

Research at Prasat Sambor Temple N1 Tower and Conservation Pre-Angkor Monument

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Sambor Prei Kuk Archaeological Group (SPKAG) is an outstanding example of the interchange of human values that took place in the monumental arts in the late 6th and early 7th century in Southeast Asia. It was a state city and capital city of Chenla in name Isanapura by King Isanavarman I (615-636) and was located about 196 km from Phnom Penh Capital and about 30 km from provincial city of Kampong Thom.

Previous surveys and recent investigations activities show the existence of a distinctive Khmer culture that constituted a milestone in urban planning and the plastic arts in Southeast Asia. Recent field surveys have documented the remains of this ancient city including the brick temples and their embanked causeways, the moat and rampart of the city and waterworks for irrigation and town supply. Several monument complexes and brick structures are concentrated in the temple zone of SPKAG. However, many other remnants were also confirmed in the western area where the habitation zone surrounded by a moat on three sides and a river on the other is located. The SPKAG contained numerous ancient temples and other structures. The number of archaeological structures total 291, many of them comprising of multiple individual structures and features. Preservation work was lacking for several decades because of the several civil wars that occurred.

Since 2001, the Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project established through collaboration between the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia and Waseda University of Japan has conducted conservation activities, restoration works and tourism development with the strong cooperation of the community living around the heritage site. We are mainly doing research, conservation and restoration at Prasat Sambor (North group), N14-1, N14-2, N7, N8, N9, N10, N11 and N1 tower. In 2015, we have conducted excavation and clearance work around N1's terrace to identify the original structure of the terrace's basement and also for purpose of arranging the site for tourism.

From the results of the excavation it was seen that the some part of the terrace structure was decayed and tending to collapse, that the terrace with the drains remained *in situ* and that there was later period additional construction etc. This paper aims at reconstructing the original shape of the whole entire of the N1 tower through the conservation and restoration of the remaining structure.