



VIETNAMESE BLACK LACQUERED WOVEN RATTAN ROUND ARCHED PARADE SHIELD

A LARGE VIETNAMESE BLACK LACQUERED WOVEN RATTAN ROUND ARCHED PARADE SHIELD

FINELY DECORATED IN GILT WITH A DRAGON OR 'SHOU' EATING THE SYMBOL OF ETERNITY

A WOOD HANDLE TO THE REVERSE

EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 65CM DIA – 25½ INS DIA

LITERATURE

ORIGINATING IN THE TRADITIONS OF THE WOVEN RATTAN WAR SHIELDS OF THE INDIGENOUS VIETNAMESE JORAI PEOPLES, THIS SHIELD COMES FROM THE CULTURE OF THE NGUYEN DYNASTY OF THIRTEEN EMPEROR'S. THE DYNASTY WAS FOUNDED IN 1802 BY THE EMPEROR GIA LONG, WHO CONSOLIDATED THE COUNTRY AFTER HUNDREDS OF YEARS OF CIVIL WAR AND BUILT AN IMPERIAL CITY AT HUE IN CENTRAL VIETNAM. IN THE BEST CHINESE TRADITION, WHO HAD RULED THE COUNTRY INTERMITTENTLY UNTIL THE 16TH CENTURY, THE IMPERIAL PALACE WAS FORBIDDEN TO ANYONE EXCEPT THE MANDARINS, MEMBERS OF THE COURT AND THE EMPEROR'S FAMILY. TOMBS WERE ALSO BUILT IN THE MING STYLE, AND THE ANNAM TOMBS WERE LAID OUT IN PERFECT SYMMETRY AND LUXURIOUSLY APPOINTED WITH A VALLEY AFFECTED TO EACH EMPEROR AND HIS EXTENDED FAMILY.

IN 1883 THE FRENCH INVADIED HUE, AND TONKIN AND ANNAM BECAME FRENCH PROTECTORATES. HOWEVER, THE FRENCH MAINTAINED THE ILLUSION OF IMPERIAL RULE AND A RAPID SUCCESSION OF EMPEROR'S MARKED THE EARLY DAYS OF FRENCH COLONIALISM AS THE RULERS EITHER FLED OR WERE REPLACED BY THE FRENCH.