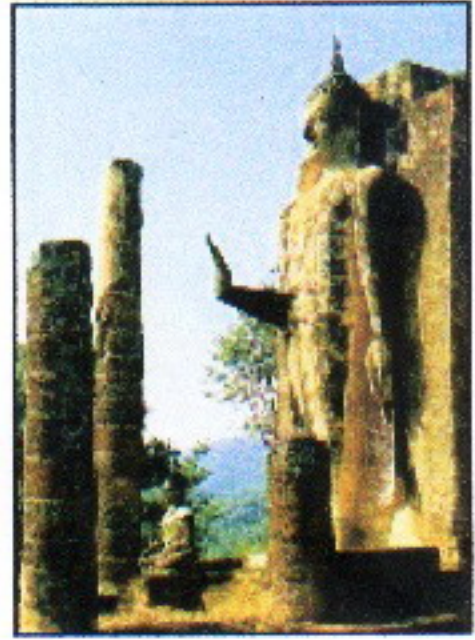


Sukhothai Period

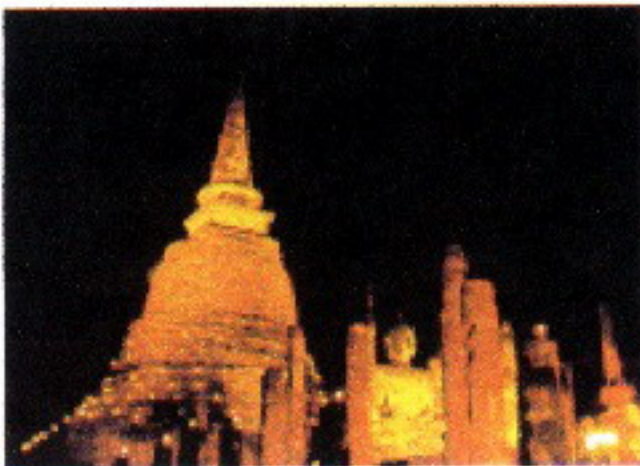
Sukhothai was the first Thai kingdom. It was founded in 1238 by two Thai governors, Khun Bang Klang Thao (Si Inthrahit) and Khun Pha Muang who rebelled against the Khmers; and gave independence to the region. Sukhothai period was the most flourishing period of Thailand. It gained independence in 1238 and quickly expanded its boundary of influence. Sukhothai period was considered to be a golden age of Thai culture. During that time in the history, everybody could say that "There are fish in the water and rice in the fields". The boundary of Sukhothai stretched from Lampang in the north to Vientiane, in present day Laos and the south to the Malay Peninsula.

During this time Thai had strong friendship with neighboring countries. It absorbed elements of various civilizations which they came into contact. Thai maintained and advanced their culture with China. The potters entered Thai artistry and extensive trade was established with Cambodia and India.

After the death of Khun Pha Muang in 1279, Ramkhamhaeng King, the third son of Si Inthrahit, ascended to the throne. Under the Ramkhamhaeng King, Sukhothai had strong friendship with neighboring China. Ramkhamhaeng King organized a writing system which became the basis for writing and eventually developed to be the modern Thai alphabet.



Sukhothai Period



Sukhothai Art (N.7-N.8)



In the early 13th century the Thais declared Sukhothai independent from the Khmers. The Sukhothai kingdom rapidly expanded and became prosperous. Buddhism of the Sri Lanka sect was established in Sukhothai. In sculpture the Thai craftsman was inspired to create successfully a new style with a spiritual ideal in human form. Sukhothai ceramics are known as "Sangkhalok ware" or "Sawankhalok ware". There are two types monochromes in brown, white, and celadon and painted wares. Sukhothai ceramics were extremely popular in Southeast Asia and were exported widely to Indonesia and the Philippines from the 15th to the 16th



Ayutthaya Period

Ayutthaya, the capital of the Thai Kingdom was found by U-Thong King in 1350. Ayutthaya as an island is formed by the gathering of three rivers, the Chao Phraya, the Pasak, and the Loburi and surrounded by rice terraces. It is easy to see why the Ayutthaya area was settled prior to this date since the site offered a variety of geographical and economic advantages. The Thai kings of Ayutthaya became powerful in the 14th and 15th centuries, taking over U-Thong, Lopburi, and Ayutthaya.

King U-Thong and his immediate successors expanded Ayutthaya's territory, especially northward towards Sukhothai and eastward towards the Khmer capital of Angkor. The greater size of government could not remain the same as during the days of King Ramkhamhaeng. The society during the Ayutthaya period was strictly hierarchical. There were, roughly, three classes of people king at the top of scale. At the bottom of social scale were commoners and the slaves.

In the early 16th century, the European visited Ayutthaya, and a Portuguese embassy was established in 1511. Portugal's powerful neighbor Spain was the next European nation to arrive in Ayutthaya forward the end of the 16th century. In the early 17th century they saw the arrival of two northern European, the Dutch and the British, and France in 1662.

In the mid-16th century, Ayutthaya and the independent kingdom in Chiang Mai was put under

the control of the Burmese, but Thais could regain both of the capitals by the end of the century.

The Burmese invaded Ayutthaya again in 1765. This time Burmese caused much fear to Thais. Burmese soldiers destroyed everything, including temples, manuscripts, and religious sculpture. Ayutthaya was burned down and destroyed. Thousands of people were killed or moved away as slaves. Only 10,000 people were left in the city after the catastrophe.

Ayutthaya Art (N.9-N.10)



Early Thai art in central Thailand reveals the influence of the Mon and the Khmer, the pre-Thai styles. Ayutthaya was established as a capital of Siam in 1350. The Buddha images of the early period reflect varying degrees of Dvaravate and Khmer characteristics. Later, from the middle of the 15th century A.D., Ayutthaya art developed to the National style. Towards the end of the period many crowned and highly ornamented Buddha images were produced.

Ayuthaya Period

