



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 historiographical issue

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

Roberto B. Gozzoli
Siam University,
Hotel and Tourism Studies Department





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)

- Naraphong Charassri. (2004) 'The role of performing arts in the interpretation of heritage sites with particular reference to Ayutthaya World Heritage Site', PhD dissertation, Bangkok: Silpakorn University.
- Aphivan Saipradist. (2005) 'A Critical Analysis of Heritage Interpretation and the Development of a Guidebook for Non-Thai Cultural Tourists at Ayutthaya Heritage Site', Unpublished PhD, Bangkok: Silpakorn University.



Some bibliographic references (2)

- Aphivan Saipradist and Staiff, R. (2007) 'Crossing the Cultural Divide: Western Visitors and Interpretation at Ayutthaya World Heritage Site, Thailand', *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 2(3):211–224.
- Suwanna Thuraphan. (2008) 'Tourists' Behavior and Satisfaction to Historic City of Ayutthaya, the World Heritage Destination (Thailand)', Bangkok: University of Thai Chamber of Commerce.



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





Flooding



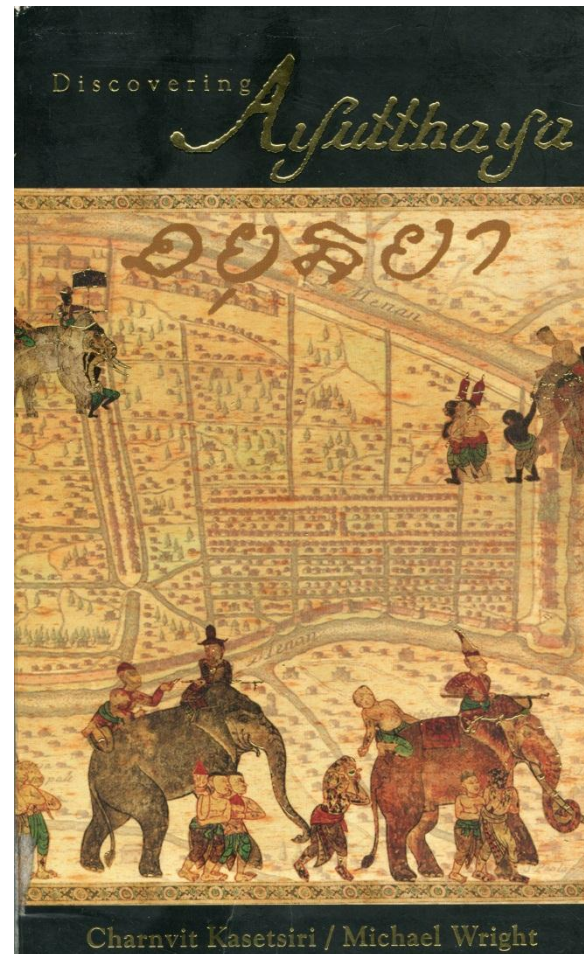
A blue line drawing of a site plan for a proposed development. The plan shows a central rectangular area with a cross-shaped feature, surrounded by various rectangular and circular structures. A north arrow is located in the bottom right corner, and a scale bar is in the bottom left corner.

ปณมสารวิกริธาดิ ศูนย์รวมจิตใจของ
มวลศิษย์ตลอดมาทุกสมัยนับตั้งแต่พระ
ปิองค์พระ
ชาชาติที่ 6 แห่งกรุงรัตนโกสินทร์ ทรง
และถูกคนร้ายลักลอบขุดหาทรัพย์
ได้ดำเนินการขุดค้นบริเวณกลางพื้นที่ห้อง
กลักลอบขุดไปแล้ว พบพระปณมสาร
นิม นอกจานี้ยังพบพระปณมรัตน์
องค์ และแผ่นเงินใบเป็นรูปสัตว์ต่าง ๆ
พุทธนิเทศสถานแห่งชาติเจ้าสามพระยา

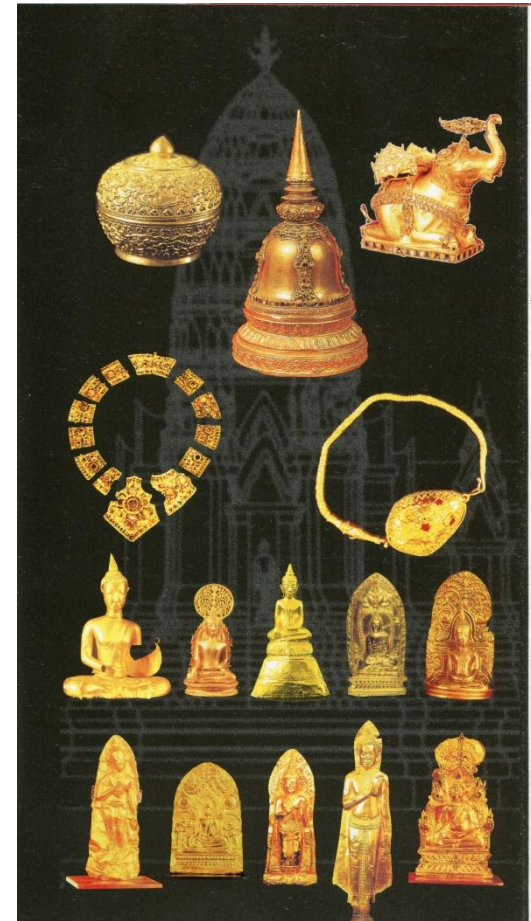
During the reign of King Rama VI in the Rattanakosin period, about 1911 A.D., the main prang of the wall collapsed again and looters seized the opportunity to dig for treasure. Only in 1956 A.D. did the Fine Arts Department undertake excavations around the central area of the prang where the relics must have been kept. The relics of the Buddha were found in the stupa within a seven-layer reliquary. Other antiquities were recovered as well, including Buddha images, votive tablets, covered boxes shaped like fish and golden plaques in the form of animals. All these objects are now at the Chao Sam Phraya National Museum.



Lack of tourist guidebooks



Chao Sam Phraya Museum





Chao Sam Phraya Museum (2)

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Saturday December 12, 2009, 1:21 AM Saturday December 12, 2009, 1:21 AM GMT +07:00

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CRIME

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 Kachornprasart'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





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.

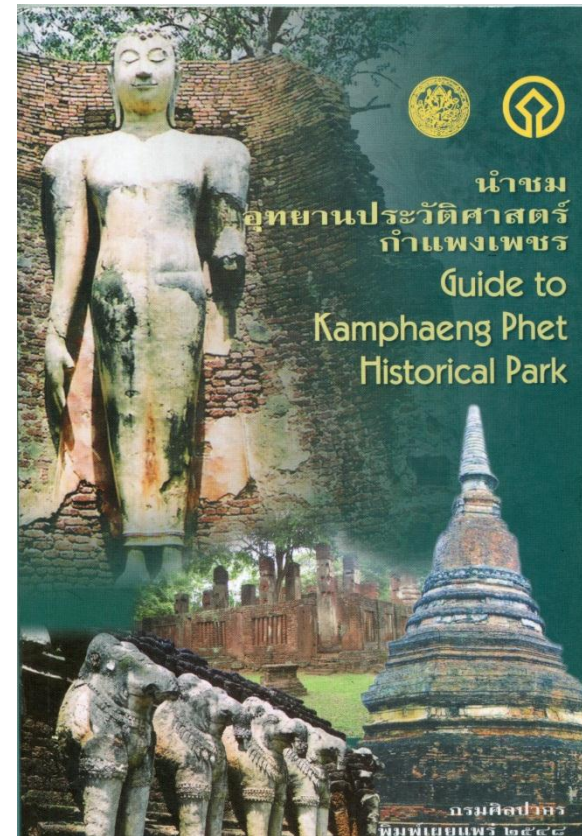
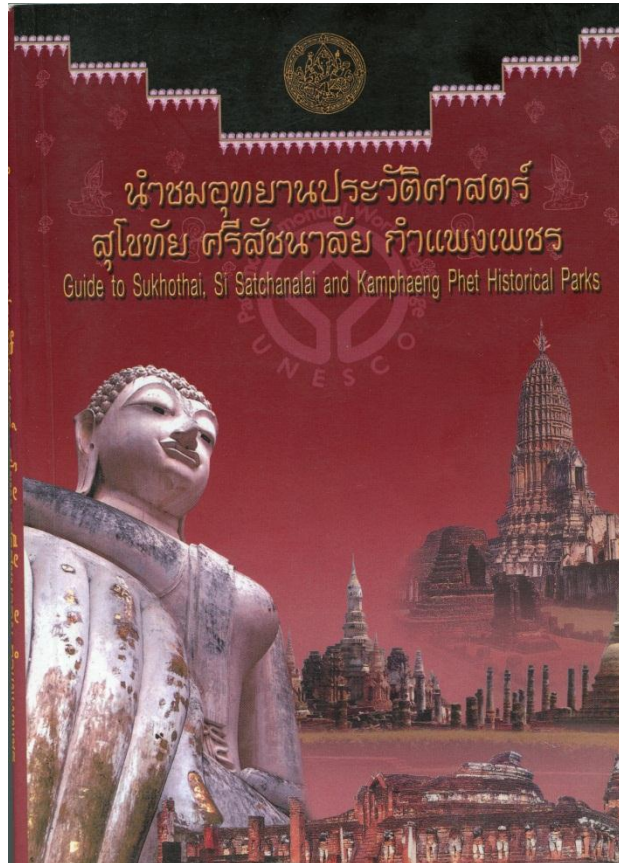
Sukhothai interpretation

1. Interpretation signs



2. Presence of TAT-licensed tourist guides.

Sukhothai interpretation. FAD guidebooks



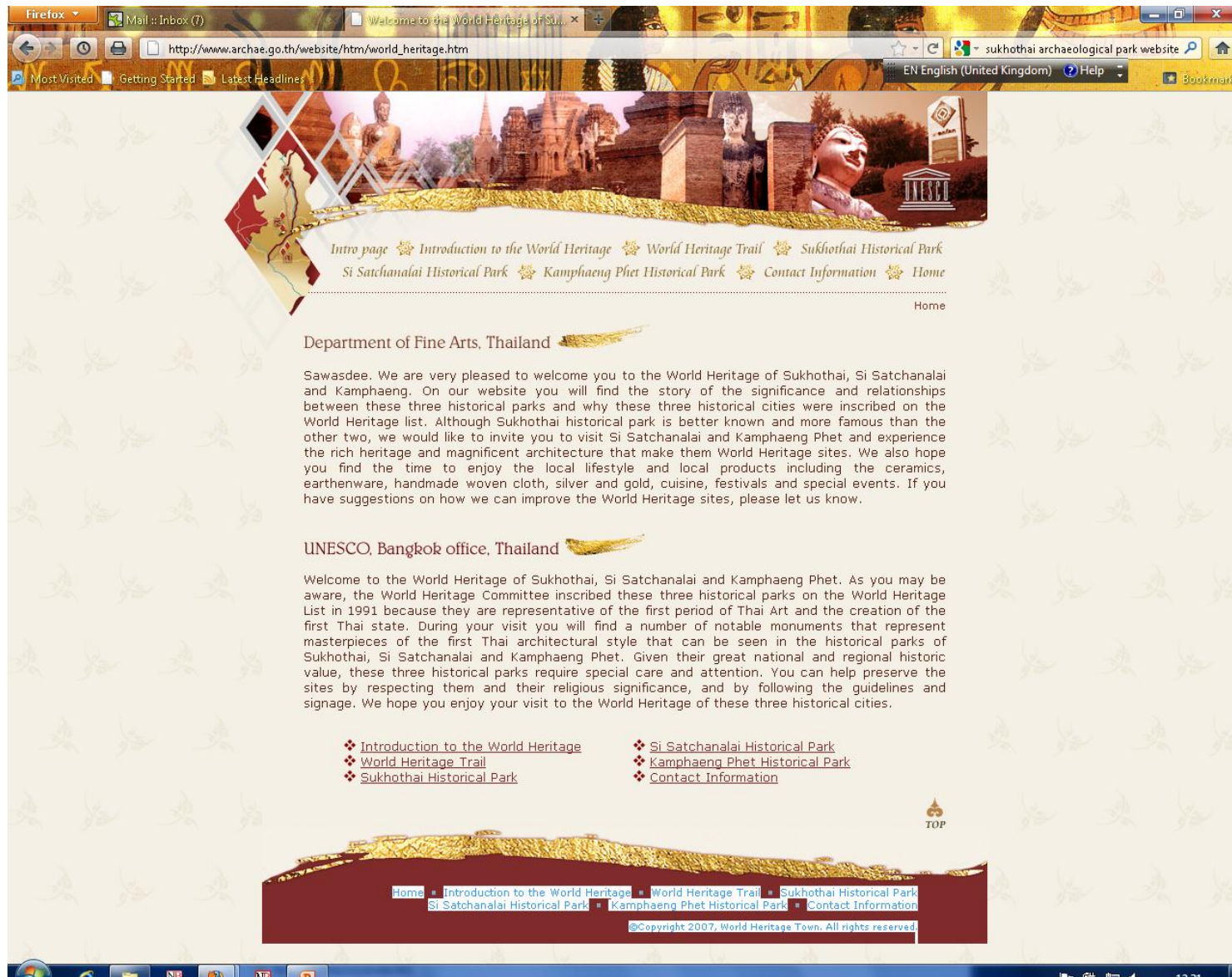


Sukhothai Ramkhanhaeng Museum





Sukhothai website





Some conclusions

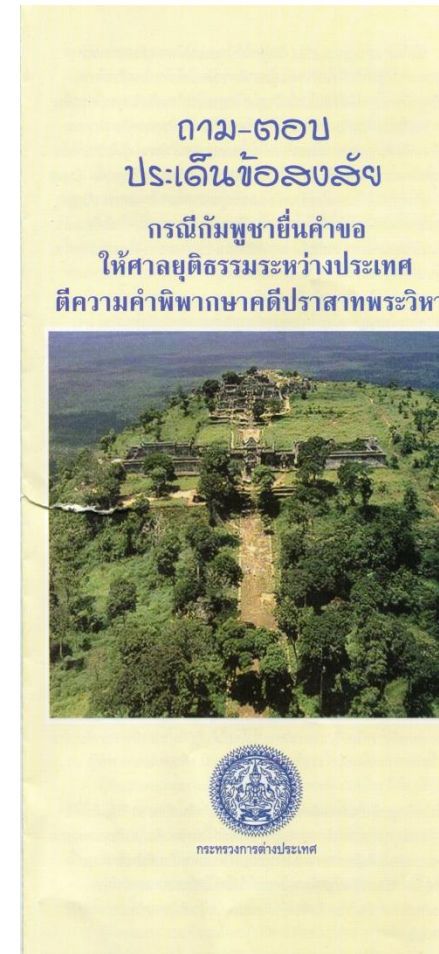
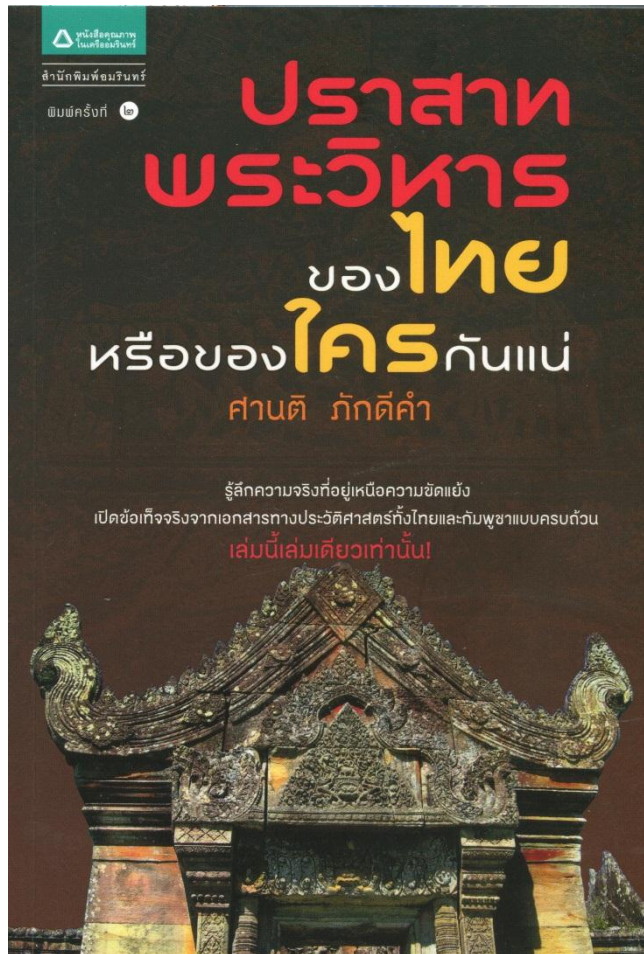
As both entities are under the Fine Arts Department, why such a difference?

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!!

