
**Sukhothai
Historical Park Development Project
Master Plan**

**Fine Arts Department
and Ministry of Education
Government of Thailand.**



Fig. 1. Wat Traphang - Ngoen

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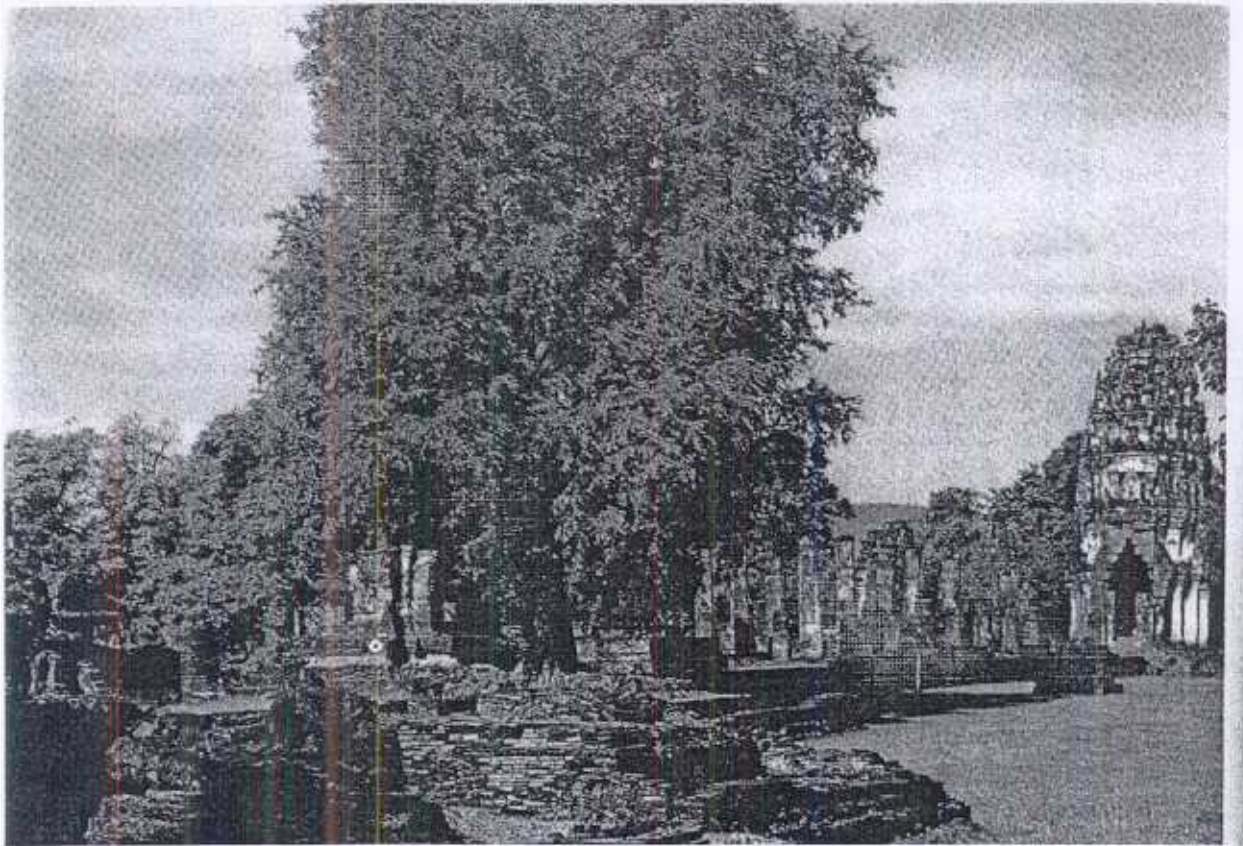
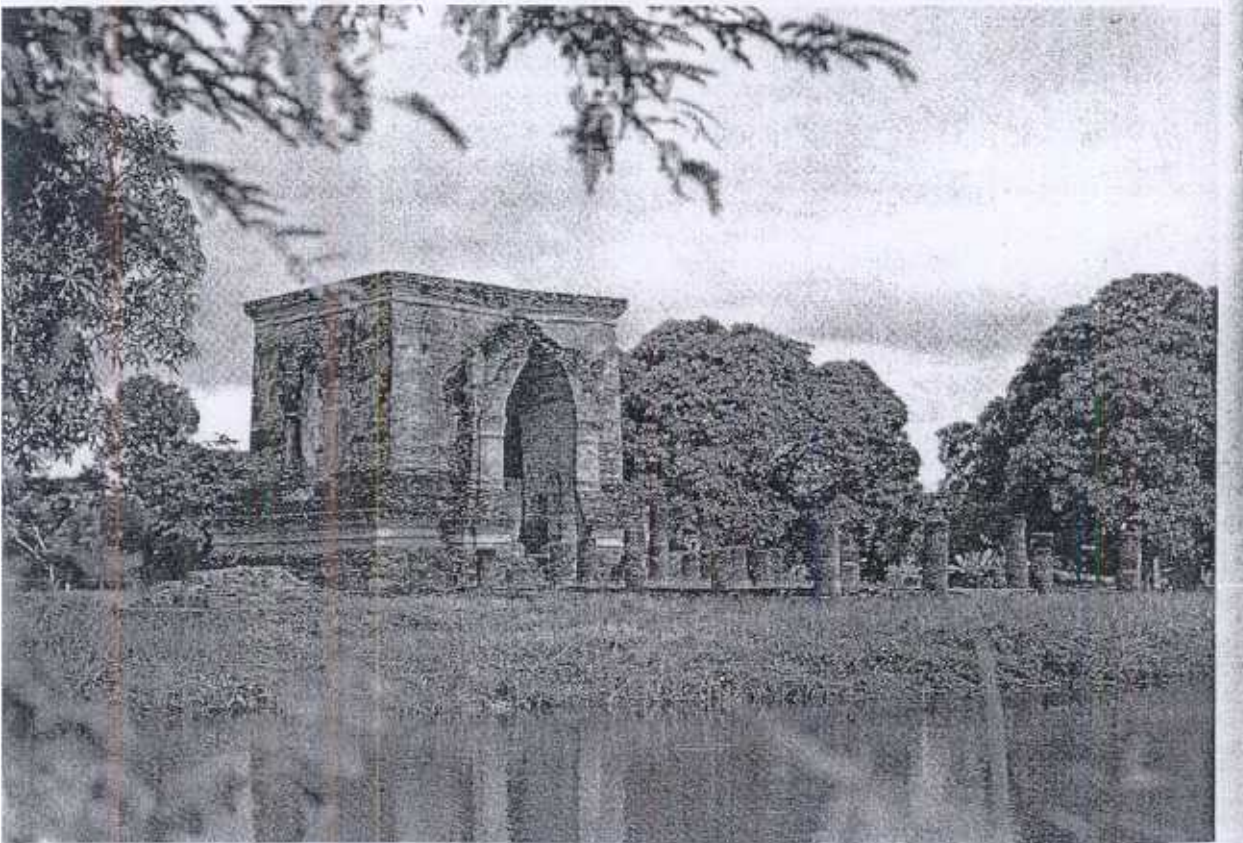


Fig. 2. Wat phra - Phai - Luang

Fig. 3. Wat Thraphang - Thong - Lang



The Sukhothai Historical Park Development Project - Master Plan Introduction

The historical and cultural heritage of the Thai people has its roots in the ancient civilization of Sukhothai, the capital of the first Thai kingdom between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. A source of inspiration for present-day Thai civilization, the ruins of this historical site are the first and most important confirmation of the Thai race. Present archaeological evidence shows that, compared to neighbouring kingdoms, Sukhothai was advanced in spiritual, artistic, technological and political matters.

In order to restore and preserve Sukhothai's rich remains, scholars, connoisseurs of art and concerned individuals have got together to set up a programme of restoration for this once-glorious ancient capital. The Sukhothai Historical Park Development Project, set up in 1975 under the Department of Fine Arts, is concerned with maintaining and restoring historical sites in this city. On 29 December 1976, the National Economic and Social Development Board approved the Fine Arts plan to develop the 1,600 rai of land of Sukhothai city within the government budget of 44 million baht.¹

The aims of the project are as follows:

To restore and maintain the area within the city walls and close by, and in the mountain district to the west.

To Provide tourist facilities.

To increase the earnings of the people living in the vicinity by promoting various activities particularly for purposes of tourism.

To renew the study of Sukhothai history and sociology with fresh archaeological evidence so that present-day Thais can understand their cultural heritage in greater depth.

To enhance the atmosphere of the ancient city in every possible way, particularly by planting trees as described in the first stone inscription, as well as other trees and flowers.

To revive ceremonies and festivals that were practised at the time of Sukhothai.

To keep the registered governmental area under the control of the Fine Arts Department by making sure that no additional people settle or use the area.

On 2 August 1961, the 40,000-rai area of Sukhothai city was registered as a government-protected zone. This was announced in Volume 92, Part 112 of the *Royal Gazette*. The first phase of the project will deal immediately with the area inside the city walls, comprising 1,600 rai; the surrounding area will be dealt with in the second phase. Plans for the restorations were outlined by the Fine Arts Department and approved by the National Economic and Social Development Board; the outline appeared

in the National Development Bulletin. In 1966, a sum of one million baht was allocated for the making of the master plan, and in 1977 this sum was received by the Fine Arts Department. Forty-three million baht was the amount allocated for implementation of the project plans.

Since Sukhothai's city structure was extremely advanced for its time, the drafting of the master plan required a wider range of experts than the Fine Arts Department could provide, and so experts from other governmental departments were recruited. The following departments and agencies contributed greatly to the making of this master plan: the Military Mapping Department (Supreme Command Headquarters), the Land Development Department (Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operative), the Ways and Means Division, Sukhothai (Highway Department), Silpakorn University, Thammasat University, Chulalongkorn University and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In addition to this, consultants were provided by the national Economic and Social Development Board, the Forestry Department (Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operative), the Budget Bureau (Office of the Prime Minister), the Department of General Education (Ministry of Education) and the Office of Policy and Planning (Ministry of the Interior).

The drafting committee was composed of persons from government departments who were strongly motivated by a desire to strengthen the national identity of the country. Because no extra pay was issued for any service provided by these government departments, only 300,000 baht were spent in studies and research for the project. A series of

sixteen meetings culminated in the assembling of plans and designs into an organized booklet form.

Research for the master plan involved:

Studies in archaeology and history to determine the number of ancient sites and their various locations and to arrive at suggestions about land use in Sukhothai times.

Studies of the physical factors in Sukhothai to determine the living conditions of past and present inhabitants and to understand the city in terms of its landscape, as well as the impact of soil conditions on construction and agriculture.

A survey of the present system of land ownership in Sukhothai.

Studies in sociology and economics concerning the population in the city, the number of houses, the socio-psychological circumstances of the present population, their earnings, occupations and prospects for the future.

The following development goals were set:

The carrying out of research on techniques for restoring and preserving the monuments.

Making provision for maintaining the sanitation of the sites, by providing park facilities, an efficient water supply system, drainage pipes and roads.

Arranging exhibitions and educational programmes on the history and culture of Sukhothai.

The promotion of tourism.

Creation of increased job opportunities (The Fine Arts Department will provide vocational training for park service, the improving of farm land and the setting up of cottage industries. The construction of hotels and restaurants will also be encouraged).

Each of the above items will be ex-

plained in greater detail later. Because of the nature of the programme, many of the development components overlap each other and therefore repetition is unavoidable.

In all, the project aims at preserving not only the bricks and stones of an ancient city but the civilization of a whole kingdom. Ancient Sukhothai will continue to 'live' to enrich the cultural heritage of the Thai nation as well as people from all over the world.

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