

A) IDENTIFICATION

Nomination : The Historic City of Ayutthaya
Location : Province of Ayutthaya
State party : Thailand
Date : 28 September 1990

B) ICOMOS RECOMMENDATION

That this cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of Criterion III.

C) ICOMOS OBSERVATIONS

The World Heritage Bureau in June 1991 deferred examination of this nomination pending receipt from the Thai authorities of details of the boundaries of the area nominated for inscription. By letter of October 11, 1991, the required information has been provided. ICOMOS has examined the documentation and is satisfied with the information provided.

D) BACKGROUND

In 1350, during the reign of the grandson of Rama the Strong (the true founder of the kingdom of Sukhothai), a Thai vassal revolted and obliged the king to make an oath of allegiance to him. He had himself crowned, taking the name Ramadhipati, and made Ayutthaya his capital, which thus became the second Siamese capital. The city was relatively close to the border with Cambodia because the new king wanted to make the Khmers his vassals. The new dynasty had to defend itself against numerous revolts and invasions and the Siamese state became, above all else, a military state.

Regarding its cultural life, several distinct phases can be seen:
-the period between its foundation and the annexation of Sukhothai (1350-1438); -the period of the great wars (1438-1628); -the

period of Westernization (1628-1733); -and the apogee, before its destruction (1733 to the end of the 18th century).

Initially, Ayutthayan art was a mixture of local traditions with strong influences from Sukhothai. It was only during the second period that a true "national" art was born, the product of diverse cultural influences. As the state opened up politically toward Europe in the 17th century, traces of Western culture began to appear. Once these new influences were assimilated, Siamese art entered a period of rich mannerism.

The city was destroyed by the Burmese and today nothing remains but a few vestiges of the splendor that was Ayutthaya. The main architectural feature of the town was the "prang", a reliquary tower which did not exist at Sukhothai. To compete with the old capital, the kings of Ayutthaya richly endowed the monasteries, which acquired gigantic proportions (Wat Mahathat, 14th-17th centuries; Wat Si Sanphet, 15th century, etc). Another feature of Ayutthayan art was the increased use of mural painting used to decorate all monuments, for example, the crypts of Wat Raj Burana.

Today, the site's characteristic architecture of brick and stucco is devoid of its decoration and completely exposed to the elements. In 1967 the site was classed a historic park, but only part of it is proposed for inclusion on the World Heritage List.

- **Criterion III.** This site bears excellent witness to the period of development of a true national Thai art.

ICOMOS, November 1991

Land Development Plan of Ayutthaya

Historical Park (1991 - 2001)

-  Historic Areas - highly Significant
-  Information Centre
-  Historical Park Project Office
-  Arts and Crafts Villages
-  Public Park
-  New Residential Areas
-  Old Residential Areas
-  Added Area for New Residents
-  Historic Areas in Newly Developed Section
-  New Arts and Crafts Villages
-  Old Residential Areas in Newly Developed Section
-  Boundary of Ayutthaya
-  Historical park Area
-  Boundary of Newly Developed Section

0 100 300 500M.

Ayutthaya : plan du Parc Historique / plan of the Historical Park

