#  Pillar Preah Vihear Thom <br>  <br> Written by Oeur II 



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Preah Vihear Thom


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Written by Oeur II

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## PREFACE

thes been my dresem wote thes pictorigl beok since my first trip to 100 -Pillor Presh Whegr Then Wet 3094 I wes visting the Wet while conduding the Analyzing Development bsues (idy asure in kutie provime, Combodie I was inspired as I was glancing through the purtures entetbed withis the walls and ceilings of what is called a "Reception Hall" of the we the risuoded me of olessos in primary school where we learned this story abent swo cubsatiles fightrey if the rivet.

3 visited the Wet unother these fimes in 2007, again with the ADI team, ond it struck avet mare, sol spent time shking mony questions to leare more obout the history. Althount I was uxkug tive elders many guestions repegtedly, I came away with undear memories of the stary thes is why s heve compled the stery in this picterial book, and I hope that oflos peaple moy feel es proud of the history depicted in this Wat, by doing some reading during nut ofter visting thes Wef.

The Flems sieined this to be a true stery, connected to oformer Cambodian King and
 for this story is to decument bistory, one which has reinforced the cultural practice than deeply reoted in combedian society, such as the use of crocodile banner in the funerul.
 hell of the wey ood the eiders, Mr. Moo KimHeon, Mr. Ouk Doeun, Mr, Soa Monn, and some ther eless it the 100 P Pller Preah Vihear Wat who shared their story on April 28 and June 9. 2007. Aso, I would like to simcerely thank Mr. Chim Phak, the commune chief of Chey Ouddem, Wer Buntheurng and other elders, living in Sre Chhouk village, Chey Ouddom commene, Lemphet disthict whe spent time sharing information on July 4, 2007 and Archar
 possuble

I weold else like to profeundly thenk those whe have supported me greatly in making this boak otesinty They indude The Sophal, Kung Seakly, Chhum Syrom, Khuon Chan Dore, Toy Wometh, Ong Rettenak, Yim Nimolla, Katrina Sounders, Eng Rotha and of course, the stong acourggement of my wife, Simonavy, and my parents.

The production of this book would not be possible without the generasities of those of yey whe fore financully comtributed to this book, a name list appears on the last page. Due to yees deads thess beoks will be kept of 100 Pillar Preah Vihear Thom Wat, other Wats whe poble insitutiens. logether we hove reached the goal of producing this publicotion.

The entere story ts bilinguel for ousy gctess to Combodions and foreigners who are menssted in learming about the history depicted inside the Wat. This book contains 23 colour
pictures of the paintings within the Wat's reception hall. I added two original photos of $100-$ Pillar Preah Vihear Thom Wat and Krapum Chhouk's Stupa and other story-related sites as well.

The 100 -Pillar Preah Vihear Thom Wat is one of the most well-known cultural sites in Kratie province where there are many visitors' arrivals annually. In fact, for us seeing was not enough but spending time listening to story told by the elders in the Wat made us fully appreciative and feel immersed into the richness of Cambodian culture and tradition. Also, Ratanakiri province provides a highly eco-touristic potential as it is rich in natural forest and lakes and more importantly there are many indigenous communities there; and thus becomes a place worth visiting.

I appear to have provided a very long introduction; however, I hope that this lures you to have as much interest as I do in this story, an important aspect in Khmer culture. I also have consulted relevant documents to present similarities and differences for your thoughts. I hope this book will provide you with clear information and assist to embed this story in your memory. I personally find the story quite fascinating and I hope you all do too. I invite constructive feedback of my writing to ensure future editions are useful to readers.

## Oeur II

Phnom Penh, September 11, 2007
Email: iloeur2@gmail.com


(Figure 1: sketchy map of Longvek - Khmer Nation, $2^{\text {c }}$ Series, by SIPAR)

























In the former Longuek capital in $16^{\text {m/ }}$ century, there was a King, Preah Ang Chan Reachea or Preah Ang Chan Ty Muoy ${ }^{2}$, who reigned from 1516 until 1566. In historical records, he was reputed for his architecture of Longvek capital about 70km from Phnom Penh along National Route 5. Longvek capital located on the west bank of Tonle Sap River and is near Chhnok Irou. The capital was built within two years from 1527-1529. His reign was known to be one of the most glorious times in Cambodian history.

[^0]

(Figure 2: Royal prophet predicted the fate for Vorpheak)










Preah Ang Chan Reachea has one lovely doughter, Vorpheak, or publicly known as Krapum Chhouk (Virgin Lotus). She was 16 years old then. One day, she fell badly ill and there was no-one known who had the capocity to cure her illness ${ }^{3}$. Preah Ang Chan Reachea invited the Royal Prophet to predict how to find the best healer to help rid his daughfer of this nasty illness.

[^1]

(Figure 3: The King ordered Sevakamarts to get the best healer)









After the King was informed about how to find someone who could help his daughter, he immediately ordered the Sevakamarts (palace officials) to look for the most effective healer to cure the illness. The Sevakamarts walked as a group, from one place to another, beating drums throughout the Kingdom, as a means of finding the best healer.


(Figure 4: Sevakamams numed the heas-momis is neal worpheran s illness)



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The royal prophet adrised that if anyone came te osk about the beating of the drum, then this was the best persan to theal Yorpheak. The Sevekomerts finally met a powerful monk, wha came to telk to them about the thating of the drums, ond so be wes believed to the the mast effective illuess beclec. He was the head-mank of Wat Merksem". He was invitad to trovel hy beet, with the Sevkemarts, to cure Varpheak of her illaess.

* Locates in Ciroy Bartezu Commurt Pres Pasch Distrat kathe Puonce Te Golidethen of Komes







(Figure 5: Head-monk taiked to Nen Thonn)
















Before leaving the Wat, the head-monk asked all his young disciple monks (Nens) to try to learn the lessons he taught, and then he turned to his closest young disciple monk, Nen Thonn, and told him to take good care by cleaning rooms and the book cabinets but he also told not to open one special cabinet. This made the closest young disciple monk curious. As soon as the head-monk left, the young monk, Nen Thonn, opened the forbidden cabinet and he found a bible which described special methods on how to disguise oneself to be a crocodile and other types of animals but it occurred to him to be fond of a method for becoming a crocodile.









 ตรั่ง

The head-monk troveled all the way to the palace with Sevakamarts. The King was very delighted with the presence of the perceived best illness heoler to help his daughter. The head-monk spent time consulting and curing Vorpheak's illness, while The King and The Queen and officials ottentively took note of the condition ond treatment.










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The young monk decided he wanted to try to disguise himself as a crocodile, and told the rest of the young monks in the Wat that if he became a crocodile, they must beat him with a water-carrying tool called "Dang Rek", made from bamboo, three times so that he returns to the form of a human being. He did try the special method, and it worked, but the crocodile was smaller than the regular ones. Then, the small crocodile was beaten with the Dang Rek by the young monks, he returns as a human being.





















[^2]The young monks who were neariay and helping said that "the crocodile was too small and can you try to make yourself bigger?" Mea Thonn wanted to show his ability, so he tred the second time ${ }^{5}$, this time, the crocodile *es much bigger than the reguiar crocodiles. The: frightened all young monks who wer supposed to help, as well as other monks the Wat and therefore no-one dared to use the Dang Rek, and were even afraid to stay nearioy.

Thonn, in the form of the crocodile, then jumped into the water to take some time to work out what to do. He went hack to the War and crawled around looking for help, but noone dared to help by beating the crocodile with the Dang Rek any more. He was hopeless and did not know what to do. His anly thought was that only the head-monk could heip him, but only before the $7^{\text {th }}$ day. He realized, in fact, it was already over seven days and so he continued to stay in the river waiting for the head-monk's return.

[^3]

(Figure 8: people looked on as the head-monk gave power on the head of Thonn crocodile)













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Upon the head-monk return, he did not see Nen Thonn and asked the other young monks about Thonn's whereabouts. After he discovered Nen Thonn had secretly learnt about the bible and had become a crocodile, he asked to Thonn to come up to the land. He told Thonn that it was too late to help him to become a human being again because of his deeds, or 'karma' and disobedience. However, he blessed Thonn by giving the crocodile more magic power to make him more powerful than the other crocodiles in the water kingdom.


(Figure 9: The head-monk was on board heading toward seeing Vorpheak)










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The King's daughter did not fully recover, so the Sevakamarts came back to the Wat to invite the head-monk to help them again. This time, the head-monk declined the offer of taking the boat with Sevakamarts and told them that he had his own transport. Since Thonn had become a crocodile, he had offered to be a vehicle for the head-monk, hence, he was able to take him from the Wat to the Royal Palace in Longvek to assist the King's daughter again.


(Figure 10: The headmonk cured Vorpheak the second time)










While the head-monk was staying at the royal palace to cure Vorpheak's nasty illness, Thonn the crocodile, who was living under the royal residence port, felt homesick and really wanted to go back to the Wat. The head-monk's second attempt at healing sped up the recovery and thus gave much pleasure to the King and the Queen.

(Figure 11: Thonn brought the head-monk back to Neaksen wat)












The day after the healing the head-monk took a bath in the river near the royal port. While seeing the head-monk taking a bath nearby, Thonn decided to take the head-monk on board and swim around a bit in order to help him release some stresses he might have after the curing of Vorpheak's illness. As Thonn wanted to go back to the Wat so badly, he saw this as the opportunity. Thonn the crocodile, with the head-monk on board, began to swim in the direction of Neaksen Wat, without the head monk noticing at all.


(Figure 12: Thonn fought with Neak Ta Crocodile)
















On the way back in the Mekong river, Thonn encountered with another powerful Neak Ta (spirit) crocodile at Phnom Sopor Kaley ${ }^{6}$, currently locates in Prek Prasob district of Kratie province. The Neak Ia crocodile was named Neang Orai, a tailless crocodile. Orai saw Thonn and ran after him to start a fight. Thonn tried to escape because he did not want any trouble.

[^4]











The Neak Ta crocodile continued to follow closely so Thonn decided to face her as he wanted to show his power, too. Thonn did not know what to do with the head-monk on his back, so he decided to swallow the head-monk to protect him, but under the permission of the head-monk. Immediately after Thonn swallowed, he engaged in a fight with the Neak Ta crocodile.




















[^5]The fight lasted for seven days and seven nights. Both crocodiles showed considerable strength to continue to fight each other for this long, and this surprised many people. In the end, the Neak Ta crocodile was killed as Thonn bit her through the belly. Thonn could now continue to head towards the Neaksen Wat. On arrival, he regurgitated the head-monk and found him dead ${ }^{\text {² }}$.

The monks and people of the Wat were very sorrowful becouse of the loss of their most respectful and strong guru. Thonn had never thought that swallowing the head monk would lead to his death. At the time he did not know what else to do as he thought that the headmonk might fall from his back during the fighting. Apart from feeling immense sorrow, Thonn was also badly reprimanded by the monks and the people as they thought he intentionally killed the head-monk.

[^6]




















Thonn did not believe that he deserved the blame that was being assigned to him. He started to think about the real causes for the death of the head-monk. In the end, Thonn believed that it was not his fault and he became very outraged with the daughter of the King. Thonn believed that if the head-monk did not spend time going to cure the King's daughter, he would have never passed away. He believed that the fight, and the reason he had to swallow the head-monk, was a result of the travel to cure the illness of Vorpheak.

After deciding this was the real cause, Thonn decided to take revenge and travelled all the way to Longvek in order to kill Preah Neang Vorpheak. When he reached the port where he waited for the head-monk during the daughter's healing day, Thonn secretly hid himself waiting for a good opportunity to swallow her. There is nothing to indicate how long Thonn waited under the port and how he came to know Preah Neang Vorpheak.


(Figure 14: Vorpheak took bath)









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It was predicted by the royal prophet that Vorpheak's life would be ended in the river by a crocodile. Therefore, The King decided she ought not to bathe in the river. Vorpheak kept demanding to bathe in the river, so The King ordered the entourage to fence off part of the river so that she could spend time swimming together with her maids (Srey Snams) in the river.


(Figure 15: Thonn crocodile swallowed Vorpheak)












Thonn was already under the port before they fenced in the areas with no-one noticing. One day when Vorpheak swam with her maids under the strict control of armed forces, Thonn suddenly rushed from his resting place and swallowed her. Thonn then broke the fence and escaped. All the Srey Snams and soldiers were frightened and hurriedly run to tell the King.


(Figure 16: The maids informed the King)












[^7]The King was very shocked and extremely angry. He gathered Sevakarmarts and prophet and asked how he could get his daughter back and kill the crocodile. The prophet said that the only way to know where the crocodile was to float the magic kantoang ${ }^{8}$ (cone-shaped banana leave.) Wherever the kantoang stopped was where the crocodile stopped, and if the crocodile moved from place to another, the kantoang does, too.

[^8]
 (Figure 17: The King ordered Sevakamarts to use Kantoang to find Vorpheak)























The King ordered the Sevakamarts to use the kantoang to find out the whereabouts of Vorpheak. The King, officials and entourage set out on nicely-decorated boats and followed the kantoang to know the whereabouts of Vorpheak and the crocodile? The kantoang floated from royal residence port on the Tonle Sap River and then continued to float against the regular flowing direction of the Mekong River.

[^9]

(Figure 18: Thonn crocodile swam to Prek Chhlỡng tributary)


(Figure 19: The bridge and Prềk Chínhiong)











Since Thonn had swallowed Vorpheak, he had so far escaped the entourages and officials and traveled through the river. Finally, they found the crocodile at Prek Chhlong (one of the large tributaries of the Mekong in Chhlong district of Kratie) as directed by the kantoang. The Sevakamarts were disparately trying to catch the crocodile using different types of tools. However, Thonn had escaped to the Mekong again.


(Figure 20: Sevakamarts used bamboo to block Thonn's way)











At one point in Kratie district of kratie province. Sevakamarts and the people tried to use bamboo to block the crocodile from moving further. The place where the people did this is today known as "Russey Char village" which means 'people used bamboo to fence part of river to catch the crocodile, but failed'.


(Figure 21: The dolphins at Prek Kampir, photo on July 14, 2007)






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It should be noted that many places are named after areas where people tried to catch Thonn, and his subsequent escapes. Back in the Mekong, Thonn swam through the deep pool in Russey Char, then continued to Prek Kampir, where today there are very deep pools inhabited by dolphins. Kampir was named after two robars (small, long pieces of wood) which were used to block the crocodile's way.













Thonn then escaped to another tributory, the Sevakamarts used long poles (Thnoal) to block Thonn's way at the juncture of the small tributary and the Mekong and therefore, the small tributary is called Prek Char Thnoal. Thonn had gone further along the tributary until its end point, then took a sharp turn by crawling on land in order to find another tributary before moving back to the Mekong. In another tributary on the way back to the Mekong, Thonn abruptly encountered the kantoang, an area now called "Vak or Pak, meaning a sudden and surprise encountering" and this tributary is today still called "0'pak".

 (Figure 22: Sre Pok River at Sre Chhouk village, Lumphat district, photo on July 6, 2007)






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The kantoang continued to move after the crocodile on the Mekong. The King, the officials and royal prophet were also traveling after the kantoang to observe closely where the crocodile could be caught. Thonn continued to escape and reached Steung Treng province. He continued along Sre Pok River, one of the largest tributaries of the Mekong connecting with Ratanakiri province. In fact, in the Sre Pok River there are many deep water pools, varies in size and depth, provide an excellent habitat for fisheries and other living species.

 (Figure 22: Sre Pok River at Sre Chhouk village, Lumphat district, photo on July 6, 2007)













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Along the Sre Pok River ${ }^{10}$, Thonn quieilly hid in Anlong Prol in Kaun Mom distritit of Rattanakirt In an attempt to seize Thonn, boats called Sampov (sailing junk) and carts were used. One of the carts was broken between Sre Angkrong commune of Kaun Mon district and Sre Pok village of Seray Mungkol commune and so the broken cart area is now called Neang Skar Bak Rotes. Further up the river, the Sumpor was stuck in Serey Mungkol commune and it is now called Koh Sampov or Sailing Junk island, an island located right in the middle of the river. There are no inhabitants on the island but there are some mango trees on it.

[^10]

(Figure 23: The current status of Lumphat Lake)











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Thonn moved on to the Lumphat district and then went up land toward Lumphat Lake. This lake is about 300 meters long and 60 meters wide, about 100 meters away from Srek Pok River. Due to Thonn's large body he had difficulty hiding in the lake, he could feel the wind blowing over his back (indicating he was exposed to the view of his captors). Thonn decided to escape from the lake. The lake then was subsequently called Lumphat in Laos meaning "wind blowing".


(Figure 24: Wat Aranharam in Lumphat district town)










From Lumphat, no-one knows where Thonn had moved, but it is thought that Thonn had gone through 0 'Toteung, the stream located between Neang Dei village and Samkhar village (three legs in Lao) in Chey Ouddom commune of Lumphat district. Thonn went up land and in order to follow him, his followers had to pull their boats overland, this is why there is an area called Os Touk field or valley, located in Kaleng commune of Lumphat district.


(Figure 25. the current status of Lumkod Lake)


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(Figure 26: the current status of Yeak Loam Lake) http://www.pbase.com/brambos/image/6798973


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[^11]Thonn had reached Yeak Loam Lake near Ratanakiri provincial town but for some reason he could not stay in that lake. So Thonn moved along $0^{\prime}$ Chib, a stream flowing across many villages, one of which is Nakham village (it means Kham rice field in Tumpuon dialect) of Seda commune. Thonn then reached Lumkod, a larger lake than Yeak Loam. Again, Thonn could not stay in this lake and so continued to a final lake called Lumpors, a deep and long lake. This final lake is located in Lumchor commune, O'yadav district of Ratanakiri" province.

[^12]

(Figure 27: Sevakamarts caught Thonn at Lumphat)

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[^13]Thonn was finally exhausted after traveling a very long distance to escape both on water and land. Thonn ended up hiding himself in Lumpors, a deep and long lake. When realizing that Thonn laid in this Lake, the King ordered Sevakamarts to dive into deep water to chase out the crocodile, while many others were ready to catch him when he rose to the surface. When chasing Thonn out of the Lake Thonn appeared on water's surface with hi: mouth open. The Sevakamarts threw som coconuts into his mouth to disable his ability $\dagger$ bite and then caught him alive ${ }^{12}$.

[^14]

(Figure 28: The royal prophet predicted if she were ceac or ance









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The Sevakamarts tied up the crocodile with rope very tightly and brought him upland to wait for the royal order. At that moment, the prophet told the king that his doughter could still be alive if the crocodile were allowed to regurgitate her The King was extremely upset and disparately wanting to see his daughter. He took ne natice of the prediction and he had no hope that his daughter remained alive.


(Figure 29: The King ordered Sevakamarts to cut open Thonn's belly)











[^15]The King was outraged and so he ordered that the crocodile belly be cut open to remove his daughter. As soon as the Sevakamarts did that, they become extremely regretful as they saw the daughter had already passed away. As they were removing Vorpheak's body, the King and the Sevakamarts realized the body was still warm ${ }^{13}$.

[^16]
 (Figure 30: The King cremated the body of Vorpheak at Lumphat)











[^17]It was decided Vorpheak would be cremated at Lumphat ${ }^{14}$. Many people were in attendance during the cremation ceremony, all were very sad at the loss of Vorpheak's life. Before the cremation, the cremating tower was beautifully prepared and decorated to the royal standards, and the King invited Monks to preside over the cremation ceremony. For the ceremony, The King decided to use the crocodile skin to make a funeral banner signaling that his daughter passed away because of the crocodile.

[^18]

(Figure 30: The King cremated the body of Vorpheak at Lumphat)











[^19]It was decided Vorpheak would be cremated at Lumphat ${ }^{14}$. Many people were in attendance during the cremation ceremony, all were very sad at the loss of Vorpheak's life. Before the cremation, the cremating tower was beautifully prepared and decorated to the royal standards, and the King invited Monks to preside over the cremation ceremony. For the ceremony, The King decided to use the crocodile skin to make a funeral banner signaling that his daughter passed away because of the crocodile.

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# Though the use of trocodile banner for funerals has been around since Buddha's time ${ }^{15}$, the happening in Preah Ang Chan Reachea's era reinforced the practices ${ }^{16}$ in Khmer society and has been maintained until the present time. However, the crocodile skin is not used, but the cloth is intentionally made into the shape of a crocodile. 

After the funeral, the same kantoang was used in order to identify a suitable place where the remains of The King's daughter be enshrined. It was believed this would bring tranquility for Vorpheak's soul to rest in heaven and it would also bring happiness for her loved ones who were still living.

[^21]

(Figure 31: The King used kantoang to find a place to enshrine Vorpheak's remains)












The kantoang floated down river and then stopped for a while, and so the royal musical band called Pin Peat started to play the music immediately. This place is named Kampong Pin Peat, and later become Kampong Cheung Peat locates in Koh Knher commune, Sambor district, Kratie province. The kantoang continued to float further down the river and had finally stopped at Sambor village. So, The King ordered the Sevakamarts to establish a temporary royal residence there in order to construct the towe for enshrining his daughter's remains.


(Figure 32: Some Stupa's broken bricks)










When reaching the area that was selected for Vorpheak's remains to be enshrined, the King ordered The Sevakamarts to build a stupa. The stupa was built in 1529 , made of bricks that are larger and longer than ones being used in the present time. It is also said that in order to build this stupa, many pregnant women were murdered and placed in the foundation of the stupa, which was believed to make Vorpheak's soul more powerful.


(Figure 33: The real stupa)


(Figure 34: The effigy of the Thonn crocodile)


(Figure 35: The inscription about the Stupa)

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## Quote of the Inscription in front of the Stupa

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## THIS ROYAL STUPA

Preah Ang Chan Reachea built it in 1529 and enshrined Vorpheak's remains and then bones of Satha 1,17 Cheychetha 1, ${ }^{18}$ Preah Reach Samphea Chao Ponhea To, ${ }^{19}$ Preah Neang Preah Mae Yuo Bophavatey ${ }^{20}$ and other royal families. Until December 1955, HRH Norodom Sihanouk had rebuilt ${ }^{21}$ the Stupa and inaugurated on 2.6 B.E ${ }^{22}$ 2499 or April 30, 1956.
${ }^{17}$ He has another name, Barom Reachea 5. He is the son of Preah Ang Barom Reachea and is the grandson of Preah Ang Chan Reachea. He reigned from 1576-1586 (Khmer Nation, 2nd series, by SIPAR, page 16)
${ }_{18}$ The son of Preah Satha 1 (Khmer Nation, 2nd series, by SIPAR, page 16)
${ }^{19} \mathrm{He}$ is a great great grandson of Preah Ang Chan Reachea. He reigned in Koh Khloak island (Khsach Kandal) from 1629

- 1634 (Khmer Nation, 2nd series, by SIPAR, page 22)

20 The wife of Preah Outtey and Preah Outtey was the grandson of Preah Ang Chan Reachea
${ }^{21}$ The Elders confirmed that the Stupa was not rebuilt but it was formerly a tower without crown-shaped top. This tower was completely covered with crown-shaped top as seen today.
${ }^{22}$ The lunar system reads $2=$ Monday, number 6 under the dot $=6$ Roach, and number 6 behind the dot $=$ month of Pisak. So, it is read that 2nd day or Monday, 6 Roach and the month of Pisak.


<br>(Figure 36: The effigy of the Royal Prophet and Eight-Head Grandpa)

















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[^22]After the completion of the stupa The King asked for a rong bon(a funeral shelter) to be built near the stupa. The rong bon was built consisting of 100 pillars with thatch roofing. The local Magazine Secret ${ }^{23}$ noted 100 of Vorpheak's virgin maids voluntarily committed suicide to take care of her by having each of their souls embedded in one of the 100 pillars. The royal prophet, now known as Ta Tos, agreed to serve Vorpheak, and the highest military commander, popularly called Ta Kbal Prambei (eight-head grandpa) committed suicide to provide her protection. At that time of completion of the rong bon, a major ceremony was held just near the river bank. During the ceremony, the rong bon was named by The King as "Preah Vihear Thom", and later was renamed as " 100 -Pillar Preah Vihear Thom".

[^23]

(Figure 37: The King built a Stupa and a Preah Vihear)









The 100 -pillar Preah Vihear, with its thatched roof, was badly burned by a thunderstorm, destroying 28 pillars, leaving only 72 pillars in tact. Buddha's statue in this Vihear was also somewhat affected by the burning, the statue was fairly black and the long hair that was wrapped atop Buddha's head like a crown was broken. Later, the whole statue was totally damaged during the Khmer Rouge period.


(Figure 38: The current status of 100-Pillar Preah Vihear Thom and the Gate)















[^24]The 100 -Pillar Preah Vihear Thom ${ }^{24}$ was completely rebuilt, golden in color, excellent in design and extremely beautiful. It was rebuilt by efforts of the Wat's head-monk, the monks, Achars, the Wat Committee, and through the generous supports of the leaders of the Royal Government of Cambodia, government officials, and people from within Cambodia and Overseas. The Preah Vihear was rebuilt with 116 concrete pillars. Presently, it is still visited frequently by those worshipping the stupa and Buddha's statues.

[^25]

(Figure 39: Vihear's three pillars left)

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(Figure 40: Pillars of Vihear Koak since 1142)















[^26]Today, only three of the pillars remain intact even after the Pol Pot regime have dismantled the Vihear and used the pillars for the bridges and cut into pieces. The three pillars, about 5 meters in length have been left in the Wat for display. They were made from a special wood that last for centuries, called Ta Trao ${ }^{25}$ wood. Similar pillars can be found very solidly in eastern Wat, Vihear Koak, stand still today supporting the Vihear or temple since 1142.

[^27] KEY KHMER SPELLINGS IN THIS BOOK

| โก็ด\％ | ［บกิษถาษ | กัเ บูษู |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| กุढิ | ขอิถกููรกิธู | กูหกราสิส |
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#  <br> LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS FOR PUBLISHING THIS BOOK FOR THE WATS 

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[^0]:    ' By its onginal name, Longvek is stif currenty maintained. however has become one of the communes in Kampong Chbriang province along National Roude 5
    ${ }^{2}$ SIPAR's history book, Khmer Nation, 2 Series, does not indicate the number of children Preah Ang Chan Reachea had, howewer only specifically names a son, Preah Barom Reachea. whio reugned atter Preah Ang Char Reachea. Chuop Khean in his book of 100-Pillar Vihear dated Nowember 15, 1997, page 2 indicates this story is related to Preah Ang Chan Reactiea Ty Pir who seigned from 1806 - 1834 at Cuuldong capital. Similarly. the Colection of Khmer Foikioress. 5" series, of Bugdhist Institite in 2001 , page 180 ako reveats the story related to a Cambodian King in the Ouddong era.

[^1]:    ${ }^{3}$ Chuop Khean, in his book of 100 -pillar Vinear, dated November 15, 1997 on page 2-3, indicates that Vopheak was 18 years old when she became 尚. Prior to this the King had asked the royal prophet to predict the fate of his young daughter. The prophet claimed she would not be powerful and that she would be swallowed by a crocodile at the age of 18 years. Upon reaching 18 years of age, she wanted to swim at the river but due to strong forbidding of her father, she was very frustrated that she later becomes badily 米.

[^2]:    
    

[^3]:    In his book on page 7, Chuop Khean, indicates that Thonn only had one try at becoming a crocodile in the pond behind the Wat

[^4]:    ${ }^{6}$ In his book on page 11, Chuop Khean, indicates that the mountain was called Phnom Dei Chral, later called Phnom Sopor Kiri or Sopor Kaley locates currently in Chambak commune, Prek Prasob district, Kratie province. He also indicates The Neak Ta crocodile was called Ayeak. On page 16 he indicates that after swallowwing Vorpheak, Thonn encountered a fight for one day and one night with a crocodile in a lake, Boeng Kachoat or now called Boeng Ket in Kampong Cham province.

[^5]:    
    

[^6]:    ${ }^{7}$ It was believed that he might have stayed alive it it had been less than seven days.

[^7]:    
    
    

[^8]:    ${ }^{8}$ In is book on page 16, Chuop Khean, indicates that the Green Kantoang is a magic one tied to seven pieces of threads by Brahman in an attempt to capture Thonn the crocodile

[^9]:    9 In his interview with Radio Free Asia, Dr. Keng Vansak (series 43-46), told various stories related to Thonn the crocodile. However, in his interview of series 47, dated April 10, 2005, he mentioned that Thonn the crocodile, as the closest disciple, liked the guru (referring to the monk) so much that when the King invited the monk to cure the ailment of his daughter, Thonn was really frustrated waiting so long for guru's return that Thonn went in search of guru. As a vendetta, Thonn met the King's daughter and just swallowed her. The royal forces followed Thonn along the Mekong to a point called Tonle Bet. Thonn escaped through a tributary, but some of the royal forces were waiting at a juncture of that tributary. hence the area was called Kampong Jum (later it was called Kampong Cham, however, this interpretation of the name does not refer to an area where Muslim inhabitants resided)

[^10]:    ${ }^{10}$ The Collection of Khmer Folklores, $5^{\text {h }}$ series, of Buddhist Institute 2001, page 187. Ilustrates that A-Thonn escaped through the Mokong until Khoan area (Cambodian-Laos border) and stayed secretely thare for 2-3 days, he then swam back down the fiver. Finally, A Thonn was captured and killed at Prek Chhlong with the help of Memot (magician) who was promised to offe the crocodile skin atter capture.

[^11]:    
    
    
    
    
    

[^12]:    " Khmer Dictionary of Supreme Patriarch Chuon Nath Choatanheannoa, Published by Buddhist Institute. December 10, 1967 (B.E. 2511), page 606, indicates that Ratanakiri is the name of Cambodia's province separated from Steung Treng province since 1959 (Reach Krom 298-ns dated February 17, 1959).

[^13]:     काज

[^14]:    ${ }^{12}$ Some people mentioned about the use of magic thre: to bring the crocodile up the water's surface.

[^15]:    
    
    
    
    
    
    
    
    
    
    
    
    

[^16]:    ${ }^{13}$ In his interview with Radio Free Asia, Dr. Keng Vansak, in series 47, dated April 10, 2005, continued by saying that after Thonn was captured, his belly was cut open, and the King's daughter was found breathing. Once fully conscious she looked eagerly for the crocodile, upon learning that the crocodile had been killed, she became distraught and breathless. The King ordered the building of a 101 -Pillar Vihear for his daughter. He also ordered that pregnant women be murdered to place in the foundation of each pillar so as the spirits would care for both the daughter's soul and Preah Vihear (the location was not mentioned by the interviewee).

[^17]:    
    
    
    

[^18]:    ${ }^{14}$ The Collection of Khmer Folklores, $5^{\text {th }}$ series, of Buddhist Institute 2001, page 188 indicates that the daughter's body was cremated at Sambor district and enshrined her remains in a stupa in Wat Sambor.

[^19]:    
    
    
    

[^20]:    ${ }^{44}$ The Collection of Khmer Folklores, $5^{\text { }}$ series, of Buddhist Institute 2001, page 188 indicates that the daughter's body was cremated at Sambor district and enshrined her remains in a stupa in Wat Sambor.

[^21]:    ${ }^{17}$ On August 17, 2007 Mr. Soa Monn, the head of the committee of 100 -pillar Preah Vihear Thom, offered a more detailed account of the crocodile banner as follows:
    A dragon disguised as a person approached Buddha in order to be ordained. His good will convinced Buddha to ordain him. One day, another monk visited the room of the ordained monk, after knocking and opening the door, he suddenly saw a dragon instead of a monk. As soon as Buddha was informed about this, he prescribed that no animals were to ever be ordained Later, a crocodile also approached Buddha to be ordained, but this not possible due to the previous prescription. Nevertheless, the crocodile insisted that when it died, its skin may be used as a banner. Buddha agreed due to the crocodile's conviction. The crocodile banner has been maintained ever since.
    "In his interview with Radio Free Asia. Dr. Keng Vansak, series 43-47, dated April 10. 2005, indicated that the Tong Krapeu (crocodile banner), also called Tong Rolauk (wave of water) or Tong Proleung, is used for funerals, for Phnom Ksach cermony and generally for hanging in Wats. This banner represents a state of excellence or best belief from lime immemorial. This belief is symbolized by the two inseparable elements, i.e. Neang Kong Hing = Land = Mae (leader or mother) and a Crocodile $=$ Water $=\mathrm{Ba}$ (man).

[^22]:    
    

[^23]:    ${ }^{23}$ The local Magazine SECRET, Volume 1, Issue No. 3 , dated $13^{3 n}$ September - October 2006, page 25-27

[^24]:    
    
    
    

[^25]:    ${ }^{24}$ Locates on the eastern part of the Mekong river bank in Sambor commune, Sambor district, Kratie province, 36 km from Kratie provincial town. This newly-rebuilt $100-$ Pillar Preah Vihear Thom was inaugurated on January 14, 1997.

[^26]:    
    
    
    

[^27]:    ${ }^{25}$ Khmer Dictionary of Supreme Patriarch Chuon Nath Choatanheannoa, Published by Buddhist Institute, December 10, 1967 (B.E. 2511), page 217, explains that Ta Trao is a kind of large and hard wood that are useful and long lasting.

