

# A CASE STUDY: APPLYING THE LARP (LIVING ANGKOR ROAD) CULTURAL DATABASE TO ART HISTORY

**Dawn F. ROONEY**

Baan Sansiri , 159/58 Mahalekluang 2, Rajadamri Road, Bangkok 10330, Thailand

Email: dfr@jprooney.com

## ABSTRACT

*This paper demonstrates how the application of data retrieved and analyzed through modern technology employed by LARP can be integrated with existing 'classic' material in an art historical context. For the first time in modern history, a joint cultural collaboration between Thailand and Cambodia has enabled an on-the-site study of the Ancient Royal Road that extended from Angkor to Phimai when northeastern Thailand was within the territorial boundaries of the Khmer Empire between the ninth and thirteenth centuries. Until now, the modern political boundaries of the two countries and civil strife in Cambodia in recent years have precluded such a study.*

*Although the LARP project is not yet completed, the results so far have provided an expanded understanding of the road, its buffer zones and communication links. Art historians now have access to this data and can integrate it with existing sources such as ancient maps, aerial photographs, inscriptions and textual and archaeological records. This data, assembled by LARP, compels a reassessment of known material and a reorganization of methodology for art historians.*

*This case study, which is a work-in-progress, shows ways the multi-discipline cultural database can expand art history research. For example, results from remote sensing/GIS techniques and satellite maps have calculated the exact length of the Ancient Royal Road, which was previously unknown. Also, the discovery of ancient stone structures such as dharmasalas (rest houses), ceramics and iron-smelting kilns, feeder canals and their precise locations provide new comparative material.*