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**The numbers correspond to those in the Japanese edition.
Numbers that are missing are for the Japanese edition only.**

③AY2018

- Welcome Party for ISEP Exchange Students

Three exchange students arrived in Japan from the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP). They are Chantra (third-year student from the Department of Khmer Literature of RUPP), Kunthib (third-year student from the Department of Sociology of RUPP), and Sorun (third-year student from the Department of Sociology of RUPP).

A welcome party for the exchange students was held at the Cambodian language common study room during lunch break on Thursday, October 18, 2018. The three students enjoyed talking with about 20 TUFS students majoring in Cambodian language while eating light meals they had brought in.



At the welcome party (right: Chantra)



center left: Sorun, center right: Kunthib

First- and second-year Japanese students who had never visited Cambodia joined in and were exposed to Cambodian culture as they listened to explanations by the exchange students about the Cambodian foods they had brought.

Chantra already had interactions with TUFS students during a short visit program (for RUPP Cambodian literature department regular class students) in February.

Chantra, Kunthib, and Sorun will participate in the ISEP-TUFS program. In the fall semester, they will attend classes such as general Japanese language, English language in practice, ideological and cultural theory, language and communication, and international cooperation theory.

Chantra and Sorun said their current stay in Japan was their first travel overseas, and that they wanted to actively interact with Japanese students as well as foreign students enrolled at TUFS as international students and deepen their understanding of different cultures.

Chantra, Kunthib, and Sorun will also attend Cambodian language classes as assistants. They have shown a willingness to assist with Cambodian language education. Despite their short stay lasting 10 months, we hope they will not only study at TUFS but also have a positive influence on TUFS students.

An article written by Chantra appeared in the Cambodian Web magazine Sabay.

["Japan in the eyes of an international student"](#) (October 25, 2018)

Chantra presents the following points:

- Japanese people are polite, kind, and generous when asked for help.
- It is clean and in good order everywhere, and everyone cooperates with the maintenance of living environments.
- If there are vacant seats in a restaurant or elsewhere, they don't sit without permission and ask if they can share the table.
- They are keen on saving and recycling and eat all the food without leaving anything.
- You need to pay a fee to throw away refrigerators or other recyclable products.
- Photography is sometimes prohibited in public spaces.
- Before uploading a picture to a social network site, you need to obtain permission from the subject.

- Train, bus and other public transportation services are punctual to the second.
- Talking on the mobile phone is prohibited on public transportation systems. You can send text messages.
- Male employees wear black suits and carry black bags regardless of the amount of salary.
- Women are plainly dressed and wear light makeup, and fewer Japanese women smoke than Western women.
- Children behave well and are adorable. They can safely cross streets by themselves.
- Store clerks are always cheerful and serve with a smile, and do not follow customers around.
- Twenty-four-hour vending machines can be found anywhere.
- Ads and flyers have QR codes printed on them for access to more detailed information.

- Daily Life of Exchange Students: Classes and Japanese Cultural Experience

Three exchange students from the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) in Cambodia are taking various classes held in English at TUFS, in addition to Japanese language classes. They are also taking extra-curricular activities to experience Japanese culture.

1) Fall semester classes

Chantra's most favorite class is Topics in Intercultural Communication. This class is attended by students from many different countries, which enables them to directly ask questions and learn about each other's culture. The students also give group presentations. Working in a group of seven people, Chantra discusses with not only Japanese students but also students from Colombia, the UK and other countries and gives presentations about each country's way of greeting and differences in meanings of body language.

2) First try at natto

A natto tasting party was organized at the suggestion of a first-year student majoring in Cambodian language. The exchange students learned how to eat the fermented soybeans from the basics and stirred natto themselves. It was their first experience to taste natto's stickiness and bitterness.



First try at natto

4) Experiencing Ikebana

The exchange students took part in an Ikebana (Japanese flower arrangement) class for international students at TUFS's International Hall. They learned how to arrange flowers to make them look



Left to right: Chantra,
Prof. Sovathana, Kunthib and Sorun

beautiful – an aesthetic sense unique to Japan –, observing the teacher making minor adjustments to their works. After the Ikebana class, they brought home the arranged flowers, and displayed and enjoyed looking at them in their rooms for a while.

④AY 2019

- Report on Fukushima Study Tour (Feb. 2020)

Students enrolled in our project participated in the employment experience program organized by TUFFS Inter-University Exchange Project (COIL). This course, conducted in cooperation with The Nippon Foundation Student Volunteer Center (Gakuvo), consists of pre-study (February 4), voluntary fieldwork in Fukushima (February 6 – 9) and a post-conference COIL-type online session with California State University, Northridge (February 12). The program schedule is as follows.

Date and time	Activities
Tue, Feb 4	Pre-learning 1: Prior study: Introduction to the Japanese non-profit organization industry, a report on the history and current situation of disaster support in Fukushima, etc.
Thu, Feb 6	Moving to Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture Lecture by the vice chief priest of Chogen-ji Temple, experience Zen meditation
Fri, Feb 7	Volunteer work at Yuu-yuu Farm Visit to Tomioka Town and Naraha Town, Visit to Hamakaze Kirara in Hisanohama, Lecture on the experience of the earthquake
Sat, Feb 8	Volunteer work in areas affected by typhoon, Lecture by the vice-chief priest of Bodaiin
Sun, Feb 9	Volunteer work for the Iwaki Olive Project, Moving to Tokyo
Wed, Feb 12	Post-tour briefing session: COIL-type Online Session with California State University, Northridge (more details here)

We have received a report on the experience of exchange students from Cambodia who participated. See below for details.

Junichi Terai

Coordinator, Inter-University Exchange Project (ASEAN)

Fukushima has been badly damaged by natural disasters. From February 6 to 9, 2020, I visited Fukushima as a volunteer, staying at Chogenji Temple, supporting farmwork in olive groves, and touring the restricted areas.

1. Staying at Chogenji Temple

It was my first experience working in sub-zero temperatures and staying at a temple. At the temple, men stayed on the first floor and women on the second floor. Guests have to follow rules such as cleaning, keeping quiet, and observing hygiene. The temple accepts volunteers every year. I was still cold in my sleeping bag because there was no heating, and I could only sleep for three hours on the first day. On the first day, the chief priest talked about natural disasters and volunteer activities in Fukushima Prefecture. After that, I experienced meditation. It lasted for only fifteen minutes, since it was my first meditation. The purpose was to imagine a situation where the victims were unable to move in a small shelter and didn't have enough water or food. By meditating and clearing our minds of unnecessary thoughts, we could empathize with the suffering of the victims of natural disasters. On the third day, I meditated again, but I couldn't stand even thirty minutes. How distressing it must have been for the victims who had to stay in a small space for a long time.

2. Olive groves

On the second and third days, we worked in groups, and on the fourth day, we all worked in the olive groves. We paid for our own food on this tour, but we were treated to a meal in the olive groves. We collected fallen leaves, dug holes around the olive trees, put fertilizer in them, filled the holes, and then crushed and sprinkled something like bran on them. I didn't mind doing the work but found the

climate uncomfortable. The temperature on that day was below minus 10 degrees Celsius. I was shivering during the work and felt that my fingers and toes were going to freeze. Besides, I had to wash my hands with cold water after I finished the work.



オリーブ畑にて

I was truly impressed to see all the volunteers working together in unity despite the freezing weather. We developed a deep connection with one another through the four days in Fukushima.

In the olive groves, we learned that natural disasters had destroyed not only infrastructure and crops but also human lives, that the local people hoped that we would develop industry by using the knowledge we gained through our hard work at school, and that olives are good for our skin and health.

3. Tour of the restricted areas

In Fukushima, I was surprised that I met only about ten people on the twenty-minute walk to our workplace, and that even in a large store, there were only three clerks and five customers. Of course, I was aware that the area had been badly damaged, but I didn't expect to see so few people living there. There was a restricted area in the region we visited on the third day. Even in the unrestricted areas, very few people were there compared to other prefectures. In the restricted area, I saw abandoned roads, houses, schools, factories, and offices, as well as people performing repairs.

Later, I visited a museum that had videos and photos of the victims and felt sincerely sorry for those who had fought so hard to evacuate to safety and lost their homes, properties, and even their loved ones due to the natural disaster.

4. What I have learned

The four-day tour of Fukushima was exhausting for me, but I was happy to be able to work for others. I was able to grow as a person through this tour and to learn lessons. I have learned how to help people in

need. Last August, Cambodia's Sihanoukville Province was hit by a flood. It was a big disaster in Cambodia, though not as damaging as the floods in Japan. I wanted to help the victims but thought I couldn't do anything because I was a sophomore in college and had no job or money. Through volunteering in Fukushima, I realized that nobody needs high social status or lots of money to help others. You can volunteer to help those in need if you have a little time to spare and a modest budget. Even a little help is valuable. No one can stop a natural disaster, but we can help its victims.

- Report on an ISEP Student's Experience of Japanese Culture (Dec 2020)

As part of "Japan Specialist Program for the Enhancement of Japanese Language and Cultural Outreach in Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia", Inter-University Exchange Project (Supporting the Formation of Relations with Universities in ASEAN Countries), TUFS welcomes exchange students from its partner university, the Royal University of Phnom Penh. Exchange students experience Japanese society and culture while interacting with TUFS students. The following is a report on the experience of Japanese culture of Try Sreyleak, an exchange student for the academic year 2019/2020.

The First Step in Learning the History of a Culture: Japanese culture in the eyes of a Cambodian

Ai Noguchi

Every year, we accept exchange students from the Royal University of Phnom Penh for a year-long stay. They participate in various exchanges, such as helping us learn Khmer and having fun together in our free time. From last summer to this summer, Try Sreyleak was with us. Here I introduce her impressions of Japanese culture, based on her experience of a four-day trip to Akita Prefecture in late December 2019, as below.

On the first day in Akita, the two of us explored the area around Akita Station and went to see Kubota Castle, the residence of the Satake clan, the lords of the Kubota Domain, and one of Akita's famous castles. Sreyleak had already learned the word "shiro (castle)" when she was in Cambodia and had imagined it as a tourist attraction. She saw with her own eyes the vast moat around the castle tower and the various measures to keep enemies out of the castle, and gained insight into the Japanese architectural technologies for preserving buildings that keep them beautiful for many years.

As we explored the castle, it began to snow, and she seemed to be very moved. She said that the

temperature is constantly over 20 degrees Celsius in Cambodia, and she had seen snow only in videos. At first, we took commemorative photos against the snowy background, but the snowfall became heavier and heavier, so we went to my aunt's house. I burst out laughing when Sreyleak said, "It's so beautiful, but I didn't think it would be this cold. It's best to watch snow from indoors."

At my aunt's house, I told Sreyleak about Japanese events. Among them, she was interested in osechi dishes and kadomatsu. I explained to her that each of the osechi dishes has a meaning. For example, kazunoko signifies fertility and family prosperity, while shrimp signifies a long healthy life. We display kadomatsu to ward off evil spirits and invite good fortune. When we went into the town, the storefronts were actually decorated with kadomatsu and posters of osechi dishes were up. Since exchange students don't see these things in their dormitory life on the campus in Tokyo, she was glad to discover that the customs of the New Year are ingrained.

On the second day, we went to the Oga Peninsula with my aunt. Oga faces the Sea of Japan, and Namahage is famous there as an Intangible Cultural Heritage. We went to the Namahage Museum to learn about its history and events, and also tried on Namahage costumes. Namahage is not a demon but a divine visitor who brings happiness and disease-free life for the year, and shares a common origin with other various Japanese events. Not only was Sreyleak able to learn more about one of Japan's traditional cultures from its origin, but she was also convinced that namahage is certainly scary for children who have never seen it before, as she saw them start crying when they saw namahage during the tour of the museum.

Later, we all went to a hot spring. There are no hot springs in Cambodia, and many people are reluctant to be naked in front of others, but Ms. Sreyleak told me that she would like to experience Japanese culture. Since it was in the evening, we almost had the whole hot spring to ourselves, and the two of us

basked for nearly two hours. Ms. Sleireak seemed to love the view from the open-air bath and the nice scent of the hot spring, and her initial embarrassment seemed to fade away. She told me later that she had gone to hot springs four times afterward while she was in Japan.

On the third day, we visited my grandmother's house and talked about various topics in Japanese, English, and Khmer. Sreyleak said that although she was studying in Japan, she rarely had an opportunity to talk to Japanese people other than the university students and faculty members, so she had learned a lot by seeing my aunt's and grandfather's everyday work and life. In addition to seeing the culture, she was happiest to interact with the local people during the trip to Akita. As we left, she gave each of my relatives Cambodian scarves called krama. They have become treasures of our family.



Wearing Namahage costumes
at the Namahage Museum

-Long-term ISEP report: Experiences amid the COVID-19 pandemic

Try Sreyleak

My ten months in Japan were very fulfilling and passed very quickly. During my first semester at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (from September 2019 to January 2020), I lived in the dormitory on campus, spending my time doing the usual things, such as studying in the



Visiting Angkor Wat after returning from Japan

classroom, meeting teachers and friends, and going out to have a meal. However, COVID-19 gradually became widespread, and classes were given online in the following semester (from April to July 2020). The lives of Japanese people also changed due to the pandemic. Some of them started working from home, some businesses were suspended, and some schools were closed. The government was always encouraging people to be alert, and most people wore masks outside. What was interesting was that shops ran out of toilet paper, masks, thermometers, and alcohol. Fortunately, Japanese friends gave me masks and alcohol. As for toilet paper and thermometers, I had bought them in bulk beforehand, so I was fine.

During this period, I only went out once a week to buy food. When the university classes became online lectures, I thought I would feel lonely, but I felt surprisingly normal. That was because I had friends from Myanmar and Laos in the dormitory, and I was also talking to Japanese Khmer majors using social media. I decided to return to Cambodia on July 29, after the end of the semester. Since direct flights between Narita and Phnom Penh had been suspended, the Sato Yo International Scholarship Foundation, which sponsored my scholarship, arranged a return ticket for another route. When I arrived at Narita Airport, I was very surprised to find the place almost empty, since it would usually be bustling with people. At the airport, I ate my favorite udon noodles with my Japanese tutor from the university. I felt very sad, thinking that this would be the last udon I would eat in Japan.

On the plane, we were instructed to leave the middle seats unoccupied when we took seats. I flipped

through the pages of an album made by Japanese Khmer majors. The album was wonderfully made, packed with photos and messages. I was so moved that I laughed and cried on my own.

At the connecting airport, the passengers had their temperatures checked again, and those with above 37.3 degrees had to have a PCR test. Four Cambodians who had traveled from Narita were asked to undergo a PCR test. I was one of them. The test was conducted with two cotton swabs that were about three times as long as Q-tips. The first one was inserted into my nose so deeply that I thought I would start bleeding. The second one was also inserted deeply into my throat. It was very painful. It took more than 10 hours for the test results to come out, and there was no connecting flight I could take immediately, so I ended up spending two nights and three days there. The test results were negative for all four of us, allowing us to move freely through the airport. There was a comfortable lounge for transit passengers to rest at the airport, but it was still difficult to get enough food and sleep. At the airport, I spent my time checking Facebook and calling my friends.

On the evening of the 31st, our temperatures were checked again before we boarded the plane to Phnom Penh. In Phnom Penh, we had another PCR test, and I decided to pay the fee to stay at a designated hotel instead of at the free national quarantine area. The next day, I got my passport back as I had a negative result. I was ready to self-isolate for 14 days at home. I returned to the apartment near the university I had rented before going to Japan. A university friend of mine who was working in Phnom Penh brought me a takeaway meal.

After that, my father and younger brother came from my parents' house in Takéo Province, which is about two hours away from Phnom Penh by car, to pick me up. In fact, my parents were very surprised because I had only told my older sister and younger brother that I was back from Japan. My mother was close to tears when she saw me, and my younger sister tried to hug me, so I told her not to approach me. I also tried to keep one meter away from my family members at all times. I didn't eat with my family but had my meals brought to my room, and I had my younger sister take away the used dishes the next day. I hadn't been worried about the coronavirus before then, but after returning to my parents' house, I

became very scared, imagining that something might happen to my family because of me. That was because no matter how careful I was, I couldn't be sure I was okay.

Fortunately, the infection rate in Cambodia has not been too bad so far. I had a difficult experience due to the pandemic, but I think this experience will be useful for me in the future.

