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INTERVIEWEE:

ERDENE MYAGMAR



What is the relationship between politics and archaeology in Mongolia generally?

Government of Mongolia supports archaeology in Mongolia. By the Cultural heritage protection law of Mongolia, historical and cultural heritages in Mongolia are under legal protection of the state. Mongolian government and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science gives the permit for the excavation of archaeological sites.

How does archaeological administration contribute to academic archaeology where you are, and vice versa?

Archaeological expert committee in Mongolia keeps the right to control over the archaeological excavations conducted in the territory of Mongolia.

How does Mongolian Archaeology manages to face its transnational heritage (international collaborations with neighbouring nations, etc)?

Thousands of historical and cultural heritage sites are in the territory of Mongolia and many of them are of transnational interest. Mongolian archaeologists investigate these sites in collaboration with archaeologists from neighbouring nations- Russia and China. We can name many Mongolian-Russian and Mongolian-Chinese archaeological expeditions working on the archaeological sites from different historical periods in different parts of Mongolia for many years successfully. Mongolian archaeologists are also very interested to work on the archaeological sites in the neighbouring countries which are related to the histories of Mongolia's nomadic people.

How does the peculiar ecological setting (grassland, desert, etc) and the relation between local communities and their land influence archaeological prospection, field archaeology, and the interpretation of archaeological findings?

Natural condition and ecological setting in Mongolia influence differently on the preservation of the archaeological sites. While extreme temperatures in the winter or summer, high seasonal and daily temperature fluctuation, wind and rain impact negatively on the preservation of the archaeological monuments, very dry climate condition in the steppe and desert, and permafrost condition in high mountainous areas facilitate very good preservation of the artefacts, specially from organic materials.

Field archaeology in Mongolia does also depend to some extent on the ecological setting. Because of the severe continental climate and very cold winter condition, archaeological fieldwork is possible only during warm seasons – in May, June, July, August and September. But the interpretation of the archaeological findings would not depend much on the ecological setting in Mongolia. Relation between local communities and their land does not much influence on the archaeological investigation.

About Erdene:

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Research interest: Anthropology of archaeological populations from Mongolia, Skeletal biology, Paleopathology.

Questions from Lia Wei in China.

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