Abstract

In 2000 the German Apsara Conservation Project – led by Prof Dr Hans Leisen of the University of Applied Sciences Cologne – was requested by the APSARA National Authority, which is responsible for the management and conservation of the World Heritage Site at Angkor, to survey and, if necessary, to conserve the great eight armed statue that stands in the West Gate of the Temple of Angkor Wat. While it clearly had conservation issues which needed to be urgently addressed, it was also evident that this statue was an extremely important centre of worship for the local community. It therefore became increasingly clear as research progressed that there would have to be a much more integrated approach to the planning and implementation of the conservation programme if all the values were to be truly respected, conserved and enhanced. This called for a reflection on the nature of authenticity and its understanding within the context of the conservation of living heritage.

This short film, shot and edited by the conservator, shows how the synthesis of scientific conservation and community involvement is not only possible but also ultimately leads to the development of a conservation approach and practice that more effectively conserves and enhances the value and authenticity of living heritage at every level.

Photographs

Figure 1: Discussing the Conservation of the Statue with Local Spiritual Leader. (Photo: Warrack)
Figure 2: A Young Bridal Couple (and mother in law) worshiping the statue. (Photo: Poncar)

**Biography**

**Simon Warrack** is a British born stone conservation consultant based in Italy. He received a degree in Renaissance History from the University of Warwick and then having decided to work in the field of conservation he attended the Building Crafts Training School in London. Following a four year apprenticeship at Canterbury Cathedral where he was responsible for the working drawings for the West façade and North West Tower he moved to Venice where he attended the San Servolo Course (UNESCO) and the ICCROM/UNESCO Stone Conservation Course. He worked in Venice for three years on various sites including the Ducal Palace, San Zaccaria and San Salvador and during this period he also worked in France on the Church of Notre-Dame d’Etampes and the Church of Saint Mexme in Chinon.

He then moved to Rome where he worked on the Trevi Fountain, Trajans Markets, SS Vincenzo ad Anastasio amongst other monuments before becoming involved in the conservation of the Temples at Angkor in Cambodia in 1994.

Since 1994 his work has centred on stone conservation and training in SE Asia though he has also worked in Ethiopia with ICCROM on the preparation of the Technical Feasibility Study regarding the return of the Obelisk of Axum (stolen from Ethiopia by Mussolini in 1935) and on the implementation of a training programme for young national conservators in Cambodia. This Course (The Ta Nei Training Programme) has since become the focal point for the training of young Cambodian nationals who work on the World Heritage Site at Angkor.

In 1997 he taught on a Training Course in Persepolis, Iran with the RCCCR and ICCROM. In 1998 he prepared a Training Needs Assessment for SE Asia (all 10 ASEAN members) ICCROM and the World Heritage Centre. He has also worked in Kosovo on a number of sites that were restored in the post conflict rehabilitation of the cities in the area. Recently he worked with the Getty Conservation Institute on a Training Programme in Laos PDR and is presently preparing training programmes for various sites in the Kingdom of Cambodia on behalf of ICCROM and the Royal Government of Cambodia.
Publications


Awards
As documentation expert for the GACP at Angkor was nominated in the Smithsonian Computer Awards Scheme 2001 which were conferred in April 2001.