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SEASSI Khmer 2007  
Khut Sokhan Interview Translation

1. How did you become interested in archaeology?

Long ago, before entering university to study archaeology, archaeology hadn't captured my interest. Later I became interested in archaeology when I wanted to understand the remains of the stupa and prasat in my home ស្រុក។

Vocab:

ចំណា បំអារម្មណ៍= to capture interest

សំណល់= remains

ប្រាង្គ= stupa

ប្រាសាទ= prasat

2. Did you learn about archaeology in school? What did you study?

When I was in high school ទាំងបឋមភូមិ (Jr. high) and secondary school (high school) we didn't have the subject of archaeology. But in the Ministry of Education for the Youth and Sports curriculum had Khmer history and art history. I became interested in the (discipline of?) Khmer historical documents. For example historical summary of Khmer kings, art, Khmer skill (crafts?), and religion etc.

Vocab:

ប្រវត្តិ= history

វិជ្ជា= knowledge

ទស្សន៍= perception

3. Why did you study archaeology at RUFA?

In fact, I did have a goal of studying at RUFA. After taking a test (associated with getting a diploma for high school) (in his phum?) my parents wanted me to continue my studies and ពួកគាត់ ( a group of his family?) sent me to Phnom Penh to take a test to enter a university. I made an application to 4 universities: law school, dental school, technological university, and RUFA. The final result was lucky, I only passed (the exam) at RUFA. Because I did not have (leftovers?) the others to choose from I decided to study at RUFA. (Even tho the other three weren't options?). I was happy to begin studying there and after 6 months I increasingly enjoyed studying archaeology.

Vocab:

រីកចម្រើន.....ឡើយ = increasingly

4. Do you want to have a career in archaeology in Cambodia?

Certainly, when I was a student I had a desire to work/to have a career as an archaeologist. Participation/collaboration in the course of instruction in the classroom and training curriculum to prepare (to work with directly?) foreign archaeologists in various regions. Working with foreigners (?)I expected more and more to have lots of jobs and by having the previous experience to transform that into an archaeological career. Unfortunately, after I finished my 4 year degree in archaeology, I expected too much. Many factors have contributed to my dream not coming true. The job market, my capability, and understanding and limited opportunities to expand my education and build on my previous knowledge.

5. Do you want to study overseas?

Certainly. I always had the desire to continue studying archaeology overseas.

6. Do you think Khmer people understand archaeology? Please explain.

Foreign university students studying archaeology are one type of person (the only person?) who understands archaeology. I do not think that Khmer people think that archaeology in Cambodia is important. For Khmer people, archaeology is maybe not really important because almost all Khmer people are not familiar with or understand archaeology. Even tho they know that artifacts/art and

stupas/monuments which we have in Cambodia are part of our heritage too. But they don't understand the value or importance of ancient objects buried in the ground or an ancient villages (place?) (archaeological sites) and remains and foundations of a broken prasat. The reason therefore that people continue to steal and dig ancient graves and flatten networks/streets and dams etc. is to fulfill their desire/need. They don't think their activities that they did destroy archaeological evidence in Cambodia. Moreover, various development projects in Cambodia don't think they can affect the destruction of the ancient remains (??)

Vocab:

វត្ថុសិល្បៈ = artifacts (?)

ទីតាំងស្ថាប័នបុរាណ = ancient place or village

ផ្ទះបុរាណ = ancient grave

អភិវឌ្ឍន៍ = progress/development

បំផ្លាញ = ruins

ហេតុ = reason

ទោះ = even though

7. Do you think Cambodia has problems with looting? What are some solutions?

Cambodia has problems with looting for many reasons that all have a relationship with one another: traffic in selling and looting in high value artifacts that are not understood as valuable and a state of ignorance and poverty/starvation and underemployment without an income for families etc. To solve the problem we can work to help by having collaboration/participation between government and citizens. To cease and abolish the market for selling and looting of a variety of artifacts by creation of effective characteristics (methods?) that people like: supplying jobs, restoring public infrastructure, broadly educate (using?) methods people can use to explain and educate about archaeology in Cambodia.

Vocab:

មូលហេតុ = origin/reason (?)

ទៅវិញទៅមក = mutually, with each other

ចរាចរណ៍ (ទិញ លក់) = traffic (in selling-looting)

លក់វត្ថុបុរាណ= looting artifacts

ខ្លី= ignorant

ដោះស្រាយ= to solve a problem

ចូលរួម=participation/collaboration

សហការ=collaborate

បិទ=to cease

ងាយស្រួល=easy

ការផ្គត់ផ្គង់=supply

ស្នាម=salvage

ហែ=to hurry

អប់រំ= educate

ផ្សព្វផ្សាយ= broadly

8. Do foreign archaeologists help or cause problems in Cambodia? Please explain.

I think that foreign archaeologists help Cambodia and create problems. They help Cambodia in a lot of ways: training Khmer students with archaeology in the university. They send students to finish 4-year degree and continue studies overseas, and participation with research at archaeological sites with results that support the goal of archaeology in Cambodia. The recording of inventory and excavation and rearch of prehistoric places, expand experience via application of jobs within international institutions doing research in Cambodia etc. At the same time ther eare also a number of problems too. The problem is the insist/be firm/be stubborn (?) with techniques that various foreign archaeologists use (OR how to adapt the technology of different archaeologists??). And the exclusive control by foreign archaeologists to do research in areas or create research (in those areas?). Khmer arechaeologists can't carry out independent research in the presence of foreign archaeologists. Even though this is a problem it does not cause complications between Khmer archaeologists and foreign archaeologists.

Vocab:

ស្ថាប័ន=institution

បុរេប្រវត្តិ=prehistoric

កាន់កាប់ = to control

ផ្តាច់មុខ = exclusive

កំណាយ = excavation

បញ្ជីសារពើភ័ណ្ណ = inventory

9. How can foreign archaeologists be more helpful?

I think that what foreign archaeologists can do to help Cambodia is: provide long-term training with an objective relating to the field of archaeology. To reach students in the university studying archaeology and create a permanent center for research, exhibitions, and for jobs in archaeology, a collaboration with Khmer archaeologists to plan and promote various research and create a curriculum to exchange Khmer students overseas for archaeology education.

Vocab:

វិស័យ = objective

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌល = center/institution

អច្ឆ័យ = exhibit (?)

កម្មវិធីសិក្សា = curriculum

វិស័យ = education?

10. Can archaeology help development/progress in Cambodia?

I think that archaeology can progress/development in part of Cambodia. Even if it is not a lot, it can help one small part. I will give one example by demonstrating that archaeology can participate in development in Cambodia. If education field of Cambodian archaeology expands and there is the full assistance of the government we can have an objective to attract the influence of tourists to come visit special regions that have archaeological sites or ancient kilns. Creating a headquarters for archaeological research institutions and a museum of archaeology in a region for displaying and exhibiting artifacts and art found in excavations. All these objects will attract visitors and tourists to visit. Visitors and tourists can provide jobs to people in those regions. One part that can help is the reduction of poverty of those groups of people. The museum can become a place for training kids. People in those regions can understand and know their history and know about archaeology which is one way to create development.

Vocab:

ផ្តល់ = provide

ងារ = job

បំណែក = part, division

បង្ហាញ = demonstrate

អភិវឌ្ឍន៍ = progress/development

ទស្សនា = to visit

ទេសចរ = tourist

ភ្ញៀវ = visitor

ទាក់ទាញ = to pull/attract

តាំងបង្ហាញ = to display exhibit?

សិល្បៈ = art

ទំហឹង = strength/power

ប្រើវិស័យ = objective/goal