

Chan Thearin English Translation\*

**1. Interviewer:** Kong Ry (KR)

**2. Interviewee:** Chan Thearin

1. Right, so what is your full name? □

2. Chan Thearin □

1. Do you have a nickname or a childhood name? □

2. No. □

1. What were you called as a child? □

2. Same name, Chan Thearin. □

1. Just that one name?

2. Yes.

1. So, did you ever learn a different language besides Khmer?

2. No

1. No?

2. I never got to study Khmer and I didn't learn any other language.

1. So you never even formally learned Khmer?

2. Nope, I never studied it.

1. Right, so your birthplace, where was that?

2. Dey Et village.

1. Up to today, how old are you?

2. 19-.

1. Your age?

2. Oh.

1. How old are you?

2. Seventy-four.

1. You are seventy-four years old?

2. Yes.

1. SO, do you remember about your marriage with your husband, what year that happened?

2. Year 50 something 1. Okay, that's alright.

2. Fifty-seven

1. So, what was your marriage like?

2. It was always happy.

1. So how many siblings do you have?

2. So many, they are all dead now. I don't remember much about them.

1. So you are the only one left?

2. I'm the last one left.

1. What number child are you?

2. I'm the youngest. My oldest sibling who just died, their children are older than mine too. They only had 3 children. Now I'm the youngest at 74.

1. Can you describe a little bit about the lives of your siblings? Can you remember some about their histories?

2. I don't remember.

1. That's okay; did your family or any of your siblings ever live outside the country?

2. No

1. They all lived in Cambodia?

2. They were all in Cambodia.

1. Then, please forgive me for asking about your life since you were a child until you grew up and to today, so what has your life's struggle been like?

2. My life is full of struggle; I lived with my Aunt on my mother's side. I was there a bit and it was 3 years, then 5 years, and then 7 years. She would go to work and I was left with my old grandmother. They would shake, my grandparents were very

old, and if they were still around they would be over 100 years old. I don't know one hundred and what; I don't remember what year they were born. My life was hard, harder than most. Others had it easy. I had it hard. My mother died when I was 7 years old. After she died I was left with just my grandparents and no one to take care of me. I was with my aunt, she took me in and raised me, two years, three years, four, and then five years, until I had this life (laughs)

1. When you met your husband, how did you meet him?

2. He just asked to marry me and came to live here. It wasn't difficult, I didn't have to move anywhere, but we worked the rice fields, which was tiring. We were farmers, (laughs) we raised rice, and when I couldn't do that anymore it was hard on my kids. When you get old you lose strength and can't farm anymore.

1. So you farmed, did you ever do any other jobs?

2. No, I just worked the farm and sold some things.

1. Can you compare your life when you were a child to now? What difference is there?

2. These days life is easier. My kids make me food to eat. Before it was hard. When I was young, I worked hard, my grandparents were old and they couldn't make a living.

1. When you were still with your family, what was your house like?

2. My house was big like this.

1. Made of wood?

2. Yeah, my old house was big and made of wood like this one, only it was a thatched roof.

1. Right, so did you go through the Khmer Rouge period?

2. I went through it.

1. Can you describe that time, the difficult time you faced in that time? Can you tell me?

2. It was hard. They had me leave to Kratie. I left with 5 or 6 kids; I had to carry them across my back. When we stopped they all ran around, some this way some that way. I lost them all. In the end brought them and showed them to me, I told them they had to stay with me. The kids said we could go back home, I told them no we can't. I wouldn't let them leave again.

1. So, at that time, what work did the Khmer Rouge use you to do?

2. Transplanting and uprooting rice like I did on the farm. My husband they had him thresh the rice, he was blind so they had him do that. I did the management work.

1. So what was difficult during that time?

2. It was hard, it wasn't easy, and every little bit I was plugged up. I wasn't doing all that much, but I was just getting plugged up.

1. Did you have a disease?

2. Yes.

1. So what songs do you like?

2. None. I don't know how to sing any songs (laughs)

1. You don't like them?

2. No, my kids know how to sing everything.

1. Do you like listening to music?

2. No. □

1. What do you like to eat?

2. I'll eat anything, I'm not picky, and I like to eat all types of soups.

1. When you were young, what games did you like to play?

2. No, I didn't like games. □

1. You didn't like them?

2. No, because I didn't know how to play. (Laughs)

1. Can you tell me more about a difficult time in your life? What was it that you think was the hardest in your life?

2. The hardest thing was doing farm work, transplanting and pulling up the rice plants. I did it all by myself, my kids were all at school. I pulled up those plants and transplanted them, when people were free they would help. It was so tiring, there's nothing to compare it to.

1. Can you tell me more about that hardship? How did you get through it? ☐

2. I got through it just by working. Now my kids let me relax, they don't let me work. Since

I built the house they won't let me do any work. They will take care of me for once.

1. Can you tell me, what was the happiest experience of your life that you can remember?

2. The best?

1. The best experience you've had.

2. There is none. It's just how it is. It's that bad and it's that good (laughs)

1. Right, so did you ever had a desire, or ever had a dream of what you want to do when you grew up?

2. I never had anything like that, whatever I needed to do I just did. Transplanting rice, I just did it. Selling stuff, I just did it. Pickling lettuce, I just did whatever needed to be done.

1. So, your marriage or having kids, did you imagine that you would have a good family?

2. I imagined that if I did well, my kids would do well as well.

1. Thank you for letting me interview you, are you interested or what do you think about this interview?

2. I don't know. ☐

1. What about it was good for you? ☐

2. I don't know. These days my life is good.

1. Do you think this interview was good?

2. It's good; every day is good now that things are easy. When your kids don't let you do any work, even if you want to do work and sell something they won't let you, you're just at home and you make food, eat it, and sleep. (Laughs)

1. So do you think this actual interview was good? ☐

2. It was good. ☐

1. I want to ask your permission to take some pictures with you. Can I do that?

2. Go ahead and take pictures. □

1. Thank you so much for this interview!

\*Translated by Elijah Harmon