

DVARAVATI

(No. S7 Upstairs)

This collection includes religious images sacred to both Buddhism and Brahmanism. (6th - 11th centuries AD.) Exhibit items include images of the Buddha, votive tablets, Wheel of Law, boundary stones, stucco decorations and ornamental objects. Wheel of Law Dvaravati, 8th century AD. Stone, 210 cm. High Found at Nakhon Pathom



"Dvaravati" comes from the Sanskrit language, and means "consisting of doors". It is recognised as being the first state of Siam that comprised a group of riverine cities, and it was an "Indianised" culture.

Archaeological evidence shows that the focal point of the Dvaravati Kingdom was in the central region of Thailand. Several Chinese historical documents also mention this civilisation, and a number of ancient monuments and objects of art found in the area were clearly influenced by the Gupta style, which had flourished in central and western India between the 5th and 6th centuries. There are, for example, immense stupa bases and superb stucco sculptures.



Charateristics of Dvaravati ancient community

Most of the cities had an most circular plan including two moats and eastern wall surrounding it. The purpose of these constructions were for the stroage of water and floor prevention rather than protection against enemies. The cities in the Dvaravati period were usually situated in river basins or close to rivers for the purpose of consumption and transportation. Dvaravati cities were quite large. Moreover, inside the cities were large holy sites situated in the center of the cities. This can be observed in the ancient city of Nakorn Pathom, which has a temple and chedi standing in the center of the city. In Khubua ancient city in Ratchaburi, with Wat Khlongsuwannakhiri situated in the heart of the city. Srithep ancient city has ancient ruins in the middle of the city also.



Dvaravati period : Kingdom, state or urban community

Dvaravati as a stage and art style has been used following evidence found from during the 5th – 11th century. Much additional evidence has been found, such as inscription, ancient objects and ancient cities, to support the concept or theory, of academicians that the community or state called "Dvaravati" did exist. Yet, there has been no conclusion that its administration followed a truly state system and that the people of this state had created their own original style of art which can be named "Dvaravati" of the 5th – 11th century. Artifacts of this style have actually been discoverd in every region of the country.

Though evidence in the form of ancient objects and places with Dvaravati artistic styles have been ~~have been~~ found in various part of Thailand, this is still insufficient to come to a conclusion of the Dvaravati issues needed to be discussed and a great deal of additional evidence is required, such as how large was its boundary, where was it capital or center, who was the ruler of the kingdom, who was the original creator of Dvaravati culture and arts, and are the names for the communities. Ancient cities.



Dvaravati arts

In the central and western parts of Thailand, especially in Nakorn Pathom, U-Thong and Khubua , the ancient sites, ranging from the 7th to 11th century, were in the Buddhistic art style influenced by Indian arts, which we call Dvaravati art. Buildings were very big and delicately constructed. From this evidence, it can be assumed that there might have been a great craftsmen with a good knowledge and high capability and with there own identity. Those arts had been influenced by outside arts, the original style had not been abandoned. Dvaravati created its own origins. Dvaravati art emerged in many regions within Thailand. In the north as far as Haripundhai and in the south as far as Yalang ancient city in Pattani. In the northeast, it appeared in srithep in Petchabun, Fadvedsungyung in Kalasin, Sema in Nakorn Ratchasima and other ancient cities. As mentioned, the art style were shared, but in their details there was some difference because of indigenous art.

Wheel of Law and deer

Lime stones. 7-8th century, Dvaravati. Found at Nakhon Pathom. A considerable number of Wheels of the Law have been found in the Nakhon Pathom and western region. These wheels often found together with reclining deer, are symbolic of the ever expanding, ever-turning Buddhist doctrine. Wheels of the Law are carved on both sides with floral motifs derived from the Gupta and post-Gupta styles of India. This wheel has two important features: its spokes are carved completely in the round, and it bears on one side a Pali inscription of the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism.



Standing Buddha

Dvaravati art style 8th -9th century A.D.



Divine of Bodhisattva

Terra-Cotta, Dvaravati art style 6th-7th



Buddha Sheltered by Naga's hood
Dvaravati art style 7th – 8th



Musicians, Stucco
Dvaravati art style 8th – 10th



Buddha in argumentation
Dvaravati art style 9th