A Tale of Two Cities.
Sukhothai, Ayutthaya and their archaeological heritage

Robert B. Gozzoli
Aims

1. A historiographical issue
2. Focus is about how the actual archaeological park is kept and their actual strong points and weaknesses.
3. Comparison of the two parks.
4. Archaeology and Thailand: some considerations
Different historiographical fates

Sukhothai (through Ramkhanhaeng) gives the image of an “ideal country”, whereas the foundation of Thai culture was established.
Different historiographical fates

Ayutthaya is the fighter. Naresuan, and the struggles against the Burmese army highlight the concept of a kingdom having to deal in various fronts.
The last king of Ayutthaya was Suryainamin (1758-1767 CE), also called Ekathat, the one eyed. He was also said to have been struck by leprosy.

The king was considered to be an illegitimate king even by his contemporaries (*Royal Chronicles*).

How much of the story is post Ayutthaya fall propaganda?
NRCT Research Project

Ayutthaya.
Past, Present and Future of a Heritage City.
Final Report

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NRCT Research Project

• The research had three goals:

1. To provide a study of the issues present in the Ayutthaya archaeological park.

2. To supply an analysis of the interpretation problems faced by visitors to the park.

3. Theoretical improvements to the park.
Some bibliographic references (1)


Some bibliographic references (2)


Master plan only from Chulalongkorn University, Social Studies Department (1987).

It deals with the various issues relative to embellishment of the park itself, planning of some itineraries opened for tourists, other than other general planning.

Actual status: never completed.
Needs of restoration.
Wat Chaiwattanaram
Lack of Interpretation material and visual aids and tourist guides
Lack of tourist guidebooks
Chao Sam Phraya Museum
Chao Sam Phraya Museum (2)

Museums close as robberies escalate

Published: 11/12/2009 at 12:00 AM
Newspaper section: News

The Fine Arts Department has ordered the temporary closure of national museums lacking in proper security measures to prevent the theft of national treasures.

The museums will be shut so their security measures can be upgraded, an order issued by department chief Kriengkrai Sampatchalit states.
Local community involvement with the park
Encroaching of local property and heritage.
New help (March 2011)

- Narrowcasters.com is offering an audio service for Ayutthaya

But the Fine Arts Department at Ayutthaya still has to produce a guidebook to the archaeological park.
Conflicts with the local community

1. Complains for decision taken from above.
2. Requests for more participation.
3. Damages of the cultural heritage
Ayutthaya website
Ayutthaya 2020: World Expo?!@

Ayutthaya to be nominated as World Expo site

Sanan's proposal gets the nod from cabinet

Published: 5/04/2011 at 12:00 AM
Newspaper section: News

Thailand will nominate the old capital of Ayutthaya as the site for World Expo 2020.

The cabinet yesterday approved Deputy Prime Minister Sanan Kachomprasart's proposal to nominate the central province as the World Expo site, reasoning that the ancient city has the strongest potential among the candidate locations of Chon Buri, Chanthaburi, Phetchaburi, Chiang Mai and Phuket.

Mr Sanan is chairman of the site selection committee.

The cabinet also approved in principle a 300-million-baht budget to undertake the bid and to campaign for support from other countries, deputy government spokesman Supachai Jaisamut said.

Another 100 million baht from the 2012 fiscal budget will be spent promoting the expo among Thai people.

The Thailand Convention Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) reported that Ayutthaya could draw 36.99 million visitors and generate expo income (tickets and sponsorship) of 61.84 billion baht if it is chosen to host the event. There would also be an estimated 1.33 billion baht in spending on hotels in the region, TCEB
Sukhothai planning and cooperation

• Sukhothai has been able to be a pilot project in Thailand by the Sophia University, Tokio (1986)

• Two master plans were defined for its archaeological park
  1. UNESCO (1982)
  2. Chulalongkorn University, Social Studies Department (1984)
Sukhothai Master Plans. Actual implementation
Sukhothai international cooperation

• Apart from the initial cooperation, Japan has contributed in more recent years, as well as UNESCO projects have been going on in very recent times.

• Japanese involvement still present, as it can be seen on site.
Sukhothai interpretation

1. Interpretation signs

2. Presence of TAT-licensed tourist guides.
Sukhothai interpretation. FAD guidebooks
Sukhothai Ramkhanhaeng Museum
Sawasdee. We are very pleased to welcome you to the World Heritage of Sukhothai, Si Satchanalai and Kamphaeng Phet. On our website you will find the story of the significance and relationships between these three historical parks and why these three historical cities were inscribed on the World Heritage list. Although Sukhothai historical park is better known and more famous than the other two, we would like to invite you to visit Si Satchanalai and Kamphaeng Phet and experience the rich heritage and magnificent architecture that make them World Heritage sites. We also hope you find the time to enjoy the local lifestyle and local products including the ceramics, earthenware, handmade woven cloth, silver and gold, cuisine, festivals and special events. If you have suggestions on how we can improve the World Heritage sites, please let us know.

UNESCO, Bangkok office. Thailand

Welcome to the World Heritage of Sukhothai, Si Satchanalai and Kamphaeng Phet. As you may be aware, the World Heritage Committee inscribed these three historical parks on the World Heritage List in 1991 because they are representative of the first period of Thai Art and the creation of the first Thai state. During your visit you will find a number of notable monuments that represent masterpieces of the first Thai architectural style that can be seen in the historical parks of Sukhothai, Si Satchanalai and Kamphaeng Phet. Given their great national and regional historic value, these three historical parks require special care and attention. You can help preserve the sites by respecting them and their religious significance, and by following the guidelines and signage. We hope you enjoy your visit to the World Heritage of these three historical cities.
Some conclusions

As both entities are under the Fine Arts Department, why such a difference?
What is the relevance of cultural heritage in Thailand today?
What is the relevance of Thai archaeologists in Thai society?
What is the relevance of Thai archaeologists in Thai society?
THANK YOU!!