

III. Relevant Organizations

1. Governmental Organizations

Ministry of Culture

The Culture of Thailand has had a rich and varied history dating back many centuries. Thai culture constitutes transmitted patterns and models of living that distinguish Thai society and assert the identity of Thai people. It pervades all aspects of human social interaction including language, custom and tradition, music and dance, art and crafts etc. Traditionally speaking, Thai culture and culture-related activities are in the responsibility of all government agencies, private sector and common citizens. It was during the Field Marshal Plaek Pibulsonggram's government, culture was viewed as a key dimension in the process of nation building and decided to assume a more active role in cultural development. In B.E. 2483 (1940 A.D.) and B.E. 2486 (1943 A.D.), two acts on the development of national culture were promulgated. These two acts were later superseded by the National Culture Act B.E. 2485(1942 A.D.) and the amendment act - the National Culture Act B.E. 2486(1943 A.D.).

As required by the National Culture Acts, the National Culture Institute was founded. Subsequently, the Ministry of Culture was established on March 12, 1952. Field Marshal Plaek Pibulsonggram, then Prime Minister of Thailand, acted as Minister of Culture. However, the social climate during the late 50's favoured economic development and failed to incorporate the cultural dimension into the development plan. The Ministry of Culture was dissolved and their personnel transferred to the Culture Division attached to the Ministry of Education.

On October 2, 2002, the Ministry of Culture was reestablished according to the new structure of the Thai government under the 2002 Restructuring of Government Agencies Act. With the jurisdiction over the following departments: 1.Office of the Minister 2. Office of the Permanent Secretary 3.Department of Fine Arts 4.the Office of National Culture Commission (changed to Department of

Cultural Promotion in 2010) 5. Office of the Contemporary Art and Culture, the main mandate of the Ministry of Culture is to protect, sustain, enhance, disseminate, and promote the religious, art and cultural affairs of the nation, and thus contribute to maintaining the ultimate symbols of Thai social values i.e. nation, religion and monarchy. It also encourages all the Thai citizens to be aware of and take pride in their own cultural roots through the development of learning resources both at local and national levels e.g. world cultural heritage sites of Thailand (Sukhothai, Ayutthaya and Ban Chiang), historical parks, national museums, national libraries and cultural centres. Other major duties include the building of cultural network both at the national and international levels along with the development of cultural vigilance. Aside from that, the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre, an autonomous organization, is under the supervision of the Minister of Culture. SAC is committed to fostering academic progress through the extension of anthropological knowledge, through the propagation of new research and findings, through the support of research studies, and in the accumulation of an extensive collection of anthropology materials focusing on Thailand and Southeast Asia

1) Task

Three major inter-relating and co-ordinating functions are concerned with the following: culture, religion and art.

Culture - with Thai identity that can be sustained and exist in harmony with the changing time does not rely only on the Ministry of Culture. It relies on every person in the entire nation, regardless of sex, age and social status. The Ministry serves as a mirror that provides reflections to the people in the country of internal and external changes affecting culture. It also suggests as to how to cope with such changes. To maintain, preserve, and hand over our existing culture and to incorporate it with appropriate effect a vast number of streams of new and foreign culture in the way that keeps our culture intact requires co-operation from every person in society, in the analysis of the weak and strong points, benefits and disadvantages, opportunities and signs of danger aiming at Thai culture. This is enhancing our culture with desirable characteristics, capable of supporting and encouraging sustainable national development.

Religion - The function relating to religion is closely linked with the work on culture, as religion is the force holding the mind of the people together and plays

a very important role in the promotion of positive cultural values enhancing a living based on morality and ethics. Religious personnel have a major role in the provision of counseling, advice and instruction to children and religious tenets and principles as taught by their respective religious founders. This is to be applied for everyday use. Should any problems or obstructions occur in their lives, they would be able to properly maneuver their ideas and thoughts and thus free themselves from such problems without having to hurt themselves, those close to them, or other people.

Art - A wide range of responsibilities covering every branch of art, tangible and non-tangible, are needed here. Art is a source of knowledge and a heritage handed down from our predecessors. It is therefore obligatory that it needs to be preserved and maintained, ready to be passed on to posterity. Also needed is the promotion for the creation of contemporary art to add to the wealth of wisdom for the current generation. Its value should be collected as national treasure.

2) Function

The ICH Committees of Experts have provided the criteria for intangible cultural heritage designation by describing the defining attributes of the items to be considered in each domain. Common criteria are as follows:

Department of Cultural Promotion

Department of cultural Promotion is charged with the task to promote and preserve Thai intangible cultural heritage through means such as studies, researches, rehabilitation, development, dissemination of information and supports to government agencies, non-government organizations and the public engaged in cultural works. The office also handles affairs relating to cultural exchanges.

Department of Fine Arts

Department of Fine Arts is responsible for the protection, conversation, maintenance, improvement, promotion, creation, dissemination of information, organization of study, research, development, and passing on art and cultural heritage of the country and to preserve national values and identity leading to sustainable development of Thai society and national security.

Bunditpatanasilpa Institute

Bunditpatanasilpa Institute is made responsible for culture education in the fields of dance, music, arts and crafts at the local, traditional, nation and international levels starting from the basic vocational to higher vocation education. Apart from teaching, performing, conducting research and academic services, its responsibilities include the promotion, the continuation, the continuation, the creation, the nurturing and the diffusion of arts and culture as national identify and also to preserve cultural diversity.

Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Center

Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Center (Public Organization) has the task to implement in activities in academic studies and researches in anthropology, and to provide technical services by serving as the agency of learning, source of information and networking for information on anthropology in Thailand and Southeast Asia. The center aims at creating innovative knowledge from researches and academic staff highly knowledgeable in anthropology, and acting as core organization for network of academic knowledgeable on anthropology nationally and internationally.

Film Archive

Film Archive (Public Organization) was established on 23 June 2009. It was initially established in 1984 under the name “The National Film Archive” under the Department of Fine Arts. The mission of the organization is to find and collect film-related materials, motion pictures and other audio visual media from all over the country in order to preserve them as national culture heritage and provide educational service for academic research and the general public.

Research Institute for languages and cultures of Asia, Mahidol University

In 1981, the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia (RILCA) was established. The Institute promotes excellence in Asian ethnic group, language and culture research and development. The mission of the organization are researching and developing language and culture for ethnic minority groups also developing and preserving the language and culture of ethnic minority groups in Thailand and beyond

Biodiversity-Based Economy Development Office

The mission of Biodiversity-Based Economy Development Office is promote and assist value chain process from biodiversity and local wisdom utilization as well as relevant interdisciplinary bio business Besides, Biodiversity-Based Economy

Development Office is responsible for promote and support the community to recognize the value of local biodiversity resources, which leads to proper and efficient utilization. Add value and outstanding characteristics to the local products to generate income and raising the standard of living within the community.

2. Non-governmental Organizations

Akha Education and Culture in Thailand (AFECT)

The AFECT's role and responsibility is to establish development program related to education, health and culture for Thai Hill Tribes in 268 villages within four northern Thai provinces.

The Siam Society under Royal Patronage

The Siam Society under Royal Patronage was established to promote the preservation of Thai heritage, culture, art, nature, wildlife, flora, through its study trips, lectures, museum, exhibitions, and publications. The famous project is an ethnological museum "Kamthieng House" which is one of the best surviving examples of Northern Thai architecture and provides a superb example of a traditional Northern Thai house built on wooden stilts.