

2. Field Research Locations: Rationale

After obtaining approval from the MoCFA and ICHCAP, the team conducted field surveys in six provinces,—namely, Kampong Cham, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, Kampong Thom, Siem Reap, and Banteay Meanchey. Due to the schedule of the game, which is only played during the New Year and the *chlong chet*, at the inception of the project in March, the team was only able to collect data by interviewing local people to find out about locations where the actual observations should be made.

The observations were conducted during the 2013 New Year in three different places in Siem Reap Province:

1. Chres Village, Spean Thnot Commune, Chikreng District.
2. Kambor Or, Village, Khvao Commune, Chikreng District.
3. Thnal Trong Village, Bakong Cummune, Prasat Bakong District.

Moreover, a team member had the fortunate opportunity to shoot video clips when the game was taking place during the *chlong chet* ceremony, which takes place on the day of the full moon during the month of *chet*, which fell on the 25 April in Banteay Stey Buddhist temple, Banteay Srey District.

Siem Reap was chosen over other regions for a number of reasons. First, as we did not want to risk missing the chance to observe the performance, we received reconfirmation from the local people that the game would certainly take place in their community. This reconfirmation played an important part as we frequently missed games, and this was problematic while conducting field surveys. Sometimes, when we were told that the game would be played, we would show up at the right time and place only to discover that the game was cancelled, due to a lack of interest in favour of other distractions, such as dancing. And this is why the re-confirmation weighed so heavily in the decision-making process.

Furthermore, we already had an established relationship with the local people there, we would make collecting information easier. In addition, some of the research team members are well acquainted with the region. Finally, Siem Reap is the ancient cradle of Khmer civilization, and it appears to be the most conservative in terms of Angkorian traditions, which is to say contemporary thoughts and practices have a significant probability of descending or evolving from the 'classical' model. Therefore continuity as well as rupture could be traced in a satisfactory way.