

Arts of Asia Lecture Series Spring 2012

The Arts of South Asia & the Himalayas: The Sacred & the Secular

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Reflections on Thai Art: Sukhothai, Lanna, Ayutthaya and Bangkok

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- Sukhothai (13th-14th centuries)
- Lanna (Chiang San) (13th-15th centuries)
- Ayutthaya (1350-1767) (Kingdom of Siam)
- Bangkok (1782-present)

Temple Architecture

- Ordination Hall (Thai: *Ubosot*)
- Preaching Hall (Thai: *Wihan*)
- *Stupa* (Thai: *Chedi*) and Redented stupas
- Temple Tower (Thai: *Prang*)

Structure of *stupa*

- *Stupa*: bell shape, influenced by Sri Lanka
- Function: housed relics (common deposited votive tablets and Buddha images), practitioners circumambulate three times
- Medium: brick and mortar decorated with stucco
- Prang (tower): influenced by Cambodian architecture (commonly facing East)
- Medium: laterite, brick, and mortar decorated with stucco

Structure of temple:

- brick covered with mortar and decorated with stucco
- roof made of wood and covered with ceramic tiles
- Finial (*rasmi*): made of wood

Sukhothai: King Ram Khamhaeng (c. 1279- c.1299 or 1316); Inscription I (dated to 1292)

- Ceramics: Si Satchanalai, Swan Khalok, Kham Phangphet
- Wat Chang Lom (12th century)
- Wat Mahathat, Sukhothai, 14th century
- Wat Si Chum, Sukhothai, late 14th century
- Phitsanulok (Sukhothai's royal family moved to Phitsanulok in 1443)

Lanna (Chieng San) (1262-1558): King Mang Rai (r.1261-1317)

- Wat Kukut (late 12th-early 13th centuries)
- Wat Chedi Chet Yot (13th centuries)
- Wat Phrathat Haripunjaya, Lamphun (14th century)

Ayutthaya (1351-1767): U-Thong (Ramathibodhi I)

Wat Mahathat, Ayutthaya, 14th century

Wat Ratchaburana, 1424; King Borommaracha II (1424-1448)

- Deposits:
 - Level I: Mural painting of 2 styles: Chinese figures and Sukhothai figures and Buddha images
 - Level II: Mural painting based on Sri Lankan texts, gold royal regalia, insignia, vessels, gold votive tablets, textiles, and two bronze tables
 - Level III: relic in gold reliquary

Borommatrilocanat (1448-88): *Jataka* bronzes (1458)

Wat Phra Si Sanphet (1492)

Bangkok Period (Ratanakosin Period) (1782-present)

- Phra Phutthayotfa (Rama I) 1782 - 1809
- Phra Phutthaloetla (Rama II) 1809 - 1824
- Phra Nangklao (Rama III) 1824 - 1851
- Mongkut (Rama IV) 1851 - 1868
- Chulalongkorn (Rama V) 1868 - 1910

Wat Phrakew (The Emerald Buddha temple, Bangkok)

Wat Pho

Wat Suthat

Alavaka: a demon who was converted by the Buddha

Phra Malai: The compassionate monk Phra Malai used his extraordinary powers to visit both heaven and hell

Phra Si-an (Maitreya)

Ramakien (Ramayana)

Trilokavinichayakatha: Buddhist text compiled in 1802 during the reign of King Rama I and was utilized as the main sources of art during early Bangkok period

Upagupta: A monk who was summoned by Ashoka to overcome Mara; Upagupta asked Mara to take the of the Buddha

Recommend reading:

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Hiram W. Woodward, *The Sacred Sculpture of Thailand*. Bangkok: River Books, 1997.