's influence
- deliver Ang Mey to Leonowens, ingratiating herself to Bangkok

ROUALEYN GEORGE GORDON-CUMMING, BIG GAME HUNTER

On the hunt, Gordon-Cumming dresses and looks the part of a man who has stumbled out of the wilderness after forgetting the civilized world. His rough canvas clothes are stained and unwashed; his dark beard and hair is a hopeless tangle; he moves with the blustery confidence of the self-assured or the hopelessly drunk. His leather harness supports both a shapeless knapsack on his back and a massive rifle, held aloft by a mechanical arm.

The second son of minor nobility in Scotland, the young Gordon-Cumming bought the cheapest military commission available, serving the East India Company's Light Madras cavalry. He took great pleasure in the exotic hunting of India, and began what would become a sizeable trophy collection. He then served in the Cape Mounted Rifles in the South Africa, and enjoyed the hunting so much he sold his commission and used the proceeds to outfit himself as a professional hunter. His trophy collection grew until it was literally world renowned: he exhibited it and lectured at the Great Exhibition of 1851. His subsequent retirement was cut short by the rising of Atlantis, which he insisted on exploring, although to his chagrin he discovered a complete lack of game to hunt on the barren archipelago.

Now nearly sixty, Gordon-Cumming spends his days writing and hunting in his native Scotland. He also reads voraciously, which prompted him to connect an illustration from the Mekong river expedition with the work of pioneering paleontologist Othniel Charles Marsh. He is convinced that the jungles of Kambuja hide a population of stegosaurus, and is intent on adding one last trophy to his collection.

Exemplars

- hip-mounted elephant gun
- bulging canvas knapsack
- florid, unkempt backwoodsman

Classes

- Hinterlander (Cut the Bull)
- Brute (Thick Skinned)

Approaches

- with Force
- with Grace

Languages

- fluent English
- fluent Scots Gaelic
- fluent French
- broken Afrikaans
- broken Punjabi
- broken German
- broken isiXhosa
- broken isiZulu

Possible Wants

- to shoot a Stegosaurus
- help spelunking the caves into which the stegosaurus retreats
- sorcerous help in summoning the stegosaurus
- the stegosaurus sculpture off the temple wall
- capture a male and female stegosaurus for breeding purposes (he'll shoot the offspring)

KHMER NAMES

Surnames come first in Khmer names. Nicknames and abbreviations use the last syllable: “Davy” is shorted to “Vy.”

Surnames

- Dith
- Duong
- Hong
- Jan
- Keo
- Khlot
- Meas
- Muy
- Om
- Pang
- Sang
- Sar
- Sok
- Song
- Tang
- Tat
- Touch
- Uch
- Vang
- Yim

Masculine Names

- Amara
- Bona
- Chanthoi
- Heang
- Kamsoth
- Makara
- Oudum
- Palasath
- Pros
- Rithipol
- Samay
- Sarath
- Sokhan
- Teng
- Thy
- Vanneth
- Vaha
- Viseth
- Yuthy
- Yim

Feminine Names

- Bonavy
- Chhoum
- Jorani
- Kesor
- Leakena
- Mealea
- Nakry
- Pala
- Rachany
- Ravi
- Sina
- Socheat
- Sokhun
- Sotheary
- Sreymom
- Sovanni
- Tavree
- Thida
- Vannara
- Vichara

Gender Neutral Names

- Achariya
- Anchaly
- Arun
- Chan
- Dara
- Leap
- Narin
- Pisey
- Rasmey
- Samnang
- Seng
- Sody
- Sokha
- Sros
- Thom
- Touch
- Vanny
- Visna
- Visey
- Yanni

FRENCH NAMES

Surnames come last in French names. Most expedition members refer to each other by their last names: Delaporte, Allard, Marchand, etc.

Masculine Names

- Adrien
- Alphonse
- Benoit
- Clair
- Didier
- Donat
- Fabrice
- François
- Gustave
- Honoré
- Ignace
- Jean-Baptiste
- Jules
- Laurent
- Maurice
- Raymond
- Salomon
- Thibault
- Vespasien
- Yves

Feminine Names

- Adrienne
- Angeline
- Béatrice
- Chantal
- Daphné
- Eloïse
- Fabiola
- Georgette
- Hermine
- Isabelle
- Josseline
- Lili
- Mailys
- Nadège
- Olivie
- Perrine
- Rozenn
- Séraphine
- Toinette
- Zoé

Gender Neutral Names

- Alex
- Camille
- Celeste
- Dominique
- Jocelyn
- Lou
- Morgan
- Narcisse
- Prudence
- Yannic

Surnames

- Allard
- Beaulieu
- Berger
- Bonhomme
- Comtois
- Cousineau
- Deschamps
- Dubois
- Fauchoux
- Fournier
- Giroux
- Lambert
- Marchand
- Noel
- Olivier
- Paget
- Pascal
- Reyer
- Sauveterre
- St Pierre



POWERED BY  patreon

The production of this port-of-call was made possible by the generous patrons of the Steampunk Ports-of-Call Patreon campaign.

Each month I detail a new location in the World Atlantis Broke and publish it as a port-of-call. These content packs can be used with any tabletop roleplaying game—steampunk or no—or simply enjoyed as colorful reading and dream-fodder.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My usual method of operation for creating a port-of-call is to do a bunch of research and then spit out scraps of fictional first-person accounts and character descriptions. This time around, I discovered the beautiful prose of Anna Leonowens, who visited Angkor a few years before 1878. I didn't want to recreate what she had already written, so I excerpted a portion of *An English Governess in the Siamese Court*. You can find the full text here:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/8678>