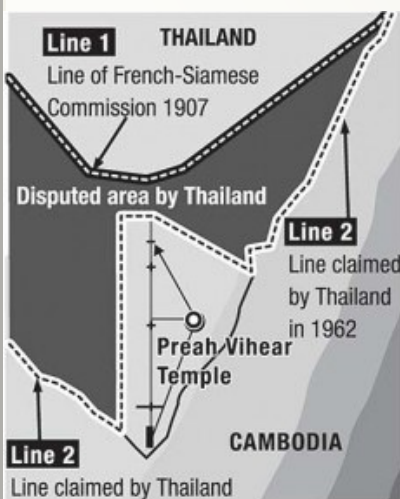


The Border Dispute between Thailand and Cambodia at the temple of Preah Vihear: Recollections of my personal encounters

More than half a century ago, in June 1961, the young German engineer Dr. Ackermann, was assigned by the



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Delft Institute of Aerial Surveys in the Netherlands to determine the actual watershed line in the Preah Vihear area. Spending ten days on the promontory of Preah Vihear, and using sketches, measurements and point elevations, he was able to determine the correct flow direction of a small rivulet and the non-existence of another

streamlet marked on an obviously erroneous 1907 French map. The real watershed, stipulated as the border line in the Franco-Siamese treaty of 1904, would have left the whole temple complex under Thai sovereignty. The 1962 International Court of Justice (ICJ) verdict in favour of Cambodia was not due to, but rather in spite of, Dr. Ackermann's crucial findings because the exact watershed was not considered decisive by the majority of judges who insisted on the Thai tacit acceptance of the formerly submitted French map.

Professor Ackermann is one of the very few witnesses of the 1962 ICJ trial still alive today. Therefore, his personal recollections represent an extraordinary and unique resource for understanding the still unresolved Preah Vihear temple dispute between Thailand and Cambodia.

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Dr. h.c. mult. Friedrich Ackermann (born in 1929) is an internationally well-known professor, researcher and developer of analytical



and digital photogrammetry. In 1966, he founded the Institute of Photogrammetry at the University of Stuttgart and remained its director until 1992. He has received numerous international awards and has been appointed an honorary member of the British, American, and international societies of photogrammetry.

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