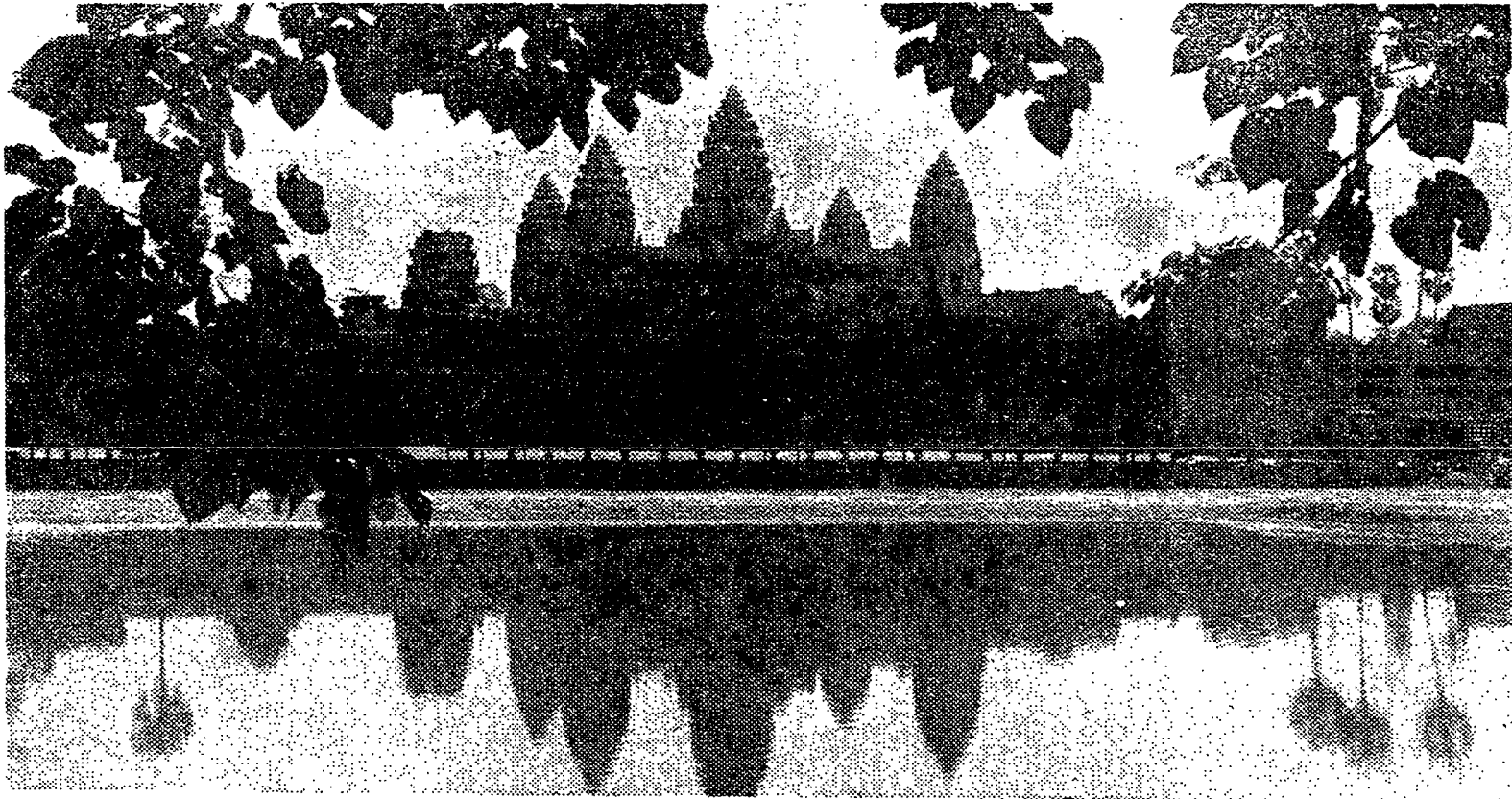


Dance

Architecture: Yoo-Hoo, Abominable Snowman



The Holiday Inn is coming to Angkor. After the ruins, 18 holes of golf?



By ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE

GUESS what Santa brought to Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia. A Holiday Inn. In fact, two Holiday Inns. There will be one at Phnom-Penh and one at Angkor, each with 300 rooms and "both carrying the colors of Holiday Inns International," according to the Cambodian national weekly *Réalités* Cambodgiennes, quoted in *Atlas*, a review of the international press.

If the colors they carry are the same abroad as at home, they will be predominantly green and yellow and mounted on a sign featuring backward-leaning cursive script, topped by a star coming out of a kind of chimney over a speedy arrow, an aggressively ordinary larger-than-life accumulation of shapes and colors that could give the Abominable Snowman a headache if Holiday Inns ever reached the Himalayas. (Oops, they will; one is scheduled for Nepal.)

Obviously, this is just what the pilgrim to the superb 12th-century temples and palaces at Angkor needs to get him in the mood for transcendental art and antiquities. If the combination doesn't produce a bad case of cultural shock, nothing will. (All right, it's a beautiful sign to the Holiday Inn people. The last

time I demurred they sent me a key ring with the sign attached, a gesture so charming after my published ill will that I really wanted to use it. I couldn't. It isn't even camp.)

Cambodia — royal, romantic, sublime, inscrutable, fiercely independent, anachronistically socialistic, culturally exotic, with jungle treasures secreted in a surreal, timeless equilibrium of nature and art, treasures shrouded, until recently, in the mysteries of the remote and unreachable — has succumbed to a new mystique. It is the tourist mystique, of dollars and standardized travel. There are no surprises to international tourism anymore; it is vacuum space travel, in one's own life-pack, insulated from the environment; plastic-wrapped experience. In ten years, Cambodia hopes that this kind of tourism will be the country's primary source of wealth, even outranking rice and rubber exports.

Now, I am the last one to knock basic plumbing and sanitation and even the familiar comforts of the international hotel. I rely on it all and can cite examples of 20th-century convenience that work well in older civilizations. But I like my tourism cushioned, not smothered, or

camouflaged. And I think a hotel should, literally, know its place.

Holiday Inns will bring their own ambience. I hesitate to label it American art and culture. First (shudder), the sign? Can they bear to leave it behind? Perhaps in the name of international relations? Second, the standards of motel-modern décor, with all of their intrinsic cheapness and spurious glamor.

Then, according to the prospectus, an 18-hole golf course at Angkor. Water sports on the Bassac. Automated bowling alleys. And just in case the tourist might still be inclined to focus his schedule only on the attractions of Angkor, he will be encouraged to stay and use the golf course (and spend dollars) by the simple expedient of seeing that his package tour consist of several days. "it will be easy," Kemmons Wilson, chairman of the board of Holiday Inns is quoted as saying in *Réalités* Cambodgiennes. "After all, we are the ones who will organize the tours."

Mr. Wilson and an Indian investor from Hong Kong are putting \$7.5 million into bringing tourism, American style, to Cambodia. This is, understandably, making Cambodian businessmen and poli-

ticians happy. Holiday Inns also plans hotels in Hong Kong, Singapore, Djakarta, Bangkok, Katmandu (yoo-hoo, Abominable Snowman), Tokyo, Colombo and Bombay. In Cambodia, the sponsors predict, "No sooner will our hotels be completed than they will prove too small."

One reason, of course, will be the use of the jumbo jets. I don't know at what point Cambodia becomes a scheduled stop for the giant 747, and I honestly don't want to ask. Not since the Tartar or Mongol hordes descended on the East (I am hazy about that) has an equivalent threat to overrun or destroy existed. How strange and how sad that accessibility is the beginning of the cultural end, the start of the loss or corruption of the very things we are lured to see. Six hundred rooms full of eager travelers; mob scene in the silent ruins of Angkor Vat; something out of Cecil B. De Mille, drip-dry.

To give an idea of the very real future, the Port of New York Authority recently released with pride the news that 12 three-door bridges capable of unloading 360 passengers in five minutes from the jumbo jet are to be installed at the International Arrivals Building at Kennedy Airport, at a cost of \$8,500,-

000. "Three telescoping walkways will connect the doors of the 747 with a passenger bridge to permit rapid deplaning and boarding for the new high-capacity aircraft." End of official script. We give you the next scene.

Three hundred and sixty wild, frustrated people battling re-entry. Bedlam in customs and baggage. Murder for taxis and transportation. Kennedy a disaster area. Government commission appointed to find out why the planners failed to plan and the designers designed only to the end of the runway.

In an overseas terminal — variations on the theme. Chaos unparalleled. Cattleherding of massed, deplaned passengers demanding non-appearing luggage, tensions raised to fever pitch by the total cutoff of communication characteristic of foreign airline personnel faced with crisis. Stoic peasants with lumpy bundles and dead roses watch impassively from the sidelines. Six porters with ox-carts flee. Twelve taxi drivers with 1933 De Sotos are torn limb from limb. Ladies with blue hair and mink shrugs faint. Hardy youths produce sausage and bedrolls from knapsacks. Tonight, the airport benches. Tomorrow, Angkor. And 18 holes of golf.