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# The Activities of the Sophia Mission in Cambodia since 1979

— Conservation and Restoration of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat  
and Development of Human Resources —

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The 3<sup>rd</sup> SEAMEO SPAFA International Conference on South East Archaeology  
10:30-11:00 on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019 (Bangkok), Opening Ceremony, Keynote-Lecture-2

## **1. The Founding Spirit and Educational Ideals of Sophia University**

Sophia University was founded in 1913 in the city of Tokyo in Japan, as a fruit of the desire of the Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier, who arrived in Japan in 1549 in order to propagate Christianity. The University was founded based on the tradition of the Jesuit educational ideal, namely “Men and Women for Others, with Others.” What this means is, we need to “utilize our talents not just for ourselves, but for the benefit of others as well,” and to aim at “self-realization through the service of others.”

Education at Sophia University is set up on the ideals of neighbourliness and internationalism, based on Christian humanism. Students ponder over human dignity, and deepen their grasp of it. At the same time they seek human security and world peace, through the study of international relations, environmental issues, human rights, and other related topics.

## **2. Roots of the Sophia Mission**

The roots of the Sophia Mission date to 1961. Three Jesuits of that period, namely Professor P. Riestch of Japan and two others, formed a student exchange program known as AUVIT. The first batch of students belonging to this body appeared in 1961, from Sophia University. On that occasion, while addressing students who were about to graduate, Professor P. Riestch declared that as he was scheduled to conduct an intensive course of lectures at a university in Vietnam, those interested were welcome to join him. Those who joined him included a student named Mr. Yoshiaki Ishizawa.

Accordingly, seven students including Mr. Yoshiaki Ishizawa responded to his invitation, and set out on their respective journeys. Professor P. Riestch frequently admonished them with the words,

“We will hereafter enter the age of Asia, and so be sure take a good look at the Asian reality around you.” However, four years later in 1965 the Vietnam War began. It continued until 1975, but the resulting confusion and fighting in Cambodia stretched on from 1970 to 1993.

From 1961 onwards Mr. Yoshiaki Ishizawa remained at the site in Cambodia, and began his study of the history of the Angkor dynasty. He later became a professor at Sophia University, and served as the university’s President from 2005 to 2011.

### **3. The Practices of the Sophia Model**

Our Sophia Asia Center for Research and Human Development adopted the name ‘Sophia Mission,’ and carried out a variety of activities in Cambodia over a period of 20 years. I now wish to look back on the background surrounding the commencement of the ‘Sophia Mission.’

Cambodia was embroiled in a civil war that lasted 24 years, until 1993. In 1979, Fr. Giuseppe Pittau S.J. who at the time was president of Sophia University, carried out fund raising activities for Cambodian refugees. He stood in front of Shinjuku station in Tokyo, and solicited alms on their behalf. In 1980, Professor Yoshiaki Ishizawa re-entered Cambodia to conduct research on Angkor Wat and to search for Cambodian friends whose whereabouts were unknown, and he noticed that people were indeed drained owing to the horrors of the war.

Angkor Wat is a symbol of unity for the people of Cambodia, and besides, it appears on the national flag. It is Angkor Wat alone that can provide the Cambodians with the courage and hope they require. We of the Sophia Mission have faith in the ability of the Cambodian people to carry out the work of conservation on their own, and we have accordingly been actively engaged in the development of Cambodian human resources.

When the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh (hereafter RUFA) re-opened in 1989, both the department of Archaeology and Architecture were suffering from a serious lack of teachers. In response to this situation, we of the Sophia Mission started intensive lectures for the students at RUFA, from 1991.

### **4. Projects in Angkor**

#### **a) Intensive lectures at RUFA (1991-)**

Intensive lectures for RUFA students of the departments of Archaeology and Architecture have been conducted since 1991, and training has also continued until now.

#### **b) Research and training at Banteay Kdei (1989-)**

Sophia University started archeological research at Banteay Kdei in 1989, and since 1991 we have been conducting the training of RUFA students. In 2015, we constructed the Sophia Angkor Center for Cultural Heritage Education, in the temple.

c) On-site training of students of RUFA (1991-)

Along with the intensive lectures conducted in Phnom Penh, we have carried out training at the site in Siem Reap, since 1991. The training sites are Banteay Kdei and the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat. In addition to learning the theory, the expertise we offer the students is characterized by practical training and experience at the sites, such as excavation and restoration work.

d) Sophia Asia Center Headquarters (1996-)

The headquarters building was erected in Siem Reap in 1996. It is used as a front base for all the projects.

e) Conservation of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat (1996-)

In 1993, Professor Yoshiaki Ishizawa received a request from the Royal Government of Cambodia, regarding the restoration of the northern half of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat. Sophia University began the Conservation and Restoration Project in 1996, in collaboration with the APSARA Authority that was created in 1995. The first phase was completed in 2007, and the second phase has been going on since 2016.

f) ISO 14001 (2003-)

In 2006, the APSARA Authority acquired the ISO 14001 certification, from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). This was done with the support of certain institutions, including Sophia University from 2003.

g) Construction of the Museum (2006)

The Preah Norodom Sihanouk-Angkor Museum was constructed between the years 2005 and 2007 by Sophia University, with the financial support of the AEON 1% club. The 274 Buddhist statues excavated at the Banteay Kdei site in 2001, are displayed there.

h) International Workshop (2014-)

For three years from 2014, Sophia University held workshop with experts on archaeological preservation from five countries of South East Asia. The five countries are Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia.

Since 2017, we have held workshop with museum experts from 10 ASEAN countries. We aim to further develop the network construction and relationship strengthening among the stakeholders in the future.

## **5. Conservation Project of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat**

### **a) Introduction**

In 1993, Professor Ishizawa received a request from the Cambodian government asking him to restore the northern part of the Western Causeway, and accordingly the project was begun. In the same year, Sophia University started the architectural survey, and in the following year the training of masons was begun. At that time, there were few architectural engineers and skilled masons, and it was impossible to start the project at once, due to a lack of Cambodian human resources. That the project began with problems regarding all aspects, namely people, goods, and funds, is undeniable. We of Sophia University have held high the ideal that “Angkor Monuments in Cambodia should be restored by Cambodians, for Cambodians.”

### **b) Restoration work of the past**

On the Western Causeway, there are traces of restoration that appear to have been done prior to the French colonial period (1863-1953). However, the exact restoration date is unclear, due to a lack of supporting documents. It has been pointed out that restoration works may have been done when Angkor Wat was restored in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

On the other hand, many French-led maintenance and restoration traces from 1908 to the 1960's are visible, and many text and photo records by EFEO (Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient) remain. They constitute a valuable discovery.

According to records, two major restoration works were conducted. Due to heavy rains in 1952, the northern part of the Western Causeway collapsed over 50 meters. The first major restoration work was conducted between 1953 and 1954, and the second was conducted between 1960 and 1966. French conservators had achieved a lot of work, despite the tropical rain and difficult environs within the dense forests of Angkor.

### **c) Restoration work supported by Sophia University**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Phase (1996-2007)**

In August 1996, Sophia University and the APSARA Authority held a ground-breaking ceremony for the Restoration of the Western Causeway. The target area for the restoration was 100 meters from the terrace to the end, on the northern half of the Western Causeway. The retaining wall was completely dismantled and rebuilt, because damage at the bottom of the retaining wall was severe. We carried out the restoration work using the traditional construction method, and carried out structural reinforcement with traditional materials, inside the retaining wall. We completed the first phase in November 2007. By means of this project we trained architectural engineers and masons, and at the same time continued training the students. Experts and masons with experience at the Western Causeway, are now active in various restoration sites in the Angkor area.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Phase (2016-present)**

Following the ICC recommendation in December 2012, the APSARA Authority applied to the Japanese government for ODA equipment. Cranes and other equipment for restoring the Western Causeway were provided to Cambodia in late 2015. On the other hand, Sophia University has since 2013 set up the “Committee on technical exchange and training for the Western Causeway Restoration,” to prepare for restoration work on the causeway. The target area of the second phase of the restoration is 100 meters from the entrance to the terrace on the northern half of the causeway. In May 2016, the APSARA Authority held a ground-breaking ceremony, for the second phase restoration of the causeway. In response to the rise in the number of tourists, a temporary floating bridge 200 meters long on the moat, was set on the south side of the causeway by the APSARA Authority. The main operator of the second phase is the APSARA Authority, and the role of Sophia University is to provide technical assistance to them. Sophia University will continue to support the Apsara Authority, while also continuing discussions with UNESCO experts at the ICC.

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新教が世界をつなぐ

Keynote Lecture 2

## The Activities of the Sophia Mission in Cambodia since 1979

- Conservation and Restoration of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat and Development of Human Resources -

Satoru Miwa  
Assistant Professor  
Sophia Asia Center for Research and Human Development  
Sophia University, Tokyo  
17 June 2019

Slide-01



Satoru Miwa  
Assistant Professor  
Sophia Asia Center for and Human Development  
Sophia University, Tokyo

1997-1999  
1999-present

Research at Angkor monuments Working in Siem Reap, Cambodia In charge of most projects by Sophia University. In particular, conservation of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat and human resource development in the field of architecture.

Slide-02



Yoshiaki Ishizawa  
Director of the Sophia Center for Research and Human Development, Sophia University



1960's Visit to Angkor  
1980 Re-visit to Angkor  
1991- Human Resource Development Project  
2005-2011 President of Sophia University  
2017 Ramon Magsaysay Award

Slide-03



Slide-04

### Contents

1. The founding Spirit and Educational Ideals of Sophia University
2. Roots of the Sophia Mission
3. The practices of the Sophia Model
4. Projects in Angkor
5. Conservation Project of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat

Slide-05

1. The founding Spirit and Educational Ideals of Sophia University

Slide-06

### The founding Spirit of Sophia University

The University was founded based on the tradition of the Jesuit educational ideal, namely **"Men and Women for Others, with Others."** What this means is, we need to "utilize our talents not just for ourselves, but for the benefit of others as well," and to aim at "self-realization through the service of others."

Slide-07

2. Roots of the Sophia Mission

Slide-08

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Slide-09

## Roots of the Sophia Mission

Prof. P. Riestch :  
**"We will hereafter enter the age of Asia, and so be sure take a good look at the Asian reality around you."**

Slide-10

## Roots of the Sophia Mission

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Slide-11

## Roots of the Sophia Mission



Professor Yoshiaki Ishizawa received a Ramon Magsaysay Award (31 August 2017)

Slide-12

## Roots of the Sophia Mission



Prof. Ishizawa at the ICC Meeting, Technical Session, Siem Reap, Cambodia (11 June 2019)

Slide-13

## 3. The practices of the Sophia Model

### The practices of the Sophia Model



**Fr. Joseph Pittau**, who at the time was president of Sophia University, carried out **fund raising activities for Indochina-refugees** in front of Shinjuku station, Tokyo (1979)

(Photo: Sophia univ.)

Slide-15

### The practices of the Sophia Model



Angkor Wat and National Flag of Cambodia (present)

Intensive Lectures by Prof. Ishizawa (1991-)

Slide-16

## 4. Projects in Angkor

Slide-17

### a) Intensive Lectures at FUFA(1991-)

1991-1997 Lectures at FUFA, Phnom Penh  
1991-present On site training, Siem Reap



Intensive Lectures by Prof.Ishizawa (1991-)

Slide-18

### b) Research and Training at Banteay Kdei (1989-)

1989-present Archaeological Research at BK



Excavation Training (1990's)

Excavation Training (1990's)

Slide-19

### "Cultural Heritage Education"



Elementary school students (1999, B.Kdei)

Junior high school students (2014, A.Wat)



Local resident (2014, B.Kdei)



Junior high school students (2018, B.Kdei)

Slide-20

### Sophia Angkor Center for Cultural Heritage Education (2014, Banteay Kdei)



Slide-21

### c) On site training of students of RUFA (1991-)

1991-1997 Lectures at FUFA, Phnom Penh  
1991-present On site training, Siem Reap



Banteay Kdei (1990's)

Western Causeway (2015)

Slide-22



Slide-23

### d) Sophia Asia Center Headquarters (1996-)



Erected in 1996 (Siem Reap)

Slide-24



e) Conservation of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat (1996-)



Ground Breaking Ceremony for Phase 1 (August 1996)



Complethion Ceremony for Phase 1 (November 2007)

Slide-25

f) ISO 14001 (2003-2006)  
EMS : Environmental Management System)



Display of ISO 14001 on the admission ticket to Angkor

Slide-26

g) Construction of the Museum (2006-)

2000-2001 274 Buddhist statues were excavated at BK. 2007 Inauguration of the Museum



Erected in 2007 (Siem Reap)



Excavation in 2001 (Photo: Tsugusato Omura)

Slide-27

h) International Workshop (2014-)  
2014- Mekong Cultural Heritage workshop  
2017- ASEAN Museum workshop



Dr M.R. Rujaya Abhakorn, Centre Director of SEAMEO-SPAFA (Sophia Asia Center, Cambodia)

Slide-28



Mekong workshop (Aug 2015, Sophia Center)



Museum workshop (Nov 2017, Sophia Center)

Slide-29



Museum workshop (Nov 2018, Sophia Asia Center in Cambodia)

Slide-30

5. Conservation Project of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat

Slide-31

Angkor Wat (2015)



Slide-32



Slide-33



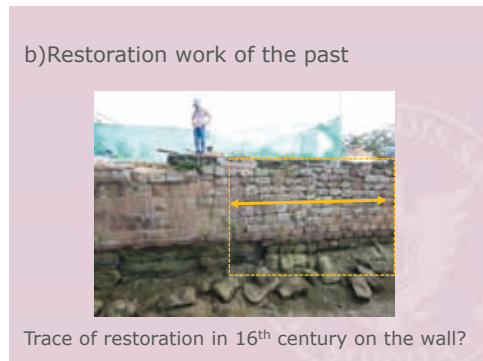
Slide-34

a) Introduction of the project

1993 Received a request from Cambodia  
 Started Architectural Survey  
 1994 Started training of mason  
 1996 Ground Breaking ceremony for phase 1

Sophia University have held high Ideal that  
**"Angkor Monuments in Cambodia should be restored by Cambodians, for Cambodians"**

Slide-35



Slide-36



Slide-37



Slide-38



Slide-39

c) Restoration work supported by Sophia University

Phase 1 (1996-2007)

1993 Received a request from Cambodia  
 Started Architectural Survey  
 1994 Training of mason  
 1996 Ground Breaking for phase 1  
 2007 Completion of Phase 1

Slide-40



Slide-41



Slide-42



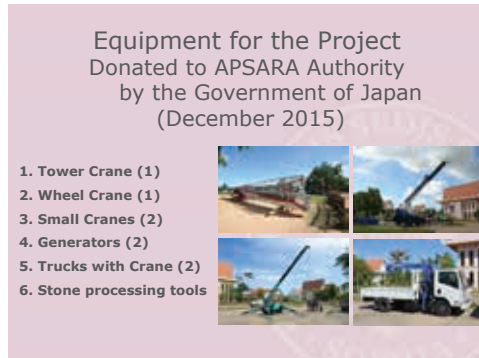
Slide-43



Slide-44



Slide-45



Slide-46



Slide-47



Slide-48

APSARA Authority closed the Western Causeway for the restoration work and opened the floating bridge for the visitor to Angkor Wat.  
(From 25 May 2017)



Slide-49

### Angkor Wat Western Causeway Phase-2



Slide-50



Director General of UNESCO  
Visited the causeway site  
(December 4, 2018)

Slide-51

The founding Spirit of Sophia University  
"Men and Women for Others, with Others."

Philosophy of Sophia Mission  
"Angkor Monuments in Cambodia should be restored by Cambodians for Cambodians."

Slide-52



Angkor Wat is a symbol of Cambodian culture, development and peace.

Slide-53

### Conclusion

We think that **basic education** including cultural heritage education is the most important for the protection of the cultural heritage with a long-term view.

In other words, **what is important is human resources.**

Slide-54

### Conclusion

Sophia University will continue its activities

**in the field of human resource development**

**for the cultural heritage in Asia, regardless of the nationalities or borders.**

Slide-55



Slide-56