

## **GOLD TREASURES IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM**

SOME OF THE GOLD TREASURES WHICH ARE EXHIBITED IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM, HAVE BEEN FOUND IN THE NICHE OF A STUPA OF WAT MAHADHATU, AND WAT RATCHABURANA AYUTTHAYA. THEY CONSIST OF BUDDHA IMAGES, VOTIVE TABLETS, RITUAL OBJECTS, ARE THE ANIMAL PLAQUES, DEPICTING ELEPHANTS, HORSE AND TURTLES, AS WELL AS ORNAMENTS SUCH AS BANGLES, NECKLACES AND BRACELETS. IT IS BELIEVED THESE GOLD TREASURES WERE PLACED BY A KING OF AYUTTHAYA, IN A NICHE OF A STUPA WHICH HE HAD ERECTED TO GAIN MERIT FOR HIMSELF AND HIS ANCESTORS.

SOME OF THE INSCRIBED PLAQUES WHICH WERE DISCOVERED IN THE STUPA ARE SHOWN HERE. THEY TELL OF THE CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION OF THE STUPA. SIMILAR FACTS ARE ALSO LEARNED FROM PLAQUES FOUND IN THE SANCTUARY OF WAT PHRA SRI RATANA MAHADHATU AND IN THE OLD STUPA OF WAT PRA RUB, SUPHANBURI PROVINCE.

THE GOLD BUDDHA IMAGES OF THE EARLY BANGKOK PERIOD, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF THE REIGN OF KING RAMA II WERE ERECTED ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS TO GAIN MERIT MOST OF THEM PORTRAY THE BUDDHA IN THE POSITION OF SUBDUING MARA. A SMALL GROUP OF THEM REPRESENTED THE BUDDHA IN MEDITATION POSITION AND SOME SHOW HIM IN THE DISPELLING FEAR POSITION.

SOME OF THE GOLD ORNAMENTS IN THE EXHIBITION CASE, EXCEPT FOR THE ROYAL OBJECTS FOUND IN THE SANCTUARY OF WAT MAHADHATU, AND WAT RATCHABURANA AYUTTHAYA, WERE PRESENTED BY THE THAI PEOPLE TO THE GOVERNMENT IN 1939 TO SUPPORT ITS EFFORTS IN RECLAIMING LAND IN INDO-CHINA FROM FRANCE. OTHER PIECES WERE PRESENTED TO THE NATIONAL MUSEUM ON THE PRESERVATION OF THE THAI HERITAGE DAY IN 1985.

THESE GOLD TREASURES ARE OF GREAT VALUE WHEN STUDYING TO ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORY AND ART HISTORY OF THAILAND. THEY REPRESENT

THE HIGH AESTHETIC QUALITY OF THAI CRAFTSMANSHIP IN THE PAST WHICH CONTINUES UP TO THE PRESENT DAY.

## **REGALIA**

THE REGALIA IS THE VESSELS OR THE UTENSILS WHICH ARE IDENTIFIED AS BELONGING TO THE KING. USUALLY, THEY ARE MADE OF A VALUABLE MATERIAL SUCH AS GOLD AND DECORATED WITH JEWELS, BY ROYAL TRADITION, ONLY THE COURT OFFICIALS HAVE THE RIGHT TO CARRY THEM.

FOLLOWING THE PALACE LAW OF THE THAI COURT, THE REGALIA CONSISTS OF THE CROWN, EARRINGS, A NECKLACE, A BRACELET, A GOLD SASH ETC. , WHILE THE LATER DOCUMENTS EXPLAIN THE REGALIA AS CONSISTING OF AN IMAGE OF THE PHRA CHAI (BUDDHA OF VICTORY), A HOROSCOPE, A KENDI, A KALASA (WATER POT) A CONCH SHELL, A WEAPON, AND A SPITTOON.

IN A LATER PERIOD, THE MEANING OF THE WORD REGALIA CHANGES AND IS USED MAINLY FOR THE BETELNUT SET.

## **BUDDHA IMAGES AND VOTIVE TABLETS**

BUDDHA IMAGES AND VOTIVE TABLETS WERE MADE BY BUDDHISTS IN REVERENCE OF THE LORD BUDDHA. IN THAILAND EVIDENCE HAS SHOWN THAT BUDDHA IMAGES WERE CRAFTED IN GOLD DURING THE DVARAVATI PERIOD (6<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> CENTURY A.D.) UP TO THE PRESENT BANGKOK PERIOD ALSO USED GOLD IN ABUNDANCE. THE TECHNIQUES BECAME INCREASINGLY REFINED AND INCLUDED GOLD PLATING, GILDING BY ATTACHING GOLD LEAF, LINING, REPOUSEE WORK, CASTING AND MERCURY GILDING.

## **ROYAL PAVILION OF THREE CONNECTED ROOFS**

CREATED IN THE REING OF KING RAMA I OR KING RAMA II . IT USED TO PLACE OVER THE RELICS OF THREE PRINCES OF THE PALACE TO THE FRONT

OF THE PRINCE SUCCESSORS. NOW THEIR RELICS WAS TAKEN TO PLACE AT WAT PRASRI RATTANASASDRAM (WAT PHRA KAEW) THE ORNAMENT IS CARVED, CILDED, AND EMBELLISHED WITH CHIPS OF COLOURED GLASS.

### **GOLD PLATE INSCRIPTIONS**

INSCRIPTIONS THAT WERE WRITTEN BY USE OF A STEEL STYLUS ON A THIN HAMMERED OUT SHEET OF GOLD USUALLY CONCERNED ANNOUNCEMENTS CONCERNING RELIGION, THE MONARCH OR HIS FAMILY. RELIGIOUS EDIFICES OR RECORDED A CONFERRING OF HIGHER ECCLESIASTICAL RANK. ANNOUNCEMENTS CONCERNING THE ROYAL FAMILY RECORDED A MONARCH 'S NAME AFTER HE WAS DULY CROWNED OR THE NAMES OF MEMBERS THE ROYAL FAMILY WHO HAS BEEN CONFERED WITH HIGHER STYLES AND TITES.

COPPER PLATE INSCRIPTIONS HAVE BEEN DATES TO THE DVARAVATI PERIOD (6<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> CENTURY A.D.) WHILE GOLD PLATE INSCRIPTIONS HAVE NOT YET BEEN DATED. EVIDENCE HAS SHOWN HOWEVER THAT GOLD PLATE INSCRIPTIONS WERE ABUNDANTLY USED THROUGHOUT THE AYUTTHAYA PERIOD (15<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> CENTURY A.D.) UP TO THE PRESENT BANGKOK PERIOD.

### **ROYAL UMBRELLAS**

- FIVE TIRED UMBRELLAS WAS USED FOR THE PRINCES.
- SEVEN TIRED UMBRELLAS WAS USED FOR THE QUEEN.
- THE *CHUMSAI* IS AN UMBRELLA AND IS PART OF ROYAL REGALIA. IT WAS USED FOR KING AND QUEEN.



GOLD TREASURES IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM



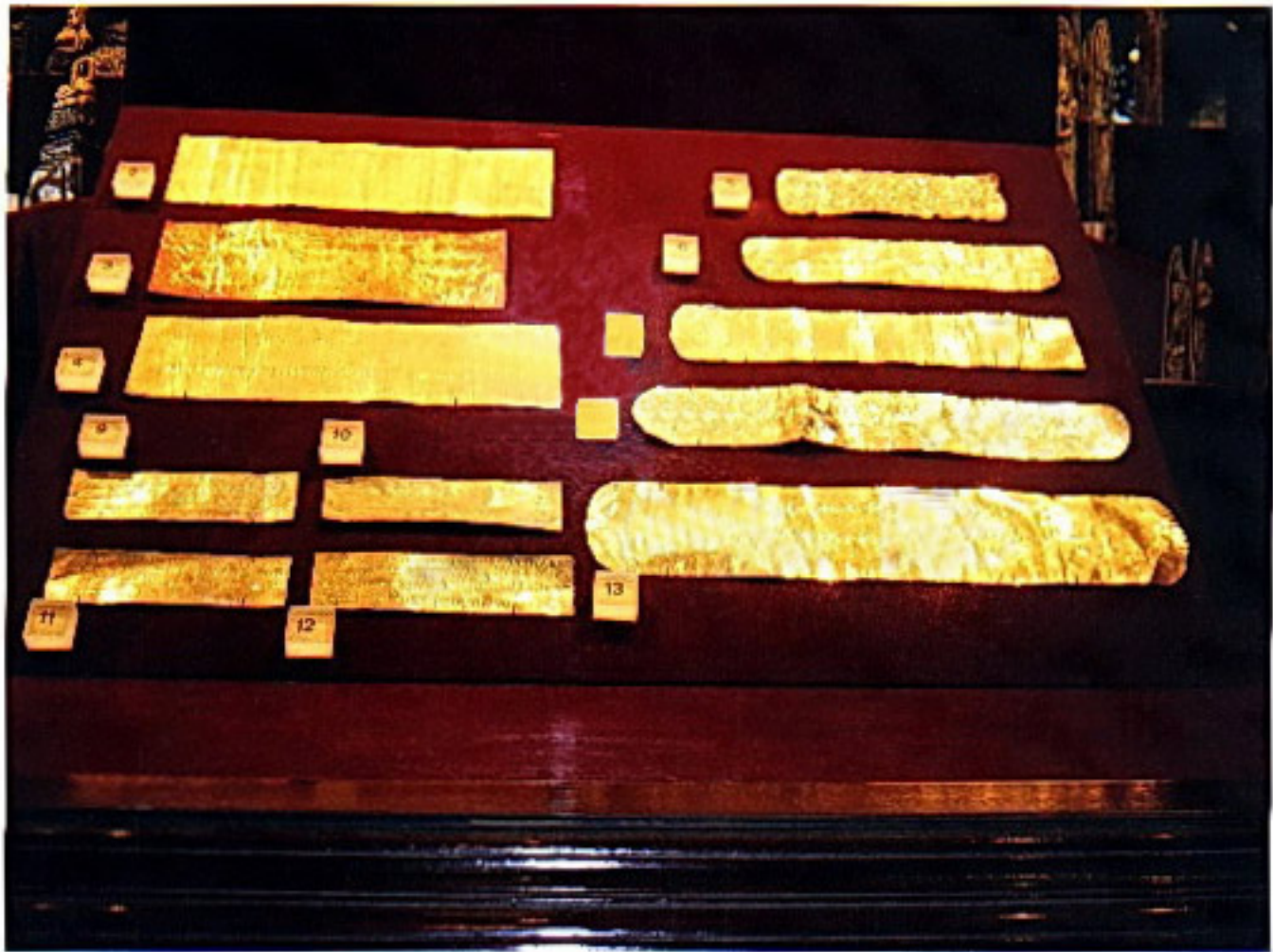
REGALIA



BUDDHA IMAGES AND VOTIVE TABLETS



ROYAL PAVILION OF THREE CONNECTED ROOFS



GOLD PLATE INSCRIPTIONS





## ROYAL UMBRELLAS

- FIVE TIRED UMBRELLAS FOR THE PRINCES
- SEVEN TIRED UMBRELLAS FOR THE QUEEN



## CHUMSAI

- CHUMSAI IS AN UMBRELLA FOR KING & QUEEN