**Dvaravati Stucco Sculptures**

Wat Nakhon Kosa is an ancient ruin located in the center of Lop Buri. It is a religious site with evidence of super imposed construction taking place from the Dvaravati to Ayutthaya periods. During the reign of King Narai, the King ordered Chao Phraya Kosathibodi to construct a Buddha image hall in front of the old principal stupa and renamed the temple Wat Nakhon Kosa.

Between 1986 and 1987, the Fine Arts Department excavated around the base of the principal stupa and discovered a large number of decorative stuccos dated to the Dvaravati period including:

**Lion** The large stucco lion head displayed at the Somdet Phra Narai National Museum has bulging eyes, cavernous mouth, fierce expression, and mane full with tubular curls. Lions are a powerful animal and believed to protect religious and sacred places.

**Dwarf** In addition to lion sculptures, dwarf stuccos were also commonly found at the site. Dwarf is depicted as a small people with big belly and earrings, sitting with both hands up above the head. The dwarf stucco was used to decorate the base of the stupa. It is traditionally believed that dwarfs are a religious supporter and symbol of wealth.

The excavation also discovered stucco sculptures of noblemen and commoners, which can be distinguished by their clothing. Noblemen often wear headgears, necklaces, and bracelets where as commoners wear their hair in a bun and few or no ornaments.

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