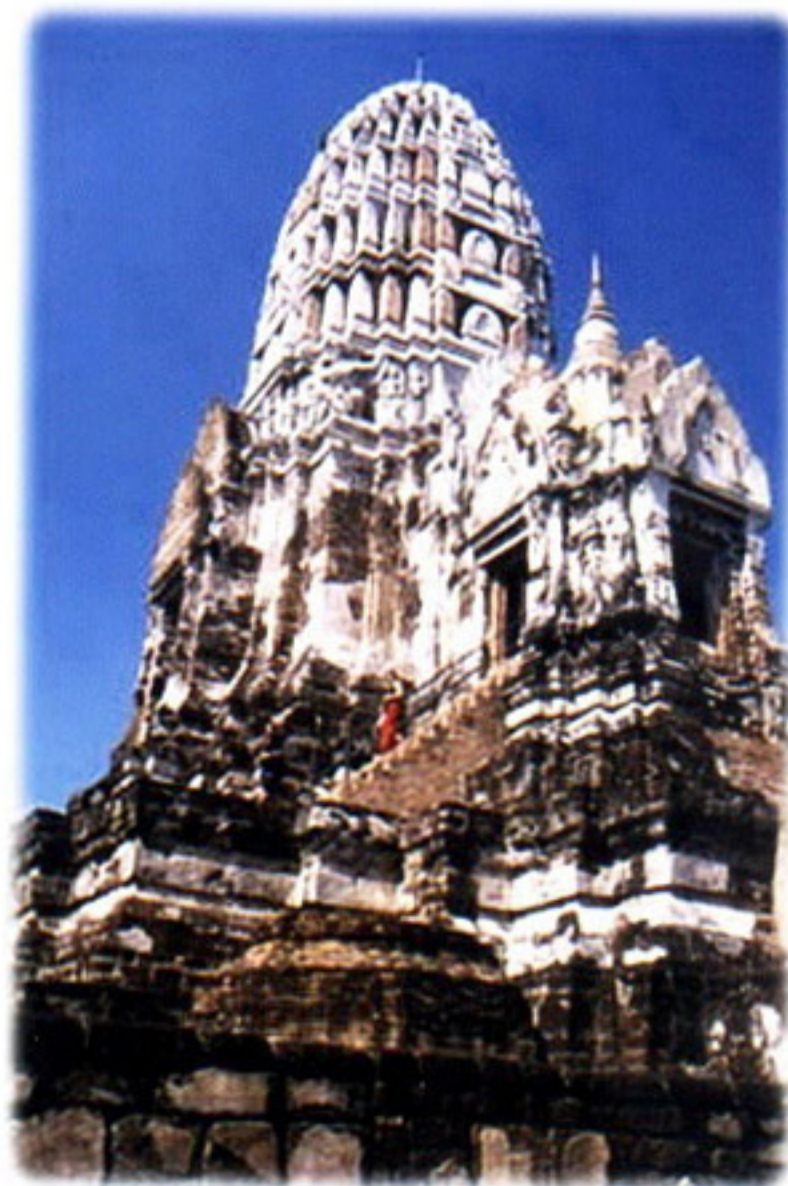


WAT RATCHABURANA RATCHAWORAWIHAN



Wat Ratchaburana was built in the reign of King Boromrachthirat II (Chao Sam Phya) in 1424 on the cremation site of his brothers, Prince Ai and Yi. They died of fighting for the throne on elephant's backs. Two chedi for the ashes of the two princes were built on the combat spot, which was between Wat Mahathat and Wat Ratchaburana. At present only the bases can be seen. In the main prang, two crypts filled with golden royal treasure, such as Buddha images, and votive tablets, were found. The finds are exhibited in the Chao Sam Phya National Museum, Ayutthaya



In 1957 thieves broke into the crypt of the central tower (the prang) and plundered a great number of relics interred with the two brothers. Some of the treasures were later recovered and installed in the Chao Sam Phraya National Museum (located nearby). The following year the temple was excavated and restored. A staircase now descends into the crypt where visitors can see several colorful frescoes from the Ayutthaya period.



A Chinese trader named **Liap** who lived in the late Ayutthaya period built this temple, so it is called Wat Jeen Liap, Jeen means "Chinese". In time, the word Jeen was dropped, leaving on the words Wat Liap. When King Rama I was crowned, HSH Prince Thepharipitak restored it as a Royal temple and named it Wat Ratchaburana, which was the name of capital's temple in the Sukhothai period.

Prang: Built in the reign of King Rama II and has 28 notches on its five-level lotus base. Each level is surrounded by figures of demons, and the top of the prang is a crown with a noppasoon (Siva's weapon).

Ubosot: During World War II, this area was damaged by bombing. The present ubosot was rebuilt to the design of Prof. Luang Wisan Silpaka (Cheua Patamachinda).

Part of its historical importance is that Khrua In Khong, the monk praised as a master artist at the court, was ordained at this temple. He was "a pioneer of incorporating the European style into traditional Thai art by introducing perspective"



The design of the temple is derived from the Khmer prasat of earlier periods but is loftier with a higher base and a taller central tower. The architectural historian Clarence Aasen writes that the prang resembles an "attenuated corn cob".



Directly north of Wat Mahathat, this fine temple, in a comparatively good state of preservation, was built in 1424 by King Borommaracha II on the cremation site of his two elder brothers, who killed each other in a struggle for the throne. the crypt of the prang was excavated in 1957, revealing traces of mural paintings and a collection of gold objects and jewellery now in the Chao Sam Phraya National Museum. Ruined temple complex at Ayutthaya, Thailand's most famous historical site.

