



**THE GUIDELINE FOR CONSERVATION OF LIVING HERITAGE TEMPLES IN THAI CONTEXT:  
THE CASE STUDY OF LIVING HERITAGE TEMPLES IN RATTANAKOSIN ISLAND**

**By  
Bhakhak anok Ratanawaraporn**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
Program of Architectural Heritage Management and Tourism  
(International Program)  
Graduate School  
SILPAKORN UNIVERSITY**

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The Graduate School, Silpakom University has approved and accredited the Thesis title of “The Guideline for Conservation of Living Heritage Temples in Thai Context : The Case Study of Living Heritage Temples in Rattanakosin Island” submitted by Ms.Bhakhakanok Ratanawaraporn as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Architectural Heritage Management and Tourism

.....  
(Assistant Professor Panjai Tantatsanawong, Ph.D.)  
Dean of Graduate School  
...../...../.....

The Thesis Advisor

Professor Emeritus Ken Taylor

The Thesis Examination Committee

..... Chairman  
(Professor Emeritus Trungjai Buranasomphob, Ph.D.)  
...../...../.....

..... Member  
(Assistant Professor Pibul Jinawath, Ph.D.)  
...../...../.....

..... Member  
(Professor Emeritus Ken Taylor)  
...../...../.....

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Living heritage temple in Thai context refers to Theravada Buddhist temple having heritage significance in which the monks reside and the religious rites have taken place continuously. In Thai society, Buddhist temples are considered as one kind of cultural heritage imbued with unique intangible value. Thus, a relevant conservation concept is needed to protect their special significance and cultural context. Although many living heritage temples have been protected by the laws enacted by the government sector, these laws still have the limitation on conservation concepts which pay more attention to protect tangible aspect and lack a clear concept for safeguarding intangible aspect. Indeed, the preservation of physical components will become completely meaningless if the physical aspects endure while their true meanings are neglected.

The process to achieve the right understanding of living heritage temples should be started with the assessment of cultural significance which is an essential prerequisite to making decisions about the conservation policy. Cultural significance of living heritage temples consists of historic, aesthetic, spiritual and social value. Historic value of Buddhist temples encompasses the history of aesthetics seen in their physical components and the relationship with society found in the continuous traditions of religious activities, including the inspiration from Theravada Buddhism in the creation of tangible aspects and in the formation of religious traditions. Aesthetic value of architectural designs and decorations as well as of images of the Buddha and his disciples found in Buddhist temples reflects the religious belief devoted to the ideal of Theravada Buddhism. This is the true meaning inherent in physical aspects of Buddhist temples. Furthermore, the tranquil surroundings are inextricably linked with physical aspects of Buddhist temples. Spiritual value of Buddhist temple refers to the Teachings of the Buddha or the Dharma. Social value has emerged from the inheritance, maintenance and dissemination of the Dharma or spiritual value by the elder monks to the young monks and to the laity.

The right understanding of cultural significance of living heritage temples can lead to the appropriate conservation policy and is to ensure that all heritage values, tangible and intangible, will be protected. In addition, the conservation policy of living heritage temples should not attempt to freeze them at a moment in time, but rather guide the inevitable changes in ways which are sympathetic to the existence of past and present expressions. Moreover, the conservation policy should be created from a bottom-up approach with residents' participation integral to the planning process. The dissemination of information to the residents and all related stakeholders is an important part for decreasing any further conflicts of misunderstanding and for the accomplishment to sustainable conservation of living heritage temples.

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Program of Architectural Heritage Management and Tourism Graduate School, Silpakom University Academic Year 2011

Student's signature .....

Thesis Advisor's signature .....

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

#### **Statement and significance of the problem**

Theravada Buddhism has been the prominent religion of Thai kingdom and has enriched the life of Thai people in almost all their aspects for more than 700 years. Thailand is now considered as the Buddhist State which can be seen by the abundance of Buddhist temples in the kingdom. In the past, Buddhist temples were represented as the center of all education from religious philosophy to social morals. Moreover, they also functioned as the center of traditional arts and crafts which still be seen in their artistic arts in the forms of Buddha images, sacred structures and their decorations.

Nowadays, many usable Buddhist temples still function as the center of faith and represent their significance as the cultural heritage of Thai society. Unfortunately, there is no specific guideline for the conservation of living or usable temples which have heritage significance. Although many living temples having heritage significance have been protected by the Ancient Monuments Act enacted in 1961 and amended in 1992, this legislation pays more attention to protect tangible heritage and lacks a clear concept for safeguarding intangible heritage of the cultural heritage places.

The usable temples with heritage significance require the proper guideline to conserve them as the living heritage places. Inside the Buddhist temples, the sacred structures and the Buddha images have been worshipped simultaneously the religious buildings have been used for taken place religious rites by the monks and the laity. Indeed, tangible aspects in the living heritage temples are imbued with intangible attributes. Therefore, the concept of conservation on living heritage temples must include all heritage values both tangible and intangible values.

Due to the rapid change in Thai society from the influence of modernization, living heritage temples are facing losing intangible heritage with the lack of awareness of protecting this kind of heritage. Intangible heritage of Buddhist temples has high significance and also represents Thai Buddhist identity. Therefore, the guideline for conservation of living heritage temples in Thai context should harmonize the concept of modern conservation with Thai Buddhist way.

#### **Goal and objectives**

**Goal:** The ultimate goal of this dissertation is to provide the model guideline for conservation of living heritage temples in Thai context.

## **Objectives**

1. To study the concepts of cultural heritage conservation at all levels from international, regional, to national level. This dissertation aims to analyse the international and national conservation concepts for applying as guidelines for the conservation of living heritage temple in Thai context.

2. To identify the concepts of cultural heritage conservation in Thai society at national and local level in the area of the test study, Rattanakosin Island. This dissertation aims to analyse the limitation on conservation works from the present legislation, ministerial regulation and conservation plans of government section.

3. To identify Buddhism in Thai context and the intangible value of Buddhist temple in the attributes of spiritual value and social value.

4. To identify unsustainable conditions that face cultural heritage significance of living heritage temples in Thailand.

5. To create the suitable guideline for conservation of living heritage temples from the case study and it can be useful to apply for other temples having heritage significance. This guideline for conservation will be used for support awareness of protecting both tangible and intangible heritage values of living heritage temples in Thailand.

## **Scope of the study**

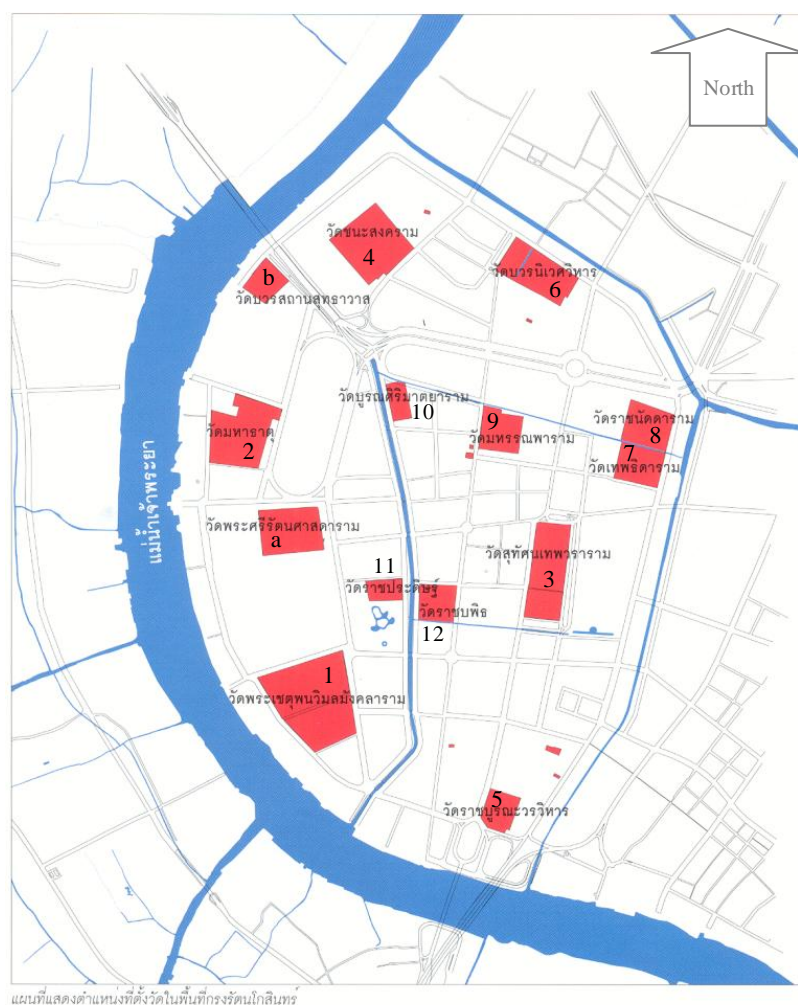
The criteria to identify the distinctive characters of living heritage temples in this dissertation are the age of the temples must be at least 50 years old qualifying as historic places and being continuously used by the monks and communities. The dissertation also aims to concentrate on the usable temples having heritage significance at national level. Therefore, the case study of this study focuses on living heritage temples in the area of Rattanakosin Island as a test study. Rattanakosin Island, the historic area located on the east bank of the Chao Phraya River, whose boundary in this study is the old capital area of Bangkok between the reigns of King Rama I and King Rama III. Inside this historic area, there are 12 living heritage temples which all of them were registered as the national ancient monuments.

Although, the temple of the Emerald Buddha is the highest valuable heritage temple in Rattanakosin Island and is continuously used for proceeding important religious rites including royal ceremonies, it is not registered as the national ancient monument. Moreover, this royal temple has no residence for the monks because the royal temple located in the Grand Palace did not allow any monks to reside in. The same circumstance as the temple of the Emerald Buddha, despite the main halls of Wat Bowornasuthawas was registered as the national ancient monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949; it has no residence for the monks because any monks cannot reside in the royal temple located in the Front Palace. Therefore, these two royal temples, which are located in the palaces' precincts, are not the test study sites in this dissertation.

The 12 living heritage temples in Rattanakosin Island which are represented the heritage significance at national level are as follows:

1. Wat Phra Chetuphon Wimonmangkhalaram (rebuilt in the First Reign)
2. Wat Mahathat Yuwarat Rangsarit (rebuilt in the First Reign)
3. Wat Suthat Thepwararam (built in the First Reign)
4. Wat Chana Songkram (rebuilt in the First Reign)
5. Wat Ratchaburana (rebuilt in the First Reign)
6. Wat Bowornniwet Vihara (built in the Third Reign)
7. Wat Thepthidaram (built in the Third Reign)
8. Wat Ratchanaddaram (built in the Third Reign)
9. Wat Mahannoppharam (built in the Third Reign)
10. Wat Buranasirimatayaram (built in the Third Reign)
11. Wat Ratchapradit Sathimahasimaram (built in the Forth Reign)
12. Wat Ratchabophit Sathimahasimaram (built in the Fifth Reign)

Remark: the numbers of the temples are in order by reign



(a) The temple of the Emerald Buddha: the royal temple of the Grand Place

(b) Wat Bowornsuthavas: the royal temple of the Front Palace

Figure 1 Map of Rattanakosin Island showing 12 living heritage temples  
Figure resource: City Planning Department, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration 2004:13

The meaning of Thai context in this dissertation is the Thai ways of belief in Theravada Buddhism. The dissertation plans to study 12 living heritage temples in Rattanakosin Island in order to summarize the present functions and the effects of the current conservation plans. The test studied results are to provide the model guideline for conservation of living temples having heritage significance.

According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the term 'Temple' refers to a building used for the worship of a god or gods in some religious, while the term 'Monastery' means a building in which monks live and worship. In Thailand, the Thai dialect 'Wat' is common used to refer to temple or monastery, although the real meaning of 'Wat' actually describes the entire religious complex that may contain any number of sacred buildings for the worship in Buddhavas area and residences of monks in Sanghavas area. Due to the common usage, these terms (Wat, temple and monastery) in this dissertation is interchangeable.

### **Research methodology**

This dissertation uses multi-methods approach to collect all related data such as document analysis, on-site survey, on-site observation and qualitative method. Each method is used whenever it is most appropriate and effective to collect data for this dissertation.

### **Research instrument**

- Document analysis with all related information of living heritage temple conservation, particularly of the test study area, Rattanakosin Island
- On-site survey and on-site observation are conducted for observing and collecting phenomenon of religious activities in 12 living heritage temples located in Rattanakosin Island
- In-depth interviews related to the dissertation content with the monks of the living heritage temples in Rattanakosin Island

### **Collection of data**

Collection of data for this dissertation is valid and reliable.

#### **- Primary data collection**

- Original documents from libraries and related resources
- Old maps, illustrations and photographs from related resources
- On-site survey and on-site observation in the living heritage temples
- In-depth interviews with related stakeholders
- Photographs from on-site surveys and on-site observation

#### **- Secondary data collection**

- Related information from libraries, the past studies and online resources
- Current documents from various resources related to the content
- All relevant issues that are helpful are considered

## **Analysis of data**

During the dissertation formation, a large amount of data is collected for analysis. These data can range from original or historic literatures and illustrations from academic books or academic journals, online resources from internet, on-site surveys, on-site observation and in-depth interviews, which are law materials and needed to be examined. All related data is analyzed by content analysis and provide synthesized information being useful for the dissertation formation.

## **Process of the study**

1. Gathering and analysis conservation concept of living religious heritage in all level from international, regional, national to local levels. This dissertation aims to analyze the update international conservation concepts for applying as guidelines for conservation of living religious heritage in Thai context. Also all relevant issues that are helpful are considered.

2. Gathering and analysis legislation, regulation and related project on conservation of living heritage temples in the area of the test study for presenting the limitation on conservation works from the present legislation, ministerial regulation and conservation plan of government section.

3. Analysis the information of Buddhism in Thai context and the intangible value of Buddhist temple in the attributes of spiritual value and social value.

4. Participation and observation the phenomenon of religious rites in the living heritage temples in Rattanakosin Island.

5. In-depth interviews related to the dissertation content with the monks of the living heritage temples in Rattanakosin Island.

6. Data analysis, discussion and conclusion.

7. Create the guideline for conservation of living heritage temples in Thai context.

8. Presentation

## **Sources of data**

The sources of data that are useful for conducting this dissertation are primary source and secondary source:

- **The primary source** includes libraries, national archive, on-site survey, on-site observation and in-depth interview.

- **The secondary source** includes libraries, the past studies, online resources and current documents from various resources related to the research content.

## Chapter 2

### The concepts of cultural heritage conservation

The idea of creating guidelines for cultural heritage conservation gradually took form in Europe owing to the destruction of historic construction during World War II. After the Second World War had ended in 1945, UNESCO, *the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* was established. One of its mandates is to pay special attention to new global threats that may affect the cultural and natural heritage and ensure that the conservation of sites and monuments contributes to social cohesion. (UNESCO 2010) Afterwards in 1992, *the World Heritage Center* (WHC) was founded to be the focal point coordinator within UNESCO for all matters related to world heritage management.

UNESCO is not the only international organization which concentrates on cultural heritage conservation. There are two other international organizations which function as the professional and scientific advisor to UNESCO on all aspects of cultural heritage.

The first advisory organization is the International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) which was founded in 1959 as an intergovernmental center for the study and improvement of methods of restoration. Its intergovernmental status and constantly updated network of specialized conservation institutions and experts enable it to collaborate closely with UNESCO for conservation approach. (ICCROM 2009)

And the second, the International Council on Monument and Site (ICOMOS), founded in 1965, is a non-governmental organization that acts as an advisor to UNESCO on cultural heritage issues. ICOMOS is dedicated to promote the application of theory, methodology, and scientific techniques to the conservation of cultural heritage. It works as a network of experts that benefits from the interdisciplinary exchange of its members, among which are architects, historians, archaeologists, art historians, geographers, anthropologists, engineers, and town planners. After UNESCO adopted concept of the Nomination to be the World Heritage List in the World Heritage Convention in 1972, ICOMOS has been responsible for the evaluation of all nominations of cultural and mixed properties made to the World Heritage List by State Parties to the World Heritage Convention against the basic criterion of 'Outstanding Universal Value' and the criteria laid down by the World Heritage Convention. (ICOMOS 2009)

Since the establishment of UNESCO and its advisory bodies, ICCROM and ICOMOS, many conservation guidelines at international level have been launched continuously for protecting the significant cultural heritage created from the ancestral wisdom.

## **The concept of cultural heritage conservation at international level**

### **The Venice Charter: International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites**

Since the second half of the twentieth century, one of the most recognized guidelines for cultural heritage conservation has been *the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites* which was adopted by ICOMOS in 1964. This Venice Charter, as it is generally known, defines 'cultural heritage' as 'historic monuments and sites' which can be seen from its concept that 'a historic monument embraces not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural setting in which is found the evidence of a particular civilization, a significant development or a historic event'. This charter provides general principles for the conservation and restoration of historic monuments and sites which aim to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument and is based on respect for original material and authentic documents.

Afterwards, when many conservation guidelines have been improved continuously and expanded to deal with cultural heritage in Asia, this charter, which was initiated by the western experts and functioned as guideline for the conservation of European architecture during the 1960s and 1970s, has been criticized for its limit only on tangible aspects conservation from its focus point to conserve the authenticity of the physical aspects of the architectural works. (Taylor, 2004)

### **The World Heritage Convention: the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)**

Since the announcement of the Venice Charter, the distinguished conservation guidelines for cultural heritage became visible but the conservation guidelines for natural heritage were not clearly appeared at international level. For its mission on protecting heritage properties, UNESCO seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of heritage both cultural and natural around the world considered to be of universal outstanding value. Therefore, in 1972, the international treaty called *the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* or the World Heritage Convention, as it is commonly known, was adopted by UNESCO. The most significant feature of the World Heritage Convention is that it links together in a single document the concepts of natural conservation and the preservation of cultural properties. In the World Heritage Convention, cultural heritage is defined into 3 types as monuments, groups of buildings, and sites which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science.

As the result of the Convention, the *World Heritage Committee*, an intergovernmental committee for protecting heritage of outstanding universal value, was constituted. Its task is to consider the applications from the State Parties to this Convention for registering their heritage properties to be the *World Heritage List*. Also a fund for giving the financial support for the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage, the *World Heritage Fund*, was hereby established.

Since its announcement, the World Heritage Convention has been regarded as the international standard of conservation practice and served as a high effective tool to stimulate conservation on cultural and natural heritage sites in many State Parties. And for facilitating the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, *the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, first written in 1977 and periodically revised, were prepared for the purpose of informing State Parties to the Convention of the principles that guide the work of the Committee in establishing the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger, as well as in granting international assistance under the World Heritage Fund. The *Operational Guidelines* are considered a working tool, and may be edited and revised by the World Heritage Committee according to local needs in accordance with the policies defined for the Convention by the Committee. (Feilden&Jokilehto 1998:5-6) The latest version was completed in 2008.

Since the announcement of the Venice Charter and the World Heritage Convention, the concepts of cultural heritage conservation have been reviewed and expanded into many specific definitions of cultural heritage such as the following:

#### **The Florence Charter: Charter for the Conservation of Historic Garden (1982)**

This addendum to the Venice Charter covers the specific field of historic gardens which is equally applicable to small gardens and to large parks whether formal or natural landscape. Historic garden can be considered as a monument by means of its architectural and horticultural composition of interest to the public from the historical or artistic point of view. The authenticity of a historic garden depends as much on the design and scale of its various parts as on its decorative features and on the choice of plant or inorganic materials adopted for each of its parts. Due to the fact that historic garden is an architectural composition whose constituents are primary vegetation and therefore living, which means that they are perishable and renewable hence the continuous maintenance is of paramount importance and all arrangement for visiting to historic garden must be subject to regulation that ensure the spirit of the place is preserved.

#### **The Washington Charter; Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (1987)**

This addendum to the Venice Charter covers the specific field of historic areas, large and small urban settlements, including cities, towns and historic centers or quarters, together with their natural and man- made environments. Their qualities to be preserved must include historic characters and all those materials and spiritual elements. In order to be most effective, the conservation of historic towns and urban areas should be an integral part of coherent policies of economic and social development and of urban and regional planning at every level. Nevertheless, the participation and involvement of the residents are essential for the success therefore they should be concerned first of all. In order to encourage their participation and involvement, a general information program should be set up for all residents beginning with children of school age and specialized training should be provided for all those professions concerned with conservation.

### **The Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage (1990)**

Archaeological heritage is a fragile and non-renewable cultural resource. It comprises of all vestiges of human existence, places (including subterranean and underwater sites) relating to all manifestations of human activity, abandoned structures, and remains of all kinds, together with all the portable cultural material associated with them. Its protection and proper management is essential to enable archaeologists and other scholars to study and interpret it and for the benefit of present and future generations. For the sustainable success, not only the application of archaeological techniques and scientific knowledge but also the participation of local cultural groups that is essential for the preservation of archaeological heritage therefore the dissemination of information to them is an important part in the protection process.

### **The Charter on the Protection and Management of Underwater Cultural Heritage (1996)**

This charter is a supplement to the charter for the protection and management of the archaeological heritage. This charter is intended to encourage the protection and management of underwater cultural heritage in inland and inshore waters, in shallow seas and in the deep oceans. The preservation of underwater cultural heritage in situ should be considered as a first option. Co-operation with local communities and interest groups is to be encouraged. Where is practical, the investigation team should provide opportunities for the public to develop archaeological skills through education and training.

### **The Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage (1999)**

In 1999, the scope of cultural heritage conservation was extended from 'ancient monument or historic building' since the Venice Charter to 'common building or vernacular heritage'. In other words, the realization of living heritage related to the usual function in everyday life of its community clearly emerged which can be seen in the Charter on the built vernacular heritage.

Built vernacular heritage is the fundamental expression of the culture of a community, of its relationship with its territory and, at the same time, the expression of the world's cultural diversity. The vernacular embraces not only the physical form and fabric of buildings, structures and spaces, but the ways in which they used and understood, and the traditions and the intangible associations which attach to them. The appreciation and successful protection of the vernacular heritage depend on the involvement and support of the community, continuing use and maintenance. The continuity of traditional building systems and craft skills associated with the vernacular is fundamental for vernacular expression, and essential for the repair and restoration of these structures. Therefore, the knowledge of traditional building systems, materials and crafts skills should be retained, recorded and passed on to the new generations of craftsmen and builders in education and training.

### **The Principles for the Preservation of Historic Timber Structures (1999)**

Its aim is to define basic and universally applicable principles and practices for the protection and preservation of historic timber structures referred to all types of buildings or constructions wholly or partially in timber that have cultural significance or that are parts of a historic area. The minimum intervention in the fabric of a historic timber structure is an ideal. Craftsmanship and construction technology, including the use of dressing tools or machinery, should correspond with those used originally and respect to relevant historical and aesthetic values. Notwithstanding, for the sustainable preservation, not only the appropriate techniques for preservation the physical aspects but also the education and training program related to the protection of cultural significance of historic timber structures are essential requisite.

### **Cultural Landscape: the Challenges of Conservation (2002)**

In 1992 the World Heritage Convention became the first international legal instrument to recognize and protect cultural landscape. The committee at its 16<sup>th</sup> session adopted guidelines concerning their inclusion in the World Heritage List. The Committee acknowledged that cultural landscapes represent the ‘*combined works of nature and of man*’ (designated in Article 1 of the Convention). They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement overtime, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal. The term “cultural landscape” embraces a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humankind and its natural environment. Cultural landscapes often reflect specific techniques of sustainable land-use, considering the characteristics and limits of the natural environment they are established in, and a specific spiritual relation to nature. Protection of cultural landscape can contribute to modern techniques of sustainable land-use and can maintain or enhance nature values in the landscape. The inclusion of such landscapes on the World Heritage List is justifiable by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the nature element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent.

### **The Xi’an Declaration on the Conservation of the Setting of Historic Structures, Sites and Areas (2005)**

The setting of a heritage structure, site or area is defined as the immediate and extended environment that is part of, or contributes to, its significance and distinctive character. Understanding the setting in an inclusive way requires a multi-disciplinary approach and the use of diverse information sources. Legislation, regulation and guidelines for the protection, conservation and management of heritage structures, sites and areas should provide for the establishment of the protection areas, or the buffer zones, which can conserve their significance and distinctive character. Heritage impact assessments should be required for all new development impacting on the significance of heritage structures, sites and areas and on their settings. Co-operation with local communities is essential as part of developing sustainable strategies for the conservation and management of the settings.

### **The Charter on Cultural Routes (2008)**

As a result of the development of the sciences of conservation of cultural heritage, the new concept of cultural routes shows the evolution of ideas with respect to the vision of cultural properties, as well as the growing importance of values related to their setting and territorial scale, and reveals the macrostructure of heritage on different levels. Cultural routes can be referred to any route of communication, be it land, water, or some other type, which is physically delimited and is also characterized by having its own specific dynamic and historic functionality to serve a specific and well determined purpose. The concept of cultural routes requires a specific methodology with the establishment of a system of coordinated and integrally managed activities. It is essential to start with the identification both of the route as a whole and of its individual sections, along with an inventory of the assets that comprise it and an analysis of their state of conservation which will facilitate the elaboration of strategic plan for its preservation. This conservation plan should necessarily include measures for raising public awareness and also require the formulation of coordinated measures and specific legal instruments for the protection, use and management of all of its elements as substantive parts of the value and significance of the route as a whole. The historic ties developed along cultural routes can serve to promote projects based on renewed cooperation between peoples who shared certain values, knowledge in the past and new arrival parties in tourism.

Since the adoption of the Venice Charter in 1960s, UNESCO and ICOMOS have produced many conservation concepts developed and expanded into many specific definitions of cultural heritage from historic monument to cultural route. All of which have their own recommended guidelines on conservation practices created for protecting their distinctive values. However, the similar concepts of each charter could be found, especially for the conservation of living cultural heritage sites which directly related to local communities, that the measure for creating *sense of belonging* among the local residents of each heritage should be supported as the essential process for the conservation success. These similar concepts include the encouragement of participation from local residents, the raising awareness on conservation and the management for dissemination of information through education and training programs.

For the conservation of living heritage sites, people are one of the key factors, not only the owners or the local residents of each heritage but everyone should be concerned, including visitors and the public. Therefore, not only the appropriate practices for protecting the distinctive significance of cultural heritage but also the guidelines for transferring knowledge to the public were recognized within the international framework such as the *International Charter on Cultural Tourism* and the *Charter for Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites*. Moreover, the topic of 'Cultural Diversity' was realized by the UNESCO for responding to two major concerns: firstly, to ensure respect for cultural identities with the participation of all people in a democratic framework and, secondly, to contribute to the emergence of a favorable climate for the creativity of all, thereby making culture a factor of development.

### **The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001)**

This Declaration was born of the wish to define a standard-setting instrument, in the context of globalization, for the elaboration of the national cultural policies, while respecting international rules and fundamental rights. It is the first time the international community has possessed a legal instrument which raises cultural diversity to the rank of 'Common Heritage of Humanity'.

### **The International Charter on Cultural Tourism (1999)**

This Charter realizes that the relationship between heritage places and tourism is dynamic and may involve conflicting values since tourism is among the foremost vehicles for cultural exchange, so conservation processes should provide responsible and well managed opportunities for members of the host community and visitors to experience and understand that community's heritage and culture at first hand. The benefit from tourism should be allotted to the protection and conservation the heritage place and to its community. The indigenous people should be trained to be local tour guides and site interpreters to improve their skills for interpreting and presenting their own cultural values. Notwithstanding, tourism information should present heritage significance together with the encouragement of public awareness on conservation.

### **The Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008)**

In the previous Charters, the importance of public communication was stressed as an essential part of the larger conservation process (variously describing it as dissemination, popularization, interpretation and presentation). They implicitly acknowledged that every act of heritage conservation is by its nature a communicative act. From the need for a clear rationale, standardized terminology, and accepted professional principles for interpretation and presentation is evident, the purpose of this Charter is therefore to define the basic principles of interpretation and presentation as essential components of heritage conservation efforts and as a means of enhancing public appreciation and understanding of cultural heritage sites. This charter suggests that interpretation and presentation should be based on evidence gathered through accepted scientific and scholarly methods as well as from living cultural traditions. Interpretation and presentation should encourage individuals and communities to reflect on their own perceptions of a site and assist them in establishing a meaningful connection to it, learning, experience, and exploration. Interpretation and presentation should be an integral part of the conservation process, enhancing the public's awareness of specific conservation problems encountered at the site and explaining the efforts being taken to protect the site's physical integrity and authenticity. International cooperation and sharing of experience are essential to developing and maintaining standards in interpretation methods and technologies. To that end, international conferences, workshops and exchanges of professional staffs as well as national and regional meetings should be encouraged. These will provide an opportunity for the regular sharing of information about the diversity of interpretative approaches and experiences in various regions and cultures.

Since the end of the Second World War, Tangible Cultural Heritage has been protected and managed by many conservation instruments which can be seen from variety of specific Charters. Meanwhile the apparent concern to safeguard the Intangible Cultural Heritage emerged in 2003 by UNESCO which considering the importance of the intangible cultural heritage as a mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development.

### **The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)**

The ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage’ means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills (as well as instruments, objects, artifacts and culture spaces associated therewith) that communities, groups, and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. The invaluable role of the intangible as a factor in bringing human beings closer together and ensuring exchange and understanding among them. For the purpose of this convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, and of sustainable development. Therefore, State Parties to this Convention were proposed to adopt not only appropriate legal, technical measures for safeguarding their intangible cultural heritage but also a general policy aimed at promoting the function of the intangible cultural heritage in society, and at integrating the safeguarding of such heritage into planning programs. Within the framework of its safeguarding activities of the intangible cultural heritage, each State Party shall endeavor to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals that create, maintain and transmit such heritage, and to involve them actively in its management.

From the dedicated works of UNESCO and its advisory bodies, many charters can reveal the explicit concern on cultural heritage conservation at international level. Guidelines for conservation were developed for the conservation approach of each specific type of cultural heritage. But one of the distinctive types of cultural heritage still has had unclear conservation guidelines in the form of Charter. The living Religious Heritage is the issue requiring its own specific conservation approach, because *‘living religious heritage may differ from other forms of heritage in some way, and that therefore its conservation might also be subject to different considerations’*. These words were written in the introduction part of the publication consists of papers submitted to the ICCROM Forum 2003 (Stovel 2005:1)

### **The ICCROM Forum 2003 on the Theme of ‘Living Religious Heritage: Conserving the Sacred’**

In 2003, the International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) launched the ICCROM Forum on the theme of *‘Living Religious Heritage: conserving the sacred’*. The experts with experience of managing ‘Living Religious Heritage’ in different regions of the world were asked to prepare papers in case study form.

By way of conclusion, the papers from the ICCROM Forum 2003 were proposed with regard to understanding living religious heritage as the following:

1. Living religious heritage is of particular important, given its vital role in conveying, expressing, and sustaining the faiths which give spiritual identity, meaning and purpose to human life. Living religious heritage is the tangible and intangible embodiment of the many and diverse faiths which have sustained human life through time.

2. Understanding living religious heritage requires recognizing that the intangible significance of tangible religious objects, structures, and places is the key to their meaning. The tangible and intangible cannot be separated since all cultural material has intangible value. Living religious heritage is expressed in cultural material: the tangible structures, objects and works of arts creates to support forms of worship within particular faiths and in associated intangible rituals, celebrations and devotional activities. In all cases, the tangible and intangible manifestations of the heritage carry intangible values, expressing the significance of the heritage for the communities who consider it important.

3. Living religious heritage is at risk in a number of ways: from fluctuating commitment to faith itself in different parts of the world, from a lack of understanding of the nature of religious heritage and the role that conservation can play in sustaining faith, and from a lack of respect for the aspirations of religious communities. Making policies to conserve must recognize the special nature of living religious heritage, and give it priority. They also need to be developed following the dialogue within the religious community and between it and the secular authorities.

4. The care of this heritage is primarily the responsibility of the religious community for whom this heritage has importance, at local and/or global levels. The conservation of living religious heritage is ideally initiated by the religious community and carried out in collaboration with conservation professionals.

5. The evolution and adaption of religious practices, rituals, or festivals to contemporary circumstances should be understood as a normal part of the continuity of living religious heritage and should be respected in conservation decision-making. Lay authorities uniquely responsible for conserving heritage may impose limits on the degree of change to be tolerated in living religious heritage. It is important that conservation efforts do not attempt to freeze either forms or traditions at a moment in time, but rather guide the inevitable changes in ways which are sympathetic to the survival of past expressions.

6. Respect for religious values in a multicultural context (or of particular orientations within a single religious) is essential for promoting peace and a tolerant society, and is best promoted through strengthening interfaith dialogues on conservation issues. Dialogue must be organized to built understanding and, better, sympathy for the different points of view which may exist in various multi-cultural contexts, and which may need to be reconciled as a part of efforts to protect religious heritage. (Stovel 2005:9-11)

## **The concepts of cultural heritage conservation in Asia**

When the western concepts of cultural conservation, since the Venice Charter, have been applied in Asian countries, the conflict to conserve cultural heritage within the context of Asia emerged from the different point of view related to the concept of conserving the authenticity of cultural heritage aspects. The example most cited was the false contention in many western publications that the Japanese ritually rebuilt replicas of their temples on adjacent sites every twenty years. So that the Japanese would feel uncomfortable about submitting the world heritage nomination in fearing that it would be judged within Eurocentric frameworks. The Japanese were concerned that their existing widespread conservation practice, such as the top-to-bottom periodic dismantling and reassembly of significant religious structures, would not be understood by Western evaluators. (Stovel 2008:9-10) Therefore, the international conference supported by the Japanese authorities for the examination on the issue concerning authenticity on cultural heritage in Asia was held in 1994.

### **The Nara Document on Authenticity (1994)**

This conference took place in Nara, Japan, finally developed *The Nara Document on Authenticity* which reveals the challenging concept that cultural heritage diversity demand respect for other cultures and all respects of their belief systems. It also states that all judgments about values attributed to cultural properties as well as the credibility of related information sources may differ from culture to culture, and even within the same culture. It is thus not possible to base judgments of values and authenticity within fixed criteria. On the contrary, the respect due to all cultures requires that heritage properties must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts to which they belong. Therefore, it is of the highest importance and urgency that, within each culture, recognition be accorded to the specific nature of its heritage values and the credibility and truthfulness of related information sources. Depending on the nature of the cultural heritage, its cultural context, and its evolution through time, authenticity judgments may be linked to the worth of a great variety of sources of information. Aspects of the sources may include form and design, materials and substance, use and function, traditions and techniques, location and setting, and spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors. The use of these sources permits elaboration of the specific artistic, historic, social, and scientific dimensions of the cultural heritage being examined.

In Asia, the enthusiasm for heritage conservation could be seen not only the conference on the issue of the authenticity of cultural heritage within the context of Asia which was held in Nara, Japan but also in Vietnam, in 2001, the Asian conservation experts convened to discuss the establishment and promulgation the regional standards of best conservation practice which will assure that the values inherent in the heritage sites of Asia are safeguarded and that their authenticity is preserved and truthfully explicated during the process of conservation. Later in 2005, *the Hoi An Protocols for Best Conservation Practice in Asia* was announced. It was created as professional conservation guidelines which would assure that the values inherent in the heritage sites of Asia are safeguarded and that their authenticity is preserved and truthfully explicated during the process of conservation and use.

### **The Hoi An Protocols for Best Conservation Practice in Asia (2009)**

From the subject of the significant role of cultural heritage in the sustainable development in Asia, Hoi An Protocols state that the physical human-made components of the cultural heritage in Asia are not only inextricably linked to but also arise from the nature geography and environmental setting for their respective cultures and serve as the setting for more intangible expressions of cultural traditions. It also informs about the inter-relatedness of practices for the conservation of the physical heritage sites, the intangible heritage, and cultural landscapes. However, conservation of cultural heritage in Asia should and will always be a negotiation solution reconciling the differing values of the various stakeholders, and underscore that this '*negotiated state of mind*' is a value inherent in Asian cultural processes.

For the implementation of the Protocols, heritage resources are divided into 5 categories as: Cultural Landscapes; Archaeological Sites; Historic Urban Sites and Heritage Groups; Monuments, Buildings and Structures and Underwater Cultural Heritage. Each category is clearly defined and the overall concepts which frame the approach to each type of heritage are stated. There follows identification of the main threats to preservation of these resources, followed by guidelines entitled '*Tool for Preservation of Authenticity*'. The goal of its conservation is to preserve heritage significance by ensuring that all interventions and actions meet the test of authenticity in all respects.

In Hoi An Protocols, preservation of the intangible aspects, which form an essential part of every cultural resource of Asia, is given special attention and also highlights the important role to be played with preservation by the community in which heritage is embedded. By the reason that intangible cultural heritage is by definition not linked to specific monuments and places, but is stored in the minds of tradition bearers and communities and conserve in the continuity of practice. The techniques and methodologies employed to preserve intangible heritage must be culturally sensitive and flexible enough to make this distinction.

Hoi An Protocols recognize that both tourism and the very process of restoration and presentation for tourism purposes introduced new and more subtle threats to authenticity. Therefore, the risks and benefits of cultural tourism to the authenticity of heritage sites and places in Asia should be attended in the decision processes of the conservation practices of each heritage site. For the approach of sustainable conservation, custodianship of heritage sites should stay in the hands of traditional custodians who should be empowered and assisted to carry out authentic conservation.

Hoi An protocols also recommend that within the regional, there are national charters of conservation best practice which can serve as models for other Asian countries in the development of their own national standards. *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for the conservation of places of cultural significance*, or the Burra Charter as it is commonly known, is one of the important national charters regarded as the effective heritage conservation practices to assist in the development of similar national charters elsewhere in Asia.

**The Burra Charter: Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance** (by ICOMOS Australia in 1979, emended in 1981, 1988, and 1999)

The Burra Charter has been widely recognized as the effective guidance for the conservation of cultural significance of the place. The term *Place* in this charter means site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views. From its definition, the term *Place* is used instead of *Monument and Site* defined since the Venice Charter. It also defines the term *Cultural significance*, that means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations, which is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. The policy for managing a place must be based on an understanding of its cultural significance.

This Charter establishes guidelines for the preservation of *a Sense of Place* during the conservation process which can be applied to all types of places of cultural significance including natural, indigenous and historic places with cultural values. The conservation processes, of looking after places of cultural significance and their fabric, are stated in this Charter including the processes of: retention or reintroduction of a use; retention of associations and meanings; maintenance, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, adaptation, and interpretation (according to circumstance, the conservation processes may include a combination of more than one of these) and every process should be based on a respect for the existing fabric, use, associations and meaning. The Burra Charter also advocates a cautious approach to change: do as much as necessary to care for the place and to make it useable, but otherwise change it as little as possible so that its cultural significance is retained.

**The Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China** (adopted in 2000, the English-language translation of the Principles was first published in 2002)

In 2000, China adopted its own national conservation guidance which provides an integrated and methodological approach to the conservation and management of sites, in compliance with the existing legislation of the People's Republic of China.

Its purpose is to ensure practice in the conservation of heritage sites in China. Conservation refers to all measures carried out to preserve the physical remains of sites and their historic settings. The aim of conservation is to preserve the authenticity of all the elements of the entire heritage site and to retain for the future its historic information and all its values. These Principles can serve as guidelines in conservation practice for everything commonly referred to as heritage sites including archaeological sites and ruins, tombs, traditional architecture, cave temples, stone carvings, sculpture, inscriptions, stele, and petroglyphs, as well as modern and contemporary places and commemorative buildings, and those historic precincts (villages or towns), together with their original heritage components, that are officially declared protected sites. These Principles also state that a buffer zone should be established to control development around the heritage site's boundary and to preserve the natural and cultural landscape. The China Principles can reveal the attempt of national authorities to conserve and manage heritage within their social context.

### **The concepts of cultural heritage conservation in Southeast Asia**

In 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, was established as an association for regional cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, technical, education and other fields among the countries of Southeast Asia. In 2000, ASEAN member countries consist of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam adopted the ASEAN Declaration on Cultural Heritage from their attempt to protect, preserve and promote cultural resources and rich heritage of civilizations, ideas and value systems of ASEAN.

### **The ASEAN Declaration on Cultural Heritage (2000)**

Its determination is to achieve substantial progress in the protection and promotion of ASEAN cultural heritage and cultural rights undertaking through an increased and sustained program of regional cooperation. By this declaration, the member countries of ASEAN accepted the policies and programs as a framework for cooperation on cultural heritage such as the following:

Each country should formulate and adopt policies, programs, and services and develop appropriate technical, scientific, legal, administrative and financial measures for protecting the significant cultural heritage within its territory.

For tangible heritage conservation, member countries should cooperate in the protection of antiquities and works of historic significance, movable and immovable cultural properties that are manifestations of national history, of great structural and architectural important, of outstanding archaeological, anthropological or scientific value, or associated with exceptional events.

This declaration is also state that cultural traditions are an integral part of ASEAN's intangible heritage and an effective means of bringing together ASEAN peoples to recognize their regional identity. For intangible heritage conservation, member countries should cooperate to sustain and preserve worthy living traditions and folkways and protect their living bearers in recognition of people's right to their own culture.

For living cultural heritage, cultures with global reach must not deprive local, national and regional cultures of their own development dynamics and reduce them to relic of the past. ASEAN member countries should strengthen regional cooperation to ensure that commercial utilization does not impinge upon the integrity, dignity and rights of particular ASEAN societies. National or regional networks should be established for the cooperative works on documentation, conservation, preservation, dissemination and promotion of ASEAN cultural heritage. (ASEAN 2009)

This Declaration can illustrate the effort of the ASEAN member countries to ensure their cultural resources both tangible and intangible cultural heritage can be conserved through their cooperation.

## **The concept of cultural heritage conservation in Thailand**

The concept to disseminate the conservation practices of cultural heritage from international to national level could be seen in the Venice Charter (since 1964) that ... the principles guiding the preservation and restoration ... should be agreed and be laid down on an international basis, which each country being responsible for applying the plan within the framework of its own culture and traditions. Since then, many international and regional conservation guidelines have awakened developing countries, which most of them to date do not have their own national charters for the conservation of cultural heritage, for improving their conservation practices to ensure the effective protection of their cultural heritage properties against the threats from modernization and urbanization.

Within a few decades, the developing countries in Southeast Asia have been faced with the threats of cultural loss, rapid deterioration of living traditions and the disappearance of worthy heritage structures due to tropical climate, inappropriate development efforts, the homogenizing forces of globalization and other major changes taking place in ASEAN societies. (ASEAN 2009)

The same as other developing countries in Southeast Asia, Thailand has been confronted with the increasing threats from the indefensible force of development and globalization, therefore the requirement for the proper conservation guideline which should be ideally suited into Thai context is the essential factor for the implementation of the effective conservation of cultural heritage.

In 2000, ICOMOS analyzed the world heritage list according to 15 categories and 7 historical periods. For The Asia Region, some 76% of the cultural sites inscribed in January 2000 were found to belong to the 3 categories of archaeological sites, historic town and Buddhist monuments. (World Heritage Center 2004:16) In Thailand, without any doubt, most of the cultural heritage regarded as the national properties are related to religious places especially the Buddhist temples.

Throughout time, the usable Buddhist temples have played a vital role as the center of faith created social value and spiritual value. Moreover their aesthetic value can be represented by their artistic arts in the form of Buddhist sculptures, architectures and their decoration within the scenic atmosphere of religious ceremonies. With the high significance as the irreplaceable heritage, some of these were registered as the national properties in the name of 'the Ancient Monuments' from the Ancient Monuments Act.

For the purposes of this study to provide the guideline for cultural heritage conservation particularly of the living heritage temples within Thai context, the involved legislations with cultural heritage conservation are discussed. This shows how the Thai government and the related authorities deal with the Buddhist temples which are regarded as the places of cultural significances in the area of the test study, Rattanakosin Island.

### **The related legislations on conservation of heritage temples in Thailand**

The evidence of the old enactment in Siam (Thailand) on cultural heritage protection can be found in the Three-Seal Law, the old enacted law since Ayutthaya, which was revised in the early Rattanakosin by the command of King Rama I. Severe penalties of trespassing on religious places or purloining religious objects were determined in this law. In 1854, the reign of King Rama IV, there was a command by the King on the issue of protecting sacred properties and monastic buildings in religious areas. In 1906 the Archaeological Club was established by King Rama V for encouraging public to heritage conservation by antiques exhibition. In 1923, by the command of King Rama VI, the consideration and registration heritage properties in the kingdom came under management of the National Library Committee. All of these indicated the attention of the Thai monarchy to the protection of cultural heritage, particularly focused on the religious places, sacred properties and legacies of the past.

After the Political Reform towards democracy in the reign of King Rama VII, in 1932, the first legislation on heritage conservation in Thailand, the Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Object of Art and National Museum, B.E. 2477 (1934 A.D.), was announced. The last issue is the Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Object of Art and National Museum, B.E. 2504 (1961 A.D.), amended in B.E. 2535 (1992 A.D.) which is the main legislation on heritage conservation in Thailand at present.

Since the first issue of this Act (1934), the term ‘ancient monument’ was used to mean ‘immovable heritage property’ and defined as archaeological sites, historic sites and historic parks. This term and its definition have been used since then, despite Thailand becoming a member of the World Heritage Committee in 1989 and the term ‘cultural heritage’ (defined in the World Heritage Convention 1972) being widely used in many international organizations currently. The term ‘ancient monument’, therefore, in Thai legislation has been used instead of ‘cultural heritage’ to define the meaning of monuments, groups of buildings and sites.

At present, the related national legislation on protection and conservation of living heritage temples in Thailand are as follows:

- Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Object of Art and National Museum, B.E. 2504 (1961), amended in B.E. 2535 (1992)
- Ministerial Regulation, first issue B.E. 2539 (1996) follow by The Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Object of Art and National Museum, B.E. 2504 (1961), amended in B.E. 2535 (1992)
- The Fine Arts Department Regulations on Conservation B.E. 2528 (1985)

The Buddhist Monastic Organization also pays attention to cultural heritage conservation by specifying the monks’ role in conservation such as:

- Announcement from the Buddhist Monastic Order of the control’s rules on ancient monuments, antiques, and objects of art inside the temples: announced on September 28, B.E. 2503 (1960)
- Resolution of Sangha Supreme Council in the conference No. 27/B.E. 2539 (1996) on the subject of the improvement on the request for royal priest’s title

In the area of the test study, Rattanakosin Island, the specific legislation on protection and conservation of living heritage temples is:

- The Cabinet Decision for Construction and activities in Rattanakosin Area
- Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Regulation 1985
- Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Regulation 1987
- Ministerial Regulation on Bangkok Comprehensive Plan 2006
- Regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister on the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2003

**The Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Object of Art and National Museum, B.E. 2504 (1961), amended in B.E. 2535 (1992)**

In 1934, His Majesty King Ananda Mahidol, King Rama VIII, enacted the original Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Object of Art and National Museum, B.E. 2477 (1934). It was first revised in 1943 and was repealed when the Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Object of Art and National Museum, B.E. 2504 (1961) was established. In 1992, the Act was amended and this amendment has been in use up to the present.

In (Section 4) of the Ancient Monument Act 1961, amended in 1992, the specific terms ‘Ancient Monument’, ‘Antique’, and ‘Object of Art’ were defined as:

- ‘Ancient Monument’ means immovable property which, by its age or architectural characteristics or historical evidence, is useful in the field of art, history or archaeology and shall include places which are archaeological sites, historic sites and historic parks.
- ‘Antique’ means an archaic movable property, whether produced by man or by nature, or being any part of ancient monument or of human skeleton or animal carcass which, by its age or characteristics of production or historical evidence, is useful in the field of art, history or archaeology.
- ‘Object of Art’ means a thing skillfully produced by craftsmanship which is highly valuable in the field of art. (Fine Arts Department 2006:28)

The definition of the terms ‘ancient monument’, ‘antique’, and ‘object of art’ indicate that this Act gives priority to the conservation of tangible cultural heritage more than intangible cultural heritage. The term ‘ancient monument’ has been used as a broad term which can refer to archaeological sites, monuments, buildings, group of buildings, historic parks and historic sites including any surrounding area, taking into account, age and historic value, architectural value or aesthetic value.

Ancient Monument Act 1961, amended in 1992, consist of five chapters:

- Chapter I Ancient Monuments Section 7-13
- Chapter II Antiques and Objects of Art Section 14-24
- Chapter III National Museums Section 25-27
- Chapter IV Archaeological Fund Section 28-30
- Chapter V Penalties Section 31-39
- Transitory Provision Section 40

However, only in three chapters I, II, and V are main subjects related to the conservation of heritage temples and the key descriptions are discussed as follow:

Heritage temples with historic value, architectural value or aesthetic value, both living temples and relic religious monuments, both unregistered and registered as national heritage must be managed under the Ancient Monument Act by means of the imposition of penalties for the act of trespass. Penalties for registered are higher than those for unregistered. Any person who trespasses on an ancient monument or damages, destroys, causes depreciation in value to, or makes useless of, any ancient monument, will be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years or a fine not exceeding seven hundred thousand Baht or both, if the offence is committed against the registered ancient monuments, the offender will be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten years or a fine not exceeding one million Baht or both. (CHAPTER V, Section 32)

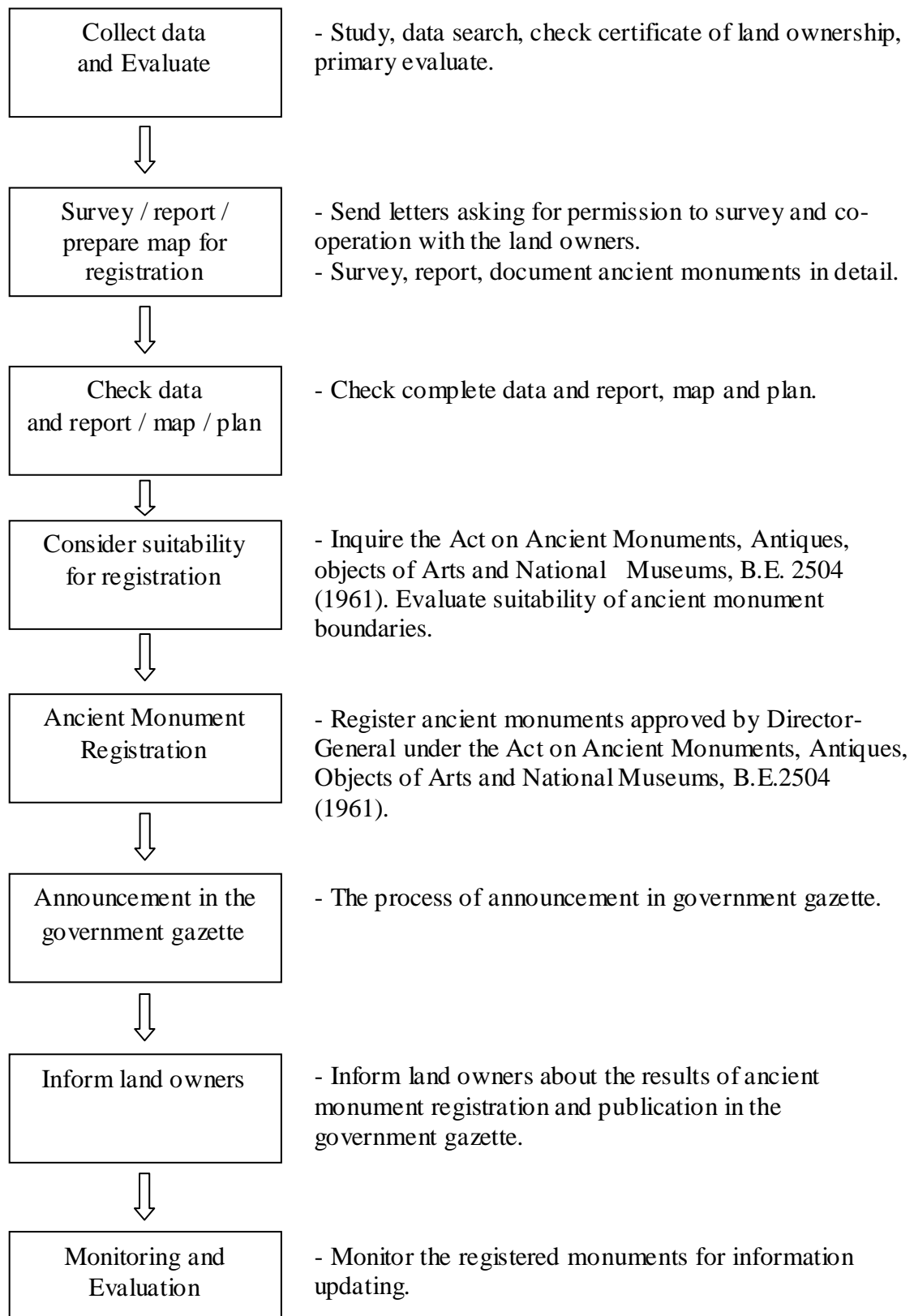
This Act authorizes the Director-General of the Fine Arts Department to consider, approve and register buildings/structures/architecture, and to determine any surrounding area which will also be considered as an ancient monument. After the ancient monument is registered, to preserve its significance, no building can be constructed within its compound area according to the law on the control of building construction, except where the permission has been obtained from the Fine Arts Department. In the case where a building has been constructed without permission, the Fine Arts Department has the power to stop the construction and to demolish the building, or a part of building, within sixty days from the date of the receipt of the order. (CHAPTER I, Section 7)

This Act authorizes the Fine Arts Department to preserve ancient monuments in the case where the registered ancient monument is deteriorating, dilapidating, or being damaged by any means whatever. In such case, the owner or lawful possessor must inform the Fine Art Department within thirty days from the date of his or her being aware of its occurrence. (CHAPTER I, Section 9) Any person who does not comply will be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month or to a fine not exceeding ten thousand Baht or both (CHAPTER V, Section 34)

No person will repair, modify, alter, demolish, add to, destroy, remove any ancient monument or its parts or excavate for anything or construct any building within the compound of an ancient monument, except by the order of the Fine Arts Department, or where the permission has been obtained from the Fine Arts Department. If the permission is granted under any conditions, they must be complied with. (CHAPTER I, Section 10) Any person who violates or does not comply with the conditions imposed by the Fine Arts Department will be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or to a fine not exceeding three hundred thousand Baht or both (CHAPTER V, Section 35)

Fine Arts Department also have the power in regard to any registered ancient monument even lawfully owned or lawfully possessed, to order the component official or person to make a repair or to take action by any means whatever for restoration or preservation of its original condition; provided that its owner or possessor has first to be notified thereof. (CHAPTER I, Section 11)

### The Fine Arts Department's Flow Chart for ancient monument registration



Flow chart 1

Resource: <http://www.archae.go.th/Eng/Workflow.asp>

**The Ministerial Regulation, first issue B.E. 2539 (1996) follow by The Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Object of Art and National Museum, B.E. 2504 (1961), amended in B.E. 2535 (1992)**

This Ministerial Regulation can be enforced only in relation to monuments, groups of buildings and sites which are registered as ancient monuments by the Ancient Monument Act. It aims to manage tourism and visit in the ancient monument areas by determining the code of conduct for persons who visit the registered ancient monument as follows:

- To prohibit the moving of any things within the ancient monument areas.
- To prohibit writing, painting or marking on the ancient monuments.
- To prohibit taking any fuel or chemical substance that can cause damage into the ancient monument areas.
- To prohibit climbing or doing any action that can cause damage to the ancient monuments or result in messy areas.
- To preserve the condition, cleanliness and tidiness within the ancient monument areas; any actions that can cause dirtiness are prohibited.
- Within the ancient monument areas, to prohibit any disgusting and scornful actions on religion and culture or making annoyance. (Fine Arts Department 2006 : 67-68)

**The Fine Arts Department Regulations on Conservation B.E. 2528 (1985)**

The Department of Fine Arts, the government organization in charge of cultural heritage management, consists of many divisions for safeguarding both tangible and intangible national cultural heritage, namely: Office of Archaeology, Office of the Architecture, Office of the Traditional Arts, Office of the Nation Museum, Office of the Nation Library, Office of the Literature and History, National Archives of Thailand and Office of the Performing Arts. Responsibility for conservation of ancient monuments under the Fine Arts Department's Regulation on Conservation lies mainly with the Office of Archaeology.

Before 1962, the conservation works of the Fine Arts Department was influenced by the French School of Far Eastern Region that worked in the French colonies in Southeast Asia. At that time, the works of the French experts were the conservation of Khmer Sanctuaries which were mostly made of sandstone and laterite, but the structures in Thailand are mostly comprised of wooden and brick masonry. Many problems in conservation work were therefore caused by inappropriate technique.

During 1963-1977, the Italian Government gave a scholarship for Fine Arts Department officials in conservation training at the International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM). By way of this knowledge, conservation works in Thailand then began to follow the international Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites or the Venice Charter. In 1985 ICOMOS Thai was founded and finally the Fine Arts Department Regulation on Conservation 1985 was established under the influence of the Venice Charter. (Fine Arts Department 1990:94-98)

The Fine Arts Department Regulations on Conservation consists of 21 sections: Section 3 is the definition; from Section 4 to Section 20 are the guidelines for conservation practices on cultural heritage. Since the Regulations were influenced by the Venice Charter, the conservation methods aim to conserve the authenticity of the physical aspects of the ancient monuments.

(Section 3[1]) The definition state that the term ‘Conservation’ means to take care and maintain ancient monuments for retaining their values, including many methods such as prevention, protection, preservation, reconstruction and restoration. Therefore, the term, ‘Conservation’ in this regulation, is used as an inclusive term that covers all methods of care and maintenance.

At present, the Fine Arts Department applies a standard of conservation methods which can be categorized into 7 levels according to the degree of involvements as follows:

- Prevention from deterioration
- Preservation
- Consolidation
- Restoration
- Replication
- Reconstruction (including Anastylis method)
- Rehabilitation

(Section 3[2]) The term ‘ancient monument’ is defined as being the same as in the Ancient Monument Acts, that is, ‘ancient monument means immovable property which by age or by construction techniques or by historical evidence is beneficial in term of arts, history, and archaeology. This definition also includes art objects which are fixed to the immovable property as mentioned’.

The Fine Arts Department has categorized ancient monuments according to their physical characteristics such as:

- Monuments
- Groups of Buildings
- Historic Sites
- Archaeological Sites
- Communities and Historic Towns
- Historic Landscapes

Therefore, the term ancient monument, in the Thai legislation, is an inclusive term which consists of not only the construction with its surroundings but the historic town and historic landscape also.

(Section 3[3]) The term ‘committee’ in this Regulation refers to the designated group of people who work on assessment, control, and supervision of monument conservation. At present, there are 2 committees for these tasks namely, the scientific Committee on Monuments Conservation and the Working Team for Initial Assessment of Conservation Designs. (Poshyanandana 2005:56)

(Section 4) Before the conservation works are launched, the pre-conservation works must be started:

(Section 4[4.1]) The inspection of the past and present condition of the ancient monument such as: history of the construction and conservation history; architectural style; materials; damage condition appearance. All of the related information from the inspection must be recorded in the report including photos, maps and plans for the preparing of the project on conservation.

(Section 4[4.2]) The conservation project of each ancient monument must assess the significance of each value such as historic value, archaeological value, artistic value, or architectural value. After the assessment of significance, the most important value will be conserved firstly together with the consideration of the secondary value which is subordinate.

(Section 4[4.3]) The third step of the pre-conservation works is the consideration of the later addition and alteration to the ancient monument. If its value was decreased, the addition and alteration should be disassembled.

Not only the ancient monument but also its surrounding area and landscape must be conserved altogether. (Section 5) But this section mentions only the conservation of ancient monument together with its landscape without stating any guidelines for practice and does not even mention the protecting area or buffer zone determination.

Ancient monument, where was altered by former conservation, should have its information inspected exhaustively. The new conservation method should be considered according to the nature of each ancient monument and considered case by case in order to find the most appropriate means and all information related to the conservation practice should be recorded. (Section 6)

Ancient monuments regarded to be of very high importance should be conserved by preservation or consolidation only. (Section 7) And the new method or technique for consolidation should be demonstrated until effective results are achieved before being used with ancient monuments. (Section 8) Addition for consolidation and the replacement of missing parts must integrate harmoniously with the whole, but at the same time must be distinguishable from the original. (Section 9, 10)

(Section 12) and (Section 13), both mention the conservation practices on relic monuments. (Section 11) and (Section 14) mention conservation practices on religious places and sacred objects and in (Section 16) the flexible conservation practices on living ancient monuments are also mentioned.

(Section 11) Art objects with high historic value, archaeological value, and aesthetic value which are fixed to ancient monuments should be conserved by preservation or consolidation. But the sacred objects which are worshiped continuously should be considered by the committee for the agreement.

Ancient monuments that have been respected and worshiped as the living religious places and well-known to the public should be preserved in their original appearance without any alteration in appearance, shape, or color that could diminish their sacredness value and spiritual value. (Section 14)

Living ancient monuments that have been continuously used by the communities are not necessarily required to keep their original features in case of additional functions or change of functions. But any new or necessary addition or alteration should be done in the way that harmonizes with the originals and respects the value of such ancient monuments but not necessarily to be exactly duplicated as the original. However, the new parts should not decrease the original value. (Section 16)

The Fine Arts Department Regulations on Conservation can be used but not limited to registered ancient monuments under the Ancient Monument Act because (Section 17) states that both registered and unregistered ancient monuments must use conservation measure in order to maintain their physical conditions and images.

Dangerously dilapidated ancient monuments should first have their fabric protect by consolidation techniques before commencing the appropriate conservation methods. (Section 18)

In some case, the conservation work should be in cooperation with other government organizations, the related private sectors or the experts for the benefit of protecting the national legacy. (Section 19)

All works related to conservation or excavation must be reported by analysis and research including illustration by drawing and photographic work. This report will be kept in the national archive. (Section 20)

(Section 21) This Regulation authorizes the Director-General of the Fine Arts Department to be in charge. (Fine Arts Department 2007:151-153)

### **The Limitations of conservation works from the Legislation and Regulation**

Since its establishment in 1934, the Ancient Monument Act has been used as the principal legislation for the protection and management of all immovable cultural properties in Thailand. But currently, from 8,732 places with historic, architectural or aesthetic value, there are 6,629 unregistered and only 2,103 ancient monuments are registered as national heritage under this Act. (Archaeology Office, Fine Arts Department 2010) Even if the 2,103 only represents 24%, the Fine Arts Department has faced problems of having an insufficient budget for the maintenance of these 24% registered. Undoubtedly, the 6,629 unregistered still require appropriate maintenance as well. Budget is not the only problem. Conservation also requires specialists to properly accomplish the works and the inadequacy of expert officials on conservation has been a problem for the Fine Arts Department's work to fulfill the duty and responsibility required by the legislation.

Although the Archaeological Fund was set up by provisions of the Ancient Monument Act, it has not had sufficient budgetary support. Registered ancient monuments, which are owned and lawfully possessed by any person, are not State owned properties and still belong to their lawful owners, all conservation works must be informed to the Fine Art Department. Also, in relation to registered ancient monuments which are open to the public for collecting admission fee, or any fees as a regular business or that yield any benefits, the lawful owners are required to bear the expense of repair, in total or part as prescribed by the Fine Arts Department. (CHAPTER I, Section 9 bis.) For this reason, the owners, who have the ability to maintain their heritage properties, are less inclined to register their properties as national ancient monuments. Beneficial support for the owners of registered ancient monuments, such as tax refunds or tax exemptions, should be realized to incentivize them.

The next limitation arises from the fact that the Fine Arts Department is the only government organization which is entrusted with the responsibility to deal with the conservation of ancient monuments. Thus, when the urgent conservation work requires the quick action, delays can emerge because Thai administrative work has become complicated from the necessity of seeking hierarchical approval. Some of the urgent conservation works do not, therefore, address any damage situation as quickly as they should be.

There are also many limitations on conservation from the statement in the legislation both in the Ancient Monument Act and the Fine Art Regulations such as the definition of the term 'ancient monument' which indicates that the value assessment on age, architectural, aesthetic and historic value will take precedence over other values such as scientific value, social value and spiritual value. Thereby, the assessment of significance of ancient monument may not take into all of the significant values, and the selection of the exact and most appropriate conservation method may not be achieved. Additionally, the problem from the lack of buffer zone definition, which was not stated clearly in the legislation, is an issue for cautious conservation at this time, particularly for heritage places located in urban zones where the threat from modern development is all around.

Moreover, the legislation determines the penalties which are used for enforcement and execution. Therefore no person would like to deal or collaborate with ancient monument conservation. In the other words, the concept of conservation in Thai legislation still lacks the concept of the participation of related stakeholders, particularly the local community nearby which leads to a lack of 'sense of belonging'.

The final limitation of the existing legislation is the lack of a clear concept for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and guidelines for its management. Thai society at this time requires the realization of conservation in both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, particularly in the Buddhist monasteries where intangible cultural heritage, in the form worship and religious rites, can represent social and spiritual value and create Thai Buddhist identity. If these intangible values are abandoned and changed for whatever reason, the sacredness of the Buddhist monastery is affected also.

Because of the problems that have arisen, the Fine Art Department has attempted to improve conceptual conservation. For solving limitations of outdated legislation, ICOMOS Thailand established the draft issue of 'Thailand Charter' which was expected to implement the conservation guidelines and fulfill the missing things of the previous enactment by appending intangible cultural heritage realization and public participation in conservation.

The draft issue of the Thailand Charter (05/09/2007) state that the objectives of this Charter are not only to establish a general conservation framework which can be adapted for conservation works of related stakeholders, but also to increase public awareness and to encourage participation by decentralization to local communities.

In (Section 2, Definitions) of the drafting issue, there are many terms such as: Conservation, Monuments and Sites, Setting, Cultural Heritage, Cultural Landscape, Cultural Significance, Cultural Management, Related Cultural Heritage, Tangible Heritage and Intangible Heritage. These defined terms reveal that this Charter was adapted from many international Charters and National Charters.

(Section 3, Evaluation), this section discusses the process of evaluation of various cultural heritage aspects prior to the launch of conservation practices. The evaluation process includes multi-disciplinary research, assessment of significance, and prioritization. (Section 4, Protection), this section discusses protection measures for cultural heritage by the related legislation, the decentralization of power to local authorities and public awareness.

(Section 5, Management), this section focuses on conservation practices which are very similar to the Fine Arts Department Regulations on Conservation 1985. E.g. for religious heritage conservation, the Thailand Charter is the same as (Section 14 of the Fine Art Regulations) in that Ancient monuments that have been respected and worshiped as living religious places and well-known to the public should be preserved in their original appearance without any alteration in appearance, shape, or color that could diminish their sacredness value and spiritual value. And the same for the living ancient monument conservation (Section 16 of the Fine Art Regulations) where have been continuously used by the communities are not necessarily required to keep their original features in case of additional functions or change of functions. But any new or necessary addition or alteration should be done in the way that harmonizes with the originals and respects the value of such ancient monuments but not necessarily to be exactly duplicated as the original. Also, the new parts should not decrease the original value. In this Section (Section 5), there is also a new conservation practice concept added in the Thailand Charter which states that intangible cultural heritage which is a significant part of cultural heritage should be considered in conservation practice.

(Section 6, Knowledge management, Interpretation and Presentation), this section recommends the compilation and dissemination of approved knowledge from experts to related stakeholders and the public. This Thailand Charter also aims to establish a specific conservation knowledge center and to encourage every heritage site to make its interpretation and presentation.

(Section 7, Participation), this section discusses the participation of all related stakeholders, especially the local communities, who are involved in cultural heritage, and states that they should participate in conservation and the management of all processes. The Thailand Charter also pays attention and respect to the local wisdom and cultural diversity of the ethnic minority.

Since 2005 until now, the Thailand Charter has not been finished and is still in process of formation. Nevertheless, the Thailand Charter strives to improve the conceptual conservation for solving the limitations of the outdated legislation and to integrate international concepts of conservation in a Thai context for creating a suitable conservation framework for Thai society.

For protecting the living religious temples, there exists not only the legislation of the government sector such as the Ancient Monument Act, the Ministerial Regulation, the Fine Arts Department Regulations on Conservation and the Thailand Charter which were addressed from a national administration concern, but also the Buddhist Monastic Organization who pays attention to cultural heritage conservation by specifying the Buddhist monks' role in conservation such as:

**The Announcement from the Buddhist Monastic Order of the control's rules on ancient monuments, antiques, and objects of art inside the temples: announced on September 28, B.E. 2503 (1960)**

Due to the fact that the demolition of old structures can be founded in many temples and in abandoned temples which are unregistered by the Fine Art Department. This announcement aims to control ancient monuments, antiques and objects of art within living temples and abandoned temples which are not registered for protection from any damage on religious places and preserving the national properties from vandalism.

From this announcement, before ancient structures or their parts will be repaired, modified, altered, demolished, added to, destroyed, removed or excavated for anything or any building within the compound of the temple will be constructed, the abbot of the temple or the monk who is entrusted must send a report to the Buddhist Monastic Committee first. With the report, pictures including brief information of the ancient structure and its parts and the new construction plan must be sent together to the committee. After the permission, any activities can be done. Any person who violates or do not comply with this announcement, the senior monk's leader will have the power to penalize as may be reasonable.

**The Resolution of the Sangha Supreme Council in the conference No. 27/ B.E. 2539 (1996) on the subject of the improvement on the request for royal priest's title**

The Sangha Supreme Council approve of the role in conservation or preservation on ancient monuments, antiques and objects of art within the temples as one of the criteria to request for the royal priest's title.

The problem of unclear buffer zone determination is apparent in the legislation for protecting heritage temples, located in the urban zone such as in the area of the test study, Rattanakosin Island, the area along the east bank of the Chao Phraya River, regarded as the oldest settlement of Bangkok Metropolitan since 1782. Therefore, for fulfilling this missing concept especially to create protective areas, the specific legislations for construction and activities control were enacted by the Government and the local authority, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, as follows:

### **The Cabinet Decision for Construction and Activities in Rattanakosin Area**

1. The Cabinet Decision in 1978 on contemporary control measure for government building construction within the Rattanakosin area, requiring that government agencies with their building constructions in the area submit construction plans for consideration by the Committee for Krung Rattanakosin Project, together with clarification on environmental impact assessment.

2. The Cabinet Decision in 1981 on land use policy for the Inner Rattanakosin;

- Prohibits on any kind of industrial craft and all skill kinds of factories that could cause fire and have negative impacts on the environment within the Inner Rattanakosin area.

- Control of commercial activities in the Inner Rattanakosin area to a sustainable amount for local communities only.

- Construction Prohibition on all types of residential buildings, government or private.

- Existing buildings from the Rama V period or earlier can be renovated into their original states. The buildings can be brought down and built into the original forms and heights. New buildings must not exceed the height limit of buildings from Rama V period and not higher than 16 meters, with floor to area ratio (F.A.S.R.) of the land plot, and with at least 20 percent of open space, in which green area must be at least 50 percent of the open space.

- Providing control and regulations on buildings along waterways, as well as piers and marinas.

- Improving traffic system to decrease traffic density, especially in the area of historical buildings, and providing pedestrian streets on some routes.

- Providing control and regulations on all types of signboards in the Inner Rattanakosin area.

- Providing protection and control for landscape as well as maintaining cleanliness and serenity of the area.

- Promoting more open space, particularly along the Chao Praya River.

- Encouraging the maintenance of buildings with historical and cultural value.

- Encouraging land use for Thai traditional and cultural activities.

3. The Cabinet Decision in 1985 on temporary measures for the constructions of government in Krung Rattanakosin Area, agreeing that government offices, including state enterprises and other government agencies, should follow such measures in according with the resolution of the Committee of Krung Rattanakosin Project.

4. The Cabinet Decision in 1998 on the control measures for building constructions of government sector, state enterprises, and other government agencies that may appear in Rattanakosin Area, requiring the submission of construction plans to the Committee of Krung Rattanakosin Project for environmental impact assessment. Relevant government sector, state enterprises, and government agencies should strictly act in accordance with this Cabinet Decision. (Committee for the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2004:37-41)

### **The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Regulation of 1985**

Subject: On areas with restrictions on construction, modification, uses or changes of uses of some types or categories of buildings within Inner Rattanakosin Area.

**Inner Rattanakosin Area** signifies the area bounded by the centerlines of Koo Muang Derm Canal and Chao Phraya River in Phra Ratchawang Sub-district, Phra Nakhon District, Bangkok Metropolitan.

Inner Rattanakosin Area is divided into 4 zones: zone 1 is the core zone where construction or modification is prohibited on row house, shop house, factory, commercial building, public building or any building apart from religious buildings, government building, that is not higher than those existing buildings and not higher than 16 meters, measured from the nearest road level or pavement to the highest part of the building. And the other zones as zone 2, zone 3 and zone 4 are the local residence and commercial areas located along the Chao Phraya River bank (mostly are the old shop-houses since King Rama the fifth reign). In these zones, construction or modification is prohibited on some types or categories of buildings.

### **The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Regulation 1987**

Subject: On areas with restrictions on construction, modification, uses or changes of uses of some types or categories of buildings within Outer Rattanakosin Area.

**Outer Rattanakosin Area** signifies the area in sub-districts of Chana Songkram, Talad Yod, San Chao Po Sua, Bowonniwet, Sao Ching Cha, Ratchabopit, Samranrat, and Wang Burapapirom of Phra Nakhon District, Bangkok Metropolitan.

Outer Rattanakosin Area is divided into 10 zones and can be assembled into 3 groups: the first group includes zone 1, 2 and 3, the second group includes zone 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 and the third group is only zone 10. All zones in Outer Rattanakosin Area prohibit construction or modification on some types or categories of buildings. the detail of prohibition or construction control mostly are the same as in the local residence and commercial zones of the Inner Rattanakosin Area only just some zones have different details. (Committee for the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2004:99-107)

Figure 1 shows map from the BMA Regulation for the detail of construction control of both the BMA Regulation of 1985 for Inner Rattanakosin Area and the BMA Regulation 1987 for Outer Rattanakosin Area.



Figure 2

The colored-map from the BMA Regulation for the detail of construction control

This map is adapted from  
[http://www.bma-cpd.go.th/db/doc/khetmap\\_A3/pranakhon.pdf](http://www.bma-cpd.go.th/db/doc/khetmap_A3/pranakhon.pdf)

## **Inner Rattanakosin Area**

From Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Regulation of 1985, subject: On areas with prohibits on construction, modification, uses or changes of uses of some types or categories of buildings within Inner Rattanakosin Area.

Inner Rattanakosin Area is divided into 4 zones and can be assembled into 2 groups: the first group is only zone 1, (yellow-colored zone) and the second group includes zone 2, 3, and 4 (brown-colored zone)

Zone 1 (yellow-colored zone) is regarded as the core zone where construction or modification is prohibited on row house, shop house, factory, commercial building, public building or any building apart from religious buildings, government building, that is not higher than those existing buildings and not higher than 16 meters, measured from the nearest road level or pavement to the highest part of the building.

Grand Palace with the Temple of the Emerald Buddha area is regarded as the center of the core zone surrounding with government buildings, academic buildings, military buildings, and heritage temples.

Heritage temples located in yellow-colored zone are Wat Phra Chetuphon Wimonmangkhalaram, Wat Mahathat Yuwarat Rangsarit, and Wat Ratchapradit Sathimahasimaram.

Zone 2, zone 3, and zone 4 (brown-colored zone) are the residential and local commercial areas where construction or modification is prohibited on some types or categories of buildings as follows:

1. Factory according to the Factory Act
2. Building used for business that is unpleasant or hazardous to health according to the Health Act
3. Service facility according to the Service Place Act
4. Hotel according to the Hotel Act
5. Entertainment facility according to the Accident Prevention From The Entertainment Act
6. Warehouse: building, or a part of building, or building in a similar type for storage or transfer of goods for commercial purposes.
7. Convention hall from the convention hall of government of government, school, university
8. Row house or shop house
9. Crematorium
10. Petro station according to the Petro Keeping Act
11. Sport complex: building or part of building used for sport training or competition for commercial purposes
12. Signboard with accumulated space exceeding 5 square meters
13. Building that is higher than 16 meters, measured from the nearest road level or pavement to the highest past of the building

## Outer Rattanakosin Area

From Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Regulation 1987, subject: On areas with prohibits on construction, modification, uses or changes of uses of some types or categories of buildings within Outer Rattanakosin Area.

Outer Rattanakosin Area is divided into 10 zones and can be assembled into 3 groups: the first group includes zone 1, 2 and 3, (green-colored zone) the second group includes zone 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 (blue-colored zone) and the third group is only zone 10 (pink-colored zone).

This Regulation aims to control construction or modification of buildings but does not cover the restoration of building to its original state, or interior modification that does not affect the building exterior.

Within zone 1, 2, and 3 (green-colored zone) construction or modification is prohibited on some types or categories of buildings as follows:

1. Factory according to the Factory Act
2. Building used for business that is unpleasant or hazardous to health according to the Health Act, *with the exception of the following activities;*
  - a. *Book publishing by means of machinery*
  - b. *Electronic repair*
  - c. *Film processing*
  - d. *Work on diamond, ruby, stone, glass or similar materials*
  - e. *Laundry, pleating, and dyeing by means of machinery*
  - f. *Plotting and making of blue-print*
3. Service facility according to the Service Place Act
4. Hotel according to the Hotel Act
5. Entertainment facility according to the Accident Prevention From The Entertainment Act
6. Warehouse *with area exceeding 80 square meters*  
(Warehouse means building or a part of building, or building in a similar type for storage or transfer of goods for commercial purposes.)
7. *Restaurant with table area exceeding 300 square meters*
8. *Marketplace according to the Health Act*
9. Convention hall from the convention hall of government of government, school, university
10. Row house or shop house, *with the exception of construction or modification to replace existing row house or shop house was burnt down or in deteriorated state, which can be constructed or modified according to the plan and architectural characteristics of row house defined by Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. Shop house that is registered as ancient monument according to the Act on Ancient Monument is allowed to be constructed or modified on the existing foundation of the building without changing the building perimeter, and has to retain the size and shape of the original building.*
11. Crematorium

12. *Commercial office building with accumulated office space exceeding 300 square meters*
13. *Department office building accumulated space exceeding 300 square meters*
14. Petro station according to the Petro Keeping Act
15. Sport complex  
(Sport complex means building or part of building or place for sport training, competition, or viewing, or a building in a similar type to facilitate sportsmen or audiences for commercial purposes)
16. Signboard with accumulated space exceeding 5 square meters, *except road or lane sign, government signboard, election signboard, or signboard of facility name.*
17. Building that is higher than 16 meters, measured from the nearest road level or pavement to the highest part of the building

*(The information of the green-colored zone of Outer Rattanakosin Area which is in the italic fonts display the different detail from comparison with the brown-colored zone of Inner Rattanakosin Area)*

Heritage temples located in the green-colored zone consist of:

- (zone 1) Wat Chana Songkram and Wat Bowornniwet Vihara,
- (zone 2) Wat Ratchabophit Sathimahasimaram, Wat Suthat Thepwararam, Wat Ratchanaddaram, Wat Thepthidaram and Wat Mahannoppharam
- (zone 3) Wat Ratchaburana

Within zone 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (blue-colored zone): follow construction prohibit as same as in the green-colored zone, apart from restaurant with table space no more than 400 square meters in all levels no more than 300 square meters and office building.

Heritage temples located in this zone is Wat Buranasirimatayaram (zone 5).

Within zone 10 (pink-colored zone): follow construction prohibits as same as in the green-colored zone, apart from ballroom hall, folkdance, a place that sells food, alcoholic drink, tea, or any soft drink or arranges entertainment performance, sport complex, entertainment building, department store, signboard, and building that is higher than 16 meters but not more than 37 meters. (Committee for the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2004:99-107)

By comparison with Inner Rattanakosin Area, the construction control in Outer Rattanakosin Area is more flexible from the reason that Inner Rattanakosin is regarded as the core zone where should be under the strict control while Outer Rattanakosin Area function as buffer zone and in this area also has an abundance of local residents and traditional commercial settlements therefore the building in this area can be restored to its original state or interior modification whenever it does not affect the building exterior.

## **The Ministerial Regulation on Bangkok Comprehensive Plan 2006**

National regulation on town planning is the Town Planning Act B.E. 2518 (1975), amended in 1982 and 1992, which provides not only the concepts for good managing of town planning for safety, tidiness, development, and hygienic condition but also the concern of conservation for places or objects with historical and cultural significance. From this Act, the term "Comprehensive Plan" means plan, policies, projects, and control measures served as the developing and conserving guidelines for a relevant urban and rural area in the use of property, transportation, public utilities, public services, and environment to achieve the objectives of town planning.

As the capital of Thailand, Bangkok has struggled to deal with the effect of urbanization. The first comprehensive town planning of Bangkok was started in 1960. It consisted of land use map, transportation and infrastructure projects. Since then, the Bangkok Comprehensive Plan has been revised continually such as in 1975 it was developed by including land use map set by the classification of usage and communication and transportation map, and in 1992 the unused land map was included in the Bangkok Comprehensive Plan.

In 2006, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration developed a new plan. This 2006 version added a Floor Area Ratio requirement (Floor Area Ratio or FAR) and the Open Space Ratio (OSR) as well as the condition that the total Floor Area Ratio could be increased (FAR Bonus) in case of more open space for public use. This Bangkok plan was applied as a ministerial regulation called 'Bangkok Comprehensive Plan 2006'. The duration of this regulation was five years from the date of May 16, 2006 to May 15, 2011 and the enforcement could be extended for 1 year but could not be extended more than 2 times. In January 2011, the first extension of this plan was announced for use until May 15, 2012. (City Planning Department 2011a)

Since its establishment, the Bangkok Comprehensive Plan has been used as a guideline for conserving cultural areas in Bangkok by its objectives to maintain places of cultural value, historical and archaeological areas and to promote conservation of Thai cultural identity. As we can see in the Bangkok Comprehensive Plan 2006, in figure 2, land usage was classified into eight categories:

- 1) land for housing (within the zones of yellow, orange and brown color)
  - Yellow-colored = low density residential areas
  - Orange-colored = medium density residential areas
  - Brown-colored = high density residential areas
- 2) land for commercial use (red-colored)
- 3) industrial land (purple-colored)
- 4) land for warehouse (violet-colored)
- 5) land for rural and agriculture preservation (white with green diagonal)
- 6) rural and agricultural land (green-colored)
- 7) land for government institutions, public assistance and infrastructures (blue-colored)
- 8) land for conservation and promotion of Thai culture (light brown-colored)

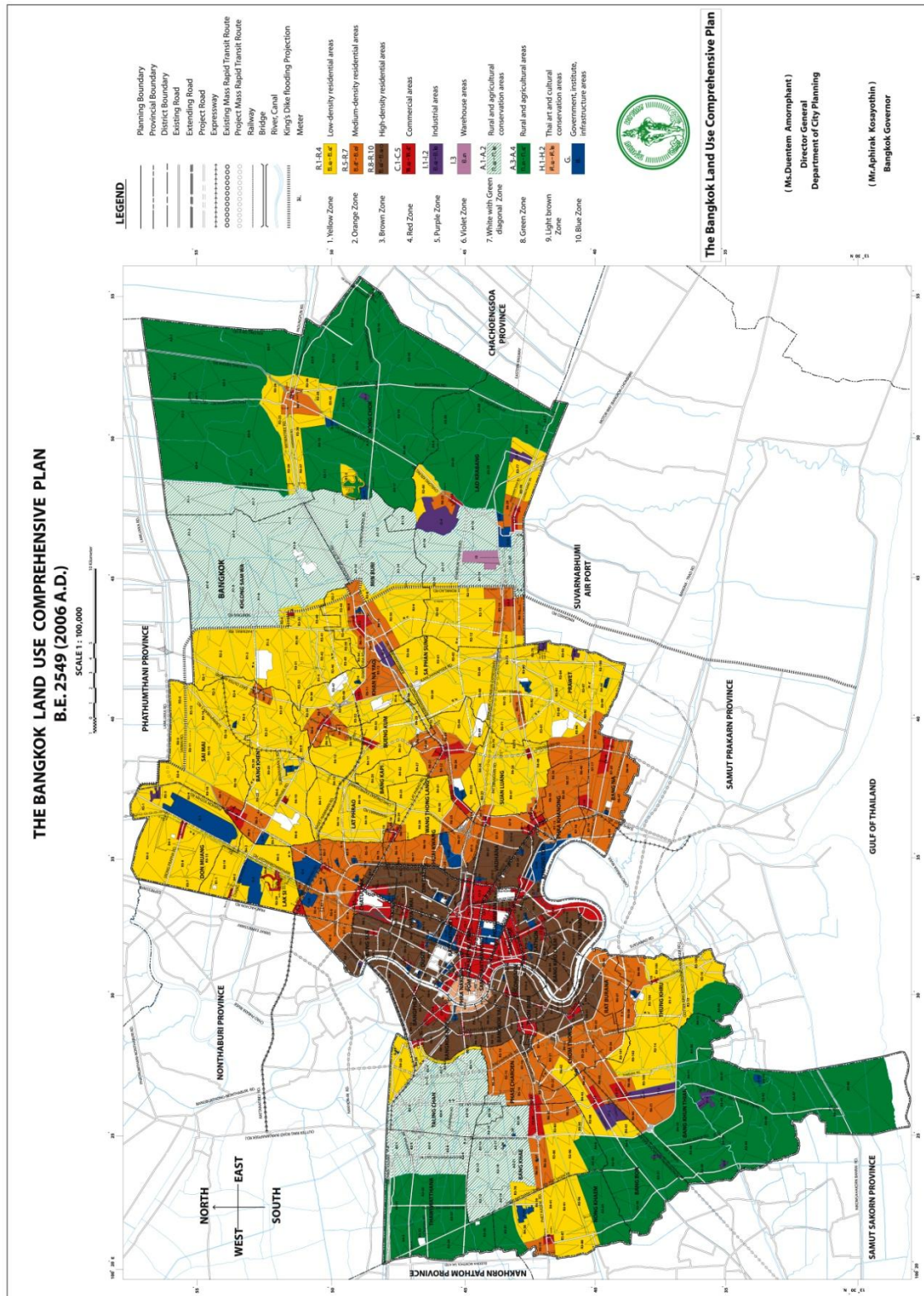


Figure 3 The Bangkok land Use Comprehensive Plan 2006  
 Figure resource: [http://www.bangkokplan.org/documents/English\\_mapIn.pdf](http://www.bangkokplan.org/documents/English_mapIn.pdf)

Royal palace areas and preservation areas for military utilities are excluded in the areas of enforced designations land in this Regulation on Bangkok Comprehensive Plan 2006.

The main area for preservation, conservation and promotion of Thai culture in the Bangkok Comprehensive Plan 2006 (light brown-colored area) is in Rattanakosin Island. Even though the Grand Palace and the temple of the Emerald Buddha is located as the core zone in this area, the power of this regulation does not cover this place, because the surrounding area is the main area to be enforced by this regulation. In the areas of enforced designation, land cannot be used for something not specified in the Bangkok Comprehensive Plan 2006 or any action which violates the terms of the Plan.

For preserving the cultural area of Bangkok, Ministerial Regulation on Bangkok Comprehensive Plan B.E. 2549 (2006) defines that the area for conservation and promotion of Thai culture is mainly used to promote the unique Thai culture and local architecture, tourism, commercial use, residential use, government institutions and infrastructures; the transfer of land to other activities exceeding five percent of the total area is prohibited. The land cannot be used for any other business than the one prescribed. Therefore, this area cannot be used for other purposes including factories, hotels, entertainment complexes, high rise buildings and high rise commercial buildings, convention centers, warehouses, gas and petrol stations, crematoriums, theme parks, etc. If the area is not for residential, the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) cannot exceed 3:1 and Open Space Ratio (OSR) has to be over 10 percent. (City Planning Department 2011b)

### **The Regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister on the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2003**

‘Rattanakosin Island’ can be referred to the historic area of Bangkok surrounded by the waterways; the Chao Phraya River and the canals which served as its moats, making its area look like an island. It comprises of 2 areas; Inner Rattanakosin and Outer Rattanakosin.

‘Krung Rattanakosin’ (Krung, the Thai dialect, means City) was signified by the legislation as the historic areas including not only Inner Rattanakosin and Outer Rattanakosin on the east riverbank but also including the old town area in Thonburi on the opposite riverbank of the Chao Phraya River also. Therefore, by comparison with Rattanakosin Island, the area of Krung Rattanakosin is wider.

For more than 220 years, Krung Rattanakosin has been functioned as the center of significant institutions and important activities including administration, economy, commercial, education transportation, and tourism. Nowadays, it inevitably faces several problems from urban threats such as high density of building construction, traffic congestion, environmental deterioration, and pollution, all of which could affect and decrease invaluable cultural heritage which located abundantly in this area.

These immediate problems together with the heightened public awareness in cultural heritage conservation have encouraged the government to earnestly act on such problems by appointing different committees to work on the conservation and development of this highly significant historical area. The relevant committees are as follows:

### **1. Committee for the Conservation of Valuable Historical, Archaeological, Cultural, and Architectural Buildings within the Bangkok Metropolitan Area**

This committee was appointed by the Interior Ministry in 1967 with Bangkok Metropolitan Administration as the key agency. Its responsibility is to define policies and measures for the renovation of significant buildings in Bangkok for the Bicentennial Anniversary of the city in 1982.

### **2. Committee for the Conservation, Improvement, and the Restoration of Ancient Monuments in Rattanakosin Island**

Appointed by the Education Ministry in according with the Cabinet Decision in 1978, this committee is responsible for defining policies and guidelines for the conservation of Rattanakosin Island. Several government agencies are represented in the committee.

### **3. Committee for the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns**

This national level committee was firstly appointed in 1978 by the Cabinet in the name of '*Committee for Rattanakosin Island Project*'. Twenty years later, in 1998, its name was changed to '*Committee for the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns*' due to the boundary under its responsibility was extended to cover not only Rattanakosin but also the old towns in each region of Thailand. (At present, 7 towns, which were announced, consist of Chiangmai, Lampang, Kampeangpetch, Lopburi, Pimai, Nakornsrihammarat, and Songkla.)

When the Regulation on the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns was issued in 2003, its status was changed from a committee under the Cabinet to a committee under the Regulation. This committee retains the Deputy Prime Minister as chairman and Office of the Environmental Policy and Planning as secretariat. Its responsibility is to define administrative and legal measures as well as regulations for operating agencies. Its task is also to encourage more cooperation from the general public and private sectors throughout different processes.

For protecting Krung Rattanakosin Area from urban threats, this committee is responsible for defining conservation and development policies, combining the responsibilities with *the Committee on the Conservation of Valuable Historical, Archaeological, Cultural, and Architectural Buildings in Bangkok* of Interior Ministry and *the Committee for the Conservation, Improvement, and Restoration of Ancient Monuments in Rattanakosin Island* of Education Ministry.

The Regulation on the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2003 was issued to ensure that all policies, plan, measures, and guidelines for the conservation and development of Krung Rattanakosin are defined systematically and efficiently to the end that Krung Rattanakosin remains everlasting cultural heritages of the nation. From its objective, the Master Plan for the conservation of Rattanakosin area was formulated by this committee.

### **The Master Plan for the Conservation and Development of Rattanakosin Area**

This master plan for the conservation and development of Rattanakosin area was approved by the Cabinet in 1997. The objectives are to conserve valuable buildings or places and their environments and to ensure that all development in Rattanakosin Area is conservation conscious. It emphasizes the opening up of views and vistas that enhance the significance and identity of valuable buildings and places, restoring ancient monuments and architectures, as well as developing proper surrounding environments. There are 20 projects generated by this master plan, which can be divided into 4 groups as follows:

1. A group of 3 projects in the area of Mahakran Fort, Ratchanaddaram and Thethidaram temple, and the Golden Mount
  - Conservation and restoration of Mahakran Fort
  - Improvement of area near Ratchanaddaram and Thethidaram temple
  - Construction of the Golden Mount Public Park
2. A group of 4 projects on land and water transportations in the Inner Rattanakosin Sub-area
  - Construction of canals and bridges for navigation
  - Construction of pedestrian walkways along Koo Muang Dem Canal and Rob Krung Canal
  - Conservation and restoration of city gates, city wall, and fort
  - Activity organization in the Ong Ang Canal mouth area
3. A group of 8 projects in the area along the Chao Phraya River
  - Improvement of the Phra Athit Road area
  - Enhancement of view for Bowonniwetsathan Suttawas
  - Improvement of the Tha Prachan area
  - Improvement of the Royal Naval Institute area
  - Improvement of the Department of Interior Trade area
  - Enhancement of view for Phra Chetuphon temple
  - Project on the improvement of the Tha Tien area
  - Project on the improvement of the Pak Klong Talad area
4. A group of other 5 projects
  - Improvement of the Prang Nara, Prang Phuthon and Prang Sappasat areas
  - Control measure for housing behind Rachadamnern Building
  - Construction of multipurpose urban plaza for cultural activities in the area between Suthat temple and the Bangkok Metropolitan City Hall
  - Environmental improvement for Bang Lumphu commercial district
  - Provision of infrastructure equipments for the Krung Rattanakosin area

The administration and management of all 20 projects is prioritized according to significance, appropriateness, and availability of resources into 4 groups; the first phase (year 1-5) with 9 projects, the middle phase (year 6-10) with 6 projects, and the last phase (year 11-15) with 6 projects. The overall budget is at 7,052.76 million Baht. (Committee for the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2004: 43-45)

However, since the initiation by the government, the projects of the master plan for Rattanakosin Area have been conducted by the administrative authorities with a little public recognition and participation. And from the attitude of the master plan that aims to improve views and vistas of heritage landscapes without local residents concern, therefore the conflicts from the demolition of some local shop-houses considered not significant have been seen since then.

### **The Lessons from the Master Plan Projects**

Thailand has developed a conservation philosophy focusing on important temples and places, which a preserved monument was once considered as an untouchable property. (Pimonsathean 2007:358 in Sirisrisak 2009:4) Due to this concept, the heritage of local residents in Rattanakosin area, such as their shop-houses which were considered not significant from administration vision, are excluded in conservation projects of the master plan and must be demolished for creating scenic landscape of the ancient monuments.

The local communities, where the conflicts were arisen, consist of Tha Prachan (local commercial area along the Chao Phraya River near Mahathat Temple), Tha Tien and Pak Klong Talad (local commercial area near Phra Chetuphon Temple), Prang Nara, Prang Phuthon and Prang Sappasat (local residence near Ratchapradit temple, Ratchabophit temple, and Suthat temple) and Mahakan Fort (local residence near Rathanaddaram temple and Thepthidaram temple).

In the master plan's projects, some shop-houses in these local communities must be demolished and wholesale activities of some areas must be removed. It was unacceptable for the local residents. Therefore, for relieving the conflict, Department of City Planning of Bangkok Metropolitan Administration proposed the specific plans for these areas, which are practical for implementation within a short term and small budget, by cancel the demolition and conservation works focus on minor physical improvement, such as to repaint the building's façade, to improve pier, pedestrian, street furniture and to manage community's landscape. The specific plans not only to improve physical condition, but also to control the activities in the areas; only activities that will not harm the value of the places are allowed.

These specific plans were successfully implemented during the budget year of 1977-1999. The conservation works were mainly done by the local communities with the academic support. Not only were physical condition and economic enhanced, the success of the specific plans also gave local communities an encouragement. Moreover, it illustrates the importance of public participation in conservation.

The approach used in the master plan has contributed to safeguard a number of cultural heritage places in the area. However, the conflict among local communities reflects the negative impact of top-down approach used in the master plan. The case of master plan's conflict can give some insight for other historic areas particularly in urban area that tend to have similar approach in conservation and heritage management. (Siririsak 2009:3-6)

While the group of 3 conservation projects in the area of Mahakan Fort which has the objective to open up vistas of the heritage place by demolishing the residences of the local community nearby, faced with conflict from the disagreement of the local community, the conservation projects related to improve landscape only in the heritage temple areas, such as the projects for enhancement of landscape of Wat Phra Chetuphon and Wat Bowornniwet, had no conflict from their local communities and their residents. However, these projects still lack the participation not only of the public but also of the monks in the temples themselves. Due to the conservation works are only in the hand of the government sectors even if one of the master plan's objectives is to encourage more cooperation from the general public. Therefore, these plans still lack of sense of belonging encouragement among the monks in the temple, the local community nearby and the public.

The conservation project related to living heritage place should be created from bottom-up approach with public participation on conservation since decision to management work even in the area where the conflict never be arisen for the provision of conservation preparedness. These directly connected to conserve social value of the place. And for living heritage temple, where spiritual value is existed, functioned and presented more than other heritage types, its spiritual value should be realized for conserving together with its social value.

It could be said that, by the conservation concept of the master plan from The Regulation on the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2003, the vista and landscape of the living heritage temples located in Rattanakosin Island have been improved for conserving their historic value, architectural value, and aesthetic value. At the same time their environments have been protected by the control of inappropriate constructions and activities. In other words, their tangible aspects can be clearly protected by the legislations enacted by the government sectors and the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. But for their intangible attribute such as social and spiritual value, to date these values still have been neglected in the conservation concepts of the government sectors and the local authority, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

By way of conclusion, the suitable guideline for conservation of living heritage temples within Thai context should encourage local participation and public awareness on conservation. Moreover, due to the fact that tangible and intangible heritage cannot separate in the conceptual conservation of living heritage temples, therefore both tangible and intangible significance including historic value, architectural value, aesthetic value, scientific value, social value and spiritual value should be investigated and implemented for the sustainable conservation approach.

## Chapter conclusion

Initiated from the western vision with the encouragement of the intergovernmental organization, UNESCO and its advisory bodies, the conservation concepts have been improved continually and the scope of cultural heritage definition has been expanded ever since the adoption of the Venice Charter to date. Specific conservation guideline for each cultural heritage has been created to protect its distinctive character. But one of the notable types of cultural heritage still has had unclear conservation guideline in the form of Charter; Living Religious Heritage is that issue requiring its own specific conservation approach.

By following the conceptual conservation considered from many charters, the first step for understanding living religious heritage is to clearly define its distinctive character together with assess its significance. ICCROM Forum 2003 stated that living religious heritage requires recognizing that the intangible significance of tangible religious objects, structures, and places is the key to their meaning. The revealing concept of the importance of intangible significance in Asia context could be found in the Nara Documents on Authenticity and the Hoi An Protocols, which accept the inherent intangible attribute in tangible aspect with the respect for cultural and heritage diversity, this concept is the essential factor for conserving living temples in Thailand. Due to the fact, that intangible significance, in the form of religious rites performed continually by monks and the Buddhists, illustrates the sacred atmosphere and creates the distinctive character of living temple. Therefore, in order to be most effective, conservation process of living heritage temple should integrate social and spiritual values into the process of conserving historic, aesthetic and architectural value and must be ensured that all values can be preserved with the appropriate way.

Not only sense of place should be conserved but also sense of ownership and sense of pride should be encouraged. Many charters, related to the conservation of living heritage address the similar concept of the attention to create sense of ownership among the residents of each heritage. The participation and involvement of local residents are essential for the conservation success including the conservation of living heritage temples which should be ideally initiated by the monks and the nearby community with the advice from the conservation experts. The measures to encourage participation such as the information programmes which should be set up for all residents, beginning with the monks of each temple and the special training which should be provided for all those persons who are concerned.

Living religious heritage in Thailand, most of them certainly are Buddhist temples. In the area of the test study, Rattanakosin Island, all living Buddhist temples located in this area were registered as the national heritage properties by the Fine Arts Department. These national heritage temples have been protected by the legislations enacted by the government sector and the local authority, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. But these legislations should be improved due to the limitation on conservation works from the outdated legislations and the negative lessons from the master plan projects created with less concern of local participation. Therefore, the attempt to solve these problems, by appending the realization of intangible cultural heritage and the encouragement of public participation, has been realized.

Rattanakosin Island is the historic area where has been protected by many specific legislations enacted for controlling inappropriate activities and restricting construction, modification, uses or changes of uses of some types or categories of buildings. This area also has been regarded as the area for conservation and promotion of Thai Culture from the Ministerial Regulation on Bangkok Comprehensive Plan 2006. All of these legislations indicate the attempt of government sector to protect heritage properties from the unavoidable modernization.

Nevertheless, as the capital of Thailand, Bangkok is confronted with the effect from urbanization. Located in Rattanakosin Island, historic center of Bangkok, the heritage temples need the specific conservation guideline which can reconcile urban development with conservation of heritage significance. Therefore, understanding the threats from urban development to living heritage temple is one of the essential factors to be clear for creating the effective conservation guideline. Moreover, the risk preparedness should be realized and integrated into the process of conservation.

Not only the suitable guideline for conserving living heritage temples but also the guideline for disseminating values of heritage temples to public should be realized. Interpretation and presentation of each heritage temple should be an integral part of the conservation process for enhancing appreciation of heritage values and transferring significant meaning of living heritage temple to a wide range of stakeholders. The effective communication can also encourage public awareness of specific conservation problems encountered at the temples and explain the conservation efforts being taken to protect the physical integrity and authenticity of the heritage temples.

For the heritage temples which have been continuously used by monks and the Buddhist worshipers, it is important that the conservation guideline should not attempt to freeze either forms or traditions related to heritage significance at a moment in time, but rather guide the inevitable changes in ways which are sympathetic to the survival of past and present expressions. Conceptual conservation of living heritage temples should therefore accept the continuing nature of living heritage.

## Chapter 3

### Buddhism in Thai context

#### Buddhism

Buddhism means the Teachings of the Buddha or the religion founded by the Buddha. *Buddha* does not exist as a name while Buddha is well-known as the title, meaning the Enlightened One or the Awakened One. The original name of the Buddha was (*Prince*) *Siddhattha* and he lived 2600 years ago. Through the story of his life, it can be learnt that a man, by training himself through his own effort and intelligence can achieve supreme attainments as the Enlightened One. From his discourses, the Buddha refused God who created the world and controls man's destiny. He proclaimed equality of all men. His Teachings, *the Dharma*, deal with suffering and the practical method for eliminating from suffering by means of realizing the true nature of things and by the way of self effort, free from prayers to celestial beings and superstition. During the Buddha's lifetime, Buddhism spread rapidly through the great personality of the Buddha himself and through the spirit of renunciation of his disciples, *the Sangha*. Therefore, the Three of them, *the Buddha*, the founder; *the Dharma*, the Teachings; and *the Sangha*, which consists of the followers who study, practice and disseminate the Teachings of the Buddha, form *the Triple Gem*, which all Buddhists value the best of all precious things. (Payutto 2005:4-10, 36)

After the passing away of the Buddha, the Dharma he taught remains the teacher as he himself explained to his disciples that they would not be left without teacher '*the Doctrine and Discipline I have taught you, that shall be your Teacher, when I am gone*'. Therefore, the foundation for the protection and preservation of his Teachings were laid down through the doctrine passed on to his disciples. In the first century of the Buddhist Era, the Buddhist Council was held to protect and preserve the purity of the Buddha's Teachings. (Payutto 2005:36) The First Buddhist Council is said to have taken place after three months following the passing away of the Buddha. It was held for the purpose of setting upon the contents of the Buddhist Canon by revising, classifying and standardizing the various Teachings of the Buddha during the 45 years of his preaching. (Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc. 2002:6) One hundred years after the First Buddhist Council, in the Second Buddhist Council, the Sangha began to split into two groups of monks. One came to be called *Theravada sect* and the other, *Mahayana sect*. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century of the Buddhist Era, the Third Buddhist Council was held under the patronage of *King Asoka the Great* (326-284 B.C.) Since then the Theravada sect and the Mahayana sect have gradually moved along different courses of development, quite apart from each other. Theravada means 'Teachings of the Elders' but the Mahayana calls the Theravada the *Hinayana* meaning 'the lesser vehicle of salvation' in contrast to their own Mahayana, which means 'the great vehicle of salvation'. Their differences are in the emphasis and the interpretation.

The Theravada preserved the original Teachings in the Pali Canon and holds together in a single unified tradition, while the Mahayana turned the original scriptures into Sanskrit and has varied interpretations of the doctrine and the discipline under differing circumstances. The Theravada requires personal self-effort while the Mahayana believes in salvation through faith and devotion. In the Theravada, the Buddha is a discoverer who points out the Path, but in the Mahayana he becomes a savior by whose grace all beings can hope to be redeemed. The emphasis of the Theravada is on wisdom and practical insight as the key virtue on the path of self-reliance towards the ideal state of being an *Arahant*. The Mahayana stress is on compassion, the key virtue of the *Bodhisattvas*, the ideal persons who vow to save all beings and work for the good of suffering beings. Moreover, the Mahayana also takes much interest in philosophical speculation and ritualism, while the original doctrine of the Theravada regards these as useless. (Payutto 2005:36-37, 42-44)

### **Buddhism in Thai History**

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Buddhist Era, Theravada Buddhism, an orthodox Buddhist sect which kept the original doctrine and tradition of the Buddha, not only flourished in India under the patronage of *King Asoka the Great* (326-284 B.C.) but he also supported the spread of Theravada Buddhism beyond the borders of India. The nine missions of the elder monks were sent to propagate the original doctrine of the Buddha in various foreign territories. Buddhism from India then was spreading to Southeast Asia when this territory was known as *Suvarnabhumi*. Buddhist beliefs eventually were accepted among the rulers and the indigenous people of Southeast Asia. The native rulers declared themselves Buddhists and became the upholders of the faith. Since then, Buddhism has become integrated with the traditional beliefs and spread extensively across territories, following the expansion of transportation routes, and is now practiced everywhere. (Saraya 1996:485-486) In the territory of Thailand nowadays, the antiquities at the ancient town of Nakhon Pathom province, 50 Kilometers west of Bangkok, seem to give practical evidence as to where Buddhism from India first took root. These include stone inscriptions and the great stupa itself which, if stripped of its later-constructed top, would be of the same design as the stupa of King Asoka the Great at the town of Sanchi, in India. (Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc. 2002:13)

From 6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Buddhism had been gradually disappearing from India and since the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. the center of Theravada Buddhism moved from India to Ceylon (Sri Lanka nowadays). At that time, in Southeast Asia, the Kingdom of the Thais, Sukhothai Kingdom, emerged and ruled over the area of present-day, north central Thailand. In 1277 A.D. when King *Ramkamhaeng* succeeded to the throne and ruled as the third king of Sukhothai kingdom, it was he who introduced the present form of Theravada Buddhism from Ceylon to the Thai people. In this reign, Sukhothai was at its peak in power and prosperity. Theravada Buddhism was regarded as the state religion. Buddhist belief was widely accepted and practiced among the ruling class as much as among the common people. Since then, the continuous history of the Thai Nation began and the Thai Buddhism took the present form and functioned as a significantly fundamental influence on Thai belief systems.

At the same time, in the central region along the Chao Phraya River, another Kingdom of the Thais was founded with Ayutthaya as its capital and later it came to dominate over Sukhothai. During four centuries of Ayutthaya period (1356-1767 A.D.) Theravada Buddhism can be seen to reach its zenith of popularity. The Thais accepted Theravada and blended with their traditional beliefs. Buddhism has had a deep influence in Thai art and culture and shaped the landscape of Ayutthaya, the capital, as the elegant Buddhist kingdom. Within and around Ayutthaya kingdom, there were scattered innumerable temples, which served not only as the center of faith but also the center of fundamental education and even as the center for secular activities. Theravada Buddhism became an integral part in ways of life of the Thai people, modeled their manner of thinking and formed the unique of Thai character.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Ayutthaya was overrun by the enemy and was ruthlessly destroyed. After the war, the royal temple and many important temples, religious literatures, Buddha images and most of the religious evidence were burnt, contributing to the decline of Buddhism in Ayutthaya. *King Taksin the Great*, who freed the Thais from the enemy in 6 months, decided to abandon Ayutthaya and moved the capital to Thonburi, the small seafront town located on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River. During his reign, the King did very much to revive Buddhism but his reign (1767 - 1782) existed only for 15 years. Nevertheless, although King Taksin ruled only a short period, under his patronage, several temples were reconstructed, monastic rules were resettled, religious texts were recollected and the study and the practice of Theravada Buddhism were revised to some degree. It is safe to state that Theravada Buddhism, in the form of that of the Ayutthaya period, still prevailed in the Thonburi period. (Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc. 2002:30-32)

In 1782, King Rama the First ascended to the throne as the first Chakri dynasty king. He relocated the center of administration from Thonburi to Bangkok, the then small town located on the east bank of the Chao Phraya River in what is now the area of Rattanakosin Island. Rattanakosin Island or Bangkok was announced officially as the new capital of Rattanakosin period. Under the patronage of the King, Buddhist rules were standardized and Buddhist texts were recollected, revised and established again. A number of Buddha images, (about two thousand in all) from the destroyed towns and the former capitals (Sukhothai and Ayutthaya), were brought in order to be preserved and enshrined in the various temples in Bangkok. Moreover, under the royal patronage and the chairmanship of the Supreme Patriarch, the Buddhist Council was held at Wat Salak or Wat Mahathat Yuwarat Rangsarit in 1788. It was the Second Thai Buddhist Council held in Thailand. (The First Thai Buddhist Council was held in Chaingmai in 1457)

Throughout the reign of King Rama I, numerous Buddhist monasteries located both inside and outside the new capital were reconstructed, especially the ancient temples since Ayutthaya period which were located in Rattanakosin Island including *Wat Pho* (Wat Phra Chetuphon Wimonmangkhalaram), *Wat Salak* (Wat Mahathat Yuwarat Rangsarit), *Wat Klang Na* or *Wat Tong Pu* (Wat Chana Songkram) and *Wat Liap* (Wat Ratchaburana), all of these, were received the great reconstruction during this reign.

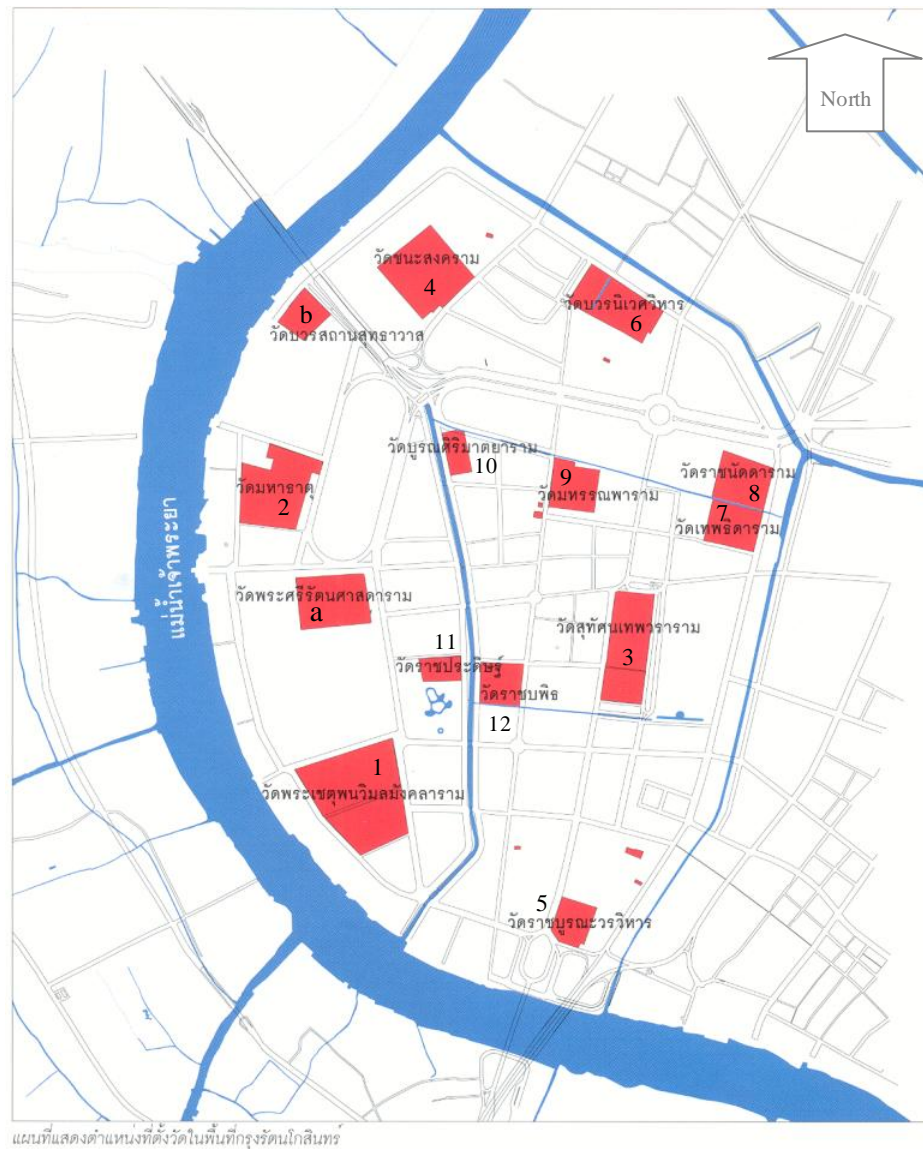


Figure 4

Map of Rattanakosin Island showing 12 living heritage temples

Figure resource: City Planning Department, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration 2004:13

Inner Rattanakosin Area locates

(a) The temple of the Emerald Buddha: the royal temple of the Grand Place

(b) Wat Bowornsuthavas: the royal temple of the Front Palace

(1) Wat Phra Chetuphon Wimonmangkhalaram, (2) Wat Mahathat Yuwarat Rangsarit and (11) Wat Ratchapradit Sathimahasimaram.

Outer Rattanakosin Area locates 10 living heritage temples comprise of:

(3) Wat Suthat Thepwararam,

(4) Wat Chana Songkram,

(5) Wat Ratchaburana,

(6) Wat Bowornniwet Vihara,

(7) Wat Thepthidaram,

(8) Wat Ratchanaddaram,

(9) Wat Mahannoppharam,

(10) Wat, Buranasirimatayaram

and (12) Wat Ratchabophit Sathimahasimaram.

Not only the ancient temples were repaired, but also new temples were created. Within the area of the Grand Palace, The new grand royal temple, Pra Sri Ratana Sasadaram temple, was built for enshrining the Emerald Buddha, the most significant Buddha image of royalty and Thai people. Eastward from the temple of the Emerald Buddha and at the central point of Rattanakosin Island, the ideal temple symbolizing the center of the universe from the Buddhist cosmological concept was built. This temple, known as Wat Suthat was firstly constructed by the initiation of King Rama I; however his reign came to end before the main building was completed. King Rama II followed the guideline launched by his father to continue the construction. Nevertheless, the main building was built completely in the reign of King Rama III. And finally in the reign of King Rama IV, front and rear porticos of the main building were added, thus completing this building.

In the reign of King Rama III (1824-1851) a great number of temples, mainly royal temples of the royal monarch and the noble, were constructed, both inside and outside Rattanakosin Island. The important heritage temples which were built during this reign and located in Rattanakosin Island consist of:

- Wat Ratchanaddaram was built by the order of King Rama III
- Wat Thepthidaram was built by the order of King Rama III
- Wat Bowornniwet Vihara was built by the younger brother of King Rama II in the reign of King Rama III
- Wat Mahannoppharam was built by the son of King Rama III
- Wat Buranasirimatayaram was built by nobleman in the reign of King Rama III

During the reign of King Rama III, the new sect of Thai Buddhist monks was initiated by Prince *Mongkut*, the King's younger brother, who afterward succeeded to the throne as King Rama IV. Due to his experience of 27 years of being a monk, the Prince was a distinguished scholar of Buddhist scripture in the Pali language. With such a wealth of knowledge, gained and digested as a result of long and profound thinking, he was able to distinguish more clearly between what was right and what was wrong in the Buddhist doctrine. Therefore, for seeking to give Buddhist monastic life its former strictness, he began to reform Thai Buddhism. This led to the establishment of a new order called the *Dhammayuttika sect* in 1833 to distinguish it from the original Sangha, which was later called the *Mahanikaya sect*. His desire to establish the Dhammayuttika was to enable Buddhist monks to lead a more disciplined and scholarly life in accordance with the pristine Teachings of the Buddha. (Kusalasaya 2010:8) As time passed by, there have been movements, changes and improvement in both sects so that nowadays the two sects do not differ in any substantial way from each other. Monks of the two sects differ very little from one another. (Payutto 2005:28)

After the passed away of King Rama III, Prince Mongkut was requested to leave his chaste life and ascended to the throne as King Rama IV. Under his patronage, the Dhammayuttika sect was supported continuously. Wat Ratchapradit Sathimahasimaram, one of the most important royal temples located in Rattanakosin Island, was built for the Dhammayuttika monks.

Throughout the reign of King Rama IV (1851-1868), the rules and regulations for the betterment of the administration of the community of Buddhist monks as a whole were laid down. Buddhist monks were greatly encouraged in their study and practice of Buddhism, so that they were well-behaved as well as well educated in the Buddha's doctrine. From the prosperity of Buddhist study in the religious sector, the secular sector also received the advantage from the result of much earnest study in Buddhism when several Pali books expounding the tenets of the Buddha's doctrine were translated into Thai language. This enabled educated people could understand the Dharma in Thai easily by themselves. This movement opened up a new trend of modern thought in its dissemination of the Buddha's doctrine to the Thai people on the broader scale. (Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc. 2002:34-36)

While the Buddhist study was expanding during the reign of King Rama IV, Buddhism in Thailand began to face the impact from western civilization when the kingdom was more contact with the western countries. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the independent kingdoms in Southeast Asia could not resist the currents of modernization from the western world. King Rama IV attempted to balance between western civilization and Thai traditional way of life. However, Thai society still received impact from the westernization which was clearly emerged in the reign of King Rama the fifth who ushered in an era of extensive modernization into Thai society.

During the period of King Chulalongkorn or King Rama V (1868-1910), almost aspects of Thai society began to transform into modernization toward accepting the influence from the European Industrial Age of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The influence of western civilization impacted not only on the secular sector but also the religious sector. In the previous time, the royal temples were commonly constructed and decorated with Thai traditional art style but the interior of the ordination hall of the new royal temple built in this reign, Wat Ratchabophit Sathimahasimaram, was decorated in Gothic style. This revealed the influence of the western art style on Thai society in another aspect.

In 1878, by the royal command of King Chulalongkorn, the Third Thai Buddhist Council was held where the Thai alphabet was used in the Tripitaka (the Buddhist Scriptures) instead of the modified Khmer script. With the modern technique of book printing, introduced into Thailand during this time, this revised version of the Tripitaka was published for the first time in the form of modern book which was known as *the Royal Siamese Edition*.

Furthermore, with the aim of the King to increase the progress and stability of Buddhist education, two Buddhist academies, *Mahamakuta* and *Mahachulalongkorn*, were founded. These two academies played an important role in the field of Buddhist study. Later, in the reign of King Rama IX (the Present King has reigned since 1946 to the present) the position of these two academies became to be the real sense of Buddhist university of Thailand. (Payutto 2005:142) These two are Mahamakuta University, situated in Wat Bowornniwet, opened in 1946 and Mahachulalongkorn, situated in Wat Mahathat Yuwarat Rangsarit, opened in 1947 (Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc. 2002:37, 41)

King Chulalongkorn also enacted the religious law, *the Sangha Administration Act of Rattanakosin Era 121 (1903 A.D.)* concerning the administrative system of the community of Buddhist monks, for providing official government for the Order and to achieve perfect harmony between the Sangha and the State. By this Act of R.E. 121, there was established a *Mahathera Samagom* or Council of Elders (or the Sangha Supreme Council) to act as adviser to the King in all affairs concerning the religion and the administration and support of the Sangha. (Payutto 2005:28-29)

Although the education of Buddhist was supported under the royal patronage, the limitation of the public education making Buddhist study expanded only among the minority of Buddhist monks and the aristocracy. As a matter of fact that a large majority of Thai people were uneducated, therefore, in order to improve public education for the mass of uneducated people in the secular sector, private and public schools were first established with the influence of western concept. It could be said that in this reign, both the common people and the Buddhist monks came together to encounter with the western civilization and reached the modern period under the warm support of the King. Unfortunately, with the end of King Chulalongkorn's reign, things changed for the worse. The process of modernization continued on the part of the secular sector but on the monastic side it was kept going for only a short period of time and then waned. (Payutto 2005:137)

During the reign of King Rama VI (1910-1925) the King still continued the policy laid by his royal father which was more encouragement of public education and Buddhist education. The King organized a new branch of Buddhist studies within the Thai language in order to imbue the spirit of Buddhism into the minds of Thai people without any distinction of position, profession and sex. Since then, the study of Thai Buddhism was accessible to all, whether they knew Pali language or not, whether they wanted to study it for a long time or within limited period of time and whether they were male or female. Any interested person can get an insight study of Buddhism either by himself/herself. Therefore, the new generation could easily find access to the knowledge of Buddhism more than in the past. (Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc. 2002:38-39)

In 1927, a revised edition of Tripitaka, called *the Siam Rath Edition*, was published in the reign of King Rama VII (1925-1934). But during this reign, Thai society confronted with the great change from both the political reform towards democracy occurred in 1932 and the economic depression from the World War. After the Second World War had ended in 1945 in the reign of King Rama VIII or King Ananda Mahidol (1934-1946), Thai society started to deal with the new form of modernization of economic transformation encompassing intensive industrialization. Nowadays, in the reign of King Bhumibol Adulyadej or King Rama IX (1946 to the present time) while Thai society has been developed into westernization, the study of Thai Buddhism still has advanced. Many institutions and writers contributed a great number of books on Buddhism both in Thai and English. Nowadays, it can be said that the study of Thai Buddhism opens wide for the interested person even the foreigners. Nevertheless, on the contrary, while Buddhist study seem to have positive advance, some social roles of Buddhist temples and Buddhist monks are distinctly changed from that in the past.

## The Change in Thai Buddhism

Throughout the long history of more than 700 years since the period of Sukhothai kingdom in 13<sup>th</sup> century, Theravada Buddhism has enriched the life of the Thais in all their aspects and has functioned as the core of their thinking and belief systems. But everything is impermanent as the Natural Truth stated in the Teachings of the Buddha that '*All compounded things (all things and all brings in the world) are perpetually flowing, forever breaking up (they are impermanent)*'. (Buddhahasa 2006:5) Since the late of 19<sup>th</sup> century in the reign of King Rama V, Thai society faced with the great change. Beginning with the administration reformed in secular sector, the structure of the government was changed to adopt a new pattern and also caused the change in religious sector when the public education system from the western concept was introduced into Thai society. (Payutto 2005:137)

In the past, Buddhist temples were as much centers of scholarly learning and wisdom as they were of life and culture. (Saraya 1996:485) The venerable monks were usually regarded as the spiritual and influential persons of both religious and secular society. And as the custom of socialization and public education has developed in Thailand, for mental and emotional improvement of a younger to be a mature adult, there has been a tradition that every Thai male at twenty years old must ordain to stay in the temple for receiving a religious training. During his monkhood, he acquires not only academic instruction from the senior monks training him to become the intellectual in religious knowledge, but also the mental teaching for improving his maturity and good manners. This custom gives an opportunity for Thai youth to become familiar with religion practice and is a factor which led to the stability of Thai Buddhism.

However, when the primary schools and the higher education system of the universities were established, then the education system moved gradually from the monastic sector to public schools and universities in the secular sector. Latterly, the influence of modern education produces the new youth who believes in scientific thought and becomes familiar with western culture. And thus nowadays, few young generations are becoming monks. Due to this factor, the number of Buddhist monks in Thai society, particularly in the capital as in Bangkok and many urban towns, seems to have decreased.

Traditionally, monks were regarded as the inheritors not only of religious knowledge but also of traditional workmanship. In the past, Buddhist temples were represented as the center of all education from religious philosophy to morals in daily life. Furthermore, temples also functioned as the gathering of traditional artists and craftsmen who created religious artworks and conserved traditional techniques such as masonry, carpentry and wood carving. Moreover, traditional medical knowledge also could be found in the temples. The spread of modern education has seen schools and universities replace temples, once the source of religious artists and craftsmen and their artistic works can still be seen in the forms of Buddhist sculptures, buildings and decoration. Hence, there has been the relationship between the increase in modernization and the decrease in traditional arts and crafts, particularly on religious artworks.

In the last decade, there has been a sharp decrease in the number of boys entering the temples to study the traditional education, especially in Bangkok and many urban areas, where modern education has been easily made accessible. As a result, there are now very few novices and monks in most temples in the more developed areas of Thailand. Simultaneously, the new generation in secular schools and universities then has been criticized for being alienated from their religious belief and cultural tradition and lacking adequate moral training. (Payutto 2005:145) All of these lead the wide gap between Thai youths and religion which have affected the stability of Thai Buddhism.

Modernization has impacted not only the decrease in the number of new monks but also the status of Buddhist monks in Thai society. Buddhist monks in traditional society took important roles as intellectuals and spiritual leaders of the communities and in whom the people placed full trust. The venerable monks were regarded as teachers on religious and some secular subjects, as meditation masters and practitioners, as preachers, as monastic administrators, and sometimes as counselors on spiritual matters. But in the present day, there is a great difference of the monks in Thai traditional society in the past and that of the monks in the modern times. Due to many effects from modernization, their intellectual leadership of disseminating religious and traditional instruction has decreased. Most of them are put in a losing position and find no place in the society of the intelligentsia except for a few individual monks.

Furthermore, from the rapid advance of communication systems today, the Dharma is more easily accessible than in the past. The dissemination of the Dharma, which once in the past was the direct responsibility of the monks, has been supplanted by secular society. At the present time, a large amount of monks have the powerful role only in their temples, represented particularly in the urbanized areas. They are usually seen blessing religious ceremonies by chanting or ceremonial preaching. They focus their attention only on monastic affairs inside the temples and emphasis on the construction of monastic buildings together with urging the adherents to make donations for monastic building. In doing these, Thai Buddhism finds itself more and more confinement. (Payutto 2005:138-143)

Nevertheless, the stability of Buddhism in Thai society depends on the ability of Thais to choose and adapt the advance knowledge of western education in the ways which are suited for Thai society. In this regard, the strength of the civilization and culture of any society depends on its ability to respond to internal and external pressures and to integrate change (Saraya 1996:479) Nevertheless, the more Thai society receives scientific knowledge from the modern education, the less is the religious faith of the new young generation. However, the real Theravada Buddhism does not exist only by faith; it exists by wisdom and insight. Because modernization has brought not only scientific thought but also its systematic methods in Thai society, these have influenced some of the well-educated to reconsider between the real and the unreal Teachings of the Buddha in the religious practices and rites. Therefore, it should be the best time for Thai society to change the belief by faith to be the belief by wisdom and finally educate the youth by reliable ways for indicating them to know the significant wisdom in Buddhism.

## The Revival of Thai Buddhism

To understand Buddhism in Thai context nowadays, all focal aspects integrated in Thai belief system should be firstly explained. Thai belief system consists of Animism, Brahmanism and Buddhism both Theravada sect and Mahayana sect. All of which were integrated for long time to be the essential character of Thai belief. Thus, to distinguish between Theravada and other beliefs can reveal the real Theravada, from which the original doctrine of the Buddha has been inherited.

Truly, Theravada Buddhism is a religion based on intelligence, science, and knowledge, whose purpose is the destruction of suffering and the source of suffering. The Dharma, the Teachings of the Buddha is supreme and absolute truth. The Buddha rejected the celestial beings. He proclaimed the equality and ability of all man. All paying of homage to sacred objects by means of praying, making offerings or performing rites and rituals to invoke the deity are not the real Teachings of the Buddha.

Mahayana Buddhism has been integrated with Theravada Buddhism in Thai society for long time. Mahayana is the Buddhist sect which is different from Theravada in the emphasis and interpretation. Mahayana stress is on compassion, the key virtue of the *Bodhisattvas*, the ideal persons who vow to save all beings and work for the good of suffering beings. It can be said that Mahayana believes in salvation through faith and devotion while Theravada requires personal self-effort. In addition, Mahayana also takes much interest in philosophical speculation and ritualism, while the original doctrine of Theravada regards these as useless. (Payutto 2005:42-44)

According to the chronicles, the ancient faith named Brahmanism or Hinduism was introduced into Southeast Asia more than two thousand years ago. It mingled with the other beliefs of Thai society for long time. The present form of Hinduism belief was brought to Thai society during Ayutthaya period when the King of Ayutthaya triumphed over Khmer kingdom. Since then, the practices of Hinduism were used for representing the sacred power of the king and flourished among the ruling class more than the common people. Until the present time, the influence of Hinduism can still be seen mostly in the royal customs and royal ceremonies.

The last focal belief is Animism, the primitive belief in Southeast Asia before the coming of Buddhism from India. When Buddhism was introduced into Southeast Asia, Buddhist explanation of the Buddha's miracles could be interpreted compatibly with the perspectives of native people, who believed in the supernatural and the miracles of invisible gods and spirits. (Saraya 1996:489) Nowadays, animism has not been lost from Thai society. In the kingdom of Thailand nowadays, both in urban and rural areas, Animism can still be seen in a remarkable prevalence of animist and superstitious beliefs and practices: these include astrology, faith healing, spirit healing, miracle working and, most notably, mediumistic practices, which can point to the inadequacy or inefficacy of modern science and technology either in solving the current human problems or in educating the people. (Payutto 2005:149)

Unfortunately, many strange patterns of beliefs from Animism, Brahmanism and Mahayana seem to be accepted and integrated with religious rites in Theravada Buddhist temples by some monks who aim to conserve the faith more than the wisdom of Theravada Buddhism. These inappropriate rites, which were never stated in the Teachings of the Buddha, are supported by some lay people who have faith in superstition. Due to these phenomena, many blemishes seem to appear more and more in Thai Buddhism and then the real Theravada Buddhism has begun to be deformed and disfigured by these inappropriate rites.

Therefore, the revival of Thai Buddhism with the scientific knowledge nowadays may offer the opportunity for Thai people to revise their belief system and to distinguish between Theravada Buddhism and other beliefs for understanding the real Teachings of the Buddha. Although Theravada and other beliefs have been integrated into Thai belief system for a long time, the real and authentic Teachings of the Buddha inherent in the Theravada sect need to be understood and revealed for conserving and managing this intangible significance with the suitable guideline. By this opportunity, the Theravada Buddhist temples which once functioned as the religious center for inheriting, maintaining, interpreting and disseminating the authentic Teachings of the Buddha can regain and maintain this role if their significance, especially its intangible value, is clearly illustrated by the reliable methods.

Due to the aim of this study for presenting the conservation guideline of living heritage temples, the conceptual approach to the understanding of cultural heritage significance is analyzed based on the Burra Charter, the Australia ICOMOS Charter which has been widely recognized as an effective tool for guiding the conservation of cultural significance of the place. The Burra Charter states that cultural significance is embodied in the cultural place. For conserving and managing a cultural place, the policy must be based on an understanding of its cultural significance which consists of historic value, aesthetic value, social value, spiritual value and/or scientific value founded in the place. (Burra Charter 1999)

In Thai society, Buddhist temple can be regarded as the living heritage place and can be defined as the cultural place which still functions as the center of social activities. Without any doubts, the distinctive character of living heritage temple is its intangible significance of tangible religious objects, constructions, and its place. Consequently, for the conservation of living heritage temple together with the revival of Thai Buddhism, the first step for understanding its cultural significance and defining its distinctive character, the intangible significance of Theravada Buddhism, both spiritual value and social value, should be discussed.

As outlined in Chapter 2, the tangible significance of living heritage temples located in Rattanakosin Island, the area of the test study, have to be managed and protected by the legislations enacted by the government sector and the local authority. But for improving the outdated legislations, the intangible significance of the living heritage temples should be given critical attention. Therefore, the remarkable topics related directly to intangible significance of Thai Buddhism in the attribute of spiritual and social values are discussed in the following topic.

## Intangible values of Buddhist temple

### Spiritual value

Buddhism is distinctive from other religions and philosophical systems due to its metaphysical and spiritual Teachings. (Payutto 1983:2) The Buddha taught nothing other than suffering and the elimination of suffering. His Teachings aim at solving everybody's daily problems in life so that everyone can live in the world without any suffering. The Buddha teaches people to know the way to carry themselves throughout their whole lives. One may live in among all sorts of suffering and yet do not feel the suffering (Buddhadasa 1988:35-41).

First of all, before the spiritual value sustained in the religious places as in the Buddhist temples will be illustrated, the Teachings of the Buddha which have been inherited, maintained and disseminated in the Buddhist temples should be explained.

In this study, The Teachings of the Buddha are presented through the writing of *Venerable Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto*, the outstanding scholar-monk who was awarded the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education in 1994. Due to his valuable works, the essences or real kernel of Buddhism are explained as the following:

Buddhism in its entirety consists of *the Dharma*, or the doctrine, and *the Vinaya*, or the discipline. The Dharma deals with ideas and principles, whereas the Vinaya deals with rules and circumstances in which these ideals and principles are practiced and realized.

#### *The Dharma* (the Doctrine)

The Dharma is the Natural Truth or the Natural Law which was discovered, interpreted and preached by the Buddha. The Dharma (in contrast to the Vinaya), as one of the Three Gems of the Buddhists; that what is taught or to be studied.

The Dharma which was proclaimed by the Buddha in his first sermon at the Deer Park in the first year of his ministry was known as *the Four Noble Truths*.

The Four Noble Truths consists of:

1. The Noble Truth of Suffering
2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering
3. The Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering
4. The Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Extinction of Suffering

#### - *The Noble Truth of Suffering:*

This Truth deals with all problems of life as represented by birth, old age, disease and death, including sorrows and frustrations of every kind. For those who want to avoid and to be free from suffering, this Truth teaches that a right attitude, the attitude of knowledge and wisdom, must be maintained towards all things. One must learn to know things as they are.

In short, the First Noble Truth addresses the problems and problematic situations which are to be observed, located and comprehended.

- ***The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering:***

In this Truth, the Buddha examines and explains how suffering arises through various causes and conditions. This Second Noble Truth includes the profound law of causes and effects called *Paticcasamuppada* (the Dependent Origination or the Conditioned Arising) which is well known as *the Law of Karma*;

- Dependent on ignorance arise Kamma-formations.
- Dependent on Kamma-formations arise Consciousness
- Dependent on Consciousness arise Mind and Matter
- Dependent on Mind and Matter arise the Six Sense-Bases
- Dependent on the Six Sense-bases arise Contact
- Dependent on Contact arise Feeling
- Dependent on feeling arise Craving
- Dependent on Craving arise Clinging
- Dependent on Clinging arise Becoming
- Dependent on Becoming arise Birth
- Dependent on Birth arise Decay and Death

To put it simply, The Second Noble Truth deals with the examination and explanation of the origin of the problems by way of causality. It points out the causes of the problems which one has to overcome if a good life is to be experienced.

- ***The Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering:***

This Truth deals with the goal of Buddhist endeavor. It tells us that when ignorance is completely destroyed through true knowledge and when craving or selfish desire is eradicated and replaced by the right attitude of love and wisdom, *Nirvana*, the state of perfect peace, absence of defilements and freedom from suffering, will be realized.

The Third Noble Truth serves as a prediction, a hope and an urge for the striving of the followers.

- ***The Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Extinction of Suffering:***

This truth defines the Buddhist way of life and contains all the ethical teachings and practices of Buddhism. It provides the way and means to attain the goal as set forth in the Third Truth. This way is called *the Noble Eightfold Path*, as it consists of eight factors, namely:

- |                                      |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Right Speech                      | (Morality)                            |
| 2. Right Action                      | (Morality)                            |
| 3. Right Livelihood                  | (Morality)                            |
| 4. Right Effort                      | (Mental discipline for Concentration) |
| 5. Right Mindfulness                 | (Mental discipline for Concentration) |
| 6. Right Concentration               | (Mental discipline for Concentration) |
| 7. Right Thought                     | (Wisdom)                              |
| 8. Right View or Right Understanding | (Wisdom)                              |

The Path of eight factors, or *the Middle Path*, can be classified into threefold training of *Sila* (Morality), *Samadhi* (the mental discipline for Concentration), and *Panya* (Wisdom). Morality (*Sila*) is basic or elementary training in that it makes the practitioner prepared for more advanced training in Concentration (*Samadhi*) and Wisdom (*Panya*). (Payutto 2005:7-9)

While the Dharma represents the natural law, the Vinaya can be regarded as the human law, particular for monks who live an ascetic life.

***The Vinaya*** (the Discipline)

*The Vinaya* here denotes not only the monks' discipline, but also the spirit of the rules and regulations. For Buddhist monks, the code of fundamental rules is called *Patimokkha*, sometimes called the primary discipline of the holy life. These are two *Patimokkha*:

1. *Bhikkhu-patimokkha* containing 227 fundamental rules for male-monks.
2. *Bhikkhuni-patimokkha* containing 311 fundamental rules for female-monks.

Nowadays, *Bhikkhuni* or female-monk has theoretically been lost from Thailand and then *Bhikkhu* or male-monk is only the main group accountable for inheriting and disseminating the Dharma to the Thai society. The 227 rules for the male-monks (*Bhikkhu-patimokkha*) are grouped into seven classes arranged in the order of the seriousness of the offenses from major to minor offenses. The first class is the group of four gravest offenses entailing expulsion from the Order, called *Parajika*:

1. Sexual intercourse;
2. Stealing;
3. Killing a human being;
4. Falsely claiming the possession of supernormal attainments.

And the following classification of the 227 rules may give a general picture of the Buddhist monastic life and a general idea of the spirit of the monks' discipline:

1. Rules concerning property and requisites (74 in number)
  - food and drink (19), - clothing (24), - bed, seat, lodging (18),
  - money and property (8) and general (5)
2. Rules concerning relationships between the monks and the maintenance of order in the Sangha (40)
3. Rules concerning the monks' relationship with lay people (26)
4. Rules concerning female-monks (15)
5. Rules concerning women and sex (13)
6. Rules concerning other bodily and verbal misconduct (23)
  - Killing and hurting (13) and verbal misconduct (10)
7. Miscellaneous rules (13) including the settlement of legal questions
8. Rules of etiquette (75)
  - on alms rounds, food and eating (30)
  - on other good manners such as dressing, walking and sitting (29)
  - on preaching (16)

The above classification is only a general one. The total number exceeds 227 because some rules can be classified into several groups. And in addition to the canonical discipline, the fundamental rules in the Vinaya have been developed in different places and customs that vary from country to country and from region to region. Many of these customs are intended to encourage, to support or to strengthen the strict observance of the Discipline. These practices, though to be distinguished from the original rules proper, are often good contributions to the integrity of the Discipline and thus to the lastingness of the Sangha. (Payutto 2008b:76-78)

Buddhism is really the religion or way of life not only of the monks but of the laity as well. The Buddhist society consists of Four Assemblies of male-monks, female-monks, male-devotees, and female-devotees. Monks on the one hand and lay people on the other lead different daily lives with different responsibilities and duties and enjoying different kinds of satisfactions. (Payutto 2008b:16)

For the monks who live as the ascetics, the *Bhikkhu-patimokkha* in the Vinaya is their practical instructions. But for the laity, lay male and lay female, there is not a special collection of instructions as such. As previously mentioned, the Vinaya deals with social life of the monks and the putting of the Dharma's principles into the practices, the Buddha defined the Vinaya for monks as the complete and finished rules, but for the lay society, the Buddha opened for the temporal regulation to suit the specific time and space. In other words, the discipline for the monks has been laid down by the Buddha, while the discipline for the surrounding society, the laity, is left for able and righteous people of the time. The conclusion that can be drawn is that the wider lay society was so open to the changing circumstances of space and time and that the Buddha did not consider it as a subject appropriate for fixed rules. Nevertheless, some basic rules and general principles were stipulated. Beyond that, it should rest on the people subject to different circumstances to formulate detailed moral codes, based on those basic Buddhist rules and principles, and suit them to their own society. (Payutto 2008b:20)

In Buddhist temples, The Dharma, which acts directly on the development process of the individual perfection, has been transmitted by the senior monks to the young monks with the Vinaya as their code of conduct. The senior monks, who are devoted to individual perfection, are the disseminators of individual perfection from the Teachings of the Buddha to the young monks. Moreover, as the disciples of the Buddha, the Buddhist monks both who have completed the practice of individual perfection and who are in the process of practicing have the direct responsibility to teach the lay society the suitable Dharma.

According to the Vinaya or the discipline, the monkhood is dependent on the lay people for food and other material necessities and then the laity receives the Dharma from the monks in return. Every morning, when monks come out on their daily almsround, they come into everyday contact with the lay society. It has been traditional for every temple in Thailand to arrange for the delivery of a sermon four times a month. This is done on the Buddhist holy days, which calculated from the lunar calendar, fall on full-moon day, the half-moon days (of the waxing moon and the waning moon) and the day before new moon day. (Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc. 2002:43) Once a year, in the ceremonies associated with events in the life of the Buddha (i.e. *Visakha-Puja day*, the worship of the 6<sup>th</sup> lunar month in commemoration of the birth, enlightenment and decease of the Buddha) and the ceremonies connected with folk cultures (i.e. the water-throwing festival or the traditional new-year day), which are proclaimed as the official holidays, the lay person, who comes to make merit at the temple, will receive the Dharma through the special sermon. Moreover, there are also the private merit-making ceremonies and celebrations for different occasions which are usually classified as auspicious (i.e. birthday, wedding etc.) and non-auspicious (i.e. funeral).

These occasions serve as a channel for the monks to gain access to the lay society and make the temples the center of meritorious activities. It is the direct responsibility of the monks to disseminate the selected Dharma which is suited for each circumstance and for answering of each individual problem.

Noticeably, the monks and the laity have different daily lives with different responsibilities and duties and enjoy different kinds of satisfactions. Due to their different goal of life, thus the Buddha classified the Dharma into 2 states as:

- **Lokuttara-Dharma** The Dharma of super-mundane state for the monks
- **Lokiya-Dharma** The Dharma of mundane state for the laity

The difference between two states of the Teachings lies in the point of emphasis. For *super-mundane state*, its point of emphasis is placed on individual perfection, whereas the point of emphasis of *mundane state* is concerned with good social relationship of secular society.

**Lokuttara-Dharma** or the Dharma of super-mundane state:

Indeed, this state of Dharma is reserved for the interested people who have made much progress toward individual perfection and have ultimate goal to Nirvana. Then, the Teachings of this state aim to deal with the monks who live as the ascetics. The monks acquire this state of Dharma from their learning and following the meditation practices to achieve the wisdom, insight and spiritual liberation. In this way, the Buddhist temples, where this state of Dharma has been inherited, maintained and disseminated from generation to generation, can be regarded as the heritage places imbued with spiritual value of Buddhism.

**Lokiya-Dharma** or the Dharma of mundane state:

The Teachings of Dharma can exist at different levels for the intention of each person. For the lay people who related directly with secular society, this state of Dharma guides them to implant morality in their mind and action. From the Teachings of the Buddha, the criteria of means can be represented by the three fundamental admonitions of the Buddha or the three practices which are known as the heart of Buddhism as:

1. Not to do any evil
2. To cultivate good
3. To purify the mind

The Teachings for '*the avoidance of doing bad deed*' can be represented though *the Five Abstaining Precepts* from (1) killing, (2) stealing, (3) sexual misconduct, (4) false speech and (5) taking intoxicants. And the Teachings for '*the cultivation of doing good deed*' can be represented though *the Five Ennobling Precepts* of (1) loving-kindness and compassion, (2) right means of livelihood, (3) sexual restraint, (4) sincerity and (5) mindfulness and awareness. These moral precepts can be served as the basic guidelines for the general living of the common lay people. However, for some lay people, depending on each individual's mental capability, these moral precepts are not enough for their goal of life. Therefore, the Teachings for '*the purification of the mind*', which must be achieved by *the Meditation Practices*, should be their answer.

The meditation practices in Buddhism can be classified into two types. There are Tranquility Meditation and Insight Meditation: their points of distinction are illustrated in Table 1.

<b>Point of Distinction</b>	<b>Tranquility Meditation (<i>Samatha</i>)</b>	<b>Insight Meditation (<i>Vipassana</i>)</b>
1. Nature	Dependent on concentration	Dependent on wisdom or insight
2. Characteristic	Non-restlessness; no anxiety	Knowing things as they are
3. Function	Overcoming <i>the five hindrances</i> to the effective working of the mind ( <i>The five hindrances are sensual excitement, ill will, sloth and torpor, flurry and worry, and doubt</i> )	Destroying ignorance or delusion (such as that manifested through <i>the three perversions</i> , which conceal the three characteristics of existence) ( <i>The three perversions are those of perception, of thought, and of views</i> )
4. Appearance	Stability of mind; state of being undisturbed	Not deluded by phenomena
5. Proximate Cause	Happiness	Concentration
6. Object	A mental image	The present phenomena or activities
7. Meditating Factors	Initial application, Sustained application, joy, happiness, one-pointedness of mind and other associated mental factors	Ardor, clear comprehension and mindfulness
8. Method	- To fix the mind on one single object (chosen from among the 40 meditation subjects) - A secluded place and a particular physical posture are often needed - Practice preferably confined to two sense-doors (the eye and the mind)	- To meditate on (be mindful of and clearly comprehending) any mental or physical activity or phenomenon that is performed or presents itself at the present moment. (These activities and phenomena are, for practical purposes, classified into the four foundations of mindfulness: body, feeling, states of consciousness and ideas) - Any place and any posture are serviceable - No particular sense-door can be prescribed
9. States of Attainments	Meditative absorptions	Various insights and states of purifications
10. Profits	- Calm and happiness of mind - Fivefold supernormal knowledge - Rebirth in Form and Formless Realms - Temporary freedom; foundation for <i>Vipassana</i>	- Destruction of mental defilements - End of suffering and final freedom - The attainment of <i>Nirvana</i>

Table 1

Resource: P.A. Payutto 2008b:106-108

Meditation practice in Buddhism is a means of preparing the mind for greater awareness and sharpening its perception of the true nature of life.

Tranquility Meditation, the initial type, makes the mind clear and calm. It is for the purpose of concentrating so that one can move on to Insight Meditation.

Insight Meditation, the more advanced type, offers the means of gaining a true knowledge of the nature of existence. It is the highest form of Buddhist meditation, leading to the ultimate happiness and freedom. (Payutto 2008b:143)

In sum, Buddhist metaphysical and spiritual teachings are what make Buddhism unique from other religions. For the monks, the path to develop their wisdom and insight for the achievement of the ultimate truth is defined evidently in the Buddhist doctrine and discipline. For the lay society, not only the virtuous cultivation of mundane state is taught, but also the Teachings which state that the human-being consists of both body and mind, and a necessary degree of material and social well-being is a prerequisite for any spiritual progress, so that, for their spiritual development, the monks are represented to be their spiritual leader.

In Buddhism, intangible significance in the attributes of spiritual value and social value, are closely related. The Dharma or the Teachings of the Buddha, both super-mundane state and mundane state, can be regarded as the spiritual value of Buddhism. Meanwhile, the social value of Buddhism has emerged from the inheritance, maintenance, interpretation and dissemination of the Dharma or spiritual value to the lay society by the monks with the Vinaya as their code of conduct.

### **Social value**

In the case of Buddhism, it is clear that from the very beginning, Buddhism was a spiritual movement in which the Buddha and his disciples achieved first their own enlightenment before attending to the perfection of the world. (Promta 2000:2) Through the great devotion of the Buddha himself and his disciples, the Dharma or the spiritual value of Buddhism then has been interpreted to the lay society. The Buddha stated that his Teachings, for the laity, were merely guidelines, not a dogma to be believed in implicitly. Nor was the Buddha a God to be worshiped. His Teachings offered the new principle that all people were equal and could develop themselves spiritually and socially. After the Buddha passed away, as the disciples who continued the Buddha's Teachings, the monks have succeeded their responsibility for the social good of the laity through the sermon on how to live good lives and to conduct themselves as good members of the society. The monks have followed the Buddha in cultivating the three main virtues: wisdom, purity and compassion. And that is called compassion may also be interpreted as social responsibility. (Payutto 2008b:142)

In contemporary Thai Buddhism, social value is more complicated and more difficult to address than spiritual value due to the dynamic diversity of its components. Therefore, each component should be explained in order to understand the overall image of social value.

In this study, social value of Thai Buddhism at present is related to many factors as in the following:

- 'Who' are involved in this association? The term, *Who*, can be divided into two groups of Thai people; the monastic society and the lay society and 'Why' represent the objective of each individual in this involvement,
- 'How' represents the process for interpretation of the Dharma to lay society on each occasion,
- 'When' represents the occasions for performing the religious rites, and
- 'Where' represents the temples where the religious rites are taken place.

***The first factor: the involved people and their objectives***

In Thailand, for more than two thousand years with the dedication of the Buddhist monks, the Dharma has been continuously interpreted. Even though Thai Buddhism has been confronted with great change since one hundred years ago, spiritual value of Buddhism has been maintained throughout the time. For the social value of Thai Buddhism, due to the modernization and urbanization since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there has been an unseen gap of the relationship between Thai Buddhism and the Thais who imply themselves as the new generation. Since then, social value of Thai Buddhism in the modern society seem to be changed from that in the traditional society. Currently, most Thais in this modern age receive so little benefit of social value from Thai Buddhism. Temples do not function as the center of social activities anymore and the role of monks has decreased in Thai society and they do not receive respect as high as in the past except for a few individual monks.

Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, social value of Thai Buddhism has been changed not only from the decrease in position and role of the monastic sector but also from the increase in the unfamiliarity with religious customs of the lay society due to the modernization and urbanization. Through time, in Thai society, the lay people depending on each individual's mental quality can be divided into three types. The first type is the lay people who have the aim to gain their wisdom and to purify their mind. Most of them are well-educated and eager to search for spiritual development.

In this age of technological advances, from the stress of working and living in the urban areas, many Thai people become disillusioned and turn to the spiritual way. They require the suggestion from their belief system, and then the interest in religious teachings and practices growing can be seen, as among the intellectuals. They are now in search of the true teachings and the correct practices. (Payutto 2005:148) Simultaneously, the access to understand the pure Theravada Buddhism by using the scientific methods is the acceptable means due to the Teachings in the Theravada related directly with the nature of truth. With the advance of Buddhist study and the abundance of Buddhist textbooks leading this group is interested in learning Buddhist texts both by themselves and by receiving advice from the experts.

However, in the religious writing of *Venerable Buddhadasa Bhikkhu*, who was claimed to be the Buddhist scholar most excellent in the Dharma and the most outstanding Buddhist thinker of modern period, stated about this phenomenon that the expertise in Buddhist texts is not the last answer for understanding the real Buddhism. Some people cling to the belief that they can reach the true core of Buddhism by becoming experts in Buddhist texts. It would not be justified to say that only a thorough study of the scriptures could lead to a right knowledge of Buddhism. There is only one important thing that we have to know best: the way to the cessation of suffering; or the most we have to know is about two things: the first is the suffering and its causes and the second is the way that leads to the cessation of suffering. Should people be interested only in these two things, it would not take long for them to know all about Buddhist Studies. (Buddhadasa 1988:21-23)

Consequently, for this first group, the study of Buddhism should go side by side with the practices for mental and wisdom development in the form of meditation, including both Tranquility Meditation and Insight Meditation. The Buddhist monks, from their familiarity of the meditation practiced in everyday of their ascetic life, can be the spiritual counselors. By this way, social value of Buddhism can be conserved from the increased relationship between the monks and the intelligentsia.

Meanwhile, there are some lay people who dislike learning about Buddhism or are simply not capable of doing so. They can be considered as the faithful believers who cherish strong faith in such activities like making merits and offering material requisites to the monks. They believe that they will be rewarded with what they wish or pray for and their good deeds will bring them happiness and prosperity in this and next life. They are the second type of the Thais who involve with Buddhism only by having participation in religious activities without understanding the true meanings, simply because they are doing what their ancestors had been doing or because of customs and traditions and that there is no need for further explanation. Throughout many generations, this traditional way of perceiving Buddhism has not enable these people to reach the actual truth. Unfortunately, this is the real state of affairs with regard to the misconception of the objective in the religious practices. The Thais, who in the eyes of many, appear to be strict adherents of Buddhism but in reality they are the people who fail to reach the truth of Buddhism. (Buddhadasa 1988:3-5, 75)

The lay people in the third type are related with Buddhism because they want to receive some absurd things such as sacred amulets, for example, more than the Teachings of the Buddha. In their religious practices, they pray for good luck, wealth or victory and ask for protection or even for recovery from illnesses. They believe in Buddhism in the same way as they believe in mysterious power. Their fears relate directly to their desire to have wealth and good health of themselves. It is true that fear is the factor behind the emergence of religions and animism is the belief which emerged from the primitive fear of an unseen power. On the contrary, Buddhism is regarded as a revolution because the Teachings of the Buddha attack on these superstitious beliefs. The fear of the real Buddhist is the fear of his or her own suffering as a great peril, worse than other dangers. Therefore, this third type of the lay people still has the strong belief in animism more than Buddhism even if they regarded themselves Buddhists. We have to accept that animism has never been lost from Thai society. Its ways of belief can still be seen in the behavior of these people. Unfortunately, they, the second type, the faithful believers, and the third type, the animist believers, are the majority group in Thai society at present.

In sum, the real and authentic Teachings of the Buddha have been well known only in the minority, among the intelligentsia. Buddhism for them offers a unique system of psychology with the reasonable answers of mentality and the practical practices for insight development. On the contrary, with Buddhism at the popular level a large part of the Thais may keep merely basic moral rules, observance of rituals and participation in religious ceremonies and worship depending on each individual's objective and maturity. Unfortunately, for the majority of Thai Buddhists, the real and authentic Teachings are little understood or listened to. Thus, the concept to maintain social value of the majority is much different from that of the intelligentsia.

Hereinbefore, social value has emerged from the interpretation and dissemination of the Dharma or spiritual value to the lay society. However, depending on the diversity of each individual, it is a natural impossibility that all people can be found at the same level of maturity and at the same stage of development. Whereas, it is also a natural truth that man is a trainable being, every person thus should have the opportunity to be educated and trained in the realm of his/her endeavor. In the age of social change and political instability of today, Buddhism has its social responsibility to indicate to the laity how to maintain the balance between the modern livelihood and the insight of mind.

*The second factor: the process for interpretation of the Dharma to lay society on each occasion*

There are many processes for the interpretation and dissemination of the Dharma to the laity. The sermon and the teaching of meditation practices have been the traditional processes in which social value of Thai Buddhism can be conserved with the right concept. Whereas, some acts of worship in the form of religious rites, taking place in many Buddhist temples at present, seem to have the misconception about the real objective of the Dharma interpretation. Therefore, the origin, the development and the change of religious rites should be discussed.

Throughout the long history of each Buddhist society, religious rites have emerged from the integration between Buddhism and its traditional culture. In Thai society, Thai Buddhism has been integrated with the primitive animist belief and some belief patterns from Mahayana sect for long time. Thus, some activities in the present rites are not the original and authentic ideas defined by the Buddha. Due to the fact that the original doctrine in the Theravada Buddhism does not state anything about religious rites, Theravada has nothing to do with prostrating oneself and deferring to awesome things, it sets no store by rites and ceremonies such as making libations of holy water, or any externals whatsoever, spirits and celestial beings included. On the contrary, it depends on reason and insight. It can be said that, the real Buddhism is not books, not manuals, not word for word repetition from the scripture, nor is it rites and rituals. These are not the real Buddhism. The real Buddhism is the practice by way of body, speech, and mind that will destroy the defilements, in part or completely. The essence of Dharma point out the practical method for gaining knowledge of the true nature of things and become completely independent of things. (Buddhadasa 2005:11-69)

Although, many activities of worship in the religious rites were not stated in the original scriptures of the Theravada, they have been created, integrated, inherited, maintained and developed by Thai society for long time. Thus, these activities must be distinguished from the original and authentic ideas and practices intended by the Buddha. Due to the fact that the relationship between the monks and the laity usually takes place in the form of religious rites and consequently, for conserving social value of Thai Buddhism, the true meaning and the real objective of each religious rite should be revealed and interpreted for increasing the right understanding of the laity before their misconception leads them to the strong attachment of traditional rites more than the right purpose of Buddhism.

In Thai society, Buddhism plays a very significant role and involves almost every occasion in the form of culture, ceremonies and festivals, although Buddhism itself is not the religion of rituals. (Virasai 1981:60) Nowadays, Buddhist rites can be divided into 2 types; the first type is the authentic practices defined from the Buddha's Teachings for the aim to disseminate the Dharma to the laity, the second type which is mostly represented through the joyous activities is the integration between the practice of Buddhism and the traditional culture. For brief example, some ceremonies will be chosen to display the authenticity and the integration.

One of the authentic practices, which has been observed continuously since the Buddha's life time till at present, is the morning alms round of the monks. This practice has bound the monks' life with the lay society and has kept them in daily contact with lay people. As the Buddha himself says, 'my livelihood is bound up with others'. Monks are exhorted to contemplate this fact again and again, so that they will be earnest both in their exertion for their individual perfection and in working for the good of the laity. (Payutto 2008b:18-19) Every day in the early morning, merit making through the almsgiving of foodstuffs or material necessities to the monks has been performed by the laity. For many of them, the almsgiving is repeated day after day, month after month and year after year from very young to old age. And also at other special occasions such as birthday, marriage, or even funeral, Buddhist monks might be invited to the laity's houses for receiving alms and also preaching the Dharma appropriated for each occasion to them. The benefits of the almsgiving helps the laity, among other things, inculcates their spirit of charity. (Virasai 1981:55) These unbroken practices can be accounted for the invaluable significance of social value of Buddhism in Thai culture.

The ordination ceremony is one of the religious rituals revealing the integration between the practice of Buddhism and the traditional culture. In Thai society, one of the greatest things in the life of every Thai male is an ordination. It is the ideal that all men should become monks at some point in their lives, usually before marriage, in order that they can experience the discipline and tranquility of the monastic life. The ordination ceremony always begins with the traditional custom when a man, with his head shaven and wearing simple white clothes, is taken to the temple with his parents, relatives and friends by the joyous and elegant procession. At the temple, the true religious ordination itself begins in the ordination hall with the examination of the man's qualifications as prescribed in Buddhism. If the man satisfies the examining monks, then he will be invested with the yellow robe and will hear first admonition in monastic discipline. He then becomes the monk. During his monkhood, he would receive training in ethics, in the control of emotions and desires, and in many rules of discipline laid down for the monkhood. When he left monkhood and became layman, his status as the educated people would be provided from the society. The Thais of olden times regarded a period of training as a monk as the best preparation for an adult man. (Narangsi 1984:6) Although, at present, this status is provided mostly by the secular study, but the ordination ceremony has been taken place continuously. For the new generation, ordination means mainly to receive religious education for their mental development and making merit dedicated to their parents. Thus, the ordination can reveal the evident identity of social value of Thai Buddhism.

***The third factor: the occasions for performing the religious rites, rituals and ceremonies***

The religious rites, rituals and ceremonies connected with Buddhism in Thai society can be classified into three categories: 1) the ceremonies associated with the great events in the life of the Buddha, 2) the ceremonies connected with the monastic life, and 3) the ceremonies connected with the folk cultures and non-Buddhist elements. (Payutto 2008b:66-74)

The religious rites, which are associated with the special events in the life of the Buddha and announced as the national holiday in Thailand, consist of:

- *Visaka-Puja day* (Worship on the full moon of the 6<sup>th</sup> lunar month in commemoration of the birth, enlightenment and decease of the Buddha)

Visaka-Puja day is believed to have been celebrated since the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Sukhothai period. It is the most important and most widely observed of all the four worship-ceremonies of this group.

- *Atthami-Puja day* (Worship on the eighth day of the waning moon of the 6<sup>th</sup> lunar month in commemoration of the cremation of the body of the Buddha)

Atthami-Puja day has been less observed, and is not recognized as a public holiday. The sermon delivered on this occasion deals especially with the distribution of the relics of the Buddha.

- *Asalha-Puja day* (Worship on the full moon of the 8<sup>th</sup> lunar month in commemoration of the First Sermon of the Buddha)

Asalha-Puja day was first celebrated in 1958. It is commemorated as the day of the Buddha's turning the Wheel of the Dharma. His winning of the first disciple who was then ordained as a Buddhist Monk and thus the completion of the Triple Gem of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. However, as the Asalha-Puja falls on the same day as the event of the Beginning of Rains Residence, activities on the two occasions are sometimes confused. In fact, most of the monastic rites and merit making activities performed on that day are parts of the rites associated with rains residence observed long before Asalha-Puja came into existence.

- *Magha-Puja day* (Worship on the full moon of the 3<sup>rd</sup> lunar month)

Magha-Puja day is first celebrated about a century ago in the reign of King the fourth of Rattanakosin period. Magha-Puja day is observed to commemorate the Great Assembly of the Buddha's Disciples in the ninth month after his enlightenment, at which the Buddha expounded the Fundamental Teachings or the Gist of Buddhism called *Ovada-Patimokkha*.

The Assembly by the union of four factors consists of

- 1) The 1,250 monks who formed the Assembly were all Arahants (Worthy of Perfect Ones) and had attained the six-fold super-knowledge,
- 2) All of them were ordained by the Buddha himself,
- 3) All of them came to assemble simultaneously without prior instruction or notification, and
- 4) It was a full moon day (that of the Magha month).

On these four days, Visaka-Puja day, Atthami-Puja day, Asalha-Puja day and Magha-Puja day, although there are some merit making activities of the laity such as almsgiving by offering food or monastic necessities to the monks, these activities are not the main purpose of these religious rites. In other words, these are not occasions on which lay Buddhists show their support to the monks. Rather, they are occasions for all Buddhists monks and laymen to join in worshipping the Triple Gem, commemorating the great events in the life of the Buddha. Moreover, for the laity, listening to the sermon during these holy occasions can lead them the realization of increasing their good deeds. By this way, the monks and the laity can continue their relationship and thus social value of Buddhism has been maintained.

Among all of the holy occasions for performing religious rites, the first group, mentioned previously, is the ceremonies related directly to commemorate the great situation during the Buddha's life time, while the second group is the ceremonies connected with the discipline and monastic life, in contrast to the Puja or worship ceremonies of the first group.

The monastic ceremonies of the second group are primarily concerned only of monks as the latter are bound by disciplinary rules to observe them. However, it was not long before the lay society came in to support the monks. Then, merit making activities developed as the means for the laity to encourage the monks in their observance of the discipline and other practices of the monastic life. The laity also finds these occasions' good opportunities for them to gain merit, and it is in this way that they come to play a part in these rites. Thus in popular Buddhism, these religious rites confirm the laypeople's relationship with the monks and their role as supporters of the monks, the monasteries and the Buddhist religion through merit making activities.

The religious rites, connected with the discipline and monastic life, consist of:

- *The day of the beginning of the Buddhist Lent*, which falls on the first day of the waning moon of the 8<sup>th</sup> lunar month (usually in the later part of July), is based on a discipline rule that enjoins the monks to take a permanent residence throughout the first three months of the rainy season, and thus primarily to be observed only by monks. As the evidence of the laypeople's support of the monks, the beginning day of the Buddhist Lent is preceded by the laity's merit making ceremony of food offering, the offering of the rains-cloth to the monks, and the presentation of a candle (a large candle which can burn throughout the three months of the rainy season) to the monastery.

As the custom of temporary monkhood as a means of socialization and public education has developed in Thailand, the beginning is preceded by a period of the ordinations. As all monks stay in the monastery during the Buddhist Lent, it is easier for newly ordained monks to find senior monks to teach them. This is the factor that has made the Buddhist Lent a period of comparatively more serious study and practice meditation. For the lay society, most of them follow the monks' examples by observing the precepts more strictly and other religious practices more actively and more regularly.

- *The day of the end of the Buddhist Lent* comes as a mere corollary of the Beginning of the Buddhist Lent on the full moon of the 11<sup>th</sup> lunar month (usually in late October). It is marked by the 'Invitation' a ceremony prescribed by the discipline as a formal act of the Sangha in which monks invite one another to speak, for the purpose of correction, of any offenses or unbecoming behavior they have seen, heard or suspected to have been committed during the Lent. The merit making ceremony on this occasion developed later as the laity came in to show their support of the monks. Traditionally, in the morning of this day, the laity offers food to the monks by putting it in their alms-bowls as they walk by in a single file headed by a Buddha image.

- *Kathin ceremony* (Annual robe-presentation) is a formal act of the Sangha to be performed in the last month of the rains following the rains residence. A Buddhist discipline rule prescribes that all the monks who have completed the rain residence in a monastery seek pieces of cloth, make them into a robe, and present it by vote in assembly to one among them whose robe is most worn. Here lies the spirit of Kathin, that is to say, the test of unity and harmony of those who have spent the community life together for the whole period of their rainy season. Here again, the laity come in to offer their help to the monks. Moreover, as this ceremony can be performed during only one specific month and one monastery can perform it only once within that limited period of time, the Kathin ceremony has been regarded as a very special occasion. Starting with the merit making ceremony of presenting the Kathin robe to the monks, it has developed into a big festival with celebrations. The spirit of unity, harmony and cooperation, expands beyond monastic communities to become unity and cooperation among all Buddhists, both monks and laypeople.

The last one, the third group, is the ceremonies connected with the traditional cultures and non-Buddhist elements. These ceremonies have been appropriated by Buddhism or accepted into the Buddhist fold by assimilation or by the incorporation of Buddhist elements. Some are chosen to present as in the following:

- *Songkran Festival* (Water-throwing festival), the traditional Thai New Year, falls on April 13 in the summer season. At the hottest time, water best symbolizes a happy beginning by its twofold function of making new and lively life of the New Year day by way of cleaning and making happy through refreshment. It is believed to be Brahmanism in origin. It is a great festival celebrated for three to seven days each of which begins at the temples with merit making. Traditionally, during this festival, the younger people pay respects and express their good wishes to the monks and receiving in return blessing from them. The festival ends with water-throwing, an act both of refreshment and merry making.

- *Sard* (Giving merit to the departed), a ceremony of animistic origin, falls on the new moon of the 10<sup>th</sup> lunar month (usually toward the end of September or in the early October), the time when dead people are believed to be released temporarily from the world of the dead to see their relatives in the human world. Originally, people make food offerings to their departed ancestors and relatives (perhaps by leaving at the foot of the tree). Having been incorporated into Buddhism, the ceremony consists only in the merit making ceremony of offering food to monks and dedicating or transferring the merit resulted thereby to the dead.

In addition, to these celebrations, there is still another grand merit making ceremony which does not fall into the previous three categories or calendrical stipulations, and which varies from region to region. This is '*Thet Mahachat*' (Sermon on the Great Former Life of the Buddha), also called '*Khatha Phan*' (Story of 1000 stanzas) and known in the northeast of Thailand as '*Bun Phra Wes*' (Merit making in connection with *Prince Vessantara*). This is the story of the last former life of the Buddha when he was fulfilling the Perfection of Almsgiving. The spirit of this ceremony may be interpreted as an attempt to impart selected Buddhist values to the people. The reason, for selecting the story of the last former life of the Buddha, is its main theme of this story, the Perfection of Giving, is directly connected with the great merit making and thus this ceremony aims to encourage the laity to gain their charity.

All of these religious rites and ceremonies serve as an opportunities not only for the laity to make merit and perform their good deeds but also for the monks to keep in touch with the laity of all levels and walks of life, as a linkage between people of different generations, as an agent to bring together people from different localities, and as a factor to make the monastery the center of the society. They encourage an *esprit de corps* or the group spirit and help to create and strengthen cooperation, harmony and unity in Thai society. Through them ethical, social and spiritual values are implanted in the public mind, cultural values are perpetuated, and entertainments are given an instructional and moral dimension. (Payutto 2008b:74)

***The forth factor: the temples where the religious rites are taken place***

There can be no doubt that Buddhism dominates all the highlights in a Thai life. At time of happiness and great rejoicing, Thai Buddhists immediately think of the temple and the monks, especially in the rural countryside, people would go to the temple and perform some meritorious act. Also at time of grief and suffering the temple is the right place to go for consultation and consolation. Buddhism is there for the Thais when things go well and when they go badly, throughout their life from the beginning to the end. Due to its function as the center of intangible significance of spiritual and social values, each temple is filled with the magnificent architecture and sacred structures which have been the direct outcome of the deep belief and devotion of the Thais who used the best of their abilities to create the beautiful and impressive tangible constructions inside the scared area of the temple. (Narangsi 1984:7-9)

In the area of each Buddhist temple, there are two main segments divided from its different function, *the Buddhavas* and *the Sanghavas*. The most important segment is the Buddhavas area, which consists of various constructions built and decorated with the finest art and craftsmanship, and is regarded as the sacred area devote to religious functions. While the other area, the Sanghavas, is used as the living quarter of the monks. Because the Buddhavas is functioned as the public area for performing the religious rites which directly implicate in the lay merit making activities and thus this area is always located in the front area of the monastery. Due to its function as the sacred precinct serving for religious activities, it comprises of several sacred structures regarded as the representative of the Buddha and the Dharma. Therefore, social value of Thai Buddhism in this area is associated directly with the relationship of both the monks and the laity during their religious performance.

A typical Buddhavas area is usually surrounded by the brick walls with the gate in each direction. The main constructions located inside Buddhavas area consist of Stupa (*Pagoda, Chedi, Prang*), an ordination hall or main chapel (*Uposatha* or *Bot*), assembly halls (*Wihan* or *Vihara* and *Salakanparian*), a bell tower or belfry, a drum tower, a scriptural hall, and a square building (*Mondop*) for the Buddha's footprint etc. For illustrating the overview of social value in Buddhist temple, some sacred structures located in Buddhavas area are discussed as in the following:

- *Stupa* or *Chedi*, (the term *Chedi*, in Thai dialect, is derived from the Pali term, *Cetiya*, meaning a tumulus, mound, grave, or funeral pyre), before the time of the Buddha, the term *Cetiya* meant a seat or residence of a God as a sacred place. Latterly, this appellation referred to a hillock raised over the remains of the deceased who was regarded as the important person. Then, *Chedi* has been signified as the place of homage or the sacred construction which is worthy of respect or worship. At this present time, in many important and famous temples, the meaning of this structure is believed to be a relic shrine enshrining the Buddha's relics and then it is regarded as the reminder monument or the representative of the Buddha. The tradition to make a pilgrimage to pay homage to *Chedi* or *Cetiya*-worship has been encouraged since the time of the Buddha. Buddhism believes that the respect to the *Cetiya* can bring about many benefits. It can arouse a calm, joyful and purified state of mind that leads to the development of concentration and other virtues, of faith and spiritual strength that serve as a primary step toward further and more energetic practice of the Dharma. For a mature practitioner, the reflection on impermanence leads further to the insight into the true nature of things and thus to the final freedom of mind. And at a temporal and social level *Cetiya*-worship serves as a factor to unify people and help them to identify themselves with their faith. (Payutto 2008b:64)

- *Uposatha* or *Bot* is an ordination hall where reserved for religious ceremonies of and for the monks only. It is here that monks congregate to worship and meditate. Everyday inside the ordination hall, the monks perform their monastic rite and the recitation of the *Bhikkhu-Patimokkha*, containing 227 fundamental rules for monks, is held here twice a month, at the full and new moon day. And once a year on the special occasion particularly during the first month of the rainy season (usually in July) the ordination ceremony of new monk will be taken place here. Due to its sacred functions, the eight sacred stones (*Sima*) represented the sacred boundary markers can be found around this building.

Because of the strict function of the ordination hall which is closely related to the monastic activities, for the purification therefore some monasteries do not permit the laity to go inside this building. At this moment, especially, in many temples of the Northern Province, this tradition is preserved as the strict rule which do not allow the lay female go inside the ordination hall and it is always closed and locked until the time when the monks gather to perform the daily religious ritual. However, this tradition can be found mostly in the countryside while in the capital as in Bangkok, many famous temples open their ordination hall for pilgrimage and even for tourism. During the daily monastic rites in the ordination hall of these temples, it is the opportunity for the pilgrims and the tourists can keep in touch with the spiritual atmosphere during the monastic rites.

- *Vihara* (the original for the Thai term *Wihan*) is the assembly hall or multi-functional hall where the religious ceremonies involved directly with the laity are taken place. The term *Wihan* is a Thai derivative of *Vihara* in Pali which means the permanent residence for monks during and after the Buddha's life time. As it is employed in the Thai dialect today, *Wihan* refers to a monastery structure serving many religious functions which is often the pivotal point for all religious ceremonies with the sole exception of ordination. (Matics 1992:33) This type of building may be constructed more than one and most of them are normally used for the merit activities of the laity. Due to its extraordinary function as a holy place for performing religious rites, inside each hall always enshrines an image of the Buddha. More than one image can be enshrined but the only one can be the principle image which is regarded as the representative of the Buddha (and also his Teachings).

For a large number of the Thais, the images of the Buddha are thought to serve as the divine images which can return their praying with good luck, prosperity and wealth. This belief seems to emerge from the animism practice and has been gradually integrated with Buddhism. For the real Buddhism, it is the misconception because Theravada refuses divine power and encourages people to help themselves. The Buddha proclaimed the practical methods for eliminating from suffering by the way of self effort as stated in his teaching that '*Self is the refuge of self*'. In addition, The Buddha image is not only the pure representative of the Buddha but also the representation of his teaching, the Dharma. From his saying that '*the Dharma and the Vinaya (Discipline) which I have proclaimed and have demonstrated these shall be your teacher when I have passed away*'. Thus the real teacher is not passed away and has not ceased to exist. What ceased to exist was just the physical body. The real teacher, which is the Dharma and the discipline, is still with us. (Buddhadasa, 1966) Indeed, the Buddha did not consider himself as the owner of Dharma or the founder of Buddhism, and he affirmed that Dharma is something that exists before all things and phenomena. He discovered Dharma as an ordinary human being who wanted to seek for something that was vital to the well-being of humankind; and he discovered only that part which would help to alleviate human suffering. It is the Dharma that he respected. He wanted the other people to respect the Dharma as well. He even declared, '*The thing that you ought to reach at and respect is not the Buddha but the Dharma*'. (Buddhadasa 1988:101) Therefore, for the right understanding of the respect for the Buddha images, these images should be meant to remind the Dharma or the Teachings of the Buddha more than his physical representative. However, the objective to pay homage to Buddha images in the same way as to respect the Buddha as the Great Teacher can illustrate the virtue of Thai tradition. Therefore, in Thai Buddhism, symbolic meanings of the Buddha images are the representatives of both 'the Historical Enlightened Teacher' and 'the Teachings of Natural Truth or the Dharma'. In the other words, due to its intangible and abstract attribute of the Dharma, thus the physical aspect of the Buddha Image represents the Dharma or the Natural Truth which the historical Buddha realized and taught. This concept can be found in the Teachings of the Buddha that '*One who sees the Dharma sees Tathagata*' (*Tathagata* is a word the Buddha often used to refer to himself). *One who sees the Tathagata sees the Dharma. One who sees not the Dharma, through grasping at the rope of the Tathagata, cannot be said to have seen the Tathagata.*' (Buddhadasa 1966)

## Chapter conclusion

Since the 13<sup>th</sup> century and due to continuous practice, Buddhism in Thai society has been very much a living religion. Because of its development and change throughout its long history, Thai Buddhism comprises of various aspects of religious significance both tangible and intangible. Indeed, intangible significance in the attribute of spiritual value and social value can be regarded as an indispensable aspect for Thai Buddhism. Therefore, for providing the model guideline for conservation of living heritage temples in Thai context, intangible significance of Thai Buddhism should be discussed. However, due to the fact that intangible significance of Thai Buddhism covers a great variety of areas of investigation, a comprehensive consideration in depth is so complicated for presenting in a short writing. Therefore, this chapter discusses main notable topics and presents an overview of Thai Buddhism for demonstrating the overview of its intangible significance.

In the past, Buddhist temples functioned as the social center of various learning form religious philosophy to morals in daily life. But everything is impermanent as the Natural Truth stated in the Teachings of the Buddha. Thai Buddhism confronted great change during the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Thai society was influenced from modernization. The monastic role in public education was supplanted by secular sector. Modernization has impacted not only the decrease in the number of monks but also their status. Although, the social roles of the temples and the monks have been decreased, the advance of Buddhist study has been moved forward continuously. Moreover, at present time, modern education also proffer Thai society the positive impact. The influence of scientific knowledge is what encourages the Thais to realize the value of their belief, Theravada Buddhism which is a religion based on the approved knowledge. It also leads the intelligentsia turn on to attain the insight of the Natural Truth. By these ways, the revival of Thai Buddhism may be the opportunity for the Thais to revise their belief system for the approach to the true significance of Theravada Buddhism which is a system of practice based on morality, concentration, and insight, and culminating in liberating insight; a system which when practiced to completion enables one to break free from suffering.

In Buddhism, its intangible significance can be divided into two attributes as spiritual value and social value, both of which are closely related. The Dharma or the Teachings of the Buddha, both super-mundane state and mundane state, can be regarded as the spiritual value of Buddhism. Meanwhile, the social value of Buddhism has emerged from the inheritance, maintenance, interpretation and dissemination of the Dharma or spiritual value to the lay society by the monks with the Vinaya (the discipline) as their code of conduct. For the monks, the path to develop their wisdom and insight for the achievement of the ultimate truth is defined evidently by the Buddha in the Buddhist doctrine and discipline. For the lay society, not only the virtuous cultivation of mundane state is taught, but also the Teachings of the Buddha which stated that the human-being consists of both body and mind, and a necessary degree of material and social well-being is a prerequisite for any spiritual progress and consequently, for their spiritual development, the monks are represented to be their spiritual leader.

Based on these reasons, Buddhist monks and temples have played an important role in the conservation of spiritual and social values of Thai Buddhism throughout its long history. However, social value of contemporary Thai Buddhism is more complicated and more difficult for arrangement and maintenance than spiritual value due to the dynamic diversity of its components. The popular Buddhist of the mass includes a great variety of people and a diversity of attitudes and objectives. Therefore, the different interpretation of the Teachings of the Buddha should be managed for each group. It is the direct responsibility of the monks to disseminate the selected Dharma which is suited for each circumstance and for answering of each individual problem. In the age of social change and political instability of today, Buddhism has its social responsibility to indicate the laity how to maintain the balance between the modern livelihood and the insight of mind.

Indeed, the guideline for conserving tangible significance must be completely meaningless if it lack the true understanding of the intangible significance of the cultural place. Fortunately, in living heritage temples of Thai temporary society, the expression of spiritual and social values has been inherited continuously even though its social value is not effective as in the past. Therefore, in order to be the most effective, conservation of living heritage temples should integrate social and spiritual values into the process of conserving historic, aesthetic, and architecture value and must be ensured that all values can be preserved with the appropriate methods.

## Chapter 4

### Assessment of Cultural Significance of Rattanakosin Island And 12 Living Heritage Temples located in Rattanakosin Island

The following descriptions are analyzed based upon basic knowledge from documentary sources, on facts of the existing conditions from on-site surveys and collected from in-depth interviews. The account of this chapter is divided into 2 sections. The first section addresses assessment of significance of the cultural landscape of the test study area, Rattanakosin Island or the historic area of Bangkok. The assessment of cultural landscape of Rattanakosin Island is presented for indicating unsustainable conditions facing cultural heritage values of the 12 living heritage temples located in this area. The second section addresses assessment of significance of 12 living heritage temples located in Rattanakosin Island. The information is presented with illustrations and a brief statement of cultural significance of each heritage temple. The significance assessment of these 12 heritage temples is presented with the aim of pointing to unsustainable conditions that face tangible and intangible values of living heritage temples in Thai context at the present time.

#### 1. Assessment of Significance of Cultural Landscape of Rattanakosin Island

##### Location and Setting

Rattanakosin Island is the oldest settlement of Bangkok Metropolitan and appeared under the name of 'Bangkok' in the marine maps and ancient maps made by foreigners since Ayutthaya period.

Figure 5  
The 17<sup>th</sup> century map of the lower part of the Chao Phraya River showing Bangkok occupying both sides of the river.

In the last quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century hundreds of French soldiers and several French priests arrived in Siam and made their way upriver to Ayutthaya, written on the map 'Ville de Siam'.

Figure resource: Beek, Steve V. 1982:5

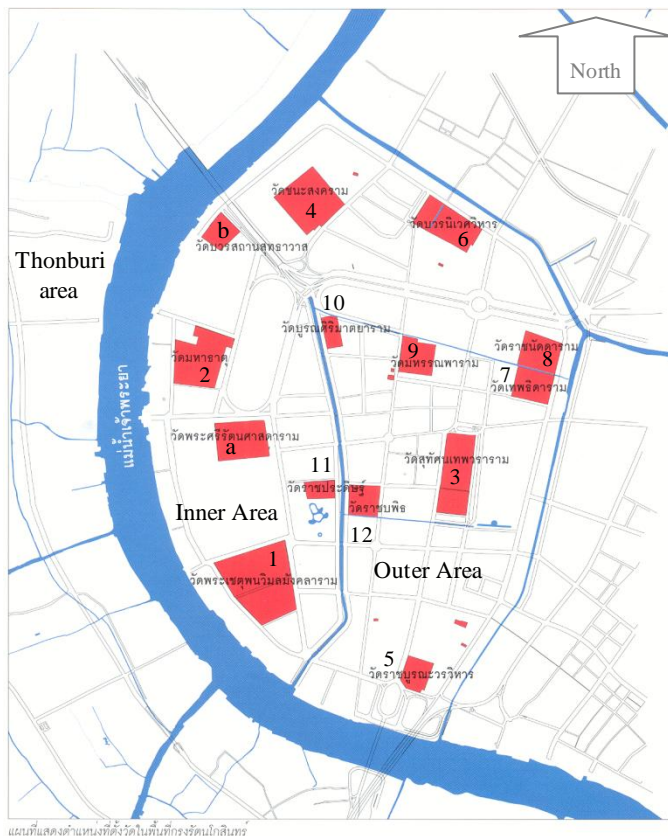


At the present time, according to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Regulation of 1985 and the Regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister on the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2003, the boundary of Rattanakosin area can be sub-divided into 3 areas:

1. Inner Rattanakosin Area includes the area from the Chao Praya River bank to Inner Moat Canal covering 1.8 square kilometers. It is within the sub-district of *Phra Ratchawang* of Phra Nakhon District, Bangkok Metropolitan.

2. Outer Rattanakosin Area signifies the area bordered by the inner moat canal, the Chao Praya River to the north, outer moat canal and the Chao Praya River to the south, covering 2.3 square kilometers. This area is within 8 sub-districts of *Chana Songkram*, *Bowonniwet*, *Talad Yod*, *San Chao Po Sua*, *Sao Ching Cha*, *Ratchabopit*, *Samranrat* and *Wan Burapapirom* of Phra Nakhon District, Bangkok Metropolitan.

3. Thonburi Area signifies the area opposite to Krung Rattanakosin on the west river bank.



Rattanakosin Island, in this study, is the historic areas of Bangkok including Inner area and Outer area.

Inner Rattanakosin Area locates (1) Wat Phra Chetuphon, (2) Wat Mahathat and (11) Wat Ratchapradit

Outer Rattanakosin Area locates 9 living heritage temples comprise of: (3) Wat Suthat Thepwararam, (4) Wat Chana Songkram, (5) Wat Ratchaburana, (6) Wat Bowornniwet Vihara, (7) Wat Thepthidaram, (8) Wat Rathanaddaram, (9) Wat Mahannoppharam, (10) Wat Buranasirimatayaram and (12) Wat Ratchabopit.

Figure 6

Map of Rattanakosin Island showing 12 living heritage temples

Figure resource: City Planning Department, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration 2004:13

(a) The temple of the Emerald Buddha: the royal temple of the Grand Place

(b) Wat Bowornsuthavas: the royal temple of the Front Palace

Both royal temples have no residence for the monks because they did not allow any monks to reside there.

### Abstract Meaning or the Ideal Concept of Cultural Landscape Rattanakosin: the Replica of Ayutthaya

Rattanakosin Island was the territory which king Rama I (1782-1809) established as the new capital in 1782. Fronting a curve of the Chao Phraya River and backed by the man-made canals creating the first cultural landscape of this territory. During the First Reign, concentric canals were dug not only for protecting the new capital, Bangkok, but also for emulating the old capital, Ayutthaya. Apparently, the cultural landscape of Rattanakosin Island during early period was a replica of Ayutthaya and was once regarded as the unique aquatic society.

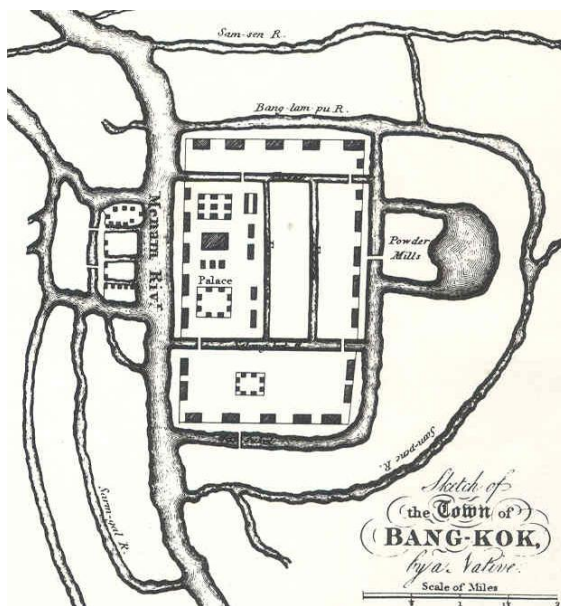


Figure 7

Map of Rattanakosin Island during 1821-1822

Figure Resource: Sternstein 1982:13, from original resource: Crawford, J., Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Courts of Siam and Cochinchina, London, 1828.

This figure illustrates 'Sketch of the Town of Bangkok by a Native' which was included in a journal of an embassy to the Siamese Court in 1821-1822. (The period during the reign of King Rama II, 1809-1824)

This sketchy map reveals the native viewpoint that Rattanakosin Island was surrounded by the Chao Phraya River and its connecting canals. Although this mental map seems to be a caricature rather than a representation of the built city, something is shown of the citadel and a great deal about the *raison d'être*, or reason for existence, of the capital. (Sternstein 1982:13) Thus, the cultural landscape setting of the early Rattanakosin period appeared almost the same as that of Ayutthaya where waterways functioned as the natural resource, communication and transportation routes and natural defense system.

Not only strategic site selection but also its town planning and cityscape followed Ayutthaya concept. At its founding, the construction of the Grand Palace and new monasteries coincided with the renovation of existing structures within its precinct of Rattanakosin area and intended to mirror the style of the former capital. Ayutthaya prototypes were assiduously adhered to and the resemblance of early Rattanakosin structures to those of Ayutthaya is remarkable. Simultaneously, while the traditional architecture and sculptural arts were created by reflecting the style of Ayutthaya, many of the traditions since Ayutthaya period were revitalized including religious belief, literature and performances. Therefore, Rattanakosin has reflected the glorious past not only in the strategic site selection and craftsmanship but also in the continuing culture and traditions of Ayutthaya period.

## Development of Land Use

After the Great War in 1767, Ayutthaya was much devastated beyond repair. The remarkable General, *Phraya Tak*, who was able to liberate the Thais, ascended to the throne and became King Taksin. The King ordered the administrative center to move to the southern area along the Chao Phraya River route and settle down in the areas known in the name Bangkok. Here, the King established Thonburi as a new capital. Thonburi at the period covered the areas on both sides of the Chao Phraya River banks with the royal palace and main government offices located on the west riverbank and residential quarters on the east. Thonburi remained capital for only a brief of 15 years when a political riot took place and the King passed away.

In 1782, King Rama I ascended to the throne as the first King of Chakri Dynasty. On April 6, 1782, the King gave order to move the capital from the west side of the Chao Phraya River to the east side: according to him Thonburi, the old capital, was not strategically located. (Shiranan 1982:418) He considered the new location was benefitted both in terms of avoiding land erosion and for defense of this peninsula-like section of land. If attacked, it could be more easily defended.

At the beginning of the new capital, the city boundary was defined by city moats and city walls of solid bricks. Inside the city area, land use was divided by city moats into 2 sections, inner area and outer area. The inner area had the Grand Palace as a core zone consisting of a royal temple (of the Emerald Buddha), a royal residence and a center of administration. In front of the Grand Palace, there was an open space named Sanam Luang where royal ceremonies were taken place. Residential areas for aristocrats were also located in the inner area. Inside the new capital during this period, there were no constructed roads, only solid ground or brick footpaths were built for connecting different areas as well as three bridges were built over the inner city moats for connecting the inner and outer areas. In 1783, the outer city moat was dug parallel to the inner city moats to expand the capital eastward and southward. City walls, city gates and forts were also built along the outer city moat. The outer area, or the area between inner moats and outer moat, was divided by two canals into three sections. They were mainly residential areas for court officials, lower-ranked government officers and general citizens.

The area outside the outer city walls and outer city moat was a great plain with forest areas. The King had a big canal dug extending from outer city moat to connect with provincial towns east of the capital. In the early winter season, this canal was also used as a place of meeting for poetry sessions as in those happy old days of Ayutthaya period. (Committee for the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2004:11-18)

Work continued on essential structures throughout the First Reign, which ended in 1809. The Grand Palace, the aristocrats' residences and the administrative offices were completely built. Canals were dug around and through the new capital, both for defense and for drainage. A large number of important and imposing monasteries were constructed and consecrated. (Sternstein 1982:11)

During the reigns of King Rama II (1809-1824), urban development had been gradual and followed the guidelines established by the First King. In the reign of King Rama III (1824-1851) the kingdom had returned to a peaceful state, a great number of majestic monasteries were both new constructed and renovated, mainly royal temples and also family temples of aristocrats to encourage spiritual well being of the citizens.

In the 1820s Siam became a focus of interest for western countries. The foreigners, including diplomats, merchants and missionaries who visited Bangkok between 1821 and 1855 left accounts of their visits containing descriptions of the city. In their view, Bangkok seemed to have the glories of a floating city. The Chao Phraya River presented a busy scene from the number of boats of every size and description passing to and fro. Inside the capital, there were few or no wide roads, wheeled carriages were altogether unknown on the narrow brick and ground pathways. The land was a rich tract of alluvial flats, low and intersected by numerous winding creeks and canals ramified in all directions and navigable a part of every tide so that locals could go in boats to almost every place, almost every house where business or pleasure calls them. Moreover, Buddhist monasteries in Bangkok impressed the alien eyewitness with enormous size, rich ornaments, peculiar architecture (particularly the roof which in form may be compared to three saddles, placed on the top of the other, diminished in size from the lowest to the top), and the extent and variety of buildings enclosed within temples' walls. (Sternstein 1982:13-17)

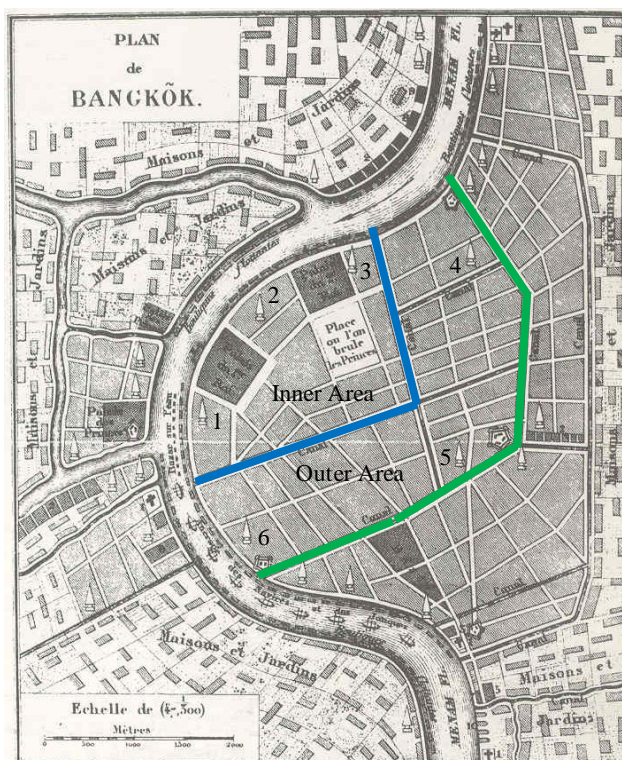


Figure 8

The plan of Bangkok circa 1850, though stylized, provides a good general impression of the capital provided the regular pattern by a maze of meandering footpaths and innumerable creeks, canals and ditches.

Figure resource: Sternstein 1982:15, from original resource: Pallegoix, Mgr., Description du Royaume Thai ou Siam Paris, 1854.

— = Inner city moat

— = Outer city moat

(1) Wat Phra Chetuphon

(2) Wat Mahathat

(3) Wat Bowornsihavas

(4) Wat Chana Songkram

(5) Wat Phraya Kai Suan Luang

(6) Wat Ratchabuarna

Remark: In this map, many royal temples built during the Third Reign (1824-1851) including Wat Bowornniwet built between 1824 and 1832, Wat Ratchanaddaram built in 1846 and Wat Suthat built between 1809 and 1849, all disappear from this map. Wat Phraya Kai Suan Luang was renamed latterly to Wat Thepthida in 1839.

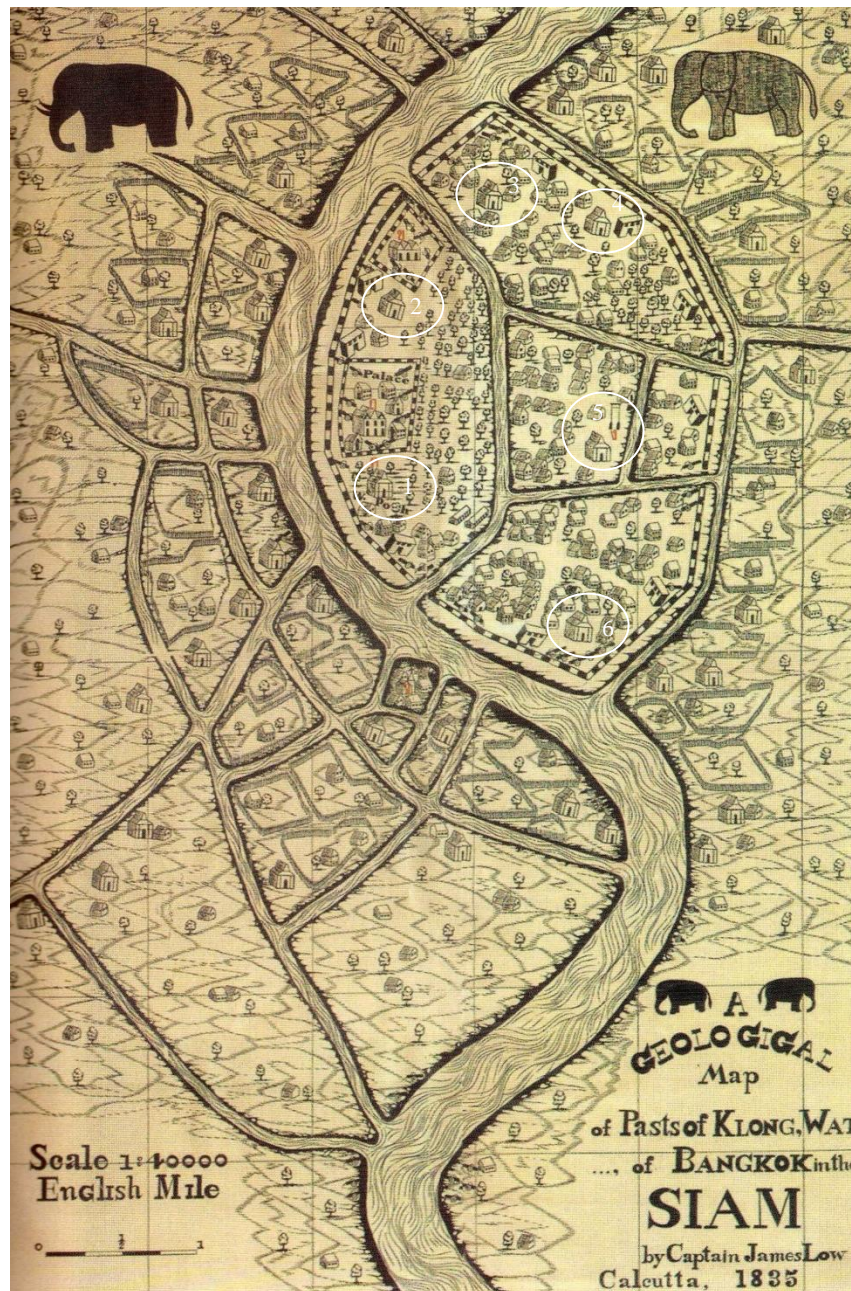


Figure 9

Map of Bangkok 1835 (The period during the reign of King Rama III)

Figure resource: Committee for the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2004:19

- |                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| (1) Wat Phra Chetuphon | (2) Wat Mahathat     |
| (3) Wat Chana Songkram | (4) Wat Bowornniwet  |
| (5) Wat Suthat         | (6) Wat Ratchabuarna |

Remark: Temples appeared in this map are all royal temples, Wat Phraya Kai Suan Luang was renovated to be royal temple and renamed latterly to Wat Thepthidaram in 1839.



Figure 10  
Map showing new canals dug during the Third Reign, 1824-1851 and the Forth Reign, 1851-1868

Figure resource:  
<http://www.bangkokinsights.com/history/bangkok-early-period.php>  
Accessed 20 October 2011

(1837) Khlong Bangkapi or Sanseap  
(1851) Khlong Phadung Krung Kasem  
(1857) Khlong Thanon Trong  
(1861) Khlong Silom

In the reign of King Rama IV (1851-1868) the new city moat named *Khlong Phadung Krung Kasem* was constructed in 1851. It was dug parallel to the outer city moats to expand the capital eastward and then the territory of the capital was enlarged. Indeed, from location and landscape of Rattanakosin Island, waterways gave ease of communication and transportation, a ready supply of water and insurance against flooding, all of which appeared sufficient reasons for maintaining waterways than building roads. However, in this reign, the new roads were constructed but for the convenience of the foreigner rather than of the local inhabitants. Unavoidably, this period ushered in an era of extensive westernization and modernization, it brought about dramatic changes in the capital's appearance. The most crucial of all was the transition from water to land transportation. Many roads were constructed southeast of the capital parallel to the Chao Phraya River through commercial district and foreign consulates. Such road constructions had transformed the urban lifestyle from ancient water-based settlement to land-based settlement, resulting in a drastic decrease of floating houses towards the end of King Rama IV period.

In the reign of King Rama V (1868-1910), Bangkok as the capital city became another urban city impacted by the Industrial Age of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Bangkok was transformed in a way that touched Thai life in almost every aspect. Modernization resulting in dramatic change of cityscape could be seen evidently in the capital. Simultaneously, roads and modern infrastructures were constructed; many of the vernacular buildings were changed starting from the aristocrats' houses which were pulled down and brick ones of European design erected in their stead. Inside the area of Rattanakosin Island afterward, new shop-houses building in western style for commercial and residential purpose were located alongside of new roadways. This was a land-based pattern of urban community development during this period. The construction of modern building and infrastructure in Bangkok was continued in the reigns of King Rama VI (1910-1925) and King Rama VII (1925-1934). Nevertheless, there was no urban expansion during the period. In the reign of King Rama VIII (1934-1946), the country still headed more towards modernization. However, when the Second World War occurred between 1939 and 1945, infrastructure construction and urban expansion declined due to the economic depression.

In 1946, King Bhumibol Adulyadej ascended to the throne as King Rama IX; today the King is regarded as the longest reigning monarch of Chakri dynasty. Although, the absolute monarchy in Thailand terminated and political reform towards democracy started in 1932, King Bhumibol has been respected and loved by all Thais. For Bangkok's movement, it has been a period of greatest development in all aspects. Bangkok since its foundation to the present has been the center of significant institutions and important activities including administration, economy, commerce, education and transportation. Thus, the area inevitably faces several problems as in other world metropolises. Problems such as high density of building constructions, environmental deterioration, traffic congestion, and devaluation of architecture and arts, have intensified and could altogether destroy invaluable heritage significance of this cultural landscape. (Committee for the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns 2004:18-29)

Consequently, during the present reign, Rattanakosin Island, the oldest settlement of Bangkok, has been declared as the historic area for conservation and promotion of Thai culture. It is maintained and protected by specific legislation enacted by both the government and the local authority, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, for controlling inappropriate activities and restricting construction, modification, uses or changes of uses of some types or categories of buildings within the area. The legislation also indicates that this historic area must be used to promote the Thai culture and local living. Therefore, large retailers, factories and tall commercial buildings are prohibited to construct in the historic area. The transfer of land to other activities exceeding five percent of the total area is prohibited.

### **Physical Environment of Rattanakosin Island**

Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, is what geographers call a '*primate city*': a metropolis which is by far the most populous and most influential in a country. (Sternstein 1982:109) During the early period between 1850 and 1900 A.D. the population was about 400,000 people. (Jumsai 1988:169) Nowadays, with its approximate area of 1,600 square kilometers, the resident population in Bangkok is said to total some 6,000,000 people, representing approximately 15% of Thailand's total population. While Bangkok can be referred to the political, commercial, industrial and administrative capital of Thailand, Rattanakosin Island can be referred to as the historic area of Bangkok surrounded by the waterways; the Chao Phraya River and the canals which serve as its moats, making its area look like an island. Rattanakosin Island, in this study, includes Inner Rattanakosin Area with its approximate area of 1.8 square kilometers and Outer Rattanakosin Area with its approximate area of 2.3 square kilometers.

Bangkok receives on average 1492 mm (58.7 in) of precipitation annually or 124 mm (49 in) each month. Average temperatures of Bangkok rarely dip below 25 degrees Celsius during the city's three seasons. Between November and February, the weather is warm and dry with temperatures from 19 to 33 degrees Celsius. From March to May, the weather is hot with temperatures rising to as high as 42 degrees Celsius. From June to October, it is warm and sometimes wet, but never cold. August and September are the wettest months. (Bangkok Metropolitan Administration 2011)

### **Statement of Significant of Rattanakosin Cultural Landscape**

The conservation plan for protecting cultural landscape should firstly define cultural significance of the area which is to be preserved and retained. As the conservation guidelines, this study finds that the cultural significance of Rattanakosin Island consists of many dynamic values. The following is a succinct summary of its cultural significance:

1. Historic value of the oldest settlement of Bangkok for more than 220 years. Cultural landscape of Rattanakosin Island during the first establishment followed the concept of the former capital; Ayutthaya, the aquatic society, was reincarnated in Rattanakosin Island. Throughout time, tangible and intangible heritage values were both created by royalty and developed through a natural process of grassroots evaluation.

2. Aesthetic value of the artistic integration of Thai, Chinese and European influences are found in the Grand Palace, living heritage temples and heritage architecture. Its aesthetic value also includes cityscape form boulevards, public monuments and public areas. Moreover, vernacular architecture of each local community also completes its aesthetic value.

3. Social value of living communities: although some local communities have own distinctive ethnic origin, living, social tradition and belief, their diversity has been accepted and reciprocated.

4. Spiritual value of important living temples that are central to Buddhist philosophy dissemination and meditation training for improving both insight and mind. Furthermore, the temple of the Emerald Buddha enshrining the Emerald Buddha, the most significance Buddha image of the Thais, is located in Rattanakosin Island.

### **The Threats to the Heritage Value**

In this study, cultural landscape assessment of Rattanakosin Island is presented for indicating unsustainable conditions facing cultural heritage values of the 12 living heritage temples located in this area. The threats to the heritage value can be divided into 3 main issues: natural threat, negative impacts from urbanization, and conflicts in cultural heritage management.

#### **Natural Threat: Flood**

Bangkok is situated on the low flat plain of the river known as the Chao Phraya Delta which extends to the Gulf of Thailand. Although, the grounds near the river were quite swampy and then the land was so drained, this area was chosen to take up residence. Indeed, Thai society in the past was regarded as the aquatic society. Waterways were the principal means for living both during wars and at times of peace. When Bangkok was first founded in 1782, the new capital was relocated across the river from the west to the east bank. The new location was considered more convenient for defense, transportation and future expansion. Concentric canals were dug not only for protecting the new capital as the natural defense but also for functioning as the natural resource of public utility, communication and transportation route and as well as recreation area.

Unfortunately, many things changed rapidly throughout the last hundred years when Bangkok became urbanized. Due to the transition from waterways to roadways since the reign of King Rama IV and distinctly in the reign of King Rama V, waterways in Rattanakosin Island have not been used as the principal communication and transportation routes any longer. Many canals were pierced by roads and buried beneath avenues. Canal banks have been developed through trespass. And the network of concentric canals has been dismembered. Its function as a transportation system has not been reconstituted. Its functions as a flood protection have been diminished. Its function as a drainage system has not been replaced. All of these have destroyed significance of waterways system in Rattanakosin Island.

During the early period, Thai people always lived alongside the riverbanks. Some preferred to live in floating houses while others preferred to live in wooden houses scattered along the river and canal banks. To cope with annual flood, their wooden houses were built on stilts which saved their living during the river was in flood. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some Thai people changed to live in the western-styled buildings such as the shop-houses located in Tha Tian. The shop-houses' ground floors were mainly used for commerce. These shop-houses were located in many roads along the river bank and then serious flood always damage the ground floors of these buildings. Additionally, many religious constructions in heritage temples have been located near the river bank. Nevertheless, important structures in the heritage temples such as brick structures, ceremonial buildings, ordination hall and other assemble halls were generally built on higher platform or on solid podiums for protecting them from submergence whenever the river was in flood.

Indeed, flood is the natural phenomena in Thailand. In the past, due to the abundant forests, flood was controlled by nature. But decades ago, many forests were destroyed rapidly exacerbating flooding and making its control difficult. Moreover, flood nowadays seem to be more serious from climate change and because of human factors such as land-use change and changes to the waterway system which have reduced their extent and in some cases destroyed them. In addition, the ground of Bangkok and its historic area, Rattanakosin Island continue to subside gradually. These factors cause more a complex flooding situation and lead to irreversible cultural, social and economic losses of the area. Unavoidably, Bangkok will be confronted with serious flooding more than in the past. All living heritage temples located in this historic area cannot escape the threat. Notwithstanding, conservation plan for protecting all invaluable historic sites located in Rattanakosin Island must take flood prevention into account.

### **Negative Impacts from Urbanization**

In the past, Thai society created its own way of life suitable for a water-based community. At Rattanakosin Island during the early period, waterways provided sufficient access and met local needs. Since the reign of King Rama V, urbanization transformed Thai traditional lifestyle from water-based to land-based settlement. Thereafter, Rattanakosin Island has experienced a rapid transformation which brings many impacts both positive and negative. However, negative impact should be more realized for protecting all invaluable historic sites located in this historic area.

Changes in land use began to appear in 1857 when the first true road (Rama IV Road) was open to the public, followed by the introduction of trams in 1887 and railways in 1890. (Jumsai 1988:170) Since then, the road construction for expanding capital area has given some negative impacts to this historic area. The ameliorating effect of the waterways on city temperatures has been nullified, while the urban area has been resurfaced with concrete that absorbs heat. The incalculable recreational value of the waterways has been lost, while the public has received an ever diminishing, already woefully inadequate area of park and playground. The beauty of the waterways has been despoiled, while Bangkok has become as any mean, modern city anywhere. (Sternstein 1982:87) Undoubtedly, city planning and important architecture of Rattanakosin Island during the first founding were built to evoke the memory of those at Ayutthaya, and although, in architecture and in plan they are different, they did recreate the old glory in spirit. (Jumsai 1988:168) Unfortunately, Rattanakosin Island, the historic area of Bangkok, has already lost unique characteristic cultural landscape of water-based community due to the negative impact from urbanization. In other words, the value of 'Sense of Place' of Rattanakosin Island has decreased because the significance of its waterways has been reduced evidently.

Another negative impact of the drive to urbanize is the traffic congestion. Although, Rattanakosin Island has been protected by specific legislations for controlling inappropriate activities and restricting unsuitable constructions, the continuing problem from traffic congestion can be seen in this historic area. Rattanakosin Island is a small area and many roadways inside are narrow but it is abundant of cultural heritage sites. Air pollution and carbon dioxide from motor vehicle exhaust can cause damage for not only human health but also ancient heritage structures. For managing traffic congestion, the Bangkok subway or MRT is under construction. The MRT Blue Line, will start at Hua Lamphong Station, it will go along Charoen Krung Road, pass China Town, and then turn left at Wat Phra Chetuphon before crossing under the river and end at Bang Khae Station. This subway line is considered for improving traffic circulation, alleviating traffic jam and helping public to travel more quickly than by using their private cars. In addition, whenever this subway is open to the public, it may also decrease the problem of using the area inside many heritage temples for parking private cars and tourist coaches.

Urbanization has brought much usefulness for modern living such as infrastructure for convenience meanwhile it has brought a more rushed lifestyle. Although, these negative impacts from urbanization always happen outside the living heritage temples where the rustic life, the slow and silent scene can still be found, these negative impacts should be realized in conservation plan to ensure that all values of living heritage temples located in this historic area are well preserved.

### **Conflicts in Cultural Heritage Management**

Rattanakosin Island is one of the most diverse cultural landscapes of all the historic urban towns in Southeast Asia. At the same time it presents many complex conservation and development issues involving multicultural living of different stakeholders, some of whom view the issue in very different ways.

Although, since the 1997 Master Plan for the conservation and development of Rattanakosin Area was approved by the Cabinet and there were 20 projects generated by this plan, only 2 projects have so far been implemented. Part of the reason for past failure stems from the multiple overlapping government, royal and clerical jurisdictions over the area which make coordination difficult. Moreover, these official projects were not adequately responsive to social changes and there was no officially recognized community participation in the preparation process because they were highly top-down by nature, as no input from local communities was ever gathered. In other words, Master Plan for the development of Rattanakosin area, approved in 1977, focused principally on ancient monuments or tangible heritage, and gave less importance to the conservation of vernacular architecture, to the diversity and integrity of living communities, and to the preservation of intangible culture.

Nowadays, it can be seen that some local communities in Rattanakosin area are interested in conservation works because they understand and realize that suitable conservation plan can improve quality of their life. Thus, before launching the next conservation plan, the negotiation between the needs of heritage conservation and the needs of the local should be done firstly for increasing their understanding and decreasing conflict with them. Furthermore, the conservation plan should be a joint project which requires cooperation from all sectors from government, local authority, conservation experts, and scholars down to local communities. The sustainable conservation plan should also encourage local communities to start their conservation activities or projects and support them to manage by themselves. Indeed, public participation is needed as a balance against domination by the government, which must itself have a clear, firm and consistently sustained policy.

Cultural tourism management is another issue which should be concerned in the conservation plan. As the historic area, Rattanakosin Island should be viewed not only as a cluster of tourism with magnificent ancient monuments but also a living culture of local communities in diversity of everyday life and vernacular architecture. Hence, both tangible heritage of historic sites and intangible heritage of local living, which is what define Rattanakosin Island as a continuing cultural landscape, should be concerned altogether in the conservation plan. To incorporate the conservation of heritage sites together with vernacular architecture and intangible aspects of the local community, any further conservation plan should proceed based on a detailed and meticulous cultural landscape mapping, done to the standards of international best practice. (Siam Society 2011:24-41)

In sum, all threats above are presented for indicating unsustainable conditions which must be concerned in cultural landscape conservation. Unavoidably, living heritage temples located in this historic area have been confronted with these threats also. The sustainable conservation plan should consider not only the clear definition of cultural significance of tangible heritage and its inherent intangible values of each heritage temple but also the effort to balance the needs of the monks who are the inhabitant in the temples and the local communities nearby the heritage temples which they can live conveniently and properly. Thus, there is an urgent need to undertake systematic conservation planning with a holistic vision to ensure that all heritage temples are managed and protected with proper conservation guidelines.

## 2. Royal Temples and Their Significance

Thailand is a predominantly Buddhist country. Approximately 95% of Thai citizens are Theravada Buddhists. An abundance of gilded and decorated Buddhist temples can be found throughout the kingdom. Buddhist temples in Thailand can be divided into two categories, the royal temple and common temple or the community temple and also including the private temple. The royal temple is built by the king or royalty or come under royal patronage while the common temple is built by the laity. The royal temples are mostly large, having very beautiful and ornate sacred buildings and many other artistic works. (Payutto 2005:23)

The traditional architecture for which Bangkok is best known is represented by the Grand Palace and royal temples located in Rattanakosin Island. Since King Rama I ascended to the throne in 1782, this period is called Rattanakosin Era, after the city's Thai name, which means 'the jeweled city', referring to the Emerald Buddha image enshrined now in the Grand Palace's temple. King Rama I built ambitiously after founding the new capital, in an effort to reconstruct not only infrastructure but national morale. He aimed to recapture the glory of Ayutthaya, and early Rattanakosin art style followed Ayutthaya precedents closely. Since then cultural landscape of Rattanakosin Island is expression in not only the exquisite Grand Palace and the ornate temple of the Emerald Buddha but also the embellished royal temples. Although, some of these temples were formerly built in Ayutthaya period, they were renovated in Rattanakosin period by Chakri kings and royalties and many of new royal temples located in Rattanakosin Island were established and supported under the royal patronage by the monarchs particularly by King Rama III.

In the Third Reign, architecture design in many royal temples became increasingly dynamic, colorful and eclectic. Religious halls were built taller, lighter and more complex in structure and decoration. The mural paintings inside them attained an unprecedented level of artistry, distinguishing the early Rattanakosin period as the great era of Thai traditional painting. Chinese stylistic influence resurged during this reign, thanks to extensive trade and diplomacy. The ceramic tiles covering palace and temple roofs began to be finished in colored glazed. Crockery mosaic came into wide royal use, and some temple and palace roofs were done in Chinese style. Chinese stone statuary were imported to decorate in palace and temple courtyards. (Sthapitanonda and Mertens 2005:18) These accumulate so much cultural heritage significance of these royal temples.

The first five monarchs of Chakri dynasty strictly followed the old tradition by creating, maintaining and supporting royal monasteries. But when King Rama VI succeeded to the throne, two new factors were pertinent: first, the state was more and more taking over the duty of general education: second, Rattanakosin Island was already plentifully supplied with royal temples. Instead of building a new royal temple, The King founded university for supporting high education to his subjects. (Buribhand and Griswold 1968:14-15) Although, all of the royal temples located in Rattanakosin Island were built in before the Sixth Reign, all royal temples have been maintained and supported under royal patronage of every monarch including the Present King.

### **The classification of royal temples in Rattanakosin period**

Since the reign of King Rama VI, the royal temples in the kingdom have been divided into 3 categories of the first class, the second class and the third class in a descending order of significance. The royal temples in each class have been graded by a further ranking order based on a hierarchical system.

The first class royal temples have high significance. Royal temples in this class are sub-divided into three grades. The three grades of the first class royal temples have the following suffixes in their names:

- *Rajaworamahavihara*
- *Rajaworavihara*
- *Woramahavihara*

The four grades of the second class royal temples have the following suffixes in their names:

- *Rajaworamahavihara*
- *Rajaworavihara*
- *Woramahavihara*
- *Woravihara*

The third class royal temples have 3 grades but only 2 grades have the suffixes in their names which are - *Rajaworavihara* and - *Woravihara*. The royal temples in the third grade of the third class have no suffix in their names. (Thaiways, 2002)

By this way, the position of the royal temples in Rattanakosin Island can be identified by their name as in the following:

#### **The first class royal temple of the grade *Rajaworamahavihara***

- Wat Phra Chetuphon Wimonmangkhalaram *Rajaworamahavihara*
- Wat Mahathat Yuwarat Rangarit *Rajaworamahavihara*
- Wat Suthat Thepwararam *Rajaworamahavihara*

#### **The first class royal temple of the grade *Rajaworavihara***

- Wat Bowornniwet Vihara *Rajaworavihara*
- Wat Ratchapradit Sathimahasimaram *Rajaworavihara*
- Wat Ratchabophit Sathimahasimaram *Rajaworavihara*

#### **The second class royal temple of the grade *Rajaworamahavihara***

- Wat Chana Songkram *Rajaworamahavihara*

#### **The second class royal temple of the grade *Rajaworavihara***

- Wat Ratchaburana *Rajaworavihara*

#### **The third class royal temple of the grade *Woravihara***

- Wat Thepthidaram *Woravihara*
- Wat Ratchanaddaram *Woravihara*
- Wat Mahannoppharam *Woravihara*

#### **The third class royal temple which has no suffix in the temple's name**

- Wat Buranasirimatayaram

### **Statement of significance of 12 temples in Rattanakosin Island**

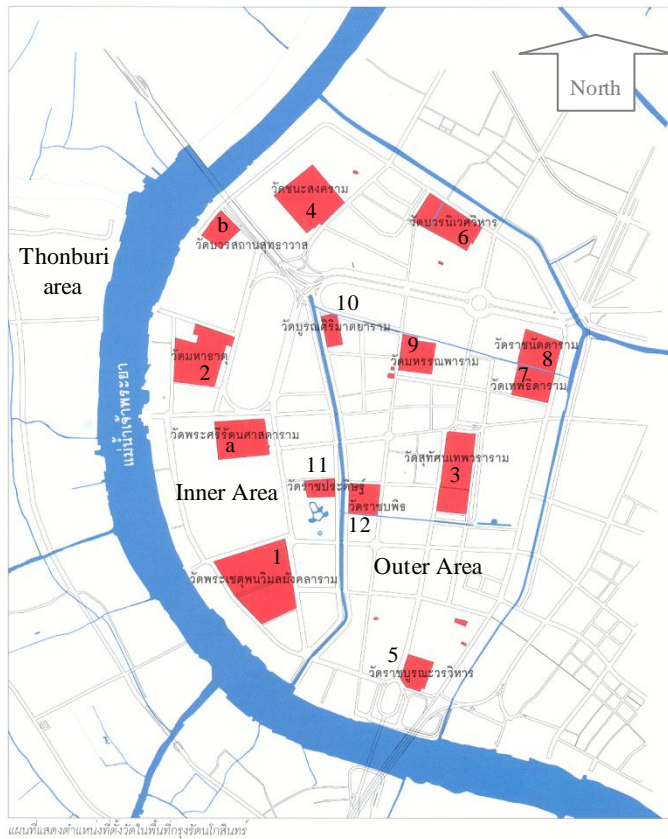
This dissertation revolves around the suitable conservation concept of living heritage temples which are regarded as the invaluable cultural heritage places and then they must be protected as same as the other cultural heritage properties. The criteria to identify the distinctive characters of living heritage temples in this dissertation are the age of the temples must be at least 50 years old qualifying as historic places and being continuously used by the monks and communities. The dissertation also aims to concentrate on the usable Buddhist temples having heritage significance at national level. Therefore, the case study of this dissertation will focus on 12 living heritage temples in the area of Rattanakosin Island as a test study. The living heritage temples located in Rattanakosin Island which are represented the heritage significance at national level are as follows:

1. Wat Phra Chetuphon Wimonmangkhalaram Rajaworamahavihara,
2. Wat Mahathat Yuwarat Rangsarit Rajaworamahavihara,
3. Wat Suthat Thepwararam Rajaworamahavihara,
4. Wat Chana Songkram Rajaworavihara,
5. Wat Ratchaburana Rajaworavihara,
6. Wat Bowornniwet Vihara Rajaworavihara,
7. Wat Thepthidaram Woravihara,
8. Wat Ratchanaddaram Woravihara,
9. Wat Mahannoppharam Woravihara,
10. Wat Buranasirimatayaram.
11. Wat Ratchapradit Sathimahasimaram Rajaworavihara, and
12. Wat Ratchabophit Sathimahasimaram Rajaworavihara,

The conceptual approach to understanding cultural significance of these living heritage temples is based on internationally accepted conservation concept which is the Burra Charter, recognized as effective tool for guiding the conservation of cultural significance of the heritage place. The Burra Charter suggests that the conservation must be based on an understanding of its cultural significance which consists of historic value, aesthetic value, social value, spiritual value and/or scientific value founded in the place. The term *Place* means site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views. And the term *Cultural Significance*, that means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations, which is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Due its clear conceptual approach to understanding cultural significance of heritage place, the Burra Charter is chosen as the conservation guideline for assessing cultural significance of these living heritage temples.

Statement of cultural heritage significance of 12 living heritage temples located in Rattanakosin Island consists of historic value, aesthetic value, social value and spiritual value. The following descriptions of each cultural heritage value are based on documents related to these temples and selective information gathered from the in-depth interviews including personal observations for collecting phenomenon of religious rites at the sites.

The figure below illustrates the location of 12 living heritage temples in Rattanakosin Island.



Rattanakosin Island, in this dissertation, is the historic areas of Bangkok consist of the inner area and the outer area.

Inner Rattanakosin Area locates (1) Wat Phra Chetuphon, (2) Wat Mahathat and (11) Wat Ratchapradit.

Outer Rattanakosin Area locates 9 living heritage temples comprise of:

(3) Wat Suthat Thepwararam, (4) Wat Chana Songkram, (5) Wat Ratchaburana, (6) Wat Bowornniwet Vihara, (7) Wat Thepthidaram, (8) Wat Rattanaddaram, (9) Wat Mahannoppharam, (10) Wat Buranasirimatayaram and (12) Wat Ratchabophit.

Figure 11

Map of Rattanakosin Island showing 12 living heritage temples

Figure resource: City Planning Department, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration 2004:13

Remark:

(a) The temple of the Emerald Buddha: the royal temple of the Grand Place

(b) Wat Bowornsuthavas: the royal temple of the Front Palace

Although, the temple of the Emerald Buddha is the highest valuable heritage temple in Rattanakosin Island and is continuously used for proceeding important religious rites including royal ceremonies, it is not registered as the national ancient monument. Moreover, this royal temple has no residence for the monks because the royal temple located in the Grand Palace did not allow any monks to reside in. The same circumstance as the temple of the Emerald Buddha, despite the main halls of Wat Bowornsuthavas was registered as the national ancient monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949; it has no residence for the monks because any monks cannot reside in the royal temple located in the Front Palace. Therefore, these two royal temples, which are located in the palaces' precincts, are not the test study sites in this dissertation.

## 1. Wat Phra Chetuphon Wimonmangkhalaram Rajaworamahavihara

### Historic value

Wat Phra Chetuphon is the first list in the official directory of the first class royal temples of Rattanakosin period and is one of the highest ranking royal temples which total only 6 of the grade *Rajaworamahavihara* throughout the kingdom. It is now the oldest and largest Buddhist temple in Rattanakosin Island. Furthermore, this temple is regarded as the royal temple of King Rama I whose relic ashes were kept inside the pedestal of the principal Buddha image enshrined in the ordination hall.

This temple was originally a small temple founded in the late Ayutthaya period. It was named *Wat Photharam* alluding to the monastery of the *Bodhi Tree*. It is not known who really built the earliest structures of this small temple. When King Rama I established Bangkok as the new capital and constructed the Grand Palace on the east bank of the Chao Phraya River. Wat Photharam occupied the site adjacent to the south wall of the Grand Palace. Since it was next to the royal residence, King Rama I inaugurated its restoration over a twelve-year period from 1789 to 1801. The King also ordered its renovation should be done to match the grandeur of the royal structures of the Grand Palace. The temple's name then was changed by King Rama I to *Wat Phra Chetuphon Vimolmangklavas*. Although, its name was changed again to *Wat Phra Chetuphon Vimolmangklararam* by King Rama IV, even today Thai people still refer to its original name *Wat Pho* which is a shortened name of *Wat Photharam*.

In the reign of King Rama III, the King ordered another major renovation of the temple to make it a center of education and erudition for all of his subjects, irrespective of birth or rank. Many scholars consider this as the true beginning of a Golden Age for the fine arts at Wat Phra Chetuphon. This second renovation took 17 years from 1832 to 1848 to complete. By this time, some wooden buildings were run-down due to their dilapidated state from the marshy terrain and the humid climate. Most of the structures which can be seen today are the result of the second renovation under the patronage of King Rama III. Since then, although there has been another restoration, no more other major work has been done except for some minor repairs.

Since the early Rattanakosin period, this temple has been regarded as the first public university of comprehensive education which was the initiation by King Rama III. This is unique among Rattanakosin monasteries and it seems to be unprecedented in former Thai tradition. King Rama III conceived of this temple as an academic institution which would be a place of study for all individuals. To achieve this aim, the King decided to collect, compile and choose various textbooks which would be appropriate for didactic purpose. All of the valuable information covered a wide range of subject matter such as geography, astronomy, astrology, mythology, poetry and traditional medical knowledge prevalent in his domain. When the texts were edited and approved, they were engraved on stone slabs which were adhered to numerous columns of cloisters and of pavilions located around the Buddhavas area. In this way, an inclusive library in stone was presented to Thai people who were interested in the religious or secular knowledge. (Matics 1979:3, 19-29, 43) This unique significance has enriched Thai culture from the past until the present time.

Due to its invaluable significance, Wat Phra Chetuphon was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949.

### **Aesthetic value**

#### **Physical components and their meanings**

Regarded as the oldest and largest monastery in Rattanakosin Island, Wat Phra Chetuphon has abundantly accumulated Thai fine arts of the early Rattanakosin period. Due to its various artistic works especially located and enshrined in the Buddhavas area, only main structures and important art objects which have evident heritage significance are chosen for presenting the overview image of the temple's aesthetic value.

#### **1. The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot*)**



Figure 12  
The ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 22/8/2010)

This building is regarded as the center of the Buddhavas area and is used for performing monastic rituals including the ordination rites. Originally, the ordination hall of Wat Photharam was narrow and inconspicuous like those of small temples in countryside during the late Ayutthaya period. King Rama I had it dismantled and built a more impressive structure.

In the reign of King Rama III, this building was reconstructed and enlarged. Its complete work, showing white exterior walls with rows of white square brick columns without any decoration at their capitals, represents the flourishing architectural design of the Third Reign. The front and rear pediments of this building illustrate the harmonious composition of floral motifs done in colored glass mosaic enclosed by gilt carved wood roof-finials of Thai architectural style. While the exterior of this building looks so plain, the interior has exquisite decorations. This contrasting decoration emphasizes the transition from the mundane outside to the sacred inside.

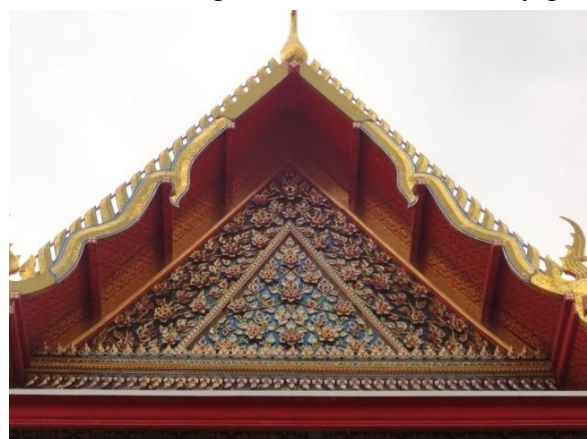


Figure 13  
The pediment of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)



Figure 14 and 15  
The decoration of doors and windows of the ordination hall (Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

At the exterior walls of the ordination hall, all frames of doors and windows are made of bas-relief stuccowork in the form of crown-like spire, signifying a building of royal monastery. On the outer side of the door panels are decorated with mother-of-pearl inlay depicting episodes of *Ramakien*, the Thai version adapted from the Indian *Ramayana* epic. On the inner side of the door panels are embellished with gold-leaf lacquer designs depicting specimens of ecclesiastical fans of rank which are presented to the monk sovereigns. (Wat Phra Chetuphon 2003:14) The art works of the entrance door panels of this building have been regarded as the greatest ever set in the reign of King Rama III and considered as a masterpiece of the early Rattanakosin period.



Figure 16 and 17  
The marble slabs illustrating the scenes of Ramakien (Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

This building also owns a unique artistic work which those of other temples do not possess; the 152 carved marble slabs illustrating scenes of *Ramakien*. These bas-reliefs were carved by the command of King Rama III and were set around the exterior balustrade of the building. These were reproduced from the art of the shadow show which once was a famous entertainment since Ayutthaya period. Unfortunately, this art became less popular during Rattanakosin period. Therefore, by duplicating the shadow show as bas-reliefs, the art will survive for generations and also reveal the finest craftsmanship to the public. The series of these bas-reliefs begin from the east entrance and develops via continuous narration from right to left. Thus, a devotee circumambulates the sacred precinct in an auspicious clockwise direction. It is suggested that one should observe these exciting scenes before entering the quiet solitude within the ordination hall. Therefore, a devotee will enact transcendence from secular to spiritual dimensions. (Matics 1979:26)



Figure 18  
The principal Buddha image of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 22/8/2010)

*Phra Buddha Thewa Patimakorn*, the principal Buddha image of the ordination hall is enshrined on a three-tiered gilt pedestal decorated with exquisite design. Inside the pedestal, relic ashes of King Rama I were kept by the order of King Rama IV who considered such merit making acts as an aid to enable the Thai people to pay proper homage to the preceding King. This Buddha image was cast in Ayutthaya art style. It was transferred from Ayutthaya to Thonburi during the Thonburi period. Latterly, King Rama I ordered its second move across the Chao Phraya River and enshrined as the principal image of this ordination hall and of this monastery. This Ayutthaya image is in the attitude of meditation, depicting the episode in the life of Prince *Siddhattha* who would become the Buddha when he discovered the cause of suffering and how it could be abolished. The image is placed over the high pedestal whose rich ornamentation contrasts sharply with the plain modeling of the image and seem to symbolize the extravagant lifestyle of human being in comparison with the serenity of the Enlightened One. (Bhirasri 1988:17)



Figure 19  
Inside the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 12/4/2011)

The mural paintings of the ordination hall were painted in the reign of King Rama III depicting the story of *Mahosatha Pandita* (one of the tales of the Buddha's previous incarnation), the 41 Buddhist experts or specialists, the scenes of heavens and the folk tales. These murals were painted not only as the decoration but also as the visual text design for spiritual instruction. In the past, much of the Thai public was illiterate, and only clergy could read the ancient scriptural language of Pali, so murals illustrated the teachings of Buddha in a form of readily understood and remembered. (Sthapitanonda and Mertens 2005:166) Moreover, these murals were painted for creating the interior's special atmosphere. All backgrounds of murals were painted in dark tone colors while small stories' subjects were painted and gilded with gold leaves. In the past, there was no lighting from electricity, on account of limited light from the construction design and the interior walls which were generally decorated with dark tone paintings were used for controlling light of the interior. When morning sunlight shines in, the gilt principal Buddha image enshrined on the high gilt pedestal is illuminated and highlighted. All of these compositions affect the holy atmosphere and make the worshipers feel they in a sacred space. That is also the result why the temples' halls built in the past faced east.

## 2. The cloisters (*Phra Rabieng*) and the direction halls (*Phra Wihan Thit*)

At major temples, courtyards around the key structure are often encompassed by cloisters called *Phra Rabiengkot* which are the covered walkways or galleries with one side open along and have roofs supported by columns. Traditionally, the cloisters were built to create a sense of heightened order and quite for the key structure in the Buddhavas area, set apart from its everyday surroundings.



Figure 20  
The cloisters and the direction halls  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

The cloisters surrounding the ordination hall of this temple have a unique pattern. They are double cloisters and are connected by four directional halls. These cloisters and the directional halls enshrine the Buddha images which were brought from the damaged towns during the First Reign. While the ordination hall was being constructed, King Rama I initiated a plan to retrieve hundreds of Buddha images from many abandoned temples and to bring them for enshrining in Bangkok. From this conservation plan, the King is credited with salvaging 1,248 images from the desolated towns, particularly of the northern and central region, which were damaged from the war. Most of the images had been fashioned from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Inasmuch as the sculptures were considered to be artistic paragons of their respective epochs, the pious monarch preserved them for posterity. Wat Phra Chetuphon was honored by sheltering 689 of them. King Rama I chose the most significant and those of the finest features from these images for enshrining in the four directional halls and 394 Buddha images were enshrined in the double cloisters, 150 images were placed in the inner cloisters and 244 images were set up in the outer cloisters. Although, hundreds of images were transferred from various towns and had different in their art styles, each image was encased in plaster covering them in the same art style and then gilded them with gold leaves, so that most of them tended to look alike. (Matics 1979:4-5, 16) All of these images have been occasionally re-lacquered and re-gilded for their appearance maintenance. Approximately three decades ago, the plaster covered some images partially flaked off. The temple had the plaster peeled off and found that some of them were bronze images cast exquisitely in different art style such as Lanna art, Uthong art, Ayutthaya art, and Sukhothai art.



Figure 21 and 22  
The Buddha images are  
installed in the cloisters  
and the image of  
Sukhothai art is  
enshrined in the cloisters

(Bhakhakanok  
7/12/2011)



Figure 23  
The inscription adhered to the column of the cloisters  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

Inside the cloisters, not only hundreds of Buddha images have been enshrined but also hundreds of stone inscriptions have been adhered to the columns along the cloisters. At King Rama III's command, all existing textbooks on traditional knowledge were collected and inscribed on thousands of stone tablets adhered to the columns of the cloisters and to the walls of the pavilions in Buddhavas area. Therefore, the cloisters of this temple can be regarded as both the sacred place for paying homage to the images and the museum for learning secular knowledge of traditional fine arts, religious sculptures and literatures. Due to its outstanding heritage significance, UNESCO has registered 1,431 stone inscriptions at this temple as the Memory of the World in 2011.

### 3. The Four Great Chedis built for commemorating the first four kings of Chakri dynasty. (*Phra Maha Chedi Si Rajakarn*)

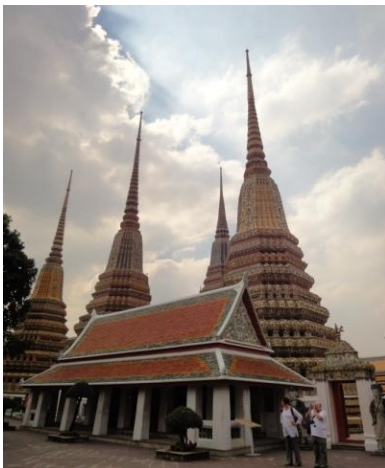


Figure 24  
The Four Great Chedis  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

*Phra Maha Chedi Si Rajakarn* is a group of Chedis elaborated with colorful ceramic mosaics. Each Chedi is in the indented-corner style with 42 meters high. They are surrounded by white walls with sheltered gates decorated with multicolored ceramic mosaic. The first Chedi was built by King Rama I, the King ordered the construction of the first Chedi for enshrining the remnant of the important standing Buddha image named *Phra Buddha Sri Sanpetch* which once had been venerated at Wat *Phra Sri Sanpetch* within the compound of the Grand Palace in Ayutthaya. The first Chedi was embellished with green ceramic tiles and given the official name as *Phra Sri Sanpetchayadayan* in honor of the Ayutthaya image within. King Rama III ordered the construction of two additional Chedis which were of the same scale and height. The north Chedi decorated with white-cream ceramic tiles was a memorial to the monarch's father, King Rama II, and the south Chedi embellished with yellow-orange ceramic tiles was meant to symbolize his own reign. Interestingly enough, the north and the center Chedis were erected on a square foundation, while the south Chedi was put on a circle base of Third Reign style. In this manner, the artisans differentiated between the past and contemporary reigns. Each of the Chedi was given a special name: the first has already been mentioned as *Phra Maha Chedi Sri Sanpetchadayan*; the second to the north, *Phra Maha Chedi Dilok Thammakork Nithan*; and the third to be the south, *Phra Maha Chedi Munibat Borikhan*. A prototype for this group of Three Great Chedis may be found at Wat *Phra Sri Sanpetch* in Ayutthaya.

In 1853, King Rama IV decided to erect a fourth and last Chedi which was eventually decorated with dark blue ceramic tiles. When its construction was completed, it was taller than the others and it contained an interior chamber which is approached by steep steps. Its design followed a Sukhothai art that persisted well into the Ayutthaya era and inspired the structural design of this fourth Chedi. These four huge Chedis are the representative of the four kings succeeding the throne during the early Rattanakosin period. A fifth Chedi was not attempted by King Rama V or succeeding Chakri monarchs. According to the royal chronicle, it is reported that when King Rama IV was near death in 1868, the monarch made his comment that he wanted these four monuments to symbolize the continuity of the four kings of Chakri dynasty; therefore, each of these four structures has come to be associated with a particular reign. (Matics 1979:37-38, 44-47) From time to time, these Chedis seen today have been restored. The four great Chedis with lofty spires originate serenity and elegance. They glorify the temple's scenery with their architectural achievement, splendor and color harmony.

#### 4. The reclining Buddha image hall (*Wihan Phra Buddha Saiyas*)



Figure 25  
The reclining Buddha image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 10/8/2009)

During the Third Reign, the precinct of the Buddhavas area of this temple was considerably enlarged toward the north-west in order to provide room for the tremendous Buddha image and its hall. Formerly, the palace of Princess *Narintharathewi*, the younger sister of King Rama I, was located on this site. After her passing away, her wooden residence was torn down and eventually replaced by the brick construction which was meant to emulate the old Ayutthaya style. King Rama III ordered this construction for enshrining the elegant reclining Buddha image. The pediment of this hall was enriched with a floral design similar to that of the ordination hall built completely in the same reign. All frames of doors and windows are ornamented with floral design. A motif on the outside door panels depicts the royal insignia of the Chakri Dynasty. Inside door panels are painted the illustrations of the mythical serpent or Naga. Inside the hall, the murals above the windows were the illustrations adapted from Sinhalese history according to the



*Mahavamsa*, the murals between each window were the scenes of 13 *Savika Atadagga* disciples, 10 *Upasaka Atadagga* disciples and 10 *Upasika Atadagga* disciples or the lives of thirteen female disciples and twenty eminent laity.

Figure 26  
The murals inside the image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 31/12/2011)



Figure 27  
The reclining Buddha image  
(Bhakhakanok 10/8/2009)

*Phra Buddha Saiyas* is the Buddha image posturing as lying on its right side with a hand supporting the head. This is merely descriptive of recumbent attitude. In Indian art, this particular subject represents *Mahaparinibbana* or the posture when the Buddha passed away. However, in Thailand after the Sukhothai period, this posture was considered to indicate the Buddha as merely resting. Even though the image was constructed during the Third Reign of Rattanakosin period, it adheres in style and iconography to precursors such as the face and body that emulate Ayutthaya modes and the foot-soles continue a tradition which was popular from the Sukhothai period. When the construction of this image was finished, it was approximately 46 meters long and 15 meters high. This enormous image was modeled out of plaster around a brick core and finished in gold leaf similar to other Ayutthaya prototypes. The Buddha image is occasionally re-gilded for maintaining its appearance. This image has something which those of other images do not possess, the exquisite design of its foot-soles. Each sole appears as dark ebony decorated with mother-of-pearl inlay representing the 108 different auspicious signs.



Figure 28  
The 108 auspicious signs at the foot-soles  
(Bhakhakanok 10/8/2009)

##### 5. The scripture hall, or the library (*Ho Trai* or *Phra Mondob*)

The present building was constructed in the Third Reign to replace the old one built in the First Reign. It was built to house *Tripitaka*, the Sacred Buddhist Texts. The Tripitaka's container placed inside was artistically produced by traditional craftsmanship of the First Reign, at present one of rarities. This building is ornamented with an elaborate crown-like cupola and spire, the shape of which is duplicated in the design of the Tripitaka's container placed inside. The top of the building is ornamented with glazed tiles and polychromatic ceramic pieces affixed to the plaster. Although, the exterior walls are plainly whitewashed, all frames of doors and windows are decorated with gilt bas-relief stuccowork ornamented with colored glass mosaic and all door and window panels are embellished with gold-leaf lacquer designs.



Figure 29 The scripture hall  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)



Figure 30  
The main gateway to the scripture hall  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

The main gateway to the scripture hall is decorated with polychromatic ceramic pieces. On both sides of the gateway are installed statues of the giant popularly called *Yak Wat Pho*. (Wat Phra Chetuphon 1982:96) These two statues represent the door guardians of this sacred building since they were created in the Third Reign. There have been a local narrative that these two Giants fought against the two Giants of Wat Arun or the temple of Dawn located on the opposite river side.

## 6. The preaching hall (*Sala Kanparian*)

Located at the south-west corner of the Buddhavas area, this building can reflect the artistic style of the late Ayutthaya period which was transferred to the early Rattanakosin period. This hall had previously functioned as the ordination hall before the complete construction of the present one. During the reign of King Rama III, this building was renovated. Its wooden posts were transformed to square brick columns without any decoration at their capitals. At its pediment, the design of the wood carving depicting floral motif surrounding a celestial abode symbolizes the royal signet of King Rama III.



Figure 31  
The preaching hall  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

The principal image of this building, *Phra Buddha Sarssada Maha Garunathikun*, represents the provincial outreach of the tradition, while the image within the ordination hall is a product of the royal craftsmanship of Ayutthaya art. (Matics 1979:6, 35) The door and window frames of this hall are gilt bas-relief stuccowork ornamented with glass mosaic. The outside door



and window panels are gilt lacquer work while the inside panels are colored painted.

Figure 32, 33 and 34 The decorations of the preaching hall  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

## 7. The small Chedis and the stone figurines placed around the Buddhavas area



Figure 35  
The groups of small Chedis built in the First Reign  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

King Rama I placed four groups of five Chedis on a single base at each corner of the external courtyard. They were established for keeping the holy relics.



Figure 36  
The small Chedis built in the Third Reign  
(Bhakhakanok 22/8/2011)

Latterly, King Rama III added the 71 small Chedis established for keeping the relics of the royal family. All of these small Chedis were placed around the perimeter of the outer cloister. This arrangement shows the shape of the

Buddhavas complex and reinforces the symmetrical emphasis of the layout plan of the Buddhavas section of this temple. (Matics 1979:33-34)

Figure 37  
The Chinese stone door guardians  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

In the second renovation during the Third Reign, it was recorded that a number of stone figurines from China were placed in the Buddhavas area of this temple. The general purpose was to place these stone figurines for decorating rather than observing the traditional religious practice. Nevertheless, huge stone figurines depicting fearsome demons are placed to guard the gates of the main entrance. At other parts of the inner courtyard, there are small stone figurines placed for decorating the area. Unfortunately, at present a number of small figurines increasingly show sign of damage from the impact of tourism. Some tourists sit on the small animal figurines. Although, they are only the decorations, they are rare ancient objects of art with historical significance. Therefore, these stone figurines should be restored to their proper condition and re-positioned to avoid further damage. (Wat Phra Chetuphon 2005:250)



Figure 38  
Small stone figurine  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

## 2. Wat Mahathat Yuwarat Rangsarit Rajaworamahavihara

### Historic value

The age of this monastery can be traced back to the late Ayutthaya period. After Bangkok was established in 1782, this temple known as *Wat Salak* was located between the sites of the new Grand Palace and the Front Palace of the viceroy. Therefore, the viceroy of the First Reign, *Kromphraratchawangboworn Maha Surasinghanart*, ordered the temple renovation in 1783 and renamed it *Wat Nipphanaram*.

It was this temple where the First Buddhist Council of Rattanakosin period took place. In 1788, King Rama I appointed 250 learned monks and laymen to collate reliable texts on the Buddha's Teachings called *Tripitaka*. The temple's name then was changed by the King to *Wat Phra Sri Sanphechdaram*. In 1803, King Rama I had its name changed once again to *Wat Phra Sri Rattana Mahathat* meaning 'the temple of the great relics' and following the tradition from the Sukhothai period that in the capital there must be the main temple where sacred relics of the Buddha were housed. Moreover, this monastery with its new name followed the King's policy to have the same temple's name as that in the former capital, Sukhothai and Ayutthaya. Due to the customary practice since the Sukhothai period, there must be at least three eminent royal monasteries named Wat Mahathat, Wat Ratchaburana and Wat Ratchapradit in the capital of the Kingdom. In the reign of King Rama V, the King added the name *Yuwarajarangsarit* in honor of Crown Prince *Maha Vachirunnahis* who had passed away before the right time.

This monastery was where the Supreme Patriarchs resided during the early Rattanakosin period from the reign of King Rama I till the reign of King Rama III. Many Princes of early Rattanakosin period had also resided here when they were in monkhood.

In the reign of King Rama V, it was this temple where the first Buddhist academy named *Maha Chalalongkorn* was established in the compound of the monastery. Up to the present, this heritage temple has functioned as both a religious center and a secular institution for monks to increase their knowledge at university level and for the interested persons who would like to increase religious knowledge or to develop their mind by learning and practicing meditation. Due to its invaluable heritage significance, Wat Mahathat was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949. It is regarded as one of the six highest ranking royal monasteries of Rattanakosin period of the grade *Rajaworamahavihara*.

In front of the monastery at the east, there is the statue of the viceroy of the First Reign, *Kromphraratchawangboworn Maha Surasinghanart*, who renovated this temple. This statue is a product of the imagination rather than a portrait because it was erected long after his death. It is the place where the local traders and the faithful believers pay homage to him every day.

## Aesthetic value

### Physical components and their meanings

During the first renovation in the First Reign, the viceroy ordered the construction of the important structures with large cloisters. These cloisters were constructed to create a sense of heightened order and quiet, set apart from its everyday surroundings. Although, outside of the temple nowadays is crowded with local residences, big amulet market, restaurants and universities, but inside the cloisters of this temple, the quiet and tranquility can still be found.

#### 1. The structure in which the sacred Chedi is installed (*Phra Mondop*)

It is located in front of the ordination hall and the image hall at the east. This structure was constructed in the First Reign by the command of the viceroy. Inside the structure is the gilded Chedi in which the sacred relics of the Buddha are enshrined. This exquisite Chedi represents the form of early Rattanakosin period art. Lined up around the gilded Chedi are many Buddha images. (Wattananusit 1982:125)

By its square floor plan thus this structure is called in Thai *Phra Mondop*. The mondop form, used since the Sukhothai period, has been applied extensively in royal temples constructed in and around Bangkok since the capital's founding. (Sthapitanonda and Mertens 2005:102) At this structure, the exterior walls together with the elaborate bas-relief stucco frames of doors and windows are whitewashed. The pediment is ornamented with colored glass mosaic depicting the figurines of deities surrounding King Rama, the avatar of God Vishnu, on his mighty monkey deity named Hanuman.

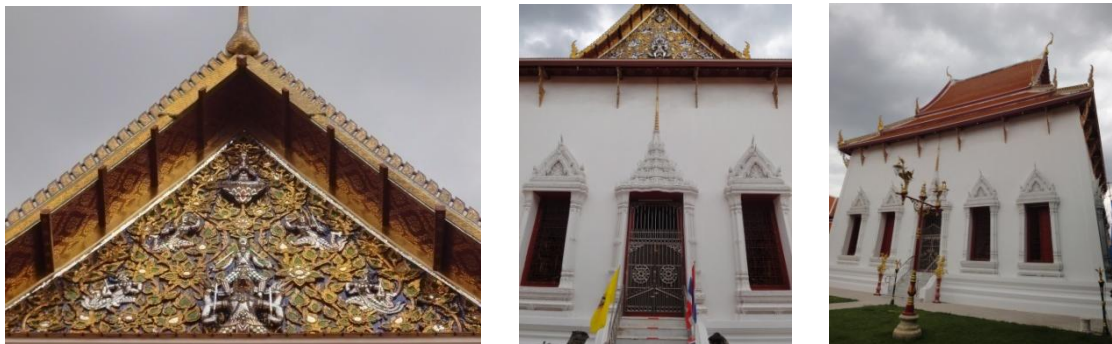


Figure 39, 40 and 41 The decorations of Phra Mondop (Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)



Figure 42  
Inside Phra Mondop enshrines the gilded Chedi and Buddha images (Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

## 2. The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot*)



Figure 43  
The ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)



Figure 44 The pediment of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

This building was built by the viceroy of the First Reign. The exterior walls and the bas-relief stucco frames of doors and windows are whitewashed. The pediments of the ordination hall are ornamented with colored glass mosaic depicting the figurines of deities surrounding God Vishnu on Garuda.



The boundary markers designating a temple sacred area are not placed on the ground floor but are the gilt bas-relief stuccowork on the exterior walls of the ordination hall. These bas-relief boundary markers depict the Garuda holding Naga.

Figure 45 and 46  
The boundary markers of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

Figure 47  
The principal image of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 1/1/2011)

Inside the ordination hall is enshrined the principal Buddha images of the early Rattanakosin period named *Phra Sri Sanpetch*. Surrounding the principal Buddha image are the images of 8 disciples of the Buddha. The principal Buddha image and the images of 8 disciples were cast in the First Reign and then they can illustrate the style of the early Rattanakosin period.



### 3. The image hall (*Phra Wihan*)

This hall was built by the command of viceroy of the First Reign. Its size and architectural style are the same as of the ordination hall. The pediments of this hall are ornamented with colored glass mosaic depicting the royal signet of the Crown Prince, *Maha Vachirunnahis*, the son of King Rama V who had passed away in 1894 and the attached name *Yuwarajarangsarit* of this temple is honorary to him.



Figure 48  
The pediment of the image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

Figure 49  
Inside the image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

Inside the image hall is enshrined the principal Buddha image of early Rattanakosin period cast at the command of the viceroy of the First Reign. This principal image is named *Phra Sri Sakayamuni*.



### 4. The memorial building (*Wihan Pho Lanka*)



Figure 50 and 51  
The exterior and the interior of  
*Wihan Pho Lanka*  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

This small building was built in the reign of King Rama IV to replace the building where the king used to reside when he was a monk. This building is called in Thai as *Wihan Pho Lanka* because it is located at the east of the Bodhi tree, the scared tree which has significance in the history of Buddhism.

The major renovation of this building was done in 1932 in the reign of King Rama VII. The principal Buddha image enshrined inside is named *Phra Nak*. This image of Sukhothai art was once enshrined in *Chan Kasem Palace* in Ayutthaya and was transferred to enshrine in this building by the advice of Prince *Damrong Rajanuparp*, the son of King Rama IV.

### 3. Wat Suthat Thepwararam Rajaworamahavihara

#### Historic value

Wat Suthat Thepwararam is one of the six highest ranking royal monasteries of the Rattanakosin period. It was constructed in 1809 after the 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Bangkok as the new capital. *Phra Wihan Luang* or the main construction of this monastery took 40 years to complete. King Rama I inaugurated the foundation of this temple for enshrining the magnificent Buddha image named *Phra Sri Sakayamuni*. This Buddha image is placed on the high pedestal with splendid gold and mosaic decoration. Inside the cloth draped over the lap of this image is the repository of the relic ashes of King Rama VIII, thus this temple is regarded as the royal temple of King Rama VIII. This heritage temple was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949.



Figure 52  
Wat Suthat Thepwararam  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

This temple was created with a unique conceptual plan. Intentionally, it was constructed at the heart of the capital. Its grandeur, planning, structures and artifacts symbolized the traditional belief of Buddhist cosmological concept. King

Rama I ordered its first construction with the intention of having it represent the central point of Bangkok, akin to the celestial city of God Indra, atop the mythical Mount Meru, traditionally believed to be the center of the universe. Additionally, the title *Suthat* stand for *Suthatsa Nakhon* or the celestial city of God Indra was named to this monastery by the monarch to emphasis its symbolic meaning. Inside a spacious area of 44,980 square meters, this monastery consists of many magnificent religious structures and artistic works of the early Rattanakosin period.

#### Aesthetic value

##### Physical components and their meanings

#### 1. The main image hall (*Phra Wihan Luang*)

This building was firstly constructed by the initiation of King Rama I in 1809 for enshrining the magnificent Buddha image of Sukhothai art named *Phra Sri Sakayamuni*. However, only the construction of the building's foundation was complete at the end of the First Reign. Further construction was carried out by King Rama II. Nevertheless, the main building and the entire construction in accordance with the original plan were built completely in the reign of King Rama III. And finally in the reign of King Rama IV, front and rear porticos of the main building were added, thus completing this building.

This building was constructed on the high platform which was specially made to stand 6 meters high. It was intentionally built to symbolize the celestial palace atop the mythical mount. Moreover, the high platform also makes this massive structure appears taller and lighter.



Figure 53  
The main image hall of Wat Suthat  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

This building has a two-tiered roof with front and back porticos, the roofs of which also are two tiered. The pediments of this building were exquisitely decorated with gilded wood carvings and colored glass ornamentation. The degree of pediments' embellishment corresponds closely to the building's status in terms of royal patronage. The upper pediment of this building portrays the figurine of God Indra atop the mythical 33-headed elephant named Erawan while the lower pediment of the portico portrays the figurine of God Vishnu on the mythical bird called Garuda. All of these design elements emphasize its predominant status of royal. Thai monarch symbolically sits on top of Mount Meru commanding the waters of life to flow down so as to preserve the well-being of his subjects. The King thus plays the part of the Supreme Being Himself, so much so that several kings have adopted the equivalent names for *Rama*: the incarnation of God Vishnu. (Jumsai 1988:23)



Figure 54  
The pediments of the image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

Inside this building is enshrined the principal image named *Phra Sri Sakayamuni*, one of the most famous Buddha images in Thailand. This image was cast in Sukhothai art. It was transferred from Sukhothai during the reign of King Rama I and has been regarded as one of the most beautiful in its simplicity and serenity that characterize the images of the Sukhothai period. This image is in the attitude of *Subduing Mara*, an allegory of the victory over Evil, which was inspired by a significant event in the Buddha's life of the ascetic on the eve of his Enlightenment. At that time, the ascetic was troubled by a succession of temptations and assaults by the Evil One who created distracting illusions, both horrible and alluring. Suddenly awakened from profound meditation, the ascetic pressed his right hand over his foreleg to call Mother Earth to bear the witness; she could testify to his store of merit and his worthiness to attain Enlightenment. Therefore, this gesture indicates his triumph over the evil prior to his ultimate goal.



Figure 55  
The principal image enshrined  
inside the image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)

The mural paintings on the walls, illustrating 27 depictions of the previous lives of the Buddha, were the craftsmanship of the Second and the Third Reigns. The inner columns are large and four-cornered in form, each face of which is adorned with murals depicting the scenes of *Triphum* or the Three Worlds of the Buddhist cosmological concept; the realms of Desire, the realms of Form and the realms of Absence of Form. The scenes of *Triphum* illustrate that, for all living beings, time comprises cycles of birth and rebirth in which one hopes to attain an ever higher form of existence through the accumulation of merit by doing good deeds. Due to the reason that during the early Rattanakosin period, most of Thai people were illiterate so that these murals had a basic purpose to instruct, guide and inspire by illustrating scenes of religious history and moral value. The mural paintings of this building were restored in 1980. The mural paintings are in good condition and represent some of the most beautiful mural paintings of the early Rattanakosin period.

One of the most remarkable features of this building is the intricacy with which the wooden doors were carved. Each door consists of 2 pieces of wood, about eighteen feet high, five feet wide and just over six inches thick. These thick wooden door panels are deeply carved with intricate and beautiful details in three layers to a depth of five and a half inches. The exquisite carving of leaves and vines depicts the tropical forest with many kinds of animal such as monkeys, squirrels, snakes, tigers and elephants delicately worked into and half hidden amid the foliage that appear real and living. These are representative the *Himayana Forest*. King Rama II is said to have carved one of the door panels personally, and having supervised the carving on the others. Because of the excellent traditional wood carving, the doors are considered a national treasure. (Punyasingh 1981:96-97) Unfortunately, in 1959 a fire broke out at this hall damaging some part of the front door panel. The Department of Fine Arts therefore removed the couple of the front door panels which are believed to be craved by King Rama II to be kept at the national museum of Bangkok.



Figure 56  
The door panels of the image hall kept now  
in the national museum (Bhakhakanok 8/1/2012)



Figure 57  
Stone statuary located in front of the image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 12/4/2011)

Encircling this building are stone statuary in the forms of pagoda, pavilion, and miniature hill created in Chinese style which are supposed to depict Mount Meru and the Himayana Forest. The stone pavilion statuary located at the frontage is representative of the *Phaichayon* pantheon of the God Indra at *Suthatsananakorn* which is atop Mount Meru. Behind the stone pavilion are a small garden and a pool which represent *Chitrlada* Garden and the *Sunantha* Pool, the residence of God Indra. (Wat Suthat n.d. :102)

The Chinese warrior figurines which stand in pairs on the steps of both the main image hall and the ordination hall are associated with deities in Thai belief. The large wrestler figurines which guard the grounds are placed in pairs at the base of the steps and are associated with giants also according to Thai belief. Similarly, the Chinese lions paired at the entrance of the temple are associated with the King Serpent, or Naga. The pair of western priests standing by the wall of the hall are said to be associated with the guards. These stone figurines of various forms: warriors, dramatic figures, western priests and animals, were originally used as ballast for ships, and later on, came to be used as decorations for the temple grounds or at noble's residences. When these art forms gained acceptance and hence became popular, they started to be made to order and turned into prime cargo for the ships, no longer as ballast. (Wat Suthat n.d. :101)

## 2. The cloisters (*Phra Rabieng*) surrounding the main image hall

The cloisters of this temple were built in the reign of King Rama III. They were covered walkways with one side opened and roofs were supported by white square brick columns without any decoration at their capitals, reflecting the favorite design of the Third Reign. As part of the temple's cosmological ground plan, the cloisters represent one of the layers of mountains or oceans around Mount Meru, which is symbolized by the encircled building. (Sthapitanonda and Mertens 2005:90) Furthermore, the cloisters are built to create a sense of heightened order and quiet, set apart from its everyday surroundings. In this temple, the area encompassed by the cloisters is typically where religious rites take place. Worshipers can wait or have a rest inside the cloisters and can contemplate the enclosed Buddha images. All of the images enshrined in the cloisters were cast during the Third reign. They were tended to perpetuate the iconography of former prototypes, but they somehow failed to express spiritual inspiration. There is a substantial difference when one compares the craftsmanship of the images and the paintings; the muralists at this time seemed to possess greater skill than the sculptors.

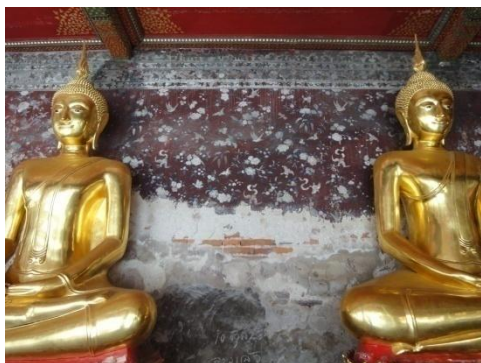


Figure 58  
Buddha images and murals inside the cloisters  
(Bhakhakanok 28/5/2010)

The mural paintings on the walls behind the images were painted in the Third Reign. The stories' subjects depict flowers, small birds and butterflies which were painted in light color while all backgrounds were left in dark color. It is the stylistic mural painting of the early Rattanakosin period. Unfortunately, some parts of murals are currently in bad condition.

### 3. The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot*)



Figure 59  
The ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

This enormous structure with its 72.25 meters height and 22.60 meters width was built in the Third Reign. Its construction took 10 years from 1834 to 1843 to complete. Standing on the three-level base, with a four-tiered roof, this building is one of the longest ordination halls in Thailand. The pattern of four-tiered roofs of this building symbolizes the importance and the paramount status of the building. Multiple roof tiers help to ward off the sun and rain, but their rationale is more aesthetic than functional. Visual rhythms suggested by multiple tiers, breaks and tile patterns make massive roofs of this building more dynamic and lighten up the roof's appearance. (Sthapitanonda and Mertens 2005:136) This building faces east, the east and west pediments of this building are each embellished with a celestial being standing on a chariot. The east pediment depicts the portrayal of Sun-God while the west presents the portrayal of Moon-God.

Figure 60  
The east pediment of the ordination hall depicts the portrayal of Sun-God standing on a chariot  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)





Figure 61 and 62

The principal image and mural paintings inside the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

*Phra Buddha Trilokachet* is the principal image of the ordination hall. This bronze image was cast in the Third Reign. In front of this principal image, there are 80 figurines represented the important disciples of the Buddha which are in positions portraying attentive listening to the Buddha's sermon. These 80 images were made of colored stucco material and cast by the command of King Rama IV.



Figure 63

The principal image and 80 figurines  
inside the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

The interior walls of the ordination hall are decorated with beautiful murals depicting the lives of the Buddha, the previous literary stories. (Wat Suthat n.d.:88, 100) From the interior design of the hall built in the early Rattanakosin period, it can be said that temple interior became increasingly ornate during this period. While larger windows shade more light inside, murals became more detailed, realistic and significant to worshippers as the art reached new heights in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Sthapitanonda and Mertens 2005:162) The mural paintings of this hall is regarded as one of the most beautiful paintings of the early Rattanakosin period and now is in good condition.



Figure 64

Mural painting inside the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

#### 4. The seven great places (*Sata Mahasathanor*)

Unlike ordinary temples, Wat Suthat does not possess the sacred structures of memorial and reminder to the Buddha in the form of Pagoda, Chedi or Prang. In the Third Reign, the group of structures was created and named *Sata Mahasathanor*. King Rama III had requested its construction in the stead of a pagoda. *Sata Mahasathanor*, or the Seven Great Places, is a composite of the seven representational places where the Buddha took the times after his enlightenment and before preaching the first sermon. The seven representational places of Wat Suthat consist of 1) a living Bodhi Tree representing the sacred tree under which the Buddha attained enlightenment, 2) a stone sculpture of a Chinese pavilion representing the pagoda where the Buddha sat to view the Bodhi Tree, 3) a stone slab standing to represent the Buddha walking ground, 4) a stone-sculpted (pavilion) representing a fitting venue for the revision of the Dharma, 5) a Banyan Tree representing the right venue for preaching the sermon to all living beings, 6) a Banyan Tree representing the venue for seeking happiness from Nirvana, and 7) a Ket Tree representing the venue of the last week of the Buddha's search for happiness from Nirvana before departing for preaching the first sermon. (Wat Suthat n.d. :89)



Figure 65 and 66 The seven great places of Wat Suthat (Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

During the Third, Fourth and Fifth Reigns, the Seven Great Places was used for the candle procession. Each year, at dusk in *Maka-Puja* day or the full moon day of the third lunar month and in *Visaka-Puja* Day or the full moon day of the sixth lunar month, there was the clockwise circumambulation in which the faithful hold flowers, incense sticks and lit candles. At the present time, this religious activity is now conducted at the courtyard of the main image hall instated of at the Seven Great Places. (Wat Suthat n.d.:89) For preserving the Buddha images of the Seven Great Places which once were enshrined outside, these authentic images are now housed in



the main image hall. The figure on the left hand side is the bronze image of the Seven Great Places which is now housed in the main image hall. This image was created for illustrating the episode in the Buddha life's time when the mythical serpent named *Mucilinda Naga* protected the Buddha from the thunderstorm in the sixth week after Enlightenment.

Figure 67 The bronze image of the Seven Great Places (Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

#### 4. Wat Chana Songkram Rajaworamahavihara

##### Historic value

This small monastery was founded during the Ayutthaya period and known in the name of Wat *Klang Na*. This name displays that it was located in the middle of the paddy fields in countryside during that time. After Bangkok was established as the new capital, King Rama I commissioned the monks of the *Raman*, one of the ethnic groups who migrated from southern Burma to Siam because of the war, to reside in this temple. During the First Reign, the Raman soldiers assisted Thai army in defending against Burmese army. Then, to commemorate their assistance in the war, the Viceroy of the First Reign, *Kromphraratchawangbaworn Maha Surasinghanart*, patronized the entire reconstruction of this temple. After the renovation, its name was changed to Wat *Tong Pu*. This new name, *Thong Pu*, was the same as the name of the Raman's temple which was once existed during the Ayutthaya period. Latterly, King Rama I gave its official name, Wat *Chana Songkram*, to signify the victory over the Burmese in the Battle of the Nine Armies. The Raman monk who was the abbot of this temple was regarded as one the three venerable monks of the early Rattanakosin period.

In the reign of King Rama VII, the relic ashes of 5 viceroys of the First Reign to the Fifth Reign were kept at this temple. In the reign of King Rama IX, this temple had its major renovation between 1950 and 1963. This heritage temple was registered as the national ancient monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949.

##### Aesthetic value

##### Physical components and their meanings

##### 1. The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot*)



Figure 68 The ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

The architectural style of this building represents well the craftsmanship of the artisans under the patronage of the Viceroy of the First Reign. It can be seen evidently at its pediment design that the windbreaks above the gable were built in the straight-line of Naga motif with sloping edges which is the signature style of the Viceroy Palace's craftsmanship. This architectural style is also found at the buildings of Wat Mahathat built in the same period. The pediment of this hall is decorated with gilded wood carving ornamented with colored glass mosaic depicting the figurine of God *Vishnu* on Garuda surrounding by celestial beings.



Figure 69 The sacred markers at the eaves level  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

Another distinctive feature of the ordination hall is the sacred boundary markers which are not located around the hall as normally practiced, but are placed high almost at the eaves level on the external walls of the building.

While the exterior walls of this hall are whitewashed, the frames of doors and windows are decorated with gilded bas-relief stucco in floral motif. The outside door and window panels are decorated with lacquer overlaid with gold leaf while the inside panels are painted depicting the guardian figure believed to be the protector of the temple against bad influences. However, some inside panels were repainted with the scenes of the previous life of the Buddha.



Figure 70 and 71  
The paintings on the inside  
door and window panels  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

Figure 72  
Inside the  
ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

The principal Buddha image of this hall is named *Phra Buddha Norasee Trilokachet Mahetthisak Puchaniyachayantakhodom Boromsassada Anaworayan*.



The principal image is surrounded with 15 Buddha images which were cast in the same period. It is believed that the Viceroy of the First Reign who renovated this temple had the aim to enshrine 16 Buddha images in the attitude of subduing Mara to match the name of this temple, the victory in war.



## 2. The four sacred structures (*Phra Prang and Phra Chedi*)

In front of the ordination hall of this temple, there are 2 Prangs with 9 meters wide and 15 meters high created in the form of Prang-styled of the early Rattanakosin period. And at the back of the ordination hall, there are 2 Chedis with 4 meters wide and 8 meters high created in the form of bell-shaped Chedi.

Figure 73 Phra Prang (Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

## 5. Wat Ratchaburana Rajaworavihara

### Historic value

This small monastery was founded during the Ayutthaya period. It was said that a Chinese merchant named *Chin Liap* was the founder and then it was called by the locals Wat *Chin Liap* or Wat *Liap*. During the reign of King Taksin, the Patriarchs resided in this monastery and then it was regarded as the royal temple of Thonburi period. When Bangkok was established as the new capital in 1782, this monastery was renovated in 1794 by *Kromluang Thepharirak*, King Rama I's nephew, who also asked for the permission from the King to establish it as the royal temple of Rattanakosin period. The King gave the permission and had it renamed to Wat *Ratchaburana* which meant that this monastery would be supported and maintained under the royal patronage. Furthermore, this temple with its new name was the King's policy to have the same temple's name as that in the former capital, Sukhothai and Ayutthaya. Due to the customary practice since the Sukhothai period, there must be at least three eminent royal monasteries in the names of Wat Mahathat, Wat Ratchaburana and Wat Ratchapradit existed in the capital of the Kingdom.

During the early Rattanakosin period from the reign of King Rama II to the reign of King Rama III, this monastery was where the Supreme Patriarchs resided. Moreover, *Khrua In Khong*, the monk who was regarded as one of the famous painters of the early Rattanakosin period resided in this monastery. It was said that the mural paintings inside the ordination hall built in the First Reign were painted by him.

The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot*) built in the Ayutthaya period was reconstructed in the reign of King Rama I by *Kromluang Thepharirak*. In the next reign, King Rama II built the cloisters enclosing the ordination hall. Inside the cloisters are enshrined 162 Buddha images which were moved from the damaged and neglected temples since the First Reign. King Rama II also ordered the construction of the image hall (*Phra Wihan*) for enshrining the principal Buddha image and the images of 80 disciples of the Buddha. In the reign of King Rama III, the King built the pagoda (*Phra Prang*) located in front of the monastery. (Fine Arts Department 1982:195)

Wat Ratchaburana had been regularly maintained under the patronage of the monarchs. It had flourished for more than a hundred years until towards the end of World War II. It was bombarded and razed in 1945. Most of the structures, both located in the Buddhavas and Sanghavas sections, were damaged beyond repair. Thereafter, it was neglected until in 1948 during the reign of King Rama IX (the Present King) this temple was rebuilt by the cooperation of the faithful, the trader and the local people. The revival of this monastery started with the reconstruction of the monks' residences and in 1953 the new ordination hall was built. Therefore, most of the structures seen nowadays were built in the reign of King Bhumibol, the Present King. Due to its heritage significance, this royal monastery was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949.

## Aesthetic value

### Physical components and their meanings



Figure 74 the old picture of Wat Ratchaburana in 1932

Figure resource: Tevaprapas Makklay in Wikimedia Commons Available from [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wat\\_Ratchaburana\\_before\\_destroyed\\_in\\_World\\_War\\_II.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wat_Ratchaburana_before_destroyed_in_World_War_II.jpg) [Online]. (Update 2009). Accessed 19 October 2011.

The figure shows the main structures in Buddhavas section of Wat Ratchaburana before the bombardment in 1945. (*On the left of the figure is the old ordination hall surrounded by cloister*). The figure above was taken in 1932 during the Anniversary 150 years of Bangkok. (*In the middle of the figure shows the Bangkok Electricity Authority*) Wat Ratchaburana was located in the foot of the Rama I Memorial Bridge, the first bridge crossing the Chao Phraya River. Both the electric powerhouse and the bridge were the strategic points and endangered this location during the war. It is a reason why this temple became a bombsite and was totally destroyed.

#### 1. The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot*)

The ordination hall built in the early Rattanakosin period had its interior walls decorated with mural paintings said to be the work of *Khrua In Khong* who was regarded as the master painter of early Rattanakosin period. He was a monk and was the first Thai Artist to adopt Western techniques in Thai mural painting. At first he adhered to traditional beliefs and ideas when depicting Buddhist scenes. He later switched to painting scenes related to Buddhism, and finally liberated him to work within the form of the Dharma riddles. His unique character is his interpretation of nature, particular trees, and his tonality control to form harmonious unity. His acclaimed work is the Dharma riddles on the walls in the ordination hall of Wat Bovornniwet. (Thongmitra 1987)

Unfortunately, the ordination hall built in the First Reign was totally damaged by bombing in 1945. Due to its bad condition, this monastery was desolated and all the images enshrined in its cloisters since the Second Reign were moved to be enshrined in other monasteries for their preservation.

The new ordination hall with beautiful decoration, seen in the good condition as it appears today, was built between 1953 and 1960 in the reign of King Rama IX, the Present King. Although the rectangular floor plan is typically the classical floor plan of the traditional constructions such as of the ordination hall, the image hall and also of the preaching hall, the new ordination hall of this temple has a cruciform floor plan. It was built on a raised platform which makes this massive structure appears taller and lighter.



Figure 75  
The ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 24/10/2010)

This one-storey building has a high ceiling and steep three-tiered roofs with traditional-styled finials. The gable-end finial is believed to present the mythical struggle of Garuda and Naga or the flight between mythical birth and mythical serpent in the legend. The graceful finial affixed to the top of the bargeboard called *Chofa* evokes Garuda. It appears as a bird-like creature with a graceful horn. The lower bargeboard finial called *Hang Hong* symbolizes Naga. It symbolizes the scene of Garuda seizing Naga. Traditionally, this design is exclusively reserved for royal and religious buildings. Garuda is the vehicle and emblem of God Vishnu and Garuda also represents the guardian protecting the building against bad influences.



Figure 76  
The pediment of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 24/10/2010)

The large triangular section at the end of a gable roof, broadly referred to as the pediment, is the most prominent exterior element of a Thai traditional architecture. (Sthapitanonda and Mertens 2005:146) The pediment facing southern direction of this building depicts the figurine of God Vishnu on Garuda. This design is homage to the Kingship because the monarchs of Chakri Dynasty have been regarded as *Rama Avatar*, who in turn is an incarnation of God Vishnu. Traditionally, this design is usually found in the building of the royal temple under the patronage of the king.



The doors and windows of this hall are decorated with ornamental frames in stucco gilded and enriched with glass mosaic. The design of ornaments is very detailed. The bas-relief design on the front door panels recount the life of the Buddha.

Figure 77  
The decorations of the front entrance  
(Bhakhakanok 24/10/2010)



Figure 78  
The façade of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 24/10/2010)

Standing on sacred ground which is outlined by eight consecrated boundary makers, this ordination hall is typically a symphony of forms, figures, finishes and color, decoration on almost every surface except its whitewashed outside walls. This new construction can be regarded as one of the contemporary masterpieces created from the famous artisans. The architect was Prof. *Luang Wisan Silpakram*. The exterior stucco design were created and executed by the famous artisan, *Sa-nga Mayura*.



Figure 79  
Inside the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 2/1/2012)

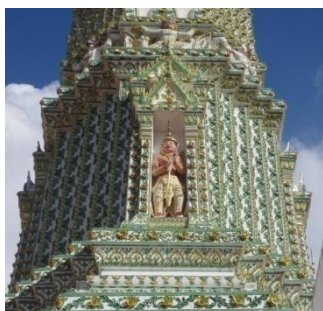
The principal Buddha image of the ordination hall is named *Phra Buddha MahaRaj*. This Buddha image is the replica of *Phra Buddha Chinaraj*, the artistic image of Sukhothai art, enshrined now at Wat Phrasrirattana Mahathat in Phitsanulok province. At present, inside the ordination hall has no mural paintings but the walls are prepared for painting in the near future.

## 2. The Prang (*Phra Prang*)

This imposing structure decorated with ceramic mosaic was built in the reign of King Rama III. Mosaic of glazed ceramic has been used as decoration in Thai architecture since the late Ayutthaya period, and became especially popular during the Third Reign. The ceramic pieces were chiseled into the right size and shape and set into wet stucco, usually in floral designs, on structure. (Sthapitanonda and Mertens 2005:200) This sacred structure, called *Phra Prang*, is the only one sacred structure remaining from the bombardment in 1945.



Figure 80 Phra Prang (Bhakhakanok 24/10/2010)



The deity figurine installed in the niche at each cardinal direction is believed to be one the four heavenly kings. This sacred structure, seen in the good condition as it appears today, was renovated from 2007 to 2009.

Figure 81 The figurine of the heavenly king  
(Bhakhakanok 24/10/2011)

## 6. Wat Bowornniwet Vihara Rajaworavihara

### Historic value

In the reign of King Rama III, the Viceroy, *Kromphraratchawangboworn Mahasakdipolsep*, ordered the construction of this temple between 1824 and 1832. At that time, this temple was called *Wat Mai*. The temple's name was later changed to *Wat Bowornniwet*, meaning the Excellent Abode Monastery. In 1836 King Rama III invited his younger brother, Prince *Monkut*, who was then a monk, to be the abbot of this temple. Nearby Wat Bowornniwet, there was another temple named *Wat Rangsisuthavas* built between 1823 and 1829 by *Kromkun Idsaranurak*. Afterward, in the Sixth Reign, *Wat Rangsisuthavas* was in poor condition and then it was incorporated into *Wat Bowornniwet*. Nowadays, its areas is in the *Sanghavas* section and is divided into 3 section; *Gana Daeng Rangsi*, *Gana Luang Rangsi* and *Gana Khiew Rangsi*.

Due to its significance that its first abbot was Prince *Monkut* who, after serving in monkhood for 27 years, acceded to the throne as King Rama IV, every succeeding monarch including the Present King, His Majesty King *Bhumibol Adulyadej*, and His Royal Highness Crown Prince *Maha Vajiralongkorn*, as well as several other males in the royal family, with the exception of King Rama VIII, was ordained in the Grand Palace and took up residence in this monastery. Moreover, this monastery has been the residence of many Supreme Patriarchs. This heritage temple was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949. *Wat Bowornniwet* is certified as being of the royal first class temple of the grade *Rajaworavihara*.

### Aesthetic value

#### Physical components and their meanings

Because this monastery was built during the Third Reign, Chinese art can be seen in many decorations such as at the gateway where the two sets of Chinese deity representing guardian spirit called *Siew Kang* are carved on the door panels, one set facing the roadway and the other facing inside the temple. This Chinese design embodies guardian figure that protect the temple against bad influences.



Figure 82 and 83

The guardian spirit called *Siew Kang* craved on the door panels of the gateway (Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

## 1. The ordination hall

The ordination hall was built in the reign of King Rama III but its pediment was ornamented with a motif of royal crown because of its association with Prince Mongkut, the first abbot of this temple.



Figure 84  
The ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)



Figure 85  
The north pediment of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 22/12/2011)

Figure 86  
The principal image, Phra Buddha Chinasi  
(Bhakhakanok 22/12/2011)

This building originally had four wings; the southern part was pulled down to make more room for the construction of the pagoda. The principal Buddha image of this ordination hall placed now in the north wing is named *Phra Buddha Chinasi*. This Buddha image, regarded as one of the most beautiful Buddha images of Sukhothai art, was transferred from Phitsanulok province in the Third Reign. The Buddha image of Ayutthaya art placed behind the principal image is named *Phra Suwannakhet* which was transferred from Phetchaburi province.



Originally, Phra Suwannakhet was the presiding image of the north wing and Phra Buddha Chinasi was the presiding image of the south wing. After the south wing was pulled down, Phra Buddha Chinasi was moved to the north and then it became the principal image of this hall. Flanking the principal images are standing images which represent the chief disciples of the Buddha named *Phra Mogallana* and *Phra Sariputra*. On the top tier of the gorgeously decorated pedestal, sit a small Buddha image known in the name of *Phra Por Bor Ror* cast in 1965 in the Present Reign. All of these Buddha images completely dominate the lofty hall with its blissful countenance and sublime serenity. (Punyasingh 1981:92)



Figure 87 and 88 The mural paintings of Khrua In Khong (Bhakhakanok 22/12/2011)

The murals of the ordination hall can be regarded as the evidence of western influence. The murals were painted by *Khrua In Khong*, the famous monk painter who introduced western impressionist into Thai traditional mural paintings. His paintings illustrated Buddhist Teachings using European figures and scenes including Mt. Vernon and Versailles, a sailing boat and a wind mill and also employing perspective as in western style painting. Differently from the original style since Ayutthaya period, the traditional mural was painted in 2 dimensions with its composition being a combination of mass and line. The basic elements were painted with no shadows; time is not stopped at any particular moment. Distance was an illusion achieved by the relative placement or overlapping of figures and objects. There is no western perspective with its fixed view and vanishing point. However, the traditional painting began to change in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when western shading and perspective and occasionally in western scenes were introduced into Thai traditional painting. An interesting early example of this hybrid style seen at the upper portion of the walls of this ordination hall where King Rama IV ordered the painting of western scenes as a kind of educational mural. (Lyons 1990:15, 24)

## 2. The image hall (*Wihan Phra Sassada*)

*Wihan Phra Sassada*, the name of this image hall comes from the famous Buddha image enshrined inside. *Phra Sassada* is the bronze image in the attitude of Subduing Mara. This image was moved to be enshrined in this hall by King Rama IV. *Phra Sassada* is said to be cast in 1357 together with *Phra Buddha Chinraj* and *Phra Buddha Chinasri*. All these three Buddha images had been enshrined in Wat Phrasri Rattana MahaThat in Phitsanulok province. *Phra Buddha Chinasri* and *Phra Sassada* were moved to Bangkok for enshrining in this temple while *Phra Buddha Chinraj* remained at Wat Phrasri Rattana MahaThat, in Phitsanulok province.



Figure 89  
The image hall of Phra Sassada  
(Bhakhakanok 31/12/2011)

This image hall is comprised of two rooms; the front room facing east enshrines *Phra Sassada* while in the smaller room to the back enshrines *Phra Saiyas*, a reclining Buddha image of Sukhothai art. King Rama IV while in monkhood found this reclining image abandoned at Wat Pra Pai Luang in Sukhothai province and then he had it moved to this temple in 1847. Prince *Damrong Rajanuparp*, a son of King Rama IV who is regarded as a famous Thai historian, wrote in his book that ‘this reclining Buddha image excels all others in beauty’. (Kantasilo 2009)



Figure 90  
Phra Sassada  
(Bhakhakanok 26/7/2010)



Figure 91  
Phra Saiyas  
(Bhakhakanok 26/7/2010)

### 3. The Chedi (*Phra Chedi*)

The golden bell-shaped Chedi is located directly behind the ordination hall. The construction of this sacred structure was begun by the Viceroy of the Third Reign but he passed away before finishing it, Prince monk Monkut, the first abbot of this temple complete its construction.



This Chedi was built in a similar style to that of the *Phra Pathom Chedi* or the Great Chedi of Nakhorn Pathom province. It is comparatively large for a city monastery, measuring over 50 meters high. Originally, it was covered with ordinary stucco; however, the renovation in 1964 introduced the use of gold mosaic tiles, giving this Chedi a massive and shining appearance. (Wat Boworn 2009) In the reign of King Rama IV, the reign of King Rama V and in the present reign the Buddha’s relics were kept inside this Chedi.

Figure 92  
The golden Chedi  
(Bhakhakanok 22/12/2011)

#### 4. The historic buildings in Sanghavas area

The residence of the monk named *Panya*, or known normally in the name of *Tamnak Panya*, was originally constructed in the Grand Palace during the Second Reign. Later, in 1836, King Rama III had this structure relocated to this monastery to serve as residence for his younger brother, Prince Monkut, who served as the abbot of this temple. Prince Monkut remained in this building until he left the Order in 1851 and ascended to the throne as the King Rama IV. Since that time, the Panya has been the residence of many monk princes and future kings, including King Rama VI and



King Rama VII. The Present King, King Rama IX, stayed here for a short time during his ordination in 1956. This building is a three storied brick and stucco dwelling which incorporates elements of Thai, European and Chinese styles. The highly adorned gable facing the north hosts the emblem of King Rama IV.

Figure 93  
Tamnak Panya  
(Bhakhakanok 31/12/2011)

In 1914, King Rama VI built a building, as a combination of Thai and European construction styles with an ornate reception hall, known as *Tamnak Pej*. It was built for Supreme Patriarch, Prince Monk *Vajirayan Varoros*. Tamnak Pej stands on the spot once occupied by Prince Monkut's printing press, the first printing press of the Kingdom. Prince Monk *Vajirayan Varoros* continued to use Tamnak Chan as his residence but used Tamnak Pej for various functions. The emblem of the Prince Monk *Vajirayan Varoros* and the royal seal of the Sixth Reign can be seen above the main entrance, and attests to the royal donation. The intricate artistic detail given to this building makes it one of the most visually pleasing in the monastery. The interior of this building is no less impressive, high ceilings, richly adorned in a style reminiscent of the renaissance. The tall doors, window cornices and chandeliers are a unique blend of Thai and European decorations, coming together in perfect balance. In the past, this building has been used for many purposes including housing funeral rites for several Supreme Patriarchs, and was the site of the thrice monthly, Supreme Sangha Council meeting. The meetings no longer take place here but have been moved to the Buddha Mondhon complex in Nakorn Patom. (Wat Boworn 2009)

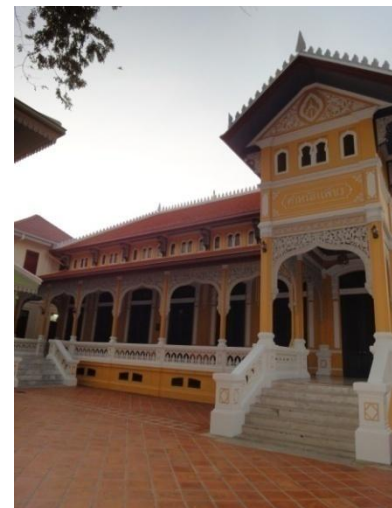


Figure 94  
Tamnak Pej  
(Bhakhakanok 31/12/2011)

## 7. Wat Thepthidaram Woravihara

### Historic value

This small temple was originally called Wat *Phraya Krai Suan Luang* as it was located in the local area named *Suan Luang Phraya Krai*. Most of the heritage structures seen today were built by the command of King Rama III in 1836. When the construction was completed in 1839, it was graciously granted to the King's favorite daughter, Princess *Wilas* or *Krommuen Apsorn Sudathep*, and given the name Wat *Thepthidaram* since the Princess also contributed funds for its construction.

This temple was built during the second renovation (1832-1848) that took place in Wat *Phra Chetuphon*. Due to the experience of renovating many wooden architecture built since the First Reign, King Rama III realized that if all details of the buildings were conventionally made of wood, it would certainly require much more maintenance. Therefore, only few teak logs were used in the construction of the buildings of this temple. While most of their materials chosen relied on endurance for the purpose that their maintenance would be easier in the future, their decorations relied on natural motif. (Jinrat 2003) Apparently, it can be seen at the pediments of the three main halls of this temple, instead of using gilt wooden pediments, their pediments were stuccoworks decorated with Chinese ceramic depicting magnificent swans surrounding with foliage motif.

Due to the Chinese influence in arts that reached its zenith during this reign, the artistic works of the three main halls of this temple were harmoniously a combination of Thai and Chinese arts. Their exquisite constructions constitute the ordination hall enclosed with walls and eight pavilions, the image hall, the preaching hall and four directional pagodas in Buddahas section and in Sanghavas section are the library, the residences of the monks and small multipurpose pavilions.

In the reign of King Rama III, a leading poet of the early Rattanakosin named *Phra Suthornwoharn* or *Suthorn Phu*, commonly thought of as the Shakespeare of Thailand, used to reside in this temple during his monkhood between 1839 and 1842. It is believable that he composed many of his famous works during his stay here. This temple was mentioned in one of his poems called 'Lamentation' that:

*"I was fated to leave the temple,  
Driven by frightening thugs,  
The temple has safety sheltered,  
Clothed, and fed me with its donations."*

(Bangkok Metropolitan Administration 2007:25)

Wat Thepthidaram, is certified as a royal third class monastery of the grade Woravihara. This royal temple was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 94 section 126, Date 13<sup>th</sup> December 1977.



**Aesthetic value**  
**Physical components and their meanings**

Figure 95  
The three main halls located in the Buddhavas area of Wat Thepthidaram (Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)

### 1. The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot*)

The architectural design of this building illustrates the harmonious combination of Thai and Chinese art which became a royal pattern of the Third Reign. The use of Chinese art in Thai traditional architecture during this period was only in level of ornamental and decoration composition to buildings. The two-tiered roofs of this building have no roof finials. The front and rear pediments of this hall are decorated with bas-relief stuccowork ornamented with fragments of ceramic depicting two swans surrounding with foliage motif.



Figure 96  
The façade of the ordination hall (Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)



Figure 97  
The exterior of the ordination hall (Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)

In front of the building, can be seen the rows of white square brick columns without any decoration at their capitals. These reflect the flourishing architectural design of the Third Reign.

The exterior walls of this hall are whitewashed, while the frames of doors and windows are decorated with gilt bas-relief stuccowork in floral motif.



Figure 98  
The exterior wall of the ordination hall (Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)

Inside the hall, the interior walls and columns are decorated with beautiful dark tone paintings illustrate the floral motif of Thai traditional pattern. When people enter this hall, they experience a dramatic transition from the brightness of the outside to the sacred space of the inside. It is a sanctuary encouraging a state of contemplative tranquility.



Figure 99  
Inside the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)

The venerated Buddha image of the ordination hall is enshrined in the gilt wooden pavilion with pointed roof. This image has been called by the locals as *Luang Phor Khao*. At the command of King Rama III, this pure white stone Buddha image was transferred from the Grand Palace to enshrine as the principal image of this temple. Afterwards, the Present King gave the official name *Phra Buddha Thewawilas* to this Buddha image in 1971.

At the four cardinal corners of the ordination hall's compound, there are 4 small Prangs created by the court artisans of the Third Reign. They have the same size as the Prang of Wat Ratchaburana built in the same reign. The deity figurine installed in the niche at each cardinal direction of the Prang is believed to be one the four heavenly kings. Unfortunately, these structures decorated with pieces of glazed ceramic are currently in poor condition.



Figure 100  
The directional Prang  
(Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)

In the Buddhavas area of the important temple, the most significant structure is usually enclosed by cloister or gallery for specifying its sacred position. With the unique plan of this temple, surrounding the ordination hall are small brick walls and 8 small pavilions. The layout of these small pavilions follows the rectangular format of an ordination hall using a gable roof that is less elaborate. They are now used for multi-purposes.



Figure101  
The pavilions surrounding the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)

## 2. The image hall (*Phra Wihan*)

Being constructed during the reign of King Rama III, this brick construction employed Chinese details same as that of the ordination hall and the preaching hall. The two-tiered roofs of this building have no roof finials. The pediments are decorated with bas-relief stuccowork depicting a swan surrounded by foliage motif. The exterior walls of this building are whitewashed while the frames of doors and windows are decorated with gilt bas-relief stuccowork in floral motif. Inside the hall, the principal Buddha image is placed on the high pedestal decorated with gilt stucco and colored glass mosaic.



Figure 102 The façade of the image hall (Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)



Figure 103 Inside the image hall (Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)



Figure 104

The images of enlightened female Buddha disciples (Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)

In front of the principal image, there are 52 images (49 sitting and 3 standing) representing the 52 enlightened female Buddha disciples or female monks. In 1836, at the same time as when this temple was founded, these images were cast at the command of King Rama III to honor and dedicate to his favorite daughter, Princess *Wilas* or *Krommuen Apsorn Sudathep*. All images are made of brass and gilded with gold leaves. With their different postures, these images seem to be alive.



Figure 105 and 106

The decorations of the door and window panels (Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)

The outside door panels are gilded lacquer work depicting the deity as the protector of the entrance while inside panels are painted in Chinese style. The outside window panels are gilded lacquer work in Thai floral motifs while inside window panels are painted in Chinese style. These show the harmonious combination of Thai and Chinese art.

### 3. The preaching hall (*Sala Kanparian*)



Figure 107 The preaching hall  
(Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)

This hall was built in the same style as that of the ordination hall and the image hall. Its architecture is characteristic of the Third Reign craftsmanship. This building has no roof finials. Its pediments are decorated with bas-relief stuccowork depicting a swan surrounded by foliage motif. The exterior walls of this building are whitewashed and the frames of doors and windows are decorated with gilt bas-relief stuccowork in floral motif which is less elaborate than of the ordination hall and the image hall. The preaching hall is now closed and used for keeping ancient art objects of this temple.



Figure 108 and 109  
The derocation of the preaching hall  
(Bhakhakanok 15/7/2011)



### 4. The Poet's House Museum

Since the reign of King Rama III, this temple has preserved the poet's residence located in the monk's living quarters and turned it into a museum which is called the Poet's House Museum. It used to be the residence of *Suthorn Phu* (1786-1856), a famous poet of early Rattanakosin period. He spent 3 years during his monkhood in this monastery between 1839 and 1842. Due to his outstanding cultural works, in 1986 UNESCO honored Suthorn Phu as the one of the Great World Poets.

Although, the other residences in the monk's living quarters are now occupied, Suthorn Phu's old residence in the left building has been turned into a small museum with exhibits from the poet's time. The architectural style of the poet's house museum illustrates a combination of Thai and Chinese art. It was built on a high platform with a well varnished timber floor and roofed with ceramic tiles. It has been steadily kept in good condition and has been awarded the best preserved Thai architecture by the Association of Siam Architects under Patronage in 1994.

Figure 110 and 111  
The Poet's House Museum  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)



## 8. Wat Ratchanaddaram Woravihara

### Historic value

King Rama III devoted much effort to the founding and upkeep of Buddhist monasteries. During his reign, five royal temples were built by the king himself and four temples were built by other members of the royalty and nobles. Moreover, sixty temples were repaired and expanded by the King. (Aasen 1998:132) This temple is one of the new royal temples built by the King. King Rama III ordered the construction of this monastery in 1846 to commemorate his favorite granddaughter, Princess *Sommanat Wattanawadi*, who later became the Queen of the Fourth Reign.



Figure 112  
Wat Ratchanaddaram  
(Bhakhakanok 28/5/2010)

At this temple, the Metal Palace was built at the command of King Rama III who was inspired by the *Mahavamsa*, the great chronicle of Sri Lanka written in Pali language which was translated into Thai in 1796 during the First Reign. This structure is the third built in over two millennia of Buddhism and is the only remaining one to be seen. The Metal Palace was the unique structure in the Buddhist tradition. The first Metal Palace was built during the lifetime of the Buddha by a wealthy female disciple named *Visakha* as the shelter for monks. The second was also built for dwelling purposes by King *Dutthagamini* of *Anuradhapura*, at present-Sri Lanka in 215 B.C. (Aasen 1998:133)

Unfortunately, in 1851 King Rama III passed away before the complete of this structure; nobody knew the King's exact intention whether it was meant to be used as monks' residence or for replacing the pagoda of this temple. Because of the incomplete construction in the Third Reign, it was constructed and embellished in the Fourth and Fifth Reign. In the Present Reign, it was renovated in 1963-1972. Nowadays, this unique structure can be regarded as the place of worship, Inside the structure are installed the Buddha images, the relic of the Buddha is enshrined at the top floor and the ground floor is the exhibition area where information of this structure is presented to the public. This royal third class temple was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949.



Figure 113 The Metal Palace  
(Bhakhakanok 28/5/2010)

## Aesthetic value Physical components and their meanings

### 1. The Metal Palace (*Loha Prasat*)



Figure 114  
The Metal Palace  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2010)

The construction of this structure was instigated by King Rama III. This prominent structure is called Metal Palace or *Loha Prasat* in Thai. The magnificent metal-roof structure stands 36 meters high and is 46 meters in width, with 37 spires covered with copper. The spires themselves represent 37 virtues conducive to Buddhist Enlightenment, known collectively as the *Bodhipakkhiya-Dharma*.



Figure 115  
Inside the Metal Palace  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2010)

With regard to its outside appearance, it is a four-storey structure of decreasing size in which is 36 pavilions with pediments and small pointed pagodas in the form known as a *Prasat*. Inside this structure, the number of storey in the building becomes seven. At ground level, the thick laterite columns supporting the towers form an almost labyrinthine collection of corridors. At the center is a staircase with large columns to support the spiral stairs with thick wooden steps which wind them from bottom to top floors. This application of winding stairs to this structure is the western technique adopted by Thai architects in the recent renovation.



This unique structure is different from the former Metal Palaces which were built as a residence for monks but this third Metal Palace built in Thailand was regarded as a pagoda. The Metal Palace is currently used to house sacred Buddha's relic and Buddha images. Therefore, this structure is regarded as a sacred place to honor the memory of the Buddha. The Metal Palace seen in the good condition as it appears today was renovated completely from the last conservation work in 2007.

Figure 116  
The images enshrined inside the Metal Palace  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2010)

## 2. The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot*)



Figure 117  
The ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)

This white brick building was built in the Third Reign. King Rama III accompanied by his granddaughter, Princess *Sommanat Wattanawadi*, presided over the foundation ceremony for the first construction of this building in 1846.

Its architectural style features the flourishing design of the Third Reign. This massive brick building with three-tiered roof was built on the high platform. Flanked by the image hall and the preaching hall which both face east, this hall was constructed on the axis of north-south. Its pediments illustrate the harmonious composition of gilt floral motifs enclosed by gilt roof-finials of Thai architectural style. Its façade shows the rows of white square brick columns without any decoration at their capitals. The exterior walls of this hall are whitewashed, while the frames of doors and windows are decorated with gilt bas-relief stuccowork ornamented with glass mosaic in floral motif.



Figure 118 and 119 The decorations on the door and windows of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 8/12/2011)

The principal Buddha image of the ordination hall is named *Phra Buddha Setthutamamunin*. This gilded copper image is in the attitude of Subduing Mara, an allegory of the victory over Evil. It was cast at the court foundry in the Grand Palace using copper obtained from Nakhorn Ratchasima province. During the reign of King Rama IV, the image was totally lacquered and gilded as well as placed under the five-tiered white umbrella of sovereignty. The mural paintings of the side walls are decorated with a composition representing 27 constellations of fixed stars and the nine planets of solar system as well as celestial beings. The mural paintings of the north and south walls depict the scenes from the life of the Buddha as he ascended the heaven to preach to his mother and then descended back to earth.

### 3. The image hall



Figure 120  
The image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)

This brick building was built in the Third Reign. Situated south of the ordination hall, this building faces east. Almost as massive as the ordination hall, this brick building was built on a high platform. Its façade shows the white exterior walls with rows of white square brick columns without any decoration at their capitals and represents the flourishing architectural design of the Third Reign. The two-tiered roof of this hall features colored tiles with traditional roof finials. The pediments of this hall are enriched with a floral design similar to that of the ordination hall built completely in the same period.



Figure 121  
The front pediment  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)

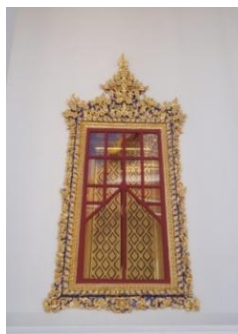


Figure 122 and 123  
The exterior decorations  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)

At the white exterior walls, the framed door and window are decorated with gilt bas-relief stuccowork ornamented with glass mosaic in floral motif. The door and window panels are lacquer work overlaid with gold leaf showing Thai tradition motifs.

This hall was intentionally dedicated as the God Indra's abode. Therefore, inside the hall, the upper part of the wall behind the principal Buddha image is occupied by the God Indra's triple celestial abode, flanked by multi-tiered ceremonial umbrellas. The principal Buddha image of this hall named *Phra Buddha Chutinnarasop* is enshrined on the three-tiered pedestal. It is a standing Buddha image in pacifying the ocean attitude and clad in full regal attire. The moral paintings of this hall feature floral motifs. At present, the image hall is not opened to the public because many valuable Buddha images are kept inside.

#### 4. The preaching hall



Figure 124  
The preaching hall  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)

This brick hall is situated north of the ordination hall and is somewhat smaller than the ordination hall as befits the purpose of utilization. Its architectural style is virtually indistinguishable from the image hall. In the past, it was used for preaching the sermons. Now this hall is not opened to the public because many valuable images are kept inside.

The two-tiered roof of this building is covered with colored tiles and decorated with traditional roof finials. Its pediments are gilded and decorated with colored glass mosaic depicting floral motif.



Figure 125  
The front pediment  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)



Figure 126 and 127  
The exterior decorations  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)

At its white exterior walls of this hall, the framed door and window are gilt stucco designs in floral motif. Similarly to the image hall, the door and window panels of the preaching hall are lacquer work overlaid with gold leaf showing Thai tradition motifs. The principal Buddha image of this hall is the standing image with hand crossing above the chest in pensive attitude. The mural paintings inside the hall feature floral motif.

The ordination hall, the image hall and the preaching hall with beautiful decorations seen in the good condition as they appear today were renovated completely from the last conservation work in 2011.

## 9. Wat Mahannoppharam Woravihara

### Historic value

*Krommuen Udomrattanarangsri*, the son of the Third Reign, was the founder of this monastery. King Rama III gave the permission to establish it as the royal temple and contributed funds for its construction. However, this small temple was first built in 1850 at the end of the Third Reign and then the further construction was carried out in the next reign. King Rama IV donated funds for the construction and built the bell-shaped pagoda which the relic of the Buddha is enshrined inside. The official name of this monastery, *Wat Mahannoppharam*, was also given by King Rama IV.

In the reign of King Rama V, a royal school was established in the area of this monastery. At that time, most of Thai people were illiterate; King Rama V realized that education was important for his subjects. Therefore, the first public school was established in the Grand Palace in 1871 for the teaching of Thai and English to members of the royal families and children of noblemen. This was expanded to include commoners by the establishment of a royal school in 1884 at this monastery. (Government Public Relations Department: 2012) Previously, traditional education was managed for men in monkhood. At the command of the King, although this school was located in the temple's area and managed by monks, it was founded for teaching to common people.

This heritage temple was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949. This temple is certified as being of the royal third class monastery of the grade Woravihara.

### Aesthetic value

#### Physical components and their meanings

##### 1. The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot or bot*)

This brick construction was built in the reign of King Rama III. It has been used for performing the monastic rites, especially the ordination ceremony. The white square brick columns without any decoration at their capitals illustrate the flourishing architectural style of the Third Reign.

This brick building has two-tiered roofs which have no roof finials. Its front and rear pediments are bas-relief stuccowork decorated with pottery mosaic and colored porcelain depicting a dragon and swans surrounded by floral motifs.

Figure 128  
The ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)





Figure 129  
The front pediment of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

Unfortunately, nowadays the pediments of this hall are in poor condition, this heritage architecture require proper conservation work for preserving its value.



Figure 130 and 131  
The decorations of the door and window frames of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

The exterior walls of the ordination hall are whitewashed while the frames of doors and windows are decorated with gilt bas-relief stuccowork in floral motifs.

The outside of the wooden door and window panels of the ordination hall are decorated with carving and ornamented with glass mosaic while the inner panels are painted depicting the painting in Chinese style.

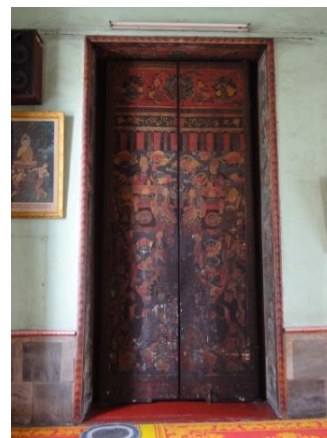
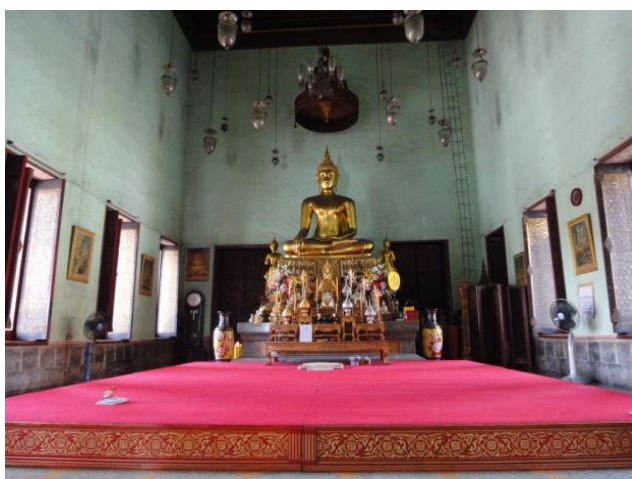


Figure 132  
The inner side of the door panel of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)



The principal Buddha image of the ordination hall is the image of Ayutthaya art named *Luang Phor Bunyarit*. This image is enshrined on the high gilt pedestal. The interior walls of this hall are whitewashed without mural painting.

Figure 133  
Indise the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

## 2. The image hall (*Phra Wihan*)

This brick construction is built in the same style and same size as the ordination hall. The two-tiered roofs of this building have no roof finials. Its front and rear pediments are bas-relief stuccowork decorated with crockery mosaic and colored porcelain depicting floral motifs surrounding a dragon and swans. Unfortunately, nowadays the pediments of this hall are in poor condition the same as of the ordination hall. The exterior walls of this hall are whitewashed while the frames of doors and windows are decorated with gilt bas-relief stuccowork in floral motifs.



Figure134 The image hall (Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

Figure 135  
The front pediment of the image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

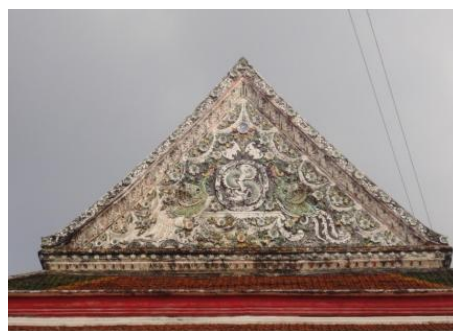


Figure 136 and 137  
The decorations of the door and  
window frames of the image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

The outer side of the wooden door and window panels are decorated with carving and ornamented with glass mosaic depicting many aquatic animals such as fish, crab and turtle while the inner side decorated with Chinese art paintings.

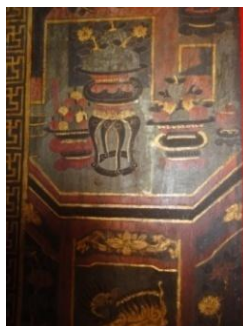


Figure 138  
The decorations on the inside of the  
window panels  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

Figure 139 The decorations on the outside of the door panels  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

The interior walls of the image hall are whitewashed without mural painting. The principal image of this hall is the artistic image of Sukhothai art named *Luang Phor Phra Ruang*. This Buddha image was formerly enshrined at Wat Singkharam in Sri Satchanalai town, Sukhothai province. It was transferred to Bangkok in the Third Reign for enshrining at this temple.



Figure 140  
Indise the image hall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)



Figure 141  
Lunag Phor Phra Ruang  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

This Sukhothai image in the attitude of subduing Mara is a 60% gold Buddha image. The feature of this image is similar to the golden Buddha image of Sukhothai art enshrined now at Wat Trimitr as the clever design which the image can be separated into 9 pieces.

This Buddha image was once covered with gilded lacquer. Until the discovery of the golden Buddha image of Wat Trimitr in 1955, gilded lacquer covering this image was then peeled off and found that it is also the golden Buddha image. Nowadays, this Buddha image is the only one golden Buddha image enshrined in the heritage temple in Rattanakosin Island.

This Buddha image has been highly respected by the local people and the public. This image hall is opened everyday from 08:30 to 17:00 for people come to pay homage to this golden Buddha image.

Comparative with Wat Thepthidaram built under the patronage of King Rama III, the temple that built by the king would be larger in size with extra decorative ornaments. This temple was built by the royal family and then it was smaller and had less decoration. Two heritage buildings of this temple, the ordination hall and the image hall, were built in the same style at the same period. Unfortunately, nowadays the physical components of both the ordination hall and the image hall are in the poor condition, thus they require proper conservation works for conserving and maintaining their appearances.

## 10. Wat Buranasirimatayaram

### Historic value

This temple was built by *Chao Phraya Suthammontri (Bunsri Buranasiri)* in the Third Reign. King Rama III gave its name *Wat Siriammatyaram*. The construction of the pagoda was completed in the Fourth Reign and the King had the temple's name changed to *Wat Bunsirimatyaram*. Its present name *Wat Buranasirimatayaram* has been used since the Fifth Reign. This temple was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 94 section 126, Date 13<sup>th</sup> December 1977. It is certified as being of the royal third class monastery of Rattanakosin period.

### Aesthetic value

#### Physical components and their meanings

##### 1. The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot or bot*)

The building laid on rectangular plan, topped by sloping two-tiered roof with ornately decorated pediments was built in the Third Reign. It has been maintained and renovated continuously. The brick building, seen in the good condition as it appears today, received last renovation in 1982.



Figure 142  
The ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)



The front and rear pediments of the ordination hall are ornamented elaborately with colored glass mosaic.

Figure 143  
The front pediment of the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

The exterior walls are whitewashed while the frames of doors and windows are decorated with bas-relief stucco in floral motif. The door panels are decorated with lacquer overlaid with gold leaf depicting the scene of *Himayana Forest* believed to be the mythical forest populated by myriad fantastical creatures.



Figure 144  
The decorations of the entrance door  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)



Figure 145  
The boundary marker on the exterior wall  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

The boundary markers designating a sanctified ground of the ordination hall are not placed on the ground floor but are the bas-relief stuccowork on the exterior walls of the ordination hall.

Inside the ordination hall is enshrined the principal Buddha image named *Phra Buddha Buranasiri Patimakorn*. Although, the interior walls of this hall are not decorated with mural paintings, the simplicity can be seen inside. Indeed, the ordination hall of this temple is smaller and less decoration than the ordination hall of the royal temple built by the monarchs. However, this temple was regarded as the temple under the royal patronage in the Fourth Reign. Therefore, this temple has been encouraged continuously by the kings.



Figure 146 Inside the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 25/12/2011)

## 2. The Chedi (*Phra Chedi*)



This indented-corner style Chedi, crowned by tapering spire hovering umbrella-like, was built in the Third Reign by Prince Monkut who, after serving in monkhood for 27 years during the Third Reign, acceded to the throne as King Rama IV. As the result that King Rama IV built this structure, this temple became the temple under the royal patronage since the Forth Reign.

Figure 147 Phra Chedi  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)



## 3. The monks' residences

Figure 148 and 149  
The monks' residences  
(Bhakhakanok 6/6/2010)

The two-storey buildings were built in European-style with perforated timber decoration. These timber buildings were constructed in the Fifth Reign and functioned as the monks' residence.

## 11. Wat Ratchapradit Sathimahasimaram Rajaworavihara

### Historic value

This small temple was constructed in 1864 at the command of King Rama IV and was named by the King as Wat Ratchapradit. This temple was established for the monks of the *Dhammayuttika* sect, the new Buddhist sect initiated by King Rama IV when he was a monk since the Third Reign.

The King intended it to be a temple for the monks of the *Dhammayuttika* sect as well as to be one of the 3 eminent royal temples as required by an old tradition to be situated within the capital. Due to the traditional practice since the Sukhothai period, there must be at least three eminent royal temples named Wat Mahathat, Wat Ratchaburana and Wat Ratchapradit in the capital of the Kingdom. Therefore, the temple's name was the king's policy to have the same temple's name as that in the former capital, Sukhothai and Ayutthaya. The attached name *Sathimahasimaram* of this temple is named from the particular location of its sacred boundary markers which are circumscribed at the temple's walls. This enable all religious rites can be taken place in the compound inside the temple's walls.

This temple was constructed on the area which was originally a coffee plantation. King Rama IV bought the plantation with his personal money and had a small temple constructed. During the construction, it was found that the ground was rather low and the earth soft. If earth and sand were used as landfill the ground would still continue to subside. King Rama IV therefore ordered that broken ceramic jars be used as landfill because the ceramic jar was especially strong. (Dhammathai 2004) The king also gave a chance to his subjects for the meritorious participation by donating their ceramic jars for the groundwork construction. This method can encourage public participation and at the same time create sense of pride form their donation.

This royal first class temple is regarded as the royal temple of King Rama IV whose relic ashes were kept inside the pedestal of the principal Buddha image enshrined in the ordination hall. In the Present Reign, this temple was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949.

### Aesthetic value

#### Physical components and their meanings

##### 1. The ordination hall (*Phra Ubosot*)

This ordination hall represents a building of early Rattanakosin style with porches at the front and rear. This hall was constructed by King Rama IV whose royal seal is depicted on its pediments.

Its façade represents a building of traditional style of the First and Second Reigns which was different from the flourishing architectural style during the Third Reign. Its architectural style retraces to follow the traditional style due to the decline of the Chinese art during this period. This brick hall was built on the high platform which makes this massive structure appear taller and lighter. The rear wall of this building is installed with inscriptions on the date of establishment and the circumscription of the temple's sacred boundary.



Figure 150  
The ordination hall (It is now under renovation)  
(Bhakhakanok 18/2/2011)

Figure 151 The exterior walls  
(Bhakhakanok 1/1/2006)

Uniquely in its exterior decoration, the exterior walls and columns are decorated with small square tiles of gray to white marble tiles. The slender round columns stand on octagonal bases with lotus bud capitals decorated with gilt wood and colored glass mosaic. These are regarded as the best stonework of early Rattanakosin period. (Sthapitanonda and Mertens 2005:160, 208) The frames of entrance doors and windows are decorated with gilded bas-relief stuccowork and colored glass mosaic in Thai traditional motifs.

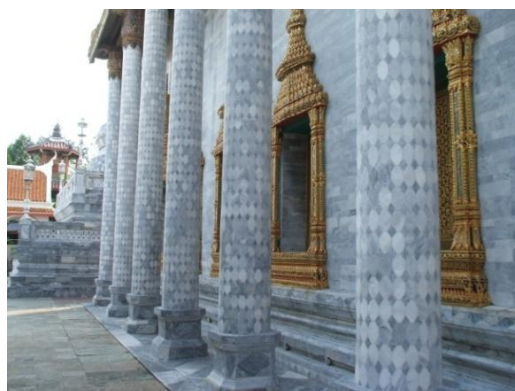


Figure 152  
Inside the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 12/4/2011)



Figure 153  
Inside the ordination hall  
(Bhakhakanok 26/7/2011)



Figure 154  
The principal Buddha image  
(Bhakhakanok 12/4/2011)

The principal Buddha image of the ordination hall is named *Phra Buddha Sihingkhapatimakorn*. This image is a replica of *Phra Buddha Sihing*, one of the most significant Buddha images in Thailand.

The murals of the ordination hall depict the scenes of the annual royal



ceremonies undertaken throughout 12 months. And one of the outstanding scenes is the historic event in 1868 when King Rama IV went to *Wa Ko* district in *Prajubkirikhan* province to observe the solar eclipse phenomenon which the King had accurately calculated and predicted. This scene shows the interest of King Rama IV in science which was second only to his interest in Buddhism, and he did very much to popularize the serious study of both. (Buribhand and Griswold 1968:13)

Figure 155  
The mural painting  
(Bhakhakanok 12/4/2011)



### 3. The bell-shaped Chedi (*Prasana Chedi*)

Figure 156  
The bell-shaped chedi  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

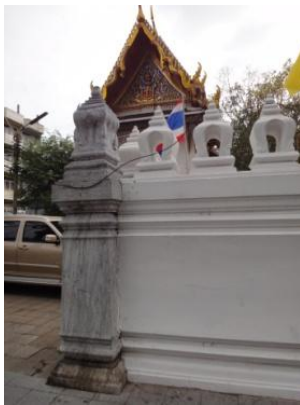
This sacred structure was built at the same time when the ordination hall was constructed. It is covered with marble tiles and is called *Prasana Chedi* which means the Stone Chedi. The bell-shaped Chedi is the flourishing architectural style constructed during the Forth Reign. The form of the bell-shaped Chedi built in Thailand is the one having the same elements as the Indian prototype which was introduced from Ceylon since the

Sukhothai period. The form of this structure is eminently Thai because it is included in a high pyramidal curved outline, a noticeable characteristic in all Thai religious buildings. (Bhirasri 1988:18)

## 12. Wat Ratchabophit Sathimahasimaram Rajaworavihara

### Historic value

This small monastery was constructed between 1869 and 1870 at the command of King Rama V. The King ordered this to be his first royal temple established after he succeeded to the throne. After his reign, his relic ashes were kept under the pedestal of the principal Buddha image enshrined inside the ordination hall. Afterward, in the reign of King Rama VII, the King had this temple renovation and considered it his royal temple as well. His relic ashes were also kept at this temple. Therefore, this royal first class temple is regarded as the royal temple of King Rama V and of King Rama VII. In the Present Reign, this heritage temple was registered as the Ancient Monument and announced in the Royal Gazette vol. 66 section 64, Date 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949.



Instead of using ordinary boundary stones for designating a sacred area, the boundary markers of this temple follow the concept of Wat Ratchapradit built by his father, King Rama IV. Wat Ratchabophit also has the boundary markers circumscribed at the temple's walls. This enable all religious rites can be taken place in the areas inside the temple's walls. And then this temple also has the attached name of *Sathimahasimaram*.

Figure 157 The boundary marker  
(Bhakhakanok 24/12/2011)

### Aesthetic value

#### Physical components and their meanings

This royal temple occupies quite a small area of land and is architecturally unique for no other temple in Thailand is built in the same style. (Wattananusit 1982:130) The layout plan of this temple is considered as the masterpiece of all the temples. Its symmetrical layout plan has directional halls and a circular cloister enclosed the compound with a bell-shaped Chedi located in the middle. Since the first construction of this temple, all main religious structures were decorated with multi-



colored ceramic tiles. The decorative ceramic tiles painted in Thai traditional motifs were produced in China especially for this temple. All these compositions make this temple look more attractive than the others. (Pirom 1982: 52)

Figure 158  
The architecture of Wat Ratchabophit  
(Bhakhakanok 1/1/2012)

## 1. The northern hall



The unique design of this architecture illustrates evidently the combination of Thai, Chinese and European art which is the design of Prince *Pravich Chumsai*. The exterior walls are decorated with mosaic of glazed ceramics represents the harmonious combination of Thai architecture and Chinese decoration while the interior design illustrates Gothic style of Western art. Its interior style is believed to have emulated one royal hall at the Versailles Palace, France. (Fine Arts Department 1988:33)

Figure 159 The northern hall  
(Bhakhakanok 1/1/2012)

The exterior walls of this hall are ornamented with multi-colored ceramic tiles. The front and rear pediments of this hall depict a figurine of a seven-headed elephant holding up a tray containing a royal seal of King Rama V while the pediment of the front portico depicts the figurine of God Vishnu on Garuda.

Figure 160  
The front pediment  
(Bhakhakanok 1/1/2012)



Figure 161  
The entrance door  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

The frames of doors and windows are decorated with gilded bas-relief stuccowork and colored glass mosaic in Thai traditional motifs. The door and window panels are elaborate decorated with mother-of-pearl inlay in traditional patterns created by Prince *Thiwakornwongprawat*. The motif of the door and window panels depicts the insignia of honors bestowed by the King. The design of its doors and windows were regarded as one of the prime works of art of Rattanakosin period, the finest one is that of Wat Phra Chetuphon. (Pirom 1982: 52) The doors are inset in the walls and on the side walls of this little recess, there is a bas-relief of a guardian spirit. Traditionally, considered passages between different realms, doors and windows, especially in palaces and temples, are decorated with special motifs to discourage the entry of evil spirits. (Sthapitanonda and Mertens 2005:154)

The interior with its vaulted roof conveys in miniature the atmosphere of a cathedral and, at the same time, with its pale blue and gilt, suggests a rather ornate period drawing-room. Originally, the life story of the Buddha was painted on the walls. King Rama VII regarded this as the principal monastery in Bangkok. The king had the paintings removed and the walls painted in blue background with gilded celestial flowers, come from heaven to worship there. (Wattananusit 1982:130)



Figure 162  
The interior decoration of the northern hall  
(Bhakhakanok 26/7/2009)

The principal Buddha image of this hall, *Phra Buddha Angkhirot*, was cast by the order of King Rama V after the style of the image created in the reign of King Rama IV. This Buddha image is in the attitude of meditation. It was enshrined in this hall in 1872 and later an elegant gilt pedestal was made for it. At the present, inside pedestal contains the relics of King Rama II, III, IV, V and VII. The multi-tiered royal umbrella over the Buddha image was the one placed over the royal urn containing the remains of King Rama IV.

The northern hall is open to public everyday and it is the place which many religious ceremonies have taken place including the ordination ceremony. It therefore functions as the ordination hall of this temple.

## 2. The southern hall

This hall is located at the southern direction of the circular cloisters opposite to the north hall which is located at the northern direction. The architectural style of the south hall is the same as of the north hall which is the European-style room within the Thai-style exterior decorated with Chinese ceramics. The interior walls of this hall are painted in pink background with the foreground motif of gilded celestial flowers. While the north hall is open daily, this hall is mostly closed and opened for some occasions or for using as the monks' meeting room.



Figure 163  
The interior decoration of the southern hall  
(Bhakhakanok 1/1/2012)

### 3. The Chedi (*Phra Chedi*)



Figure 164  
The Chedi  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

This bell-shaped Chedi is highlighted by multi-colored ceramic tiles. It is enclosed by the special pattern of circular cloister which is different from other temples in Bangkok. This Chedi and its circular cloister were built in a similar style to that of the Great Chedi or Phra Pathom Chedi of Nakorn Pathom province. This sacred structure functions as the center of this temple, was built over a vaulted room containing a large stone Buddha image which was taken from Lopburi province. This image is in the attitude of the Buddha sitting on the Naga, the mythical snake. At the top of this bell-shaped Chedi enshrines the holy relic of the Buddha. Around the outside of the Chedi, there are niches containing the Buddha images taken from various temples. In the niche which faces west, there is a shrine to the Second Abbot of this temple who became the Supreme Patriarch in 1922.

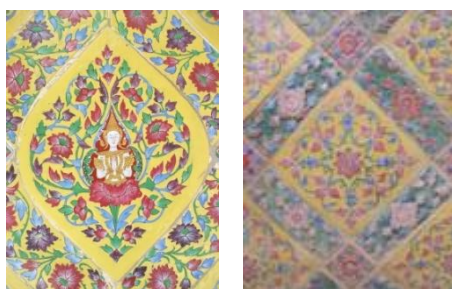


Figure 165 and 166 The decorative ceramic tiles  
(Bhakhakanok 12/4/2011)

The walls of a circular cloister, the exterior walls of the directional halls and the lower part of the Chedi are all covered with multi-colored glazed tiles designed in Thai motif but produced in China which was commissioned by King Rama V especially for this temple. There is a subtle blending of blue, yellow, red and green, the whole combining to give a mellow and mature effect. (Wattananusit 1982:130)

### 4. The Royal Cemetery (*Susan Luang*)

Within temple ground, there is a royal cemetery which was ordered constructed by King Rama V to make merit for his mother, queen, concubines, sons, daughters and the royal family. It consists of several repositories for royal remains in the form of Chedi, Prang, and European-style building. These are set in a small garden which is open to the public. This is a display of Thai architecture of different periods and styles which is worth studying.



Figure 167 The royal cemetery  
(Bhakhakanok 7/12/2011)

### **Spiritual value and Social value of living heritage temples Activities and the Meanings**

The following descriptions of spiritual value and social value of Theravada Buddhist temples are analyzed based on the related documents and selective information gathered from the in-depth interviews, including personal observation for collecting phenomenon of religious rites at the test study sites.

#### **Spiritual value**

The ultimate aim of Buddhism is to abolish suffering. As the origins of suffering are the greed, the hatred and the delusion, the means to accomplish the great aim to abolish suffering is to eradicate them. Buddhists can aid themselves directly in putting an end to the greed and the hatred by self-restraint, by having kindness and compassion, and by observing the right precepts to avoid of doing bad deed and cultivate of doing good deed. They can concentrate and purify their mind by practicing tranquility meditation which is the normal practice found in many religions. But it is not within the power of everyone to aid directly in putting an end to the delusion. In Buddhism, an end of the delusion can be achieved when a man has a true understanding of the true origin of suffering by practicing the insight meditation which is the effort to understand correctly the nature of the psycho-physical phenomena taking place in his own body and mind. In Thai society, this essential task, the teaching of insight meditation for destruction of mental defilements, has assigned more particularly to the Buddhist monks. For Thai people, Buddhist monks have both spiritual and social duties not only of perfecting themselves and instructing other monks in the intellectual doctrines but also of advising, educating, and training both tranquility and insight meditations to the interested layperson. This valuable tradition has led Thai society to contribute the abolishment of causes of suffering: the greed, the hatred and the delusion.

As the previous mentions in Chapter 3, Buddhism or the Teachings of the Buddha, in its entirety consists of the Dharma, or the doctrine, and the Vinaya, or the discipline. The Dharma deals with ideas and principles, whereas the Vinaya deals with rules and circumstances in which these ideals and principles are practiced and realized. In the Buddhist temples, The Dharma has been preserved by the monks with their learning and practice to cultivate their insight which is the development process of the individual perfection. Buddhist monks also have the direct responsibility to teach the laity the suitable Dharma.

Monks, who are devoted to individual perfection, are also the disseminators of basic morals and higher religious doctrines from the Teachings of the Buddha to the laity. In other words, intangible significance in the attributes of spiritual value and social value of Thai Buddhism, are closely related. The Dharma or the Teachings of the Buddha, both super-mundane state and mundane state, can be regarded as the spiritual value of Buddhism. Meanwhile, the social value of Buddhism has emerged from the inheritance, maintenance, interpretation and dissemination of the Dharma or spiritual value to the lay society by the Buddhist monks with the Vinaya as their code of conduct.

As the disciples of the Buddha, monks dedicate their time to study Buddhist philosophy and practice themselves for destruction of mental defilements, their duties and responsibilities are centered on the religious learning and spiritual development. To devote their time and energy fully to learn Buddhist doctrine and develop their insight, they have to cut off as many personal cares and worries as possible. Thus they shave their heads, wear the yellow robes and possess only a few requisites. Buddhist monks have to observe strict discipline to make life conditions suitable for developing both their mind and wisdom.

Indeed, Buddhist metaphysical and spiritual teachings are what make Buddhism unique from other religions. For Buddhist monks, the path to develop their insight for the achievement of the ultimate truth of super-mundane state is defined evidently in the Buddhist doctrine and discipline. For the laity, not only a virtuous cultivation of mundane state is taught, but also the Teachings of the Buddha which state that the human-being consists of both body and mind, and a necessary degree of material and social well-being is a prerequisite for any spiritual progress, so that, for their spiritual development, the monks are represented to be their spiritual leader.

In the today world of high technology and rapid communication, Buddhists of modern society have much to do with material quest and religious is far away from their daily livelihood. But whenever they want to retreat from their rushing living, temple can be the tranquil place for them. Simultaneously, Buddhist temple can serve them the spiritual treatment as monks are responsible for spiritual adviser. In the temple, various methods for spiritual treatment and development have been provided for befitting the varied personalities of the Buddhists in modern society. These spiritual treatment and development may consist of many methods such as a mental consulting, the tranquility meditation practice for concentration development and the insight meditation practice through examination the truth nature of mind for development of wisdom and insight.

Every temple can be the tranquil place for spiritual treatment and development even though they are located in the bustling town. In Rattanakosin Island, one of the congested areas, there are living heritage temples which have functioned as the religious center of Buddhist philosophy learning and also provided meditation courses for the interested person. Buddhist monasteries in Thailand can be divided into 2 groups consisting of *the Kamavasi* and *the Aranyavasi*. While the Kamavasi refers to the town-temple, the Aranyavasi means the forest-temple. Monks of the forest-temples dedicate their time to practices meditations while monks in the town-temples devote their time to study Buddhist scriptures. However, the style of their monastic life does not differ much from each other. All of them are learning the Doctrine and living under the same 227 fundamental rules of the Vinaya. Similarly, all of them have to be in regular contact with and are responsible for the well-being of secular society. In Rattanakosin Island, there are two Buddhist universities consisting of Mahamakuta University in Wat Bowornniwet and Mahachulalongkorn University in Wat Mahathat. These two town-temples not only provide higher education on religious philosophy but also provide meditation training courses for the interested person. Hence, even located in the congested areas, temples in Rattanakosin Island have preserved and maintained spiritual value with their dedication.

Spiritual value of Buddhism not only has been inherited by Buddhist monks but also has been existed in the tangible aspects of the temple. The term 'temple', or 'monastery' or 'Wat' in Thai dialect, refers to a sacred place regarded as the religious center where the Dharma has been inherited, practiced and disseminated through the responsibility of the monks. Simultaneously, Buddhist temples also possess symbolic structures and sculptures worshiped by the Buddhists and own the sacred buildings used for taking place religious rites under the conduct of the monks together with the participation of the laity. Certainly, tangible aspects of material structures and art objects created inside the temple are imbued with symbolic meanings or intangible attribute of spiritual and social value.

Emphatically, Buddhism means the Teachings of the Buddha or the religion founded by the Buddha. Theravada Buddhism, an orthodox Buddhist sect which kept the original Teachings of the Buddha is the prominent Buddhist sect in Thailand. Theravada Buddhism is a religion based on intelligence, science, and knowledge, whose purpose is the destruction of suffering and the source of suffering. The Buddha taught nothing other than suffering and the elimination of suffering. He proclaimed the equality and ability of all man and rejected the celestial beings. The Dharma or the Teachings of the Buddha is supreme and absolute truth which is regarded as the spiritual value of Buddhism. The Buddha did not consider himself as the owner of the Dharma and also affirmed that the Dharma is something that exists before all things and phenomena. He discovered Dharma as an ordinary human being who wanted to seek for something that was vital to the well-being of humankind and he discovered only that part which would help to alleviate human suffering. It is the Dharma that he respected and he wanted the Buddhists to respect the Dharma as well. Even while the Buddha lay dying, he authorized to correct his relics and place in stupa which would then become the reminder for people to follow his Doctrine, the Dharma.

Theravada Buddhism accepts that sacred structure or reliquary monument (called in many names as stupa, pagoda, chedi or prang) and decorated hall with magnificent Buddha image enshrined inside can be defined as the reminder or representative of the Buddha and the Dharma. These tangible aspects have played significance role in generating sense of sacredness in the attitude of the Buddhists. However, all paying homage to the reliquary monument and Buddha image as same as to the mythical thing of superstitious belief is not the real belief of Theravada. Sense of sacredness of Theravada Buddhism differs greatly from animism and theism. The tangible aspects of Theravada should be meant to remind the Dharma or the Teachings of the Buddha more than other meanings. However, the objective to pay homage to sacred monument and Buddha image in the same way as to respect the Buddha as the Great Teacher has been accepted in Thai tradition. Therefore, in Thai Buddhism, symbolic meanings of the reliquary monument and Buddha image are the representatives of both 'the Historical Enlightened Teacher' and 'the Teachings of Natural Truth'. For the right understanding, sacredness of Theravada Buddhism should be the representative of the insight wisdom more than the mysteriousness and then spiritual value of the real Theravada Buddhism will be preserved and maintained with the right methods. Moreover, these abstract meanings of the real Theravada Buddhism should be interpreted to the laity for gaining their right perception.

Furthermore, not only decorated architecture and sculpture created for the aim to preserve Buddhism are imbued with intangible value but also the temple's surroundings are permeated with quietness and peacefulness. Unavoidably, Buddhist temples require structures erected for using in religious activities and sculpture created for paying respect or reminding the spiritual value of Buddhism. Nevertheless, designation of space and environment in the temple compound is also a necessity. Appropriate designation of temple's space and surroundings is one of the important compositions which encourage the mind to touch the tranquility and peace efficiently. Well ordered and peaceful surrounding also helps the mind to absorb the teaching of the monks, and to assimilate religious beliefs in various intellectual levels. All together is an indispensable intangible attribute within Buddhist temple.

The living heritage temples in the area of the test study, Rattanakosin Island, are all the royal temples. Within the total only 6 royal temples of the first grade throughout the kingdom, there are 3 royal temples of the first grade located in Rattanakosin Island consisting of Wat Phra Chetuphon, Wat Mahathat and Wat Suthat. All of which were constructed or reconstructed in the First Reign while the others were built by the successive kings and by the royalty between the First Reign and the Fifth Reign. According to the Thai tradition, every monarch has inherited the traditional obligations to build, rebuild or enlarge royal monastery during his reign. The royal temples can be divided into 2 types; the first is those built under the kings' patronage and the second is those built by others, particularly by the royalty, and offer to the kings with a view to being better cared for and well supported in the future. The kings and the royalty have thus been actively involved in the propagation of Buddhism and their faithfulness in religious has sustained spiritual value of Buddhism.

The royal temples, though usually more commodious and elaborate than the ordinary temples, are equipped with the same basic elements. While the beauty to their architecture is evident, their origin and existence are also reasonable. It can be appreciated by understanding the tradition that created them. In the past, the king built an elegant temple not only to make merit but also to strengthen his kingdom. During the construction, the craftsmen dedicated all their ability for creating the best of their works offering to Buddhism. After the construction finished, as a temple under royal patronage, people would like to live nearby because they wished to be protected by spiritual power. When community nearby was founded, monks would receive food and necessity and then returned the Dharma to the society. Men were ordained at least once in his life and lived in monkhood for studying and practicing the Dharma. Undoubtedly, spiritual value of the royal temples not only emerges from Buddhism but also from the faithfulness in Buddhism of the kings, the royalty and unforgettably every architect, artist, sculptor, painter and craftsman who created the magnificent tangible aspects of royal temples including the nearby community and the lay society. All of these people from the kings to common people together with the monks who reside in the temple have made the temple alive and at the same time they have supported preservation of spiritual value of Buddhism. Although, the social position of royal temple currently changes very much from that in the past, spiritual value of Buddhism has been inherited and disseminated. Indeed, the right preservation of spiritual value depends on the right understanding on what is the true spiritual value of Buddhism.

## Social value

The real Theravada Buddhism can refer to the Dharma which can truly serve human beings to eradicate suffering. For the monks who have strictly followed the Teachings of the Buddha, the Dharma in the super-mundane state is the sublime way for their ascetic life which can lead them to extinguish suffering. For common people, the Dharma in the mundane state can actually be the right means for their livelihood and can bring about the breakdown of secular suffering.

The Buddha's Teaching is the true benefit of Buddhism and social value has emerged from it. The Enlightenment of the Buddha would not benefit society if he did not decide to promulgate the Dharma discovered by him. After his first teaching when he sent out his first group of disciples to teach the Dharma, he stated that *"Go, monks, on your journey, for the profit of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, the profit, the happiness of gods and men"*. Afterward, social value of Buddhism has emerged from the continuous tasks of the monks. Certainly, the Buddhist standpoint here is that a responsibility to oneself for betterment and perfection is required of all individuals, and at the same time they must maintain an appropriate degree of social responsibility. (Payutto 2008b:15-19)

Theravada Buddhism has guided morals and spiritual development to Thai society for more than 700 years. Wherever Buddhism was accepted, the temples then were constructed for the monks as their permanent residence. Many structures for the use of monks were created in the temple compound for their living, practicing and preaching the Dharma to the laity. Inside the temple, religious practices and religious rites are performed continuously by the monks and the laity. Since their inception the temples have functioned as the center of religious activities and social culture.

Although Theravada Buddhism is a religion of cultivated dispassion, it has inspired a passion for creation reflected in an abundance of temples in Thailand. In the countryside, even though small community temple is built of ordinary material and local technique, its architectural and decorative style is imbued with faithfulness and dedication. In the capital, magnificent royal temple with splendid architecture is built from the patronage of the monarch and the support of the laity. Both the small community temple and the large royal temple have developed to be flourishing religious centers where their heritage significance has enriched Thai culture. Moreover, with the dedication of the creators, these temples have formed a valuable cultural inheritance for all Thais.

In the temple, Theravada Buddhism has been the inspiration for creating not only architecture and art object but also space and surroundings of the temple ground. Despite located in one of the congested areas of the capital at present, living heritage temples in Rattanakosin Island have still maintained the quiet and tranquility space inside their white walls regarding tradition design of enclosed space by using high walls and cloisters. When people enter the temple compound, they can naturally make the direct contribution to develop themselves both wisdom and mind. Tranquility can arouse a peaceful state of mind that can lead to the development of concentration and finally to the insight.

The Buddhavas section in the temple compound is devoted to be a commemorative area for the Buddha and his Teachings. Inside Buddhavas section of many temples and at the central point of the ground plan is located the monument of worship (called in many names as stupa, pagoda, chedi or prang) which is generally regarded as the representative of the Buddha. Unfortunately, some Buddhists have misunderstanding of the true objective of the Buddha's monument worship. Many Buddhists currently pay homage to Buddha's relic monument by only asking for good luck or fortune. On the contrary, the Buddha himself authorized to keep his relics and place in monument which would then become the reminder for people to follow his Doctrine, the Dharma. It is the Dharma that he respected and he wanted the Buddhists to respect the Dharma as well. Therefore, the right understanding of the Buddha's monuments worship should be interpreted to the laity for leading them to the true benefit of worship.

Inside the Buddhavas area, there are also the decorated buildings such as the ordination hall, the image hall and the preaching hall where religious rites take place. The architectural concept of these halls, particularly of the royal temple, suggests visions of the celestial place, with multiple layers of form and ornament that turn the temple hall into a kind of palace for the Buddha image housed within. Traditionally, Buddha image has been regarded as the representative of the Buddha. Although it was created in northwestern India after the passing away of the Buddha and its first creation was influenced by the western civilization, it has been accepted internationally and regarded as the indispensable component of sacred temple buildings. Especially in the ordination hall, the Buddha image is always placed on a high pedestal at the central point of the floor plan and functioned as the principal of the monastic order during performing religious rites.

Buddha images created in various postures are considered as a reminder of the significant events during the Buddha's life time. In Thai temple, the principal image of the ordination hall usually relates to the major occurrence when Buddha attained Enlightenment. The image in the attitude of Subduing Mara commemorates the events that occurred in the night before the Buddha attained Enlightenment. The Subduing over Mara means the victory over the temptations. While the defeat of Mara is sacred to the faithful believers, the way the of Buddha's victory over temptations is meaningful to the intellectuals. It is regarded as a symbolic image to be venerated for reminding that desire is the evil temper and can be eradicate by virtue and insight wisdom. The image in the attitude of meditation is mindful of the event in the early morning when the Buddha attained Enlightenment. It is created to commemorate the moment when the Buddha attained complete Enlightenment. Although the Buddha image is originally created as the reminiscence of the Buddha, many modern Buddhists are paying homage to the Buddha image as the sacred image for their auspiciousness. Unfortunately, the true meaning has been gradually changed from its original objective. According to Thai tradition, Buddha image can represent both 'the Historical Enlightened Teacher' and 'the Teachings of Natural Truth'. These true meanings should be interpreted to the laity for gaining their right attitude. Moreover, paying respect to the Buddha image should encourage the Buddhists to develop their mind and wisdom by following the Teachings of the Buddha which is the true benefit of image's worship.

Inside the temple halls, the interior walls are usually decorated with murals which are painted not only as the interior decoration but also as the visual text for spiritual and social instruction. These mural paintings depict the scenes of the life of the Buddha, particularly the major events such as the Birth, the Great Renunciation, the Enlightenment, the First Sermon and the Passing into Nirvana. The subject matter in the Buddha's life story is used to encourage people to follow his example. His living proves that humans can attain eradication of the causes of suffering by self-effort and by intelligent means of understanding the true nature of things. These murals not only serve as the reminder of the Buddha and his Teachings but also provide inspiration to his followers to achieve the aim of eliminating suffering by renunciation of secular attachments through following his Teachings, the Dharma.

The side walls of the temple hall are usually painted with the scenes of *Jataka*, or the Previous Lives of the Buddha. The contents of the Buddha's previous lives before he was born for the last time to become the Buddha are the teaching stories of the great virtues leading to the Enlightenment of his present life. The Buddha stated that his rebirths originate with his ignorance and after his ignorance is completely destroyed from his Enlightenment in the present life he will not rebirth again.

The wall facing the principal Buddha image is usually painted with the symbolic scenes of the Buddha calling the Earth Goddess to witness his great virtues in the previous incarnations. This scene relates to the Buddha image in the attitude of Subduing over Mara which means the victory over the temptations.

The mural behind the principal Buddha image is always displayed with the scenes of *Triphum* or the Three Worlds of the Buddhist cosmological concept consisting of the realm of Desire, the realm of Form and the realm of Absence of Form. The content of Triphum can be generally explained that, for all living beings, time comprises cycles of birth and rebirth in which one hopes to attain an ever higher form of existence through the accumulation of merit by doing good deeds. Indeed, the aim of this scene is to indicate that the Buddha turned his back towards or came to an end of the rebirth in these Three Worlds. Therefore, it is always painted on the wall behind the principal Buddha image. For the intellectuals, this concept points out that beyond the Three Worlds is Nirvana, the supreme state of liberation from all suffering which the Buddha achieved by his enlightenment. However, for common people, the cosmological concept of Triphum can teach them social morality that those with good deeds would go to heaven, while malefactors would end up in hell.

Indeed, mural inside the temple hall is tangible element imbued with intangible attribute of Buddhism's social value. Every story and every scene chosen for painting is regarded as one kind of visual text for social and spiritual instruction. The murals' stories can encourage social morality and provide inspiration for some people to achieve individual perfection. In the past society, the walls of the temple hall were painted for most of the Buddhists who were illiterate. Regrettably, although modern society has many well-educated Buddhists than that in the past, some of modern Buddhists have less religious knowledge about the real meanings of the murals' contents, thus the real social and spiritual meanings of these murals should be interpreted for gaining knowledge to them.

Throughout the long history of more than 700 years, Theravada Buddhism has been the predominant religion of Thai society and has developed to be the Buddhism in Thai context. Simultaneously, Buddhist temples have accumulated belief and faith, social value of Thai Buddhism has emerged from the religious practices and rites taken place in the temple compound. Religious rites can be regarded as Thai tradition which has influenced on Thai belief.

In the *Kalama-Sutta*, one of the best known Buddha's discourses, the Buddha says, among other things, "*Do not go merely by tradition.*" This saying shows that tradition does not hold a very important place in Buddha's thought. It teaches that tradition is not something to be clung or attached to and also implies that changes can be commendable or at least acceptable. (Payutto 2008b:50) Indeed, the Buddha taught us to use ways of examining and testing before believing.

Inside the Buddhist temple nowadays, monastic practices under the rules of the Vinaya have preserved well the spiritual and social value of Buddhism while some activities of the laity in religious rites seem to be changed from the original. Some current activities in religious rites are preformed for gaining superstitious faith more than reasonable faith of Theravada Buddhism. If the Buddhists use the Buddha's Teachings in the *Kalama-Sutta* for examining before believing, the improper activities in some religious rites will be decreased. Whenever they participate in an appropriate rite, they will receive the true benefit and social value of Buddhism will be sustained.

Although the authentic rites of Theravada Buddhism emphasizes the practices of body and mind for eliminating suffering, merit activities in religious rites have become so numerous that they now completely obscure the real Theravada Buddhism and its original purpose. Due to the influence of materialism of the modern world, some current religious rites emphasize the donation activities believed to bring good luck and fortune more than encouraging the practice of developing mind and wisdom. Therefore, although the modern Buddhists always make merit by contributing, offering material goods to monks or performing other meritorious actions, they still suffer if they do not have the right understanding of the nature of mind and the nature of things. Fortunately, the meditation practice to reach the right understanding of the natural truth is still provided in religious rites if the Buddhists pay attention to practice mental and insight development more than carry out the meritorious activities only. The authentic practice of Theravada Buddhism is based on purification of conduct by way of body and mind which in its turn leads to insight and right understanding. Therefore, the right understanding of the real practice in religious rites is crucial for making the right perception to the modern Buddhists for leading them to the true benefit of social value.

To conserve and maintain social value inside the temples is the responsibility of both the monks and the laity. For the monks, it is their direct duty to encourage social morality. For the laity, participation in an appropriate religious rite not only brings happiness and confidence to their mind but also leads to the insight of wisdom. However, all of them should examine before believing for becoming an intelligent believer, not a faithful believer and should maintain the proper and meaningful activities in religious rites for the sustainability of the real social value.

## Chapter conclusion

The Buddhist temple in Thai society is considered as one kind of cultural heritage imbued with unique cultural significance. Simultaneously it is regarded as a living heritage which has been continuously used by the monks and the laity. Indeed, this kind of heritage must be protected as living heritage as well as protecting its historic fabric. Therefore, its cultural heritage significance should be assessed to ensure that all values can be preserved with the appropriate conservation.

Due to the location of the test study, Rattanakosin Island, all heritage temples located in this historic area are royal temples. Certainly, they have high historic value. Although all of them are registered as the national monuments, preservation of material structures will become completely meaningless if the structures endure while people lack understanding of the true meanings of the creation. The specific task of historical investigation and interpretation needs the experts to accomplish it.

Evidence of the aesthetic value of these royal temples can be seen in their unique art style and craftsmanship representing the early Rattanakosin art. Their design and decoration with the high expression of religious ideal and belief reflects the artistic tradition which has been a focus of devotion over the centuries. Aesthetic value of these royal temples has been well preserved, particularly of the royal temples built by the monarchs. Inside these temples, many ancient structures in good condition show well the preservation works of the Fine Art Department and the related agencies. Nevertheless, the conservation of living heritage temple should consider not only physical condition but the true meaning of Theravada Buddhism attached to tangible aspect should also be realized to ensure that all values are completely protected.

The Buddhist Dharma is scientific in nature and then it is timeless. Regardless of more than 2500 years after the passing away of the Buddha, the Dharma or spiritual value not only has been inherited by the monks but also existed in the tangible aspects of living temples. Certainly, the sacredness of living temples must indicate to the insight wisdom more than the mysteriousness. Inside the compound of the heritage temples in Rattanakosin Island, even now located in the congested areas, there are classes for teaching Buddhist philosophy and practicing meditation. Consequently, the Dharma or spiritual value is now maintained by the monks and the interested lay people with their learning and practice to cultivate mental tranquility and insight.

Inside the Buddhist temples, social value has emerged from the dissemination of the Dharma to the lay society. By the dedication of the monks, the patronage of the monarchs and the participation of the laity, social value has been maintained in the living temple. Although Theravada Buddhism is the religion of reason not faith, the misunderstanding of monument and image worship can be found including some activities in religious rites that are preformed for gaining superstitious faith more than reasoned faith of Theravada Buddhism. Therefore, to recognize what is the real belief of Theravada Buddhism is the essential factor for conserving intangible values of both spiritual and social. Furthermore, it is also the crucial factor in creating the right perception to the modern Buddhists for leading them to the true benefit of spiritual value and social value of Theravada Buddhism.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

#### **The need for providing the guideline for conservation of living heritage temples**

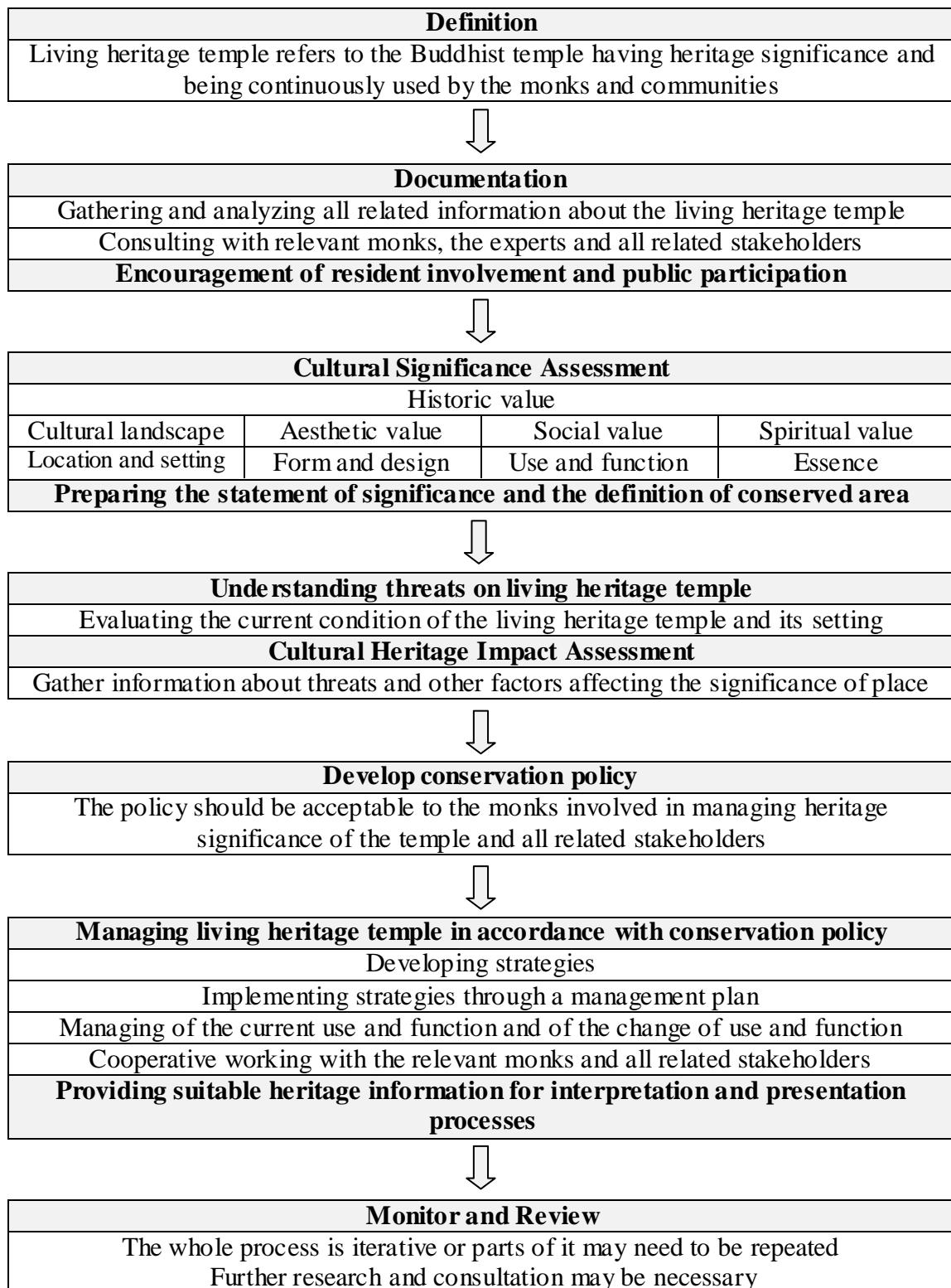
Buddhist temples can be regarded as the predominant cultural heritage of Thai society. They not only have functioned as the center of the preservation and dissemination of the Buddha's Teachings, but also represent as the social place having sacred structures, decorated buildings and artistic images for performing religious activities. Simultaneously, they have served the living quarter for the monks who have been in charge of putting the Buddhist Dharma into practice and interpreting the suitable Dharma to the laity.

Living heritage temple in Thai context refers to Theravada Buddhist temple having heritage significance in which the Buddhist monks reside and the religious rites have been taken place continuously. Nowadays, threats occur to living heritage temples in many aspects, these include: the misunderstanding of intangible value of Theravada Buddhism and of Buddhist temple; the deterioration of the authentic religious activities of Theravada Buddhism, including the disappearance of tangible heritage aspects due to natural threats from climate change, negative impacts from modernization and inadequate heritage management. Therefore, securing the sustainable future for living heritage temples is essential at the present time.

However, conservation concept of living heritage temple should be different from other cultural heritage places. Its conservation concept requires recognizing that intangible value inherent in tangible aspect is the crucial character of this kind of heritage. Although, many Buddhist temples having heritage significance are registered as the national heritage and have been protected by the legislation enacted by the government sector, this legislation should be improved due to the limitation on conservation concept which pays more attention to protect tangible value and lacks a clear concept for safeguarding intangible value of cultural heritage places. Moreover, for living heritage temples which have been continuously used by monks and the laity, it is important that the conservation should not attempt to freeze them at a moment in time, but rather guide the inevitable changes in ways which are sympathetic to the survival of past and present expressions. Conceptual conservation of living heritage temples should therefore accept the continuing nature of living heritage.

These aforementioned factors illustrate the need for providing specific guideline for conservation of living heritage temples. Therefore, the ultimate goal of this dissertation is to provide the model guideline for conservation of living heritage temples in Thai context. Moreover, this dissertation also expects this analytical information can be applied for other Buddhist temples having heritage significance.

### The model guideline for conservation of living heritage temples in Thai context



This model is not a set of restrictive concepts; it can be adapted to suit the particular circumstances

Flow chart 2 Adapted from the Burra Charter process 1999:10

### **The model guideline for conservation of living heritage temples in Thai context**

The first legislation on heritage conservation in Thailand, the Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Object of Art and National Museum, was announced in 1934. The last issue is the Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Object of Art and National Museum 1961, amended in 1992. Afterward, the Ministerial Regulation (1996) and the Fine Arts Department Regulations on Conservation (1985) were enacted. These laws have been used as the regulatory controls for the protection of national cultural heritage in Thailand at present. By the power of these laws, Buddhist temples having heritage significance have been protected. However, some conservation concepts of these laws should be improved to address the needs of protection of all heritage values of living heritage temple. These laws have been criticized for their limit only to physical aspects conservation and the lack of a clear concept for safeguarding intangible value, including the lack of a clear concept for the participation of the related stakeholders. Thus, this guideline for conservation of living heritage temple provides the additional concepts for the existing legislation which benefit for protecting all heritage values of the living heritage temple. This model guideline for conservation of living heritage temples suggests 2 principal concepts as the following:

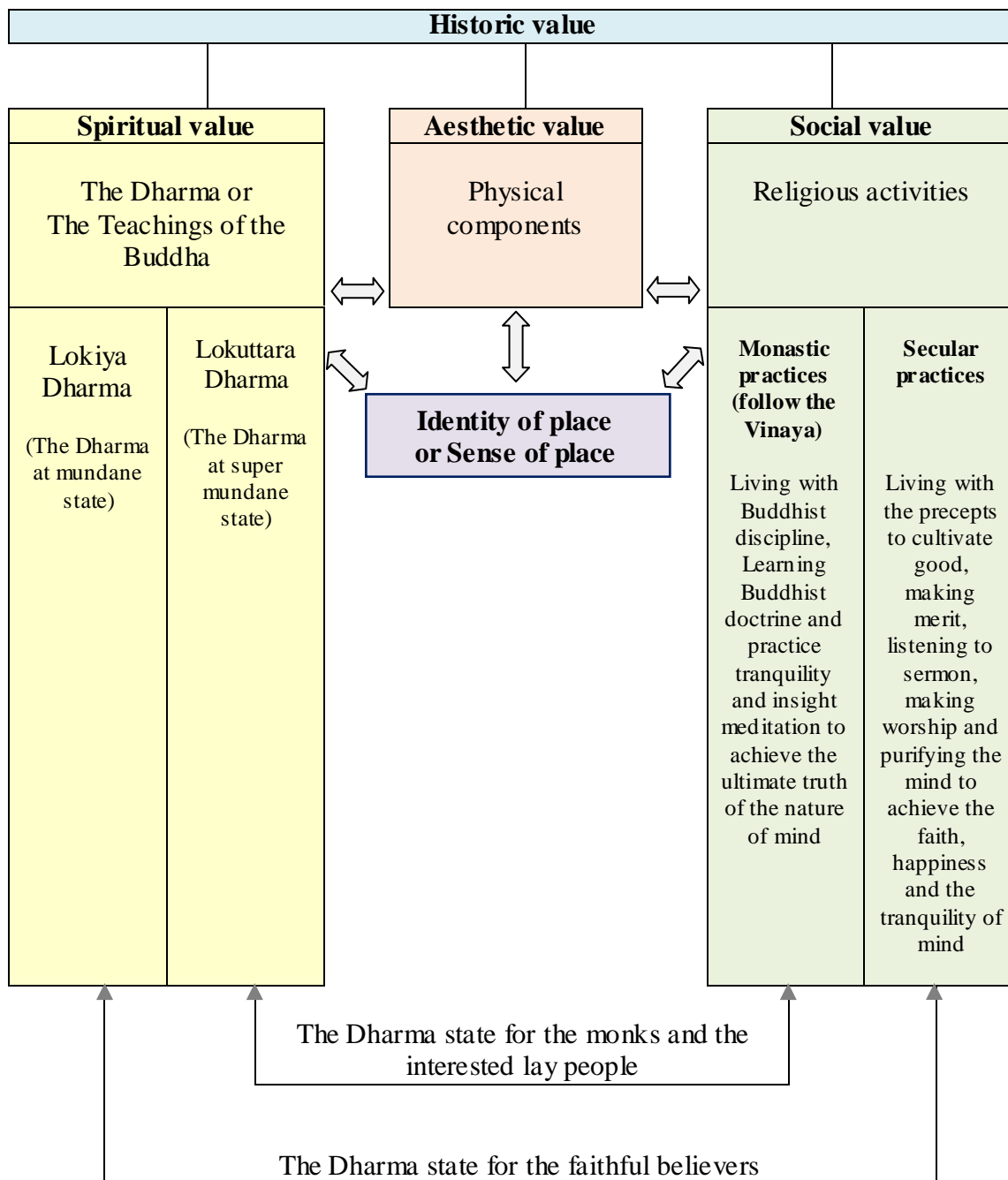
- Understanding the cultural significance of the living heritage temples
- The addenda to the conservation policy of living heritage temples

### **Understanding the cultural significance of the living heritage temples**

By following the conservation concept considered from international, regional and national charters, the first step for understanding heritage place is to clearly define its distinctive character together with assess its cultural significance. Referring to the Burra Charter, cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value of the past, present and future generations, which is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. The assessment of cultural significance can lead to the understanding of the distinctive character of the place or '*the Identity of Place*' or '*Sense of Place*' and is an essential prerequisite to making decisions about the conservation policy of the heritage place. With the right understanding of the identity of living heritage temples, the conservation policy can protect all heritage values of living heritage temples with the appropriate conservation process.

Cultural significance of living heritage temples consists of historic, aesthetic, spiritual and social value. The criteria to identify the distinctive characters of living heritage temples in this dissertation are the age of the temples must be at least 50 years old qualifying as historic places and being continuously used by the monks and communities. The living heritage temples in the area of the test study, Rattanakosin Island, are all the royal temples. Inside their precincts, there are magnificent buildings and artistic works built by the kings and royalty. Therefore, their historic value and aesthetic value seem to be higher than those built by devoted lay people. However, the ordinary temples have their own historic and aesthetic value from the faith and dedication of the common people and their communities. Thus, this analytical information can be applied for other living Buddhist temples having heritage significance both the royal temples and the common temples.

### Identity of place or Sense of place of living heritage temples in Thai context



Flow chart 3

Adapted from Taylor (2004) *Cultural Heritage Management: A Possible Role for Charters and Principles in Asia*

### **Historic value**

Historic value of Buddhist temples encompasses the history of aesthetics seen in their physical components and the relationship with society found in the continuous traditions of religious activities, including the inspiration from Theravada Buddhism in the creation of tangible aspects and in the formation of religious traditions.

### **Aesthetic value**

The creation of physical components in Buddhist temples of Thai society is the direct outcome of the devotion to Theravada Buddhism. Aesthetics of architectural designs and decorations as well as of images of the Buddha and his disciples found in Buddhist temples reflects the religious beliefs devoted to the ideal of Theravada Buddhism. This is the meaning inherent in physical aspects of Thai Buddhist temples. Furthermore, the tranquil surroundings are inextricably linked with physical aspects of Buddhist temples.

However, the preservation of physical components will become completely meaningless if the physical aspects endure while the Buddhists lack understanding of the true meanings of Theravada Buddhism. Thus, intangible attributes of spiritual value and social value attached to tangible aspects must be realized simultaneously.

### **Spiritual value**

Buddhism means the Teachings of the Buddha, thus the principal significance of Buddhism is the Buddhist doctrine which is also called the Dharma. Since the Buddha lifetime, Buddhist society has consisted of monks on the one hand and laity on the other. Due to their different goals of life, different responsibilities and different kinds of satisfactions, hence the Buddha classified the doctrine or the Dharma into 2 states as:

- The Dharma for the monks                      *Lokuttara-Dharma*: super-mundane state
- The Dharma for the laity                        *Lokiya-Dharma*: mundane state

The difference between 2 states of Dharma lies in the point of emphasis. For super-mundane state, its point of emphasis is placed on individual perfection, whereas the point of emphasis of mundane state is concerned with good relationship of secular society. Indeed, Buddhism is distinctive from other religions and beliefs due to its metaphysical and spiritual teachings which is the Dharma of super-mundane state. The Dharma of mundane state or moral teachings can be seen in other religions while the Dharma of super-mundane state can be found in Buddhism only. However, both states are the complementary parts of the Buddhist doctrine or the Dharma.

Theravada Buddhism, an orthodox sect which has kept the original doctrine of the Buddha, is the origin of the establishment of Buddhist temples in Thai society. Thus, the Dharma inherited in Theravada Buddhism, both Lokuttara-Dharma and Lokiya- Dharma, can be regarded as the spiritual value of Thai Buddhist temples. The preservation of the real and authentic Dharma of Theravada Buddhism is the preservation of spiritual value of the Buddhist temples.

## Social value

Social value has emerged from the inheritance, maintenance and dissemination of the Dharma or spiritual value by the elder monks to the young monks and to the laity. It is the direct responsibility of the monks to disseminate the selected Dharma which is suited for each circumstance and for answering of each individual problem.

The state of *Lokuttara Dharma* or super-mundane state is reserved for the person who has made much progress toward individual perfection and has the ultimate goal to Nirvana. Then, the teachings of this state aim to deal with the monks who live as the ascetics. However, for some lay people, depending on each individual's mental capability, the moral precepts of the Dharma of mundane state are not enough for the aim to gain their insight. The Dharma of super-mundane state can be their answer. The religious activities for the monks and the interested lay people to achieve the ultimate truth of the nature of mind for the destruction of mental defilements and for spiritual liberation consist of living with Buddhist discipline, learning of Buddhist doctrine and practice of both the tranquility meditation and the insight meditation.

The state of *Lokiya Dharma* or mundane state guides the faithful Buddhists to implant morality in their mind and action. The religious activities for this people consist of living with the precepts to cultivate good, making merit, listening to the sermon, making worship and purifying the mind to achieve faith, happiness and tranquility of mind. However, for the laity, not only virtuous cultivation of mundane state is taught, but also the Buddha's teaching which suggests that the human-being consists of body and mind, and a necessary degree of material and social well-being is a prerequisite for any spiritual progress, so that, for spiritual development to achieve the ultimate truth of super-mundane state, monks can be their spiritual leader.

The monks, who are devoted to individual perfection, are the disseminators of individual perfection from the Teachings of the Buddha to the monastic society and to the lay society. The monks, the disciples of the Buddha, who have completed the practice and some who are in the process of practicing, have the direct responsibility to preserve and disseminate the Dharma. Thus, monks have the direct responsibility to preserve spiritual and social values of Buddhism and of Buddhist temples.

Social value of Buddhist temples can be found in all religious activities. For the monastic society, monastic practices have strictly followed the Buddhist doctrine and discipline defined by the Buddha which are the practices by ways of body, speech, and mind that will destroy the mental defilements. For the lay society, the activities of making merit and worship are opened to the changing circumstances. Unfortunately, some inappropriate activities which were never stated in the Teachings of the Buddha seem to be accepted and integrated in the making merit and worship taken place in the Buddhist temples. Thus, the true meaning and the real objective of religious activities should be interpreted for increasing the right understanding of the laity before their misconception leads them to the strong attachment of inappropriate activities more than the right purpose of Theravada Buddhism. Indeed, it is the crucial factor in creating the right perception for the laity to lead them to the true benefit of spiritual and social value of Theravada Buddhism which is the religion of reason not faith.

### **The addenda to the conservation policy of living heritage temples**

Referring to the Burra Charter, 'Conservation Policy' is the set of guidelines to be followed for enhancing cultural significance of the heritage place, which relies on the right understanding of cultural significance of the place. Buddhist temples in Thai society are the living heritage; hence their approach to sustainable conservation needs specific concepts. Thus, for fulfilling the missing concepts of the existing legislation, this dissertation proposes the additional concepts for creating the conservation policy of living heritage temples in Thai context.

#### ***The first addendum:***

#### **The conservation of cultural landscape of living heritage temples**

The processes to achieve the right understanding of living heritage temples must not only address the assessment of cultural significance in their precincts, but also open ways of investigation of their historical and geographical context. In addition, referring to the Burra Charter, the physical location of a place can be considered as the part of its cultural significance. Although, the ancient monument Act lacks the concept to define a conserved area, or a core zone, and buffer zone for protecting the setting of cultural heritage place, defensive regulations can be enacted for this purpose. In this case, Rattanakosin Island may be the model. Cultural landscape of Rattanakosin Island has been protected by the specific legislation enacted for controlling inappropriate activities and restricting construction, modification, uses or changes of uses of some types of buildings. Moreover, this historic area was announced to be the area for conservation and promotion of Thai Culture in the Bangkok Comprehensive Plan 2006. All of these laws indicate the attempt of the government and the local authority to protect cultural heritage places and their settings from the inappropriate development. Therefore, in the other urban towns having heritage temples and other heritage places, it is essential to define the conserved area or the core zone and its buffer zone for protecting heritage places from the improper constructions and inappropriate activities which can cause negative impact to the heritage places.

Moreover, understanding the threats to living heritage temples is essential for creating an effective conservation policy. Particularly for heritage temples located in urban areas, conflicts are unavoidable in finding a balancing point between heritage conservation and development. Thus, this issue needs to be addressed as part of the conservation management planning process. Within this process, heritage temples and their cultural landscape need specific measure which can reconcile urban development with conservation of heritage significance. In this case the Hoi An Protocols suggests a systematic methodology for assessing potential impacts on heritage resources of proposed development or other actions. This is known as a '***Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment***'. It provides a statement of cultural heritage impact which analyzes and justifies the impact of any proposal to alter a heritage place. A cultural heritage impact assessment should be required for all new development impacting on the significance of heritage structures, sites and areas and on their settings. Additionally, the risk preparedness should be realized and integrated into the process of conservation.

***The second addendum:***  
**Safeguarding Authenticity of living heritage temples**

Referring to the Hoi An Protocols, authenticity specifically in an Asia context can be classified into 4 categories consisting of location and setting, form and design, use and function, and immaterial or essential quality. The retention of authenticity is the aim of good conservation practice. Authenticity in an Asia context is usually understood in term of a matrix of dimensions of authenticity which is illustrated in the table below:

LOCATION AND SETTING	FORM AND DESIGN	USE AND FUNCTION	ESSENCE
Place	Spatial layout	Use(s)	Artistic expression
Setting	Design	User(s)	Values
“Sense of Place”	Materials	Associations	Spirit
Environmental niches	Crafts	Changes in use over time	Emotional impact
Landforms and vistas	Building techniques	Spatial distribution	Religious context
Environs	Engineering	Impacts of use	Historical associations
Living elements	Stratigraphy	Use as a response to environment	Sounds, smells and tastes
Degree of dependence on locale	Linkages with other properties or sites	Use as a response to historical context	Creative process

Table 2  
 Dimensions of Authenticity in an Asia context  
 Table resource: Hoi An Protocols 2009:11

For the aim to conserve living heritage temples in Thai context, this dissertation proposes that the concept of safeguarding authenticity of living heritage temples should relate to their heritage values. Therefore, safeguarding authenticity of living heritage temples in Thai context should relate with these following conservation processes:

- Safeguarding authenticity of location and setting should be in the process for the conservation of cultural landscape
- Safeguarding authenticity of form and design should be in the process for the conservation of aesthetic value
- Safeguarding authenticity of use and function should be in the process for the conservation of social value
- Safeguarding authenticity of essence should be in the process for the conservation of spiritual value

As stated previously, cultural landscape and aesthetic value of living heritage temples can be protected by the existing regulatory control. But for social value and spiritual value, these intangible values need specific conservation guidelines. For the issue of safeguarding authenticity of use and function of religious activities taking place with or within the sacred architecture of the temples, it is necessary to consider the management and conservation of both the fabric of temples' architecture and the religious activities. Due to the dynamic character of social value of living heritage temples, safeguarding authenticity of use and function must combine the management of the current use and function and of the change of use and function. Reference to the Burra Charter, the term 'use' means the functions of a place, as well as the activities and practices that may occur at the place. The Burra Charter also suggests that new use of a place should involve minimal change, to significance fabric and use; should respect associations and meanings; and where appropriate should provide for continuation of practices which contribute to the cultural significance of the place.

Safeguarding authenticity of use and function needs the planning process to consider management of use and change. Thus, the conservation policy should identify a use or combination of uses, or constraints on use, that are compatible with the retention of the cultural significance of the place and that are feasible. Additionally, it is essential to realize that continuous maintenance is of paramount importance for safeguarding authenticity of use and function of living heritage temples. Although, adaption of some activities in making merit or worship to contemporary circumstances should be accepted as a normal part of the continuity of living temples, it is essential that the true meaning of Theravada Buddhism inherent in the activities must be revealed and interpreted for increasing the right understanding for the users who participate in the religious activities taken place in the Theravada Buddhist temples.

For the issue of safeguarding authenticity of the Buddhist temple's essence, it should be considered in the conservation process of spiritual value of Buddhist temple. As stated previously, the true meaning which is signified, indicated, evoked or expressed by the monks and the laity in the Buddhist temple is the Buddhist Dharma. Thus, authenticity of the Buddhist temple's essence can be safeguarded on condition that the real and authentic Buddhist Dharma is preserved by the monks and the laity. Furthermore, the Dharma, the essence or the spiritual value of Buddhist temples must be preserved and truthfully explicated during the conservation processes.

***The third addendum:***

**The encouragement of resident involvement and public participation**

In international charters related to the conservation of living heritage, they can be found the similar concept of the attention to encourage residents' participation and to create public awareness. Similarly in Asia, the Hoi An Protocols highlight the important role to be played with preservation by the people at places where heritage is embedded. Besides, it also states that the danger to longer-term safeguarding of the heritage in Asia is inadequate public understanding of the need to conserve the heritage. Thus, the residents' involvement and the participation of related stakeholders are essential for the approach to sustainable conservation of a living heritage place.

For Thai society, the protection of heritage significance of living heritage temples should not be the duty of a government sector only; the monks involved in managing heritage significance of the temple and the relevant laity should have an opportunity to participate in conservation decision. The conservation policy related to living heritage temples should be created from a bottom-up approach with residents' participation since the planning. The dissemination of information to the residents and all related stakeholders is an important part for decreasing any further conflicts of misunderstanding and for the accomplishment to sustainable conservation.

***The Forth Addendum:***

**The management of heritage interpretation**

Interpretation and presentation of each heritage temple should be an integral part of the conservation policy for enhancing appreciation of heritage values and transferring significant meaning of heritage temple to a wide range of stakeholders. The information of living heritage temple for preparing interpretation should be based on documentary evidence gathered through accepted and scientific tools as well as from living traditions and religious activities taken place in the temple. Furthermore, it is essential to provide suitable and attractive presentation for each group of people consisting of monks, pilgrims, tourists and public.

These additional concepts are purposed for creating the conservation policy of living heritage temples in Thai context. However, these are not the completeness, they have to be monitored, reviewed and developed. If a new problem emerges, a new additional concept should be adopted to be a new approach to sustainable conservation and to ensure that all heritage values of living heritage temples can transmission truthfully to the future generations.

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### **Biography**

Name	Ms. Bhakhakanok Ratanawaraporn
Contact	labhakha@saintjohn.ac.th
Education background	B.A. Faculty of Decorative Arts, Silpakorn University M.A. Graduate School, Chiang Mai University
Profession	Lecturer, Faculty of liberal Arts Saint John's University