

[投稿論文：研究論文]

# Historic Cityscape Characteristics in the City Center of Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Viewed from the Perspective of Local Market and  
Shophouse Distribution

マーケットとショッパハウスの分布から考察する  
プノンペンの中心市街地の歴史的都市景観の特性

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**Abstract:** Urban development in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, has been poorly planned, causing problems such as the demolition of historic buildings, as well as loss of tourism resources and urban character. In Phnom Penh, where not only modernization but also urban sprawl is progressing, local markets and shophouses are important elements in terms of urban development and cityscape, as they have been constructed throughout the urban transition process that began during the French colonial period. This study aims to clarify the current status of local markets and shophouses, their relationship to the development and growth of the city, and their role in the day-to-day lives of Phnom Penh's people.

カンボジアの首都プノンペンの都市開発は計画性に乏しく、歴史的建造物の取り壊し、観光資源や都市の風土性の喪失という問題が生じている。都市の近代化、拡大化が進むプノンペンにおいて、フランス統治時代からの都市の変遷の中で、マーケットとショッピングハウスは都市の発展と景観という点で重要な要素であると言える。本研究においては、マーケットとショッピングハウスの現状と都市の発展と成長との関係性、そして、プノンペンの人々の生活の中におけるそれらの役割を明らかにする。

Keywords: urban planning, market, shophouse  
都市計画、マーケット、ショッピングハウス

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Study Background

In recent years, Cambodia has experienced remarkable economic growth. Cambodia's gross domestic product (GDP) has not been as high as that of other member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), such as Indonesia and Thailand. However, Cambodia's real economic growth rate was in the seven percent range for six consecutive years from 2011 to 2016, which ranked first among the ASEAN states in 2018, making their economy one of the fastest-growing in Asia<sup>1)</sup>. In addition, the number of international tourists visiting Cambodia was steadily increasing until 2019, before the COVID-19 outbreak. With tourist attractions such as the Angkor Wat ruins, Cambodia had the highest percentage of GDP from tourism among ASEAN states in 2019<sup>2)</sup>. At the same time, Cambodia has experienced rapid population growth. Particularly in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, the population has more than doubled in about 20 years, from 1,113,000 in 1998 and 1,510,000 in 2008 to 2,282,000 in 2019<sup>3)</sup>. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) estimates that the number will reach approximately 2,868,000 by 2035.

As a result of the fast economic and population growth, Phnom Penh is now undergoing rapid urbanization. In the urban center of Phnom Penh, large-scale developments are being pushed forward, such as Phnom Penh City Centre, where green spaces and parks are being constructed, with offices, retail shops, hotels, and

residential areas in the surrounding area, as well as Diamond City, which has been developed around the artificial island in the Bassac River. Large commercial complexes, including AEON MALL, stand in a row and the expansion of a casino for foreigners is underway in Diamond City (Fujisawa and Shimizu, 2022).

Phnom Penh once became deserted, when the Khmer Rouge captured the capital and forced the urban residents to move to the countryside in 1975, which led to urban decay. After the 1980s, the population returned to the city, but without the financial resources to build new houses, people had no choice but to make effective use of the existing buildings. They, therefore, began to live in historic buildings, such as colonial buildings from the French colonial period and modern buildings with an architectural style unique to the tropics constructed after 1950, as well as in shophouses constructed for both business and living purposes. Thus, these buildings from the French colonial period and onwards, including the shophouses, have become a distinctive feature of the current historic cityscape in Phnom Penh's city center (Fujisawa and Shimizu, 2021).

However, in recent years, many of these buildings have been demolished due to deterioration and evictions associated with redevelopment. Phnom Penh's urban development has been poorly planned, causing problems such as the demolition of historic buildings, as well as the loss of tourism resources and urban character. Large-scale commercial complexes are being built and other developments are underway, but the indigenous characteristics of the local markets are also valuable assets in terms of tourism resources, because they have long supported the daily lives of Phnom Penh's residents and have been creating a lively atmosphere for the city. Cityscapes featuring local markets and shophouses are considered to be urban elements that should be protected in Phnom Penh, where urbanization is rapidly progressing from the following three viewpoints: 1) conservation of historic environments, 2) preservation of tourism resources to differentiate Phnom Penh from other cities, and 3) preservation of local communities, that is, places for daily living.

## 1.2 Study Objective

In Phnom Penh, where not only modernization but also urban sprawl is progressing, the markets and shophouses are distinctive elements that characterize the cityscape of Phnom Penh. This study aims to clarify the current status of these two urban elements, their relationship to the development and growth of the city, including the period of French colonial rule, and their role in the day-to-day lives of Phnom Penh's people.

In addition to the fact that Cambodia is an emerging country, there was a civil war in which most of the experts and scholars were massacred, resulting in very poor documentation being available about how the city was originally formed and its plans. Furthermore, the number of people with relevant knowledge is in decline. In this study, therefore, it is important to dig up as much information as possible about Phnom Penh through interviews and other means, and the goal is to leave such information as a record for future generations.

## 1.3 Study Methodology



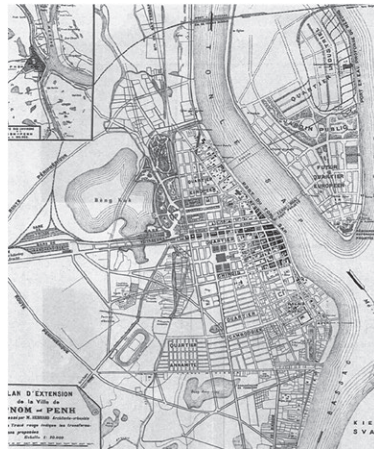
**Fig. 1: Five districts located in Phnom Penh's city center**  
Note: The figure was prepared by the author.

For the study area, the following five districts were selected: Doun Penh, Prampir Makara, Chamkar Mon, Boeng Keng Kang, and Toul Kok (Fig. 1). This is because these districts can be regarded as Phnom Penh's central urban area. A previous study of shophouses (Wakita and Shiraishi, 2007; Shiraishi et al., 2020) covered only a part of the Doun Penh district<sup>4)</sup>. However, the above-mentioned five districts are the current urban center of Phnom Penh because they are the most densely populated *Khans* (districts; the largest administrative unit in Phnom Penh). Furthermore, the urban formation centering on the five districts, as it is now, took place around 1970 based on the city block formation plan carried out during the French colonial period (Ministère de la Culture département des affaires internationales, 1997), and even after the civil war in the late 1970s, these districts remained as the foundation for Phnom Penh's urban development. We, therefore, selected the five districts also from the perspective of historic transformation. There are no previous studies conducted on local markets and shophouses covering such a large target area, thus we speculate that targeting a vast area will lead to a better understanding of the urban character of Phnom Penh today.

In Phnom Penh, we conducted field surveys on markets and shophouses in the above-mentioned five districts in cooperation with the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC), Royal University of Phnom Penh, Royal University of Fine Arts, Norton University of Cambodia, and the general incorporated association Social Compass. Nine major markets were selected and interviews were conducted with the heads of each market and an officer from the MLMUPC to find out information about the year of construction, size, and characteristics. In the field survey, we investigated the current distribution of the shophouses in the five districts by taking photographs of the shophouse-like buildings with the help of survey collaborators and then using the photographs to judge if these buildings could be categorized as shophouses. In addition, questionnaires were carried out to investigate local people's attitudes toward markets and shophouses in cooperation with the Royal University of Phnom Penh.

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## 2 Urban transformation in Phnom Penh



**Fig. 2: Map of the city block re-formation plan conducted in 1925**

Source: Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC)

### 2.1 History of Phnom Penh

The history of Phnom Penh is said to date back to the 15th century. After Angkor Thom fell when Ayutthaya invaded Angkor in 1431, King Ponhea Yat of the Khmer Empire relocated his royal capital to Bassin (currently Konpong Cham Province) to settle in a safer place. Later, the royal capital was established at the location of the current capital where the Mekong River joins the Tonle Sap River and splits into the Bassac and Mekong Rivers. In 1834, many parts of Cambodia were under threat from neighboring countries, and warfare spread to Phnom Penh. In 1863, King Norodom Sihanouk signed a 'treaty of friendship, commerce and French protection' to prevent the invasion of neighboring Thailand, and in 1866 the royal capital was moved from Oudong back to Phnom Penh, where the capital is today.

Through the 1880s, the population of Phnom Penh gradually increased, resulting in a serious housing shortage. The major transformation in urban planning during the reign of King Norodom was the construction of shophouses in response to the housing shortage and the subsequent emergence of clear districts. More than 100

shophouses had already been built by 1872, followed by the construction of over 200 shophouses<sup>5</sup>.

In 1911, educational institutions such as College Sisowath, an orphanage, and a university of the protectorate were constructed, and, by 1914, the eastern part of the present-day Doun Penh district was almost completely formed. In 1923, the French Indochina Urban Development Board was formed in Hanoi, and its first chairman, the French architect Ernest Hébrard, undertook a large-scale re-formation of the city blocks. Fig.2 is a map of the city block re-formation plan drawn up by Hébrard. His plan implemented in 1925 indicates that he was trying to expand the urban area to the north and south by introducing radial roads centered on the newly planned Central Market. The Central Market project meant that the Vietnamese quarter had to be relocated to the west of the Khmer quarter, which was located in the south. Thus, during this period, the urban area gradually expanded to the west and south.

After Norodom abdicated the throne in 1953 to form the Sangkum and become Prime Minister, urban planning and development of Phnom Penh became a national project and flourished while involving foreign and domestic architects, including Vann Molyvann. Regarding modern architecture, some buildings constructed in the development projects led by Norodom still remain today. In connection with modern movements, such as independence from the colonial ruler and modernization, they are now highly recognized as modern buildings with a unique tropical architectural style called New Khmer Architecture.

When Hébrard carried out the city block re-formation from the 1920s to the 1960s after independence, new shophouses were constructed in many parts of the city for the following reasons: the deterioration of the first wave of shophouses constructed in the early colonial period; population growth; and urban expansion. Of these new shophouses, the ones constructed particularly from the 1950s to 1960s are referred to as the second wave of shophouses.

Phnom Penh once became deserted when the Khmer Rouge captured the capital in 1975. However, in 1979, Vietnamese troops invaded Phnom Penh, overthrowing the brutal Khmer Rouge regime, and the urban population gradually returned to

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normal. But because of the Khmer Rouge's control of the city and the civil war, many of the less durable buildings, such as wooden houses, had fallen into disrepair. On the other hand, concrete shophouses and villas constructed during the colonial period remained in good condition, and people who returned to Phnom Penh began to reside in the Doun Penh area, around Wat Phnom in particular.

## **2.2 The current cityscape in Phnom Penh**

In the northern part of the Doun Penh district, where Wat Phnom is located, many colonial buildings remain, and the Central Post Office, a typical colonial building, is still in use. Many other colonial buildings around Wat Phnom have been used for state facilities such as the National Archives and the National Library of Cambodia. However, many of the buildings in the vicinity, such as the police station and the bank, are becoming dilapidated and abandoned.

As a result of the field survey, 18 surviving colonial buildings, including the post office, and 10 New Khmer architecture buildings, including the Olympic Stadium, were identified in the five districts covered by this study. As for shophouses, none of them from the first wave construction period seem to exist, but there is a large number of shophouses from the second wave construction and those newly built since then. We contacted the MLMUPC, but could not obtain information on the exact number of shophouses. However, given the large number and the history of the city's transformation, shophouses can be regarded as one of the key elements of Phnom Penh's historic cityscape besides the Royal Palace, Wat Phnom, temples, colonial architecture and New Khmer architecture buildings.



### 3 Survey of local markets in Phnom Penh

#### 3.1 Literature review on local markets

Hirohata et al. (2007) focused only on the oldest local market in Phnom Penh and conducted their study on the size of the market; distribution of stores; spatial composition such as patterns of store units; and types of stores. No studies have been conducted on markets serving as an urban element in Phnom Penh.

#### 3.2 Interviews and field surveys of major local markets

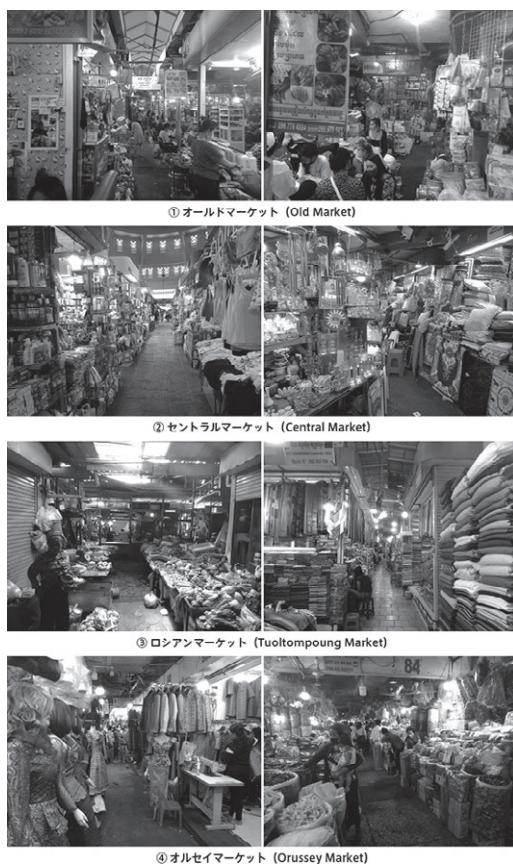
**Table 1: Year of establishment and number of stores in major markets**

Note: This table was prepared by the author based on the interview results.

|   | マーケット名称<br>Name of market             | 創設年<br>Year of establishment | 店舗数<br>Number of stores | 屋根と台のある屋台<br>Stalls with a roof and a table(s) | 屋根だけある屋台<br>Stalls only with a roof |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | オールドマーケット<br>Old Market               | 1892 年                       | 914                     | -                                              | 118                                 |
| 2 | セントラルマーケット<br>Central Market          | 1937 年                       | 3,280                   | -                                              | -                                   |
| 3 | ロシアンマーケット<br>Tuoltomponing Market     | 1953 年                       | 1,374                   | -                                              | -                                   |
| 4 | オルセーマーケット<br>Orussey Market           | 1960 年                       | 6,211                   | -                                              | -                                   |
| 5 | ドウムコーマーケット<br>Doeurm Kor Market       | 1982 年                       | 825                     | -                                              | -                                   |
| 6 | カブコーマーケット<br>Kabko Market             | 1987 年                       | 165                     | 77                                             | 21                                  |
| 7 | カンダールマーケット<br>Kandal Market           | 1989 年                       | 874                     | 582                                            | -                                   |
| 8 | ボンケンコンマーケット<br>Boeng Keng Kang Market | 1991 年                       | 1,411                   | 161                                            | -                                   |
| 9 | トゥールコックマーケット<br>Tuolkock Market       | 2002 年                       | 456                     | 328                                            | 116                                 |

For the nine major markets, we conducted interviews with the head of each market to clarify the year of construction; the number of stores; and the characteristics. Table 1 summarizes the interview results. The locations of the markets interviewed are shown in Fig 1 (1 to 9).

Fig. 3 shows photographs of the inside of each market. Old Market in the Doun Penh district (Fig. 3-1) is a market with the longest history of more than 130 years, as its name suggests. Central Market (Fig. 3-2) and Orussey Market (Fig. 3-4) were found to have an outstanding number of stores. Moreover, in addition to the normal store style, two other store operating styles were identified: stalls with a roof and a table(s); and stalls only with a roof. Many markets offer a complete range of daily necessities, and stores selling jewelry, beauty and nail salons are also common.



**Fig.3: Inside major markets**

Note: This figure was prepared by the author through fieldwork.

Central Market is characterized by a cross-shaped building extending from the dome in the center. The market offers food, household goods, kitchenware, electrical appliances, clothes, jewelry, silverware, souvenirs such as wooden/stone carvings and Buddhist statues, baguettes, and everything else essential for daily life, with gold and jewelry stores, money exchange booths, food stalls, Chinese businesses, and restaurants on the outside of the building. A wide range of visitors, from locals to tourists, are making use of this market.

Orussey Market is a huge market located in a three-story building and has the largest number of stores and goods in Phnom Penh, with the first floor selling household goods, electronic goods, CDs, DVDs, crockery, bedding, craft products, games, calculators, watches, radios, toys and food, and the second and third floors selling clothing, sundries and accessories. This market may not be suitable for tourists and has been used mainly by local people and commercial buyers.

Russian Market (Fig. 3-3) is a medium-sized, single-story market, and like the other markets, it offers a full range of daily necessities, but there are many stores selling clothing, motorbike parts, tools, do-it-yourself (DIY) products and souvenirs in particular. The market is popular among tourists as well as locals including foreigners who live in the city. The stores are crowded with housewives and people on their way home from work, but the price range is a little higher than the goods in other markets because many tourists and foreigners shop at this market.

In addition, Kandal Market located on Riverside has many beauty-related stores, including hair, nail, facial and eyebrow salons, while Boeng Keng Kang Market has many foods and daily necessity stores. Boeng Keng Kang Market, in particular, has the best second-hand clothing stores, as well as a wide range of hair salons and cosmetic stores, and it is crowded with young Cambodians because of its location. Each market in Phnom Penh has a certain tendency of visitors among locals, young people, foreigners living in the city, tourists and traders, but all markets offer a wide range of goods, including food, crafts, beauty products, souvenirs and more.

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### **3.3 Questionnaire survey on people's attitudes toward local markets**

To find out about people's attitudes toward local markets, a questionnaire survey was conducted in cooperation with the Royal University of Phnom Penh.

There were 100 respondents. The ratio of male to female survey respondents was 1:1, with 85% of the respondents aged between 21 to 29 years being the most common (the average age of Cambodian citizens was 23.9 years). Answers were on a five-point scale: agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree and disagree. We requested the cooperation of Ms. Loch Leaksmy, Head of the Japanese Language Department at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, and conducted the questionnaire survey targeting students and faculty members of the Royal University of Phnom Penh. Explanations of the method, purpose, and importance of the survey were given to the subjects in advance. Students, faculty members, and staff of the Royal University of Phnom Penh are basically residents of Phnom Penh. The questionnaire was conducted using Google Forms to ensure anonymity and certainty of aggregation, although those who did not have access to a computer or cell phone were unable to respond.

Fig. 4 shows the questionnaire results. In addition, we conducted interviews with our survey collaborators, such as professors at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, and found that their attitudes were similar to the results obtained from the questionnaire.

We found that the markets have been very common and essential to the daily lives of people in Phnom Penh and many of them have thought that the markets are a distinctive feature of the city.

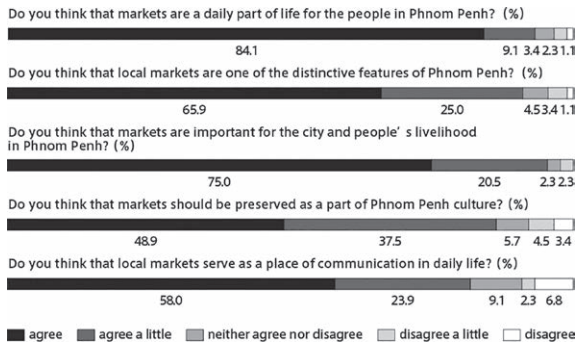
### **3.4 Travelers' interest survey on local markets**

A questionnaire survey was conducted targeting individuals arriving at the arrival lobby of Phnom Penh International Airport in 2018. There were 100 respondents, and the questionnaire was partly descriptive. After obtaining permission from the officials of Phnom Penh International Airport, the first author and three students of the Japanese language department of the Royal University of Phnom

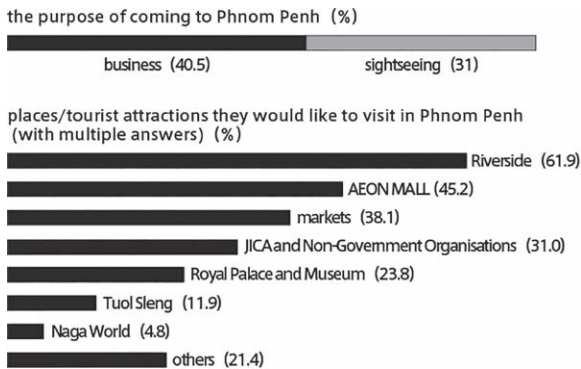
Penh conducted the survey.

Fig.5 shows the questionnaire results. The results revealed a high level of interest in markets among tourists.

Furthermore, the ASEAN Travel Awareness Survey conducted by the ASEAN-Japan Centre (2021) reported that the satisfying factors among individuals who have visited Cambodia were ‘scenery/atmosphere’ (41.4%) and ‘interaction/contact with locals’ (17.1%), implying that tourists are potentially interested in visiting markets for the reason of interacting with locals and getting in touch with the local atmosphere.

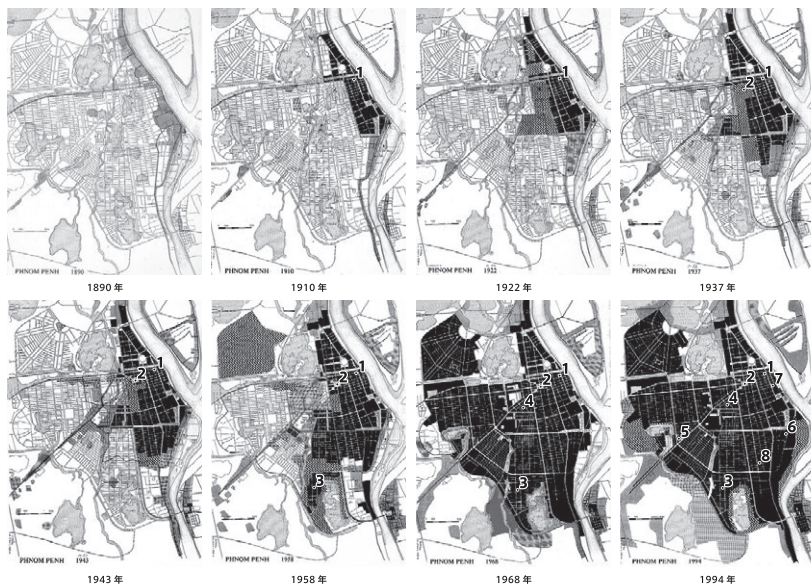


**Fig.4: Questionnaire results from the survey on people's attitudes toward local markets**  
 Note: This figure was prepared by the author based on the questionnaire results.



**Fig.5: Questionnaire results from the survey on travelers to Phnom Penh**  
 Note: This figure was prepared by the author based on the questionnaire survey.

### 3.5 Urban transformation and local markets



**Fig. 6: Urban transformation and markets**

Note: The author used the reference material “Phnom Penh développement urbain et patrimoine” (Ministère de la Culture département des affaires internationales, 1997) and indicated locations of markets by year.

With the consent of the Cambodian authorities, the French Ministry of Culture conducted a study on Phnom Penh’s architectural heritage and urban areas and revealed Phnom Penh’s urban transformation from 1890 onwards. By comparing their study results with the construction year of each market, we found that Phnom Penh has been developed and expanded in line with the markets’ establishment. Fig. 6 shows the city’s transformation and the markets<sup>6)</sup>.

After the construction of Old Market in 1892 (1 in Fig. 6), city block formation took place in the northern part of the Doun Penh district centering on Old Market during the years 1910 to 1922. After the construction of Central Market in 1937 (2 in Fig. 6), the urban area developed and expanded radially centering on Central Market, which can be seen on the maps after 1943 in Fig 6. Also, after the construction of

Russian Market in 1953 (3 in Fig. 6) and Orussey Market in 1960 (4 in Fig. 6), city blocks were formed in the Chamkar Mon and Prampir Makara districts located in the southern and central areas of Phnom Penh's city center, respectively.

On the other hand, not many changes in the city block formation can be seen on the maps between 1968 and 1994. According to interviews with professors at the Royal University of Phnom Penh and with other research collaborators, we found that many areas became uninhabited and that the land was cleared due to a civil war that occurred during this period.

In addition, we conducted interviews with Ms. Loch Leaksmy, head of the Japanese language department at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, as well as with the heads of major markets selected for this study, except for the Toul Kok Market. Furthermore, we conducted an interview with an officer from the MLMUPC. In Cambodia, because the population census started in 1998 (the second one in 2008 and the third one in 2018), the detailed population status after 1982, when Doeurm Kor Market opened, was unknown, but according to the MLMUPC, the population was certainly smaller than that of today. As a result of our interview with the head of each market, we found that the decision on where to open a market has been made through discussions with the local government. However, in Cambodia, people generally give top priority to living where there is a market and a temple (because schools are situated in temples). In other words, markets are constructed, and as a result of this, residents gather there for convenience. The markets constructed after Doeurm Kor Market (5 in Fig. 6) in 1982 and Kaboko Market (6 in Fig. 6) in 1987 were, therefore, assumed to be deeply linked to the reconstruction and revival from the situation where many areas in the city became uninhabited and the land was cleared as mentioned above. This study revealed that the construction of markets led to urbanization and city block formation in Phnom Penh, and urban growth took place alongside the markets.

### **3.6 Discussion on the market survey results**

Local markets were found to be still important in the daily lives of people in

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Phnom Penh even today and also highly attractive and appealing as cultural and tourism resources. Furthermore, the existence of markets has been an integral part of the urban development process since 1890, when the city blocks, which serve as the foundation of today's Phnom Penh, began to be formed.

## **4 Survey of shophouses in Phnom Penh**

### **4.1 Literature review and definitions of shophouses**

The authors of previous studies about shophouses in Southeast Asia include the following: Ando (1987) who identified the actual state of shophouse development in Bangkok, Thailand, and discussed the significance of shophouses in the city center and suburbs; Chong et al. (1998) who clarified the characteristics of shophouses in Malaysia in terms of the legal system of urban planning and methods of development; Wakita and Shiraishi (2007), who clarified the space organization of shophouses and the city block formation in the Doun Penh district, the oldest developed area in Phnom Penh; and Shiraishi et al. (2020) who clarified habitation characteristics of city blocks consisting of shophouses by examining the actual conditions of the living space and household diversity, with a focus on patterns of inhabitants' living in Phnom Penh.

Ando defined shophouses as a group of dwellings comprised of a ground floor used for business and upper floors used as a residence, and units as having a narrow rectangular-shaped floor plan and being connected to other units. Chong et al. defined shophouses as mid- to low-rise mixed-use buildings for both business and residence that are ubiquitous in Southeast Asia, and they are an example of urban architecture that supports working and living. Wakita and Shiraishi also defined shophouses as urban-type dwellings that integrate work and residence, where the ground floor is used as a shop and the second and higher floors as a residence, and they are constructed in a narrow rectangular shape, sharing walls with the unit next door.

This study defines shophouses as mixed-use buildings with shops on the ground floor and residential spaces on the second floor and above, which is a common interpretation in previous studies.



## 4.2 Distribution of shophouses

Our field survey was conducted to determine how densely and where shophouses are distributed in the five targeted districts in central Phnom Penh. Fig 7 was created to show the distribution of shophouses. We highlighted areas on the streets where >70%, 50-70%, and 20-50% of the total number of buildings were shophouses in dark gray, gray, and light gray, respectively.



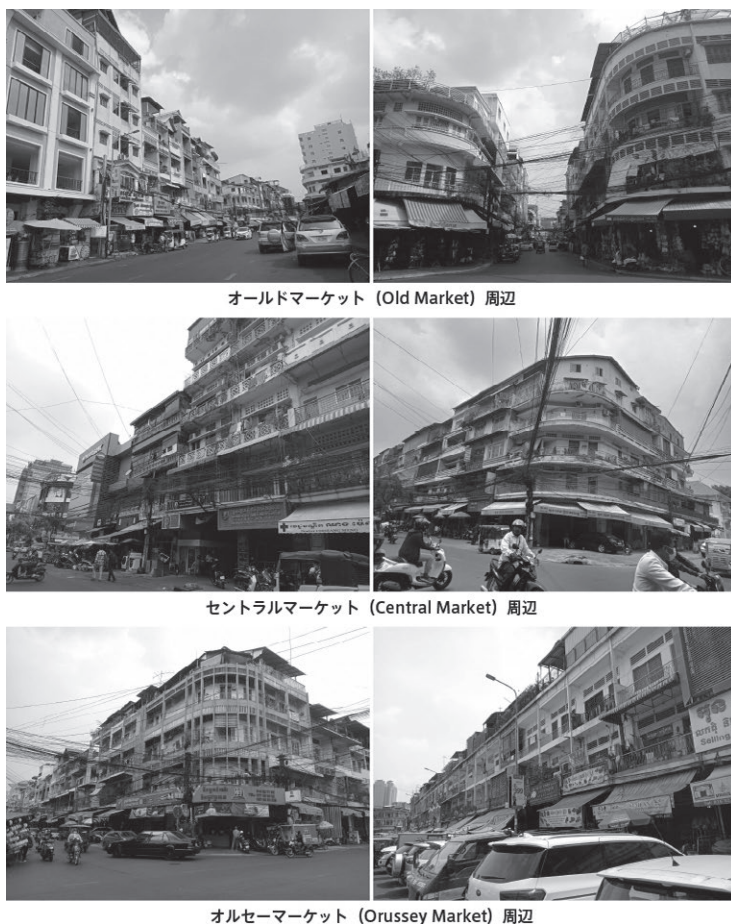
**Fig.7: Distribution of shophouses in Phnom Penh’s city center**

Note: This figure was prepared by the author.

In Phnom Penh, which is undergoing rapid urban development and modernization, such as the Diamond City project, we found that many shophouses still remain and that they are densely centered around the markets. There are 13 clusters of shophouses identified around the markets (marked by the dotted circles in Fig. 7), and thus the distribution of shophouses is closely linked and unified with the markets in Phnom Penh’s city center. In particular, the areas around Old Market and Central Market in the Doun Penh district as well as Orussey Market in the Plampi Makara district can be described as shophouse-dense areas (Fig. 8). On the other hand, contrary to the expectations of the residents we interviewed, many of the

shophouses along main streets such as Monivong and Nordon streets have already disappeared due to urban development.

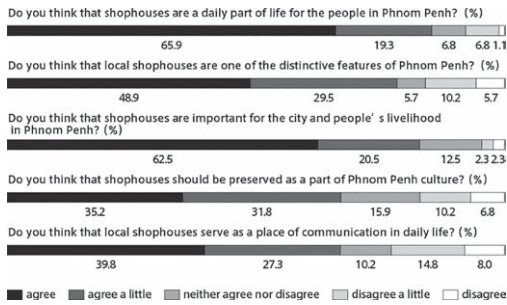
Our interview survey also revealed that when large shopping centers, a modern version of the local markets such as AEON MALL, were constructed, new shophouses were subsequently built to operate small businesses in the vicinity, confirming the close relationship between markets and shophouses in Phnom Penh.



**Fig. 8: Clusters of shophouses around major markets**  
Note: This figure was prepared by the author through fieldwork.

### 4.3 Questionnaire survey on people’s attitudes toward shophouses

Our attitude survey on shophouses through a questionnaire was conducted in cooperation with the Royal University of Phnom Penh<sup>7)</sup>. Fig. 9 shows the questionnaire results. The results indicate that people in Phnom Penh have thought that shophouses are an essential part of daily life, even though they are not as essential as markets, and that they have been one of the distinctive features (cityscape) of Phnom Penh.



**Fig.9: Questionnaire results from the survey on people’s attitude toward shophouses**  
 Note: This figure was prepared by the author based on the questionnaire survey.

### 4.4 Discussion on shophouse survey results

Shophouses have existed since before the 1890s and have firmly taken root as part of cityscapes as well as the livelihood/culture of people in Phnom Penh. They remain well preserved today, and many of them are located around the markets, forming 13 shophouse clusters. Shophouses can be regarded as an important urban element in Phnom Penh’s urban transformation, and they are a very familiar sight for Phnom Penh’s residents.

## 5 Conclusion

The results of this study clarified the relationship between two elements that have been characteristics of Phnom Penh: the markets, which have played an important role in the urban development and expansion since the 1890s; and the shophouses, which have long been a part of Phnom Penh’s cityscape. The clusters of

shophouses exist with the markets at their center. The results of this study also revealed that the markets surrounded by the clusters of shophouses have been an important urban function for the people of Phnom Penh, supporting their daily lives and being part of the local community, as well as being an attractive urban element for visitors to Phnom Penh.

They are in danger of being lost because the government and municipality have not taken appropriate measures to preserve them in a rapidly developing city, and it is clear that urban development will be increasingly promoted in Phnom Penh in the future. Therefore, from the perspectives of culture (lifestyle), tourism, and history, the preservation/protection of the clusters of shophouses with the markets in the center is likely to become an important urban issue.

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### **Endnotes**

- 1) In 2018, Cambodia's real GDP growth rate of 7.47% ranked first among ASEAN countries. Second place went to Vietnam with 7.20%; in 2019, first place went to Vietnam with 7.15% and second place went to Cambodia with 7.05% (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, Regional Policy Division, 2021).
- 2) Cambodia's tourism industry accounted for 26.4% of the total GDP in 2019 (The Japan Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, Singapore, 2021).
- 3) City Population (<https://www.citypopulation.de/>)
- 4) In the Doun Penh district, four- or six-story shophouses are common. Few shophouses from the French colonial period can be found, while those constructed in the mid-1950s to 1960s, shortly after independence, and those constructed after the 1990s onwards are still in existence. Compared to typical shophouses in other countries in South-East Asia, these are characterized by not having balconies or courtyards, and most of the façades have a modern architectural design with no decorations (Wakita and Shiraishi, 2007; Shiraishi et al., 2020).
- 5) Large-scale construction of shophouses in Phnom Penh can be divided into two main periods, and the construction from this period is regarded as the first wave, while construction that occurred in the 1950s and 1960s is regarded as the second wave.
- 6) Ministère de la Culture département des affaires internationales (1997) shows that the Doun Penh district was completely formed between 1910 and 1937, followed by the

expansion of Phnom Penh's urban area to the south, and then to the west after 1958.

- 7) This survey was conducted at the same time as the Questionnaire survey on people's attitudes toward local markets (3.3), with the same number of respondents and with the same method.

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