

Thailand National Periodic Report

Section II

State of Conservation of Specific World Heritage Properties

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II.1 Introduction

- a. State Party

Thailand

- b. Name of World Heritage property

Ban Chiang Archaeological Site

- c. Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

North-west corner: Latitude 17° 24' 18" N

South-east corner: Longitude 103° 14' 42" E

- d. Date of inscription on the World Heritage List

December 1992

- e. Organization or entity responsible for the preparation of the report

Organization (s) / entity (ies): *Ban Chiang National Museum,*

Fine Arts Department

- Person (s) responsible: *Head of Ban Chiang National Museum,*

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- f. Date of Report

February 2003

- g. Signature on behalf of State Party

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Director General, the Fine Arts Department

II.2 Statement of significance

The Ban Chiang Archaeological Site was granted World Heritage status by the World Heritage Committee following the criteria (iii), which is “*to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared*”. The site is an evidence of prehistoric settlement and culture while the artifacts found show a prosperous ancient civilization with advanced technology which had evolved for 5,000 years, such as rice farming, production of bronze and metal tools, and the production of pottery which had its own distinctive characteristics. The prosperity of the Ban Chiang culture also spread to more than a hundred archaeological sites in the Northeast of Thailand. As a result, Ban Chiang is a significant archaeological site for the study of Southeast Asian and World Prehistory.

II.3 Statement of authenticity/ integrity

Ban Chiang was the centre of a remarkable phenomenon of human cultural, social, and the technological evolution in the 5th millenium BC, which occurred independently in this area of Southeast Asia and spread widely over the whole region.

The Ban Chiang Archaeological Site is under the responsibility of the 7th Regional Office of Archaeology and National Museums, Khon Kaen province. Nowadays there are some physical changes which might indirectly affect the site which are: the expansion of community which results in the construction of buildings; the infrastructure development such as road construction and expansion, construction of drainage system within the site area; and the merge of foreign culture with the local culture such as the way to dress, the construction of buildings, etc. Even though these changes are still relatively low and do not directly affect the site, they might affect the site management in the future.

II.4 Management

To preserve the Ban Chiang Archaeological Site, it is important to understand the history and the meaning of cultural heritage. The heritage has to be well maintained and the meaning and value of the heritage should be presented to the general public in order to pass on the heritage to the next generation. The guidelines for the conservation and management of the World Heritage Site can be summarized as follows:

1. The history and origin of the site must be known.
2. The site must be protected by laws or local traditions, which are as effective as laws.
3. The World Heritage area has to be well defined.
4. A buffer zone is needed to prevent any impacts on the World Heritage.
5. The site must be preserved to maintain its originality. All conservation works done should not disturb its style, materials, craftsmanship, and location.
6. After

conservation, the site should still maintain its integrity. If the site deteriorates, there must be plans and measures to safeguard the site.

Ban Chiang is different from other World Heritage sites as its heritage is mostly buried. The artifacts excavated and exhibited are only a small part. Therefore, there has to be a strong measure to maintain and preserve the buried heritage. Other contemporary sites in nearby areas should also be managed following the correct conservation methods.

The Ban Chiang Archaeological Site is protected by national laws as follows:

- The Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museums B.E. 2504 (1961) and the Amended Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museums B.E. 2535 (1992)
- Land Digging and Land Filling Act B.E. 2543
- Announcement No. 189 of the Revolutionary Group prohibiting illegal excavation in the area of Udon Thani, Sakon Nakorn, Khon Kaen, and Mukdaharn

The Fine Arts Department has conducted a project to raise awareness in preservation and to build a cultural network among the locals. There are also education programmes for interested individuals and related agencies. The programmes are as follows:

Training and Establishment of Local Volunteers for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Training for Monks on the Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Lectures to local agencies and academic institutions on archaeology, preservation and development, and relate laws

Production of printed matters for visitors and interested individuals and the academic service for graduate and post-graduate students

Other projects done at Ban Chiang include the followings:

Works done to follow the OECF plan to develop and promote tourism in Indochina phase 2

Refurbishment of the Princess Mother building

Refurbishment of the Lottery building

Improvement of the Wat Pho Sri Nai excavation pit

Improvement of the Ban Thai Puan excavation pit

Improvement of landscape and facilities in the Ban Chiang Museum and within the Ban Chiang community

Road construction from the museum to Wat Pho Sri Nai pit and Ban Thai Puan pit

Construction of three exhibition halls

Construction of a museum storage

In collaboration with the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Udon Thani province, a project on the Development of Historical and Cultural Sites for Tourism in Indochina has been set up. Ban Chiang is part of the OECF to develop tourism in Indochina (phase 3).

The establishment of a plan on the Preservation and Development of Arts and Culture phase 1 (2002-2006) of the Bureau of Archaeology and National Museums. The development plan is divided into 2 levels which are:

Master Plan for Development which indicates 3 areas (1. Nucleus Zone 2. Buffer Zone 3. Protective Zone)

Implementation Plan for Development consisting of 10 smaller plans

Concerning academic research, since 1997, there have been a number of academic research at the Ban Chiang Archaeological Site as follows:

1997: Archaeological Research and the Establishment of a Master Plan to conserve and develop an archaeological site of the Ban Chiang culture at the Wat Chaimongkol, Ban Don Thongchai, Sawang Daen Din district, Sakon Nakorn province

1999: Archaeological Research of an Archaeological Site of the Ban Chiang Culture at Ban Non, Pen district, Udon Thani province

1999: Archaeological Research of an Archaeological Site of the Ban Chiang Culture at Ban Kok Don, Sawang Daen Din district, Sakon Nakorn province

2001: Archaeological Research of an Archaeological Site of the Ban Chiang Culture at Ban Kok Don, Tha Boh district, Nong Khai province

2002: Archaeological Research of an Archaeological Site of the Ban Chiang Culture at Ban Kung, Ban Dung district, Udon Thani province

The number of visitors has increased after Ban Chiang became a World Heritage. The below table shows the statistics of visitors in the last 7 years.

Fiscal Year	Thai	Foreigner	Official Guests	Student	Monk	Elders	Total
1995	9,750	5,480	3,540	11,541	4,065	-	34,376
1996	131,260	76,537	10,445	27,980	10,684	-	256,906
1997	142,250	74,350	6,450	28,880	9,500	-	261,430
1998	91,900	7,822	6,543	22,150	6,660	-	135,075
1999	79,760	7,194	7,955	27,468	10,058	8,189	140,624
2000	65,759	6,286	10,536	17,181	7,511	7,572	114,845
2001	54,629	6,079	13,943	19,961	4,179	4,916	103,707
2002	39,562	6,506	5,670	8,473	2,701	2,004	64,956
(Oct.- June)							

The Ban Chiang National Museum has provided sufficient facilities to serve visitors and academic activities including electricity, tap water, and transportation.

II.5 Factors affecting the property

The area surrounding Ban Chiang is the location of the communities which have expanded because the site attracts a large number of visitors. A factor which directly affects the site is the invasion to the archaeological area, which occurs because of different reasons as follows:

Need of land for farming and living as the archaeological area is suitable for settlement and farming

Illegal excavation of archaeological sites to find pottery, beads, bronze tools, etc. conducted by the locals and antique dealers from other places

Excavation to attract tourists conducted by the locals and local leaders who lack understanding on archaeology and conservation and the awareness on the value of archaeological sites

To prevent the negative impact on the conservation and restoration of the Ban Chiang archaeological site, two plans have been set up to handle the above problems within the timeframe of 3 years (2003-2006).

Plan to conserve and develop the Ban Chiang archaeological site
Strategic plan to develop the Ban Chiang community

These plans aim to integrate the civil development into the conservation of the historic site to avoid the conflict between the two which will ruin the value of Ban Chiang.

II.6 Monitoring

The Fine Arts Department is in the process of improving the standard of the monitoring system in the historical parks and archeological sites.

II.7 Conclusions and recommended actions

Ban Chiang is an important prehistoric site which is different from other sites as the buried heritage reflects a distinctive prehistoric civilization in Southeast Asia. The artifacts excavated and exhibited are only a small part of the heritage, and the buried heritage also needs to be preserved and maintained following the correct conservation methods. Any actions taken in this area and the nearby area have to abide by the UNESCO and ICCROM regulations.

The Fine Arts Department through the Ban Chiang National Museum, the 7th Regional Office of Archaeology and National Museums, works with the Bureau of Archaeology and National Museums to include an area surrounding the Ban Chiang

Archaeological Site into the Master Plan to conserve and develop the site. The two plans (as mentioned in II.5) will be implemented in three years (2003-2006).

The Ban Chiang Archaeological site still needs international assistance in terms of academic affairs, finance, and conservation.

Chapter VI

Conclusions and Recommended Actions

6.1 Main Conclusions

The Fine Arts Department has set up a plan to encourage the local community to take part in the preservation of cultural heritage following the Constitution B.E. 2540. The plan will be implemented within 10 years (2002-2013) with the focus on the devise of plans, personnel development, adaptation of laws, and research.

The Fine Arts Department has also set up a 5-year development plan which is the Plan on the Conservation and Development of Arts and Culture phase 9 (2003-

2006) to provide the understanding on national and local arts and culture as well as to encourage the local community to participate in the preservation of cultural heritage.

The Bureau of Archaeology and National Museums is responsible for archaeological management, conservation of artifacts, monuments, and fine arts, national museums, and historical parks all over the country. It has twelve regional offices with different levels of personnel, which can be divided as follows:

Main staff:	archaeologist/ curator/ architect/ construction engineer
Additional staff:	survey technician/ fine arts technician/ construction technician
General staff:	administrative officer/ finance officer/ typist/ etc.

There are a number of measures to protect, conserve, and revive the national cultural heritage as follows:

- Laws such as The Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museums B.E. 2504 (1961) and the Amended Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museums B.E. 2535 (1992)

- The Registration of Monuments
- The Prioritization of Monuments

The Fine Arts Department receives its funding from the Government of Thailand or other sources, which have been approved by the authorized body. There have been some cooperations with international agencies on the preservation of cultural heritage. Projects implemented are, for instance, the Ban Chiang Archaeological Site (with University of Pennsylvania, USA and Sumimoto Bank, Japan), the Cleaning of Phra Ajana Buddha Image in Sukhothai (with American Express Co., Ltd.), and the Reviving of the Monuments after Flooding in the Ayutthaya Historical Park (American Express Co., Ltd.). Besides, the Fine Arts Department also receives funding from the OECF.

On 2nd-8th April of every year, the Fine Arts Department organizes a project on Thai Heritage Preservation to raise public awareness on the appreciation of Thai arts and culture following the Constitution B.E. 2540. The training programmes for local volunteers and monks have also been set up to benefit the preservation of cultural heritage.

6.2 Proposed Future Actions/ Actions

Following the Constitution B.E. 2540, the Fine Arts Department has prepared a long-term plan to transfer some duties on the preservation of cultural heritage to local administrative agencies which is the Plan on the Conservation and Development of Arts and Culture phase 9 (2003-2006).

1. Training on Arts and Culture for the public

To provide knowledge and understanding on local and national arts and culture to the public and to encourage the public to take part in the preservation of cultural heritage

2. Arts and Culture Network

To encourage the collaboration within the community to benefit the preservation of arts and culture

2.1 Training on the Preservation of Cultural Heritage for monks

2.2 Training on Local Volunteers

2.3 Youth Camp on the Preservation of Cultural Heritage

2.4 Friends of National Museums

2.5 Community Assistance Programme on the conservation and preservation of cultural heritage

3. Local Museums Initiative

- To provide the knowledge on museum establishment and management to private sector and other government agencies

- To promote the collaboration in the establishment of local national museums

-To work with the local museums so that they would correspond to the need of the community

4. Pilot Project on the Participatory Approach on the Conservation and Management of Cultural Property

To encourage the collaboration between the local community, local administrative agencies, local government offices in the preservation of cultural heritage

5. Community Training Programme to prepare the local community and agencies to be responsible for the preservation of art and cultural heritage

To provide the right understanding to the community and local agencies so that they could manage and preserve their cultural heritage following the guidelines given by the Fine Arts Department

Section II

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II.1 Introduction

- a. State Party

Thailand

- b. Name of World Heritage property

***Historic Town of Sukhothai and Associated Historic Towns
Historic City of Ayutthaya and Associated Historic Towns
Ban Chiang Archaeological Site***

- c. Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

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- d. Date of inscription on the World Heritage List

December 1991, 1992

- e. Organization or entity responsible for the preparation of the report

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- f. Date of Report

February 2003

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