

Wreyford, Ben (2018) Seeing The 'Foreigner' In The Art Of Early Southeast Asia c.100 BCE – c.900 CE.
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**SEEING THE 'FOREIGNER' IN THE
ART OF EARLY SOUTHEAST ASIA
c.100 BCE – c.900 CE**

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

2018

VOLUME 1

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Abstract

The millennium between c.100 BCE and c.900 CE saw the growth of long-distance economic and cultural exchange both within and beyond Southeast Asia, processes which contributed to the development of early states and precipitated cultural changes through encounters with Indian and Sinitic cultures. Increasing numbers of people were travelling long distances along established trade routes into, within, through and out of the region, and for many different reasons. Visual representations of people claimed to be 'foreigners' in the art of this period have been identified in several cultural contexts, but have mostly received only cursory mention, often with a simple assertion of their identity. However, they are significant as locally-produced representations because, appropriately interpreted, they may offer new insights into intercultural interactions that have in large part been reconstructed from non-Southeast Asian textual sources and via studies of stylistic relationships and archaeological exotica. This thesis seeks to develop a methodology for the informed interpretation of such images that incorporates an appreciation of the cognitive processes behind the perception and representation of difference, otherness and foreignness in ancient art, in part by drawing on interpretive discussions of this kind of visual material elsewhere in the ancient world. Additional considerations pertinent to Southeast Asian engagement with non-local iconographic traditions are included. The resulting methodology is discussed further in three case studies where figures have been claimed to represent 'foreigners' to highlight the subjectivities, subtleties and sources involved in interpretation. Two of these have geographical foci, in pre-Angkorian Cambodia and Dvāravatī culture in Central Thailand, and one has a thematic focus, being an apparent association with early representations of horses in the region. In each case, significant new insights result from the attention paid to these figures and their interpretation, showing the methodology to be a productive approach to understanding long-distance connections in Southeast Asia, or indeed elsewhere in the ancient world.

Acknowledgements

A project of this nature would not get very far were it not for the support of many friends, family and colleagues, and I am immensely grateful to everyone who has helped to make this thesis a reality.

I have had strong academic guidance and support from day one from the staff in the Department of History of Art and Archaeology at SOAS University of London – my two primary supervisors, Elizabeth Moore followed by Ashley Thompson; the other members of my supervisory panel, Christian Luczanits and Crispin Branfoot; and those involved with the research skills training, especially Shane McCausland. Thanks are also due to the staff in the SOAS Doctoral School, the SOAS Library and the British Library.

I am extremely grateful to my two examiners, Michael Willis and Claudine Bautze-Picron, for their insightful and productive comments on the earlier version of this thesis, which is now much improved as a result.

I am also very thankful to all those who have granted permission for me to reproduce photographs and figures in the digital version of my thesis, which will help to make the work more accessible. And to Udomluck Hoontrakul and Chhum Menghong for their assistance with accessing and translating material in Thai and Khmer.

Fieldwork was challenging, given the amount of travel in and around Southeast Asia, but I seem to have tapped into a huge network of contacts who helped to make all my journeying a success. I am grateful to all the academics, archaeologists and curators who took time to meet with me, discuss ideas, help with access to information, and provide me with further contacts who could help. In Myanmar, I am immensely grateful to Elizabeth Moore again, U San Win, U Hla Thaug, Sithu Htun Soe, Myo Thant Tyn, U Win Kyaing, Cherry Thinn and Nan Kyi Kyi Khaing, for helping to identify unpublished material of relevance to this research. In Thailand, Saritphong Khunsong and Abhirada Komoot have been especially helpful in facilitating the processes that led to the National Research Council of Thailand and Fine Arts Department permitting me to access and research material in the nation's collections; but I also want to acknowledge the additional support of Praphaphan Srisuk, Nipa

Sangkhanakhin, Darika Thanasaksiri, Dendao Silpanon, Duangkamon Kamalanon, Sukanya Ruankaew, Suppawan Nongnut, Chudamas Supan-Klang, Karn Rabsombat, Narat Thongthae, Preeyanuch Jumprom, Wannasarn Noonsuk, and Tucky. In Cambodia, many thanks to Kong Vireak, Prak Sonnara, Bertrande Porte, Bruno Bruguier, Valy Mang and the Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project team for facilitating my research at the National Museum of Cambodia and Sambor Prei Kuk. It was fantastic to meet with Lâm Thị Mỹ Dung, Lê Thị Liên and Nguyễn Thị Mai Hương in Vietnam, and of course my PhD colleague Nguyễn Hoàng Hương Duyên at the Đà Nẵng Museum of Cham Sculpture. In Indonesia, I am very grateful to Panggah Ardiyansyah at the Balai Konservasi Borobudur for the time spent with me during my visit, and to Wieske Sapardan at UNESCO for putting us in touch. You have all helped in the success of this research.

The fieldwork would not have been possible without the generous financial support of a Santander Mobility Award and a grant from the SAAAP Academic Support Fund.

I have really appreciated the support and friendship of my PhD colleagues in the department and beyond – it would have been a lonely journey without you.

I also wish to formally thank my team at Public Health England for their longstanding understanding and flexibility in my working hours.

To my family and friends, thank you for all your moral support and your interest in my work, especially as I have been less able to spend as much time with you all these last few years.

And finally, to the two main women in my life. Rowan, you were not yet with us when I began this PhD, but I am so happy you joined us for the last 2½ years. Jen, thank you for your belief, unending support and love, and for Rowan. I could not have done this without you.

Note on the use of Southeast Asian scripts

This thesis uses Southeast Asian scripts to provide archaeological site names in their local forms in parentheses when first mentioned in the main text, and to provide the titles of cited publications in their original forms in the footnotes and bibliography, followed by English translations. The intention is to facilitate readers in locating cited sources and further information in Southeast Asian literatures if desired, rather than providing this information in transliterated forms that may not be universally accepted and may hinder such researches for some readers.

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Figure 5.24 Indra-Maruts *toraṇa* arches from Prasat Khao Noi; further information is available in Appendix 3. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Prachinburi National Museum.

Figure 5.25 Indra-Maruts *toraṇa* arches from Tuol Ang Srah Theat, Wat Ksal and Wat Phum Thmei (ñ.2092); further information is available in Appendix 3. Photographs: (top) reproduced from Bénisti, *Stylistics*, Vol.2, Fig.107; (middle) École française

d'Extrême-Orient, Fonds Cambodge ref. EFEO_CAM15796; (bottom) Author, with acknowledgement to the National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

Figure 5.26 Maruts from *toraṇa* arch from *prasat* S7, South group, Sambor Prei Kuk. Guimet Museum, MG 18853. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to the Guimet Museum, Paris.

Figure 5.27 Exposed legs of Maruts from S7 *toraṇa* arch, showing they are booted and barefoot. Guimet Museum, MG 18853. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to the Guimet Museum, Paris.

Figure 5.28 Maruts from *toraṇa* arch from Wat Ksal. Photograph: École française d'Extrême-Orient, Fonds Cambodge ref. EFEO_CAM15796.

Figure 5.29 Maruts from *toraṇa* arch from north *prasat*, Prasat Khao Noi, Aranyaprathet, Thailand. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Prachinburi National Museum.

Figure 5.30 Maruts from *toraṇa* arch from Dambang Dek. National Museum of Cambodia, ñ.1768. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to the National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

Figure 5.31 Maruts in local dress. Clockwise from top left: Wat Sopheas, Kompong Cham; Prasat Phnom Thom, Kompong Cham; Prasat Trapeang Roleak, Sambor Prei Kuk (ñ.3320); *prasat* S11, Sambor Prei Kuk (ñ.81). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, and the Kompong Thom Provincial Museum, for the lower pair.

Figure 5.32 Horse-affiliated deities wearing dress of non-Indian origin. Upper left: Sūrya with Piṅgala and Daṇḍin on the solar chariot, from Khair Khaneh, c.5th century. Reproduced from Rosenfield, *Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, Fig.96. Upper right: Sūrya with Piṅgala and Daṇḍin in *gavākṣa* from Bhūmarā, c.5th century. Photograph by Biswarup Ganguly, [Chaitya window, Surya, c.5th century, Bhumara](#), Wikimedia Commons, licenced under [CC BY 3.0](#); cropped from original. Lower left: Revanta on horseback, from the area of Sārnāth. Reproduced from Pal, *Indian Sculpture*, vol. 1, p.254. Lower right: *dikpāla* of the northwest, probably Vāyu, from Bādāmi cave 3. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.33 'Flying palace', east side of north elevation, *prasat* N15, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.34 Edifice reductions from South Asia. Row 1 (left-right): Caves 1, 19 & 26, Ajaṅṭā; Cave 3, Aurangabad. Row 2 (left-right): Jogeśvari; Cave 1, Aurangabad; Cave 26, Ajaṅṭā; Uparkoṭ. Row 3 (left-right): Cave 7, Aurangabad; Durgā temple, Aihole; Cave 3, Bādāmi. Row 4 (left-right): Cave 2, Bādāmi; 2-storey cave, Aihole. Row 5 (left-right): Mēguṭi cave, Aihole; Khambhāliḍā; Dharmarāja Ratha, Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam & 'Great Penance' relief, Māmallapuram. Photographs: Row 1: American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative no. AAB 174.90 (Accession no. 24034); John C. Huntington,

courtesy Huntington Photographic Archive of Buddhist and Asian Art, scan nos. 8336, 8519 & 7205. Row 2: American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative no. A43.57 (Accession no. 55480); Viennot, *Les Divinités Fluviales*, Pl. 9c; John C. Huntington, courtesy Huntington Photographic Archive of Buddhist and Asian Art, scan no. 8584; Nanavati & Dhaky, 'Maitraka and Saindhava temples of Gujarat', Pl. 4. Row 3: John C. Huntington, courtesy Huntington Photographic Archive of Buddhist and Asian Art, scan no. 7334; American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative nos. 204.7 (Accession no. 30544) & A42.49 (Accession no. 54954). Row 4: Tartakov, 'Beginning of Dravidian Temple Architecture', Fig.23, with permission of the author; American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative no. 399.41 (Accession no. 55270). Row 5: Tartakov, 'Beginning of Dravidian Temple Architecture', Fig.42, with permission of the author; Nanavati & Dhaky, 'Maitraka and Saindhava temples of Gujarat', Pl. 6; Author (x3).

Figure 5.35 Polychrome on figures supporting 'flying palace', *prasat* N1, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.36 Stucco figure applied over earlier, larger brick-carved figure (stucco figure's waist is level with brick-carved figure's shoulders), *prasat* N21, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.37 'Flying palace' types A and B. Photographs: Author.

Figure 5.38 Edifice reductions at Aihole (2-storey cave, Durgā temple). Photographs: American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative nos. 399.41 (Accession no. 55270) and 204.7 (Accession no. 30544).

Figure 5.39 Figures supporting 'flying palace', *prasat* N1, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.40 Figure with serpentine neck supporting 'flying palace', *prasat* N15, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.41 Figures of guard and water-carrier (?) on basement steps of 'flying palaces', *prasat* N- and S10, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photographs: Author.

Figure 5.42 Hierarchical scaling of central figure in *gavākṣa*-arch at Prasat Tamon, where both upper and lower central figures wear the *kirītamukuṭa*. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.43 Figure with *yogapaṭṭa* band, seated under *torāṇa*, *prasat* N11, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.44 Representation of building inside *gavākṣa*-arch, *prasat* N1, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.45 Superstructure of S1, Sambor Prei Kuk, with representations of populated architecture. Photographs: Author.

Figure 5.46 Row of aerial beings above *torāṇa* of brick-carved false door at *prasat* N15, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.47 Row of aerial beings along upper edge of stone *torana* arch from Prasat Kuk Nokor, Baray, Kompong Thom. National Museum of Cambodia, ñ.2103. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to the National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

Figure 5.48 *Vimāna* at *prasats* N15 (south elevation, east side) and S11 (southeast elevation) containing guard figures described as wearing items of foreign dress. Photographs: Author.

Figure 5.49 Guards from *vimāna* of *prasat* N15. Photographs: Author.

Figure 5.50 Guards from *vimāna* of *prasat* S11. Photographs: Author.

Figure 5.51 Local-dressed guard in *vimāna* of *prasat* N11. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.52 Detail of cap of one of the N15 *vimāna* guards. Photograph: Author.

Figure 5.53 Foreign-dressed guards at architectural entrances in early India, at (left to right) Rāṇī-gumphā (Udayagiri), Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, and Rāvaḷaphaḍi cave (Aihole). Photographs: (left) Sailesh Patnaik, [Udayagiri Yavana warrior](#), Wikimedia Commons, licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#), cropped from original; (middle) reproduced from Longhurst, *Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Pl.X(c), as a public domain image (out of copyright); (right) Author.

Figure 5.54 Foreign-dressed *dvārapāla* at the Rāvaḷaphaḍi cave, Aihole, c.600 CE. Photographs: Author.

Figure 5.55 The 'foreigners' of Sambor Prei Kuk. Photographs: Author. Base map courtesy of Bruno Bruguier.

Figure 6.1 Dian bronze cowrie container and lid with gilded horse-riders, from Shizhaishan, Yunnan (left: M10:53; right: M13:2). Photographs: (left) reproduced from Murowchick, 'Political and Ritual Significance of Bronze Production in Ancient Yunnan', Fig. 4; (right) reproduced from Chiou-Peng, 'Horses in the Dian culture of Yunnan', Fig.17.2.

Figure 6.2 Railing upright with medallion containing horse-rider, from Kaṅkāli-Ṭīlā, Mathurā. Photograph: American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative no. 367.69 (Accession no. 49891), reproduced with the permission of the State Museum, Lucknow.

Figure 6.3 Terracotta seal with horse head above masted ship, from Chandraketugarh, Bengal. Reproduced from Sarma, 'Rare Evidences of Maritime Trade on the Bengal Coast', Pl.7.

Figure 6.4 Drawing of painted scene showing Siṃhala's cavalry and elephant troops in boats, from Cave 17, Ajaṅṭā. Reproduced from Schlingloff, *Studies in the Ajanta Paintings*, Fig. 6, with the permission of the author.

Figure 6.5 Figure interpreted as horse trader or groom on ivory plaque from Begram. Reproduced from Auboyer, 'Private Life in Ancient India as Seen from the Ivory Sculptures of Begram', Fig.6.

Figure 6.6 Drawing of Ban Don Ta Phet high-tin bronze bowl B rim fragments 6-10 rearticulated. Estimated dimensions of complete bowl: 22cm (diameter); fragments 6-10 c.31.5 cm (partial circumference at rim). After Bennett & Glover, 'Decorated High-Tin Bronze Bowls', Fig.7.

Figure 6.7 Two views of the high-tin bronze bowl reportedly from Khao Sam Kaeo, Thailand, showing bands of horses (above) and griffins (below). Dimensions: 16 cm x 8.4 cm (diameter x height). Photographs by Paisarn Piemmettawat, reproduced from Glover & Jahan, 'Early Northwest Indian Decorated Bronze Bowl', Figs. 5 & 6a, with the permission of the photographer.

Figure 6.8 Two gold finger rings with horse imagery from Prohear, Cambodia. Upper left image not to scale. Photographs: (upper left) reproduced from Reinecke et al, *First Golden Civilization of Cambodia*, Fig.25, with the permission of Andreas Reinecke; (lower left, and right) reproduced from Reinecke et al, *First Golden Age of Cambodia*, Fig.68, with the permission of Andreas Reinecke (lower left) and Seng Sonetra (right).

Figure 6.9 Sardonyx intaglio from Bang Kluai Nok, Thailand (left), and impression (right). Dimensions not available. Reproduced from Borell, Bellina, and Boonyarit, 'Contacts between the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula and the Mediterranean World', Figs.7a-b.

Figure 6.10 Bronze pull toy horse said to be from Myauk Mee Kon. Reproduced from Coupey, 'Myauk Mee Gon horse', Fig.134.

Figure 6.11 Wheeled horse toys from Taxila, Mauryan period (left), and Chandraketurah, c.1st century BCE (right). Photographs: (left) reproduced from Marshall, *Taxila*, Vol.3 Pl.134 no.62; (right) reproduced from Bhattacharya, 'Terracotta of Bengal', p.62.

Figure 6.12 Representations of pull toy horses in reliefs from Amarāvati (upper left) and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (upper right and lower left), c.3rd century CE. Photographs: (upper left) detail from railing pillar, British Museum, 1880,0709.11 © Trustees of the British Museum, licenced under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/); (upper right) detail from pillar, reproduced from Longhurst, *Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Pl.IXc, image is in the public domain, but for a photograph where the detail of the horse's hanging tail is clearer see Zin, 'Non-Buddhist Narrative Scenes', Fig.1; (middle right) detail of railing pillar, upper left, by Author; (lower left and lower right) reproduced from Longhurst, *Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Pl.XXXVb, image is in the public domain.

Figure 6.13 Drawing of ivory comb from Chansen, Thailand. Dimensions: 11 cm x 7 cm (length x height). Reproduced from Bronson & Dales, 'Preliminary Report', Fig.7.

Figure 6.14 Houses with occupants represented on the tympanum of Makalamau bronze drum. Photographs reproduced from Bernet Kempers, *Kettledrums of*

Southeast Asia, Pl. 4.02e-f, with the permission of A.A. Balkema Publishers; permission conveyed through Copyright Clearance Center, Inc.

Figure 6.15 Representation of horse and warriors from mantle of Makalamau bronze drum. Reproduced from Bernet Kempers, *Kettledrums of Southeast Asia*, Pl. 4.02n, with the permission of A.A. Balkema Publishers; permission conveyed through Copyright Clearance Center, Inc.

Figure 6.16 Representation of one of two houses on the tympanum of Makalamau bronze drum. Compare Bernet Kempers Pl. 402e in my Figure 6.14 (upper). Reproduced from van der Hoop, *Catalogus der Praehistorische Verzameling*, Fig.62.

Figure 6.17 Han period representations of horse-riders, from Xilin, Guangxi province (left) and Leitai, Gansu province (right). Photographs: (left) reproduced from Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums*, Fig.2.62, with the permission of the author; (right) reproduced from Wagner, *Iron and Steel in Ancient China*, Fig. 4.36.

Figure 6.18 Left: wooden figure of guard with halberd, excavated at tomb no.167, Fenghuangshan, Hubei province; Han period. Right: iron halberd-heads, excavated at grave M44, Xiadu, Hebei province; 3rd century BCE. Reproduced from Wagner, *Iron and Steel in Ancient China*, Figs.4.23 and 4.37.

Figure 6.19 Terracotta plaques from Kyontu, near Bago, Lower Myanmar; dimensions: c.55 cm (height & width). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgments to Kyontu Pagoda and National Museum of Myanmar, Naypyitaw.

Figure 6.20 Details of horse gear on terracotta plaque from Kyontu. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgment to Kyontu Pagoda.

Figure 6.21 Details of combatants differentiated by dress and weapons. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgment to Kyontu Pagoda.

Figure 6.22 Horses on pre-Angkorian Indra-Maruts *torāṇa* arches; clockwise from upper left: unprovenanced, in Kompong Thom Provincial Museum (ñ.72); Prasat Trapeang Roleak, Sambor Prei Kuk (ñ.3320); Prasat Phnom Thom, Kompong Cham; Wat Sopheas, Kompong Cham; N7, Sambor Prei Kuk, in Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Area (423); S7, Sambor Prei Kuk, in Guimet Museum (MG 18853). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgments to the Kompong Thom Provincial Museum, the Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project, and Guimet Museum, Paris.

Figure 6.23 Horse-rider on stamped ceramic sherd from Chansen, Thailand. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Lopburi.

Figure 6.24 Stamped ceramic sherd from Chansen, Thailand, showing painted horizontal bands at base of vessel neck. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Lopburi.

Figure 7.1 Map of main sites in Dvāravatī cultural area of Central and Northeast Thailand. Reproduced from Indrawooth, 'Archaeology of the Early Buddhist Kingdoms of Thailand', Fig.6.7, with the permission of Informa UK Limited through PLSclear.

Figure 7.2 Corpus of terracotta and stucco sculptures suggested to represent 'foreigners'. Wongnoi, Terracotta Art from Khu Bua, p.65, also lists 1335/2504, 1336/2504, 1340/2504, 1395/2504, 1398/2504, KB.007, KB.95-KB.98 and KB.164-KB.165 as all from Khu Bua (no illustrations are published). Photographs: 1338/2504 reproduced from Khunsong, Dvaravati: A Major Entrepot, Fig.69, with the permission of the author; 'n/k', Khu Bua, reproduced from Lyons, 'Traders of Khu Bua', Fig.2; all other photographs by the Author, with acknowledgements to the Bangkok National Museum, Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum, Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Ratchaburi National Museum, Somdet Phra Narai National Museum and U Thong National Museum.

Figure 7.3 Stucco figural sculpture on *chedi* platform sides and superstructure base. Top: narrative and iconic panels on the side of the Chula Pathon Chedi platform, Nakhon Pathom; photographs reproduced from (left) Krairiksh, *Buddhist Folk Tales*, Fig.1, with the permission of the author, (right) Phra Pathon Chedi National Museum display board. Bottom left: *guhya* and 'decorative' designs on the superstructure base of Khao Khlang Nai Chedi, Si Thep; photograph: Author. Bottom right: one, possibly two, fragmentary *guhya* on the superstructure base of the Thung Setthi *chedi*; photograph: Author.

Figure 7.4 Stucco *guhya* at the Thung Setthi *chedi*, located according to a recess formed in the underlying brick surface by projecting features on four sides, being one of the base's projections, a raised interstice separating it from another recess, and ledges above and below (compare Figure 7.3 bottom right). Photograph: Author.

Figure 7.5 Buddha images *in situ* on the superstructure sides of Chula Pathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom, during excavation Photograph: École française d'Extrême-Orient, Fonds Thaïlande ref. EFEO_THA24023_1.

Figure 7.6 Architectural stucco enhancing the mouldings of the superstructure base, and producing baluster and foliate designs, at the recently-excavated Dhammasala *chedi*, Nakhon Pathom. Photograph: Author.

Figure 7.7 Stucco figural sculpture with straight edge features indicating a relationship with an architectural recess. Sculptures from Phra Prathon Chedi and Khu Bua *chedi* 44. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to Phra Pathon Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom, and Bangkok National Museum, Bangkok.

Figure 7.8 Recesses in the brick surfaces of Khu Bua *chedi* 8 (top) and U Thong *chedi* 2 (bottom), after excavation and restoration. Note the recesses are visible on the superstructure base and platform sides, respectively. Photographs: Author.

Figure 7.9 Terracotta sculptures from Khu Bua, approximately to scale (largest figure c.80 cm tall). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Ratchaburi National Museum, Somdet Phra Narai National Museum and Bangkok National

Museum; except: the two heads at middle left, reproduced from Khunsong, *Dvaravati: A Major Entrepot*, Fig.69, with the permission of the author, and Lyons, 'Traders of Ku Bua', Fig.2.

Figure 7.10 Plan of Khu Bua site. Reproduced from Indrawooth, 'Un antique royaume urbanisé', Fig.5.

Figure 7.11 Khu Bua *chedi* 40. Top: *chedi* 40 today; photographs: Author. Bottom: *chedi* 40 at the time of its excavation in 1961, with the three projections of the *chedi* superstructure base clearly visible; photographs: reproduced from Rattanakun, *Archaeology of Khu Bua*, Figs. 17 & 18.

Figure 7.12 Figure 7.12 The Thung Setthi *chedi* after excavation and restoration. The three projections of the superstructure base per side are visible, as are the partially-restored recesses on the platform sides. Photographs: Author.

Figure 7.13 Stucco sculpture from Thung Setthi. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum, Phetchaburi.

Figure 7.14 Figural head from Thung Setthi *chedi*, showing the uneven break at the neck, and (right) also the flat back of the figure on the left side of the photograph (figure's face to right). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum, Phetchaburi.

Figure 7.15 Stucco sculptures from Phra Prathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom.

Figure 7.16 Phra Prathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom, with Ayutthaya and Bangkok period modifications on top. Photograph: Author.

Figure 7.17 Plan of Nakhon Pathom. Reproduced from Indrawooth, 'Un antique royaume urbanisé', Fig.4.

Figure 7.18 Stucco figural heads 735/2519 and 736/2519, originally from Phra Prathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom, showing their flat backs. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom.

Figure 7.19 The three terrace walls at Phra Prathon Chedi, showing the multiple recesses per terrace. Photograph: Author.

Figure 7.20 Stucco figural heads 735/2519 and 736/2519, showing the uneven breaks at the level of the neck. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom.

Figure 7.21 Stucco sculpture from U Thong. Photograph: Author, acknowledgement to U Thong National Museum, U Thong.

Figure 7.22 Plan of U Thong. Reproduced from Indrawooth, 'Un antique royaume urbanisé', Fig.4.

Figure 7.23 Stucco figural head 256/2505, showing a projecting remnant of the stucco matrix on the wall side of the head (left), and the flat back of the figure (right). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the U Thong National Museum (left); U Thong National Museum (right).

Figure 7.24 Range of suggested reconstructions and comparators for Dvāravatī *stūpa* elevations. Row 1 (left to right): stone ‘models’ and bas-reliefs of Dvāravatī *stūpas* in Bangkok National Museum; *kumbha stūpas* c. 7th-9th century, from boundary stones (*sema*) in Central (b) and Northeast Thailand (a, g) and Phnom Kulen, northern Cambodia (f), from bronze reliquary (d) and silver plaque (e) from Northeast Thailand, and a terracotta *kumbha* from Central Thailand (c) (see Woodward’s figure caption for details); *stūpas* on repoussé silver plaques from Kantarawichai, Northeast Thailand, c. 8th-11th century (right example repeating (e) of Woodward’s figure). Row 2 (left to right): ‘Puduvēli Gopuram’, or ‘Chinese Pagoda’, at Nāgapaṭṭinam, Tamil Nadu; *stūpa*/temple no.3, Nālandā, Bihar, c. 6th century; reconstruction models of Dvāravatī *chedis* 9 and 13 at U Thong. Row 3 (left to right): Ku Kut *chedi* at Wat Chama Thewi, Lamphun, 12th century with later modifications; Dvāravatī terracotta representations of architecture, c. 7th-8th century. Images: Row 1 (left to right): Griswold, ‘Architecture and Sculpture of Siam’, Fig.1, reproduced under fair use principles with knowledge, but not formal permission, of Indiana University Press; Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, Fig.17, (g) reproduced with permission of the author, (f) with permission of Bruno Dagens, (a) out of copyright image originally from Lunet de Lajonquière, *Inventaire descriptif des monuments du Cambodge*. Vol. 2, EFEO, 1907; Diskul, ‘Development of Dvāravatī sculpture’, Fig.3, reproduced with permission of Oxford Publishing Limited through PLSclear. Row 2 (left to right): Yule, *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, Vol.2, 336, out of copyright image; Page, ‘Excavations at Nalanda’, Pl.XLII, out of copyright image; Wales, *Dvāravatī*, Pl.13. Row 3 (left to right): Ku Kut *chedi* courtesy Udomluck Hoontrakul; photographs of terracottas by Author, with acknowledgement to Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom.

Figure 7.25 Plaster or limewash surface layer on the terracotta figures from Khu Bua. Top: 62/2547 and 4027/2518. Bottom: 60/2547 and 1347/2504. Further small quantities are visible elsewhere on 60/2547 and 1347/2504, and on other Khu Bua figures. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Ratchaburi National Museum, Somdet Phra Narai National Museum and Bangkok National Museum.

Figure 7.26 Pigment applied to the plaster or limewash surface layer on two terracotta figures from Khu Bua *chedi* 40, enhancing features of the face and dress. Inventory numbers not visible, but on display at the Bangkok National Museum. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Bangkok National Museum.

Figure 7.27 Terracotta head 61/2547, viewing the breakage point at the neck from below, and showing burning of the clay in its core. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgements to the Ratchaburi National Museum.

Figure 7.28 Stucco figures representing human types from Nakhon Pathom. Left and middle: Phra Prathon Chedi. Right: Chula Pathon Chedi. Photographs: Author; with acknowledgements to the Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom.

Figure 7.29 Stucco figures combining apparently local-type dress with split-ring earrings. Left and middle: Chula Pathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom. Right: unspecified site, Khu Bua. Photographs: Author; with acknowledgements to the Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum and Ratchaburi National Museum.

Figure 7.30 Moulds for split-ring earring production and split-ring earrings from Dvāravatī culture archaeological contexts, from four museum collections in Thailand. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Bangkok National Museum, Ratchaburi National Museum, and Chansen Museum.

Figure 7.31 Heads of stucco figures from Thung Setthi, U thong and Nakhon Pathom, showing locations of loss of stucco from the peaks of the headwear. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum, U Thong National Museum and Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum.

Figure 7.32 Heads of terracotta figures from Khu Bua with detailed modelling of headwear. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Bangkok National Museum and Ratchaburi National Museum.

Figure 7.33 Heads of stucco figures with smooth headwear and rim features, from Thung Setthi, Nakhon Pathom (2) and U Thong. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum, Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum and U Thong National Museum.

Figure 7.34 Front detail of upper body of figure 1334/2504 from Khu Bua. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to Bangkok National Museum.

Figure 7.35 Arm details of terracotta figures 1334/2504 and 60/2547 from Khu Bua. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Bangkok National Museum and Ratchaburi National Museum.

Figure 7.36 Lower body of three figures from Khu Bua. Top: 1334/2504. Bottom: 1347/2504 and 60/2547. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Bangkok National Museum and Ratchaburi National Museum.

Figure 7.37 Boots from Khu Bua. Left: from figure 1334/2504. Top middle: object 4133/2518. Right and bottom middle: object 4132/2518. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Bangkok National Museum and Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, except top middle: Somdet Phra Narai National Museum.

Figure 7.38 Ear ornaments. Top: Khu Bua figures 4088/2518, 4027/2518 and 61/2547. Bottom: Khu Bua figure 60/2547 and Nakhon Pathom figures 735/2519 and 736/2519. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Ratchaburi National Museum and Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum.

Figure 7.39 Portrait-like heads in South Asian art. Left: unfired clay head of an ascetic, Gandhāra, 4th century CE; 14.2 x 9.0 x 13.3 cm max. (height x width x depth); Ashmolean Museum, EA1993.22. Image © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. Middle: coin of Kṣatrapa ruler Jivadāman, western India, early-2nd century CE. Photograph courtesy Panjak Tandon; this coin was published in Tandon, 'The Western Kshatrapa Dāmazāda', Fig.6. Right: coin of Śātavāhana king Vāsiṣṭiputra Sātakarni, peninsular India, mid-2nd century CE. Photograph by Uploadalt, [Vashishtiputra Sri Satakarni](#), Wikimedia Commons, licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#); similar coins are published in Sarma, *Coinage of the Satavahana Empire*, Pls. XVI-XVIII.

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1. Introduction

The categories of ‘foreign’ and ‘foreigner’ occur repeatedly in academic writing on protohistoric and early historic Southeast Asia, c.100 BCE – c.900 CE, referring to people, objects and ideas from locations and cultures both inside and outside the geographical region defined today as Southeast Asia.¹ However, the meanings and subjectivities of these terms in a context predating the origin of nation-states are rarely discussed, and they are sometimes used in ways that suggest the categories are self-evident, in binary opposition to the local, and perhaps fixed. There is no doubt that intercultural connections and relationships involving significant distances are important when considering the sociocultural changes that occurred before and during this period, leading to the states of premodern and modern Southeast Asia. This is readily appreciated in the relationships between Southeast and South or East Asian cultural forms, for example in the areas of ritual, including its associated art, architecture, literature and performance, as well as in vocabulary and scripts, as discussed further below. We can see the ‘foreigner’ played a role in these changes, but the nature of that role has been interpreted in different ways since the study of early Southeast Asia began.

1.1. Historiography and the ‘foreigner’ in early Southeast Asia

Early explanations for the widespread ancient Buddhist and Brahmanical architecture and sculpture² encountered by foreigners in Southeast Asian countries during the

¹ For example: O.W. Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca (NY): Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1999), 55–59, discusses the foreignness of Indian cultural forms vis-à-vis local Southeast Asian forms; Dougald J.W. O’Reilly, *Early Civilizations of Southeast Asia* (Lanham: AltaMira Press, 2007), 41, 56–57 & 61, and Kenneth R. Hall, *A History of Early Southeast Asia: Maritime Trade and Societal Development, 100-1500* (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011), 1–2, 39, 112 & 152–53, refer to foreignness in relation to both inside and outside the Southeast Asian region; John N. Miksic and Geok Yian Goh, *Ancient Southeast Asia* (London & New York: Routledge, 2017), 130–31, refer to ‘foreign enclaves’ where people originating outside the Southeast Asian region were resident.

² Islamic merchants were beginning to operate in the maritime trade network toward the end of this period, but the production of Islamic architecture and art in the region mostly postdates it and so the emphasis and case studies of the thesis relate primarily to Buddhist and Brahmanical contexts. Of note, Islamic architecture was probably constructed in 8th century CE Guangzhou, one of the ports marking the eastern end of the ‘Maritime Silk Road’, but according to Nancy S. Steinhardt, ‘China, Islamic Architecture In’, ed. Kate Fleet et al., *Encyclopedia of Islam, THREE* (Leiden: Brill, 2015),

colonial period, invoked the migration of South Asians to form colonies and early states under their leadership.³ Reconstructions of this kind relied heavily on documentary sources from non-Southeast Asian cultural contexts, especially Chinese historical documents and South Asian literature, both of which evince cultural misrepresentation and ethnocentrism, and in the absence of any archaeological knowledge of prehistory.⁴ Only in the north of the region is there evidence for significant political intervention by an external power, as Han China (202 BCE – 220 CE) progressively incorporated parts of what are today southern China and northern Vietnam.⁵ As studies of the material and visual culture and local epigraphy progressed, it became clear that there were significant differences between South and Southeast Asian art and architecture, and that evidence for large-scale colonisation was lacking.⁶ Explanations shifted to frame the relationship in terms of foreign interactions and ‘cultural influence’ driving processes of sociocultural change involving the ‘Indianisation’ of pre-existing local cultures, sometimes still involving migration, and, in northern areas interacting more closely with Chinese culture, their ‘Sinicisation’.⁷

http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_26219, the surviving minaret of the Huaishengsi (怀圣寺) probably dates from the 14th century.

³ A proponent of this reconstruction was R.C. Majumdar, whose *Hindu Colonies in the Far East*, 2nd ed. (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1963), and *Ancient Indian Colonization in South-East Asia*, 3rd ed. (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1971) encapsulate his ideas on the Indian conquests and colonisations that instigated all Southeast Asian Buddhist and Brahmanical societies. George Coedès, *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, ed. Walter F. Vella, trans. Susan Brown Cowing, 3rd ed. (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1968), 14–35, envisaged Indian elites establishing ‘Indian kingdoms’ in Southeast Asia where local populations adopted Indian ‘civilisation’. Charles F.W. Higham, ‘The Long and Winding Road That Leads to Angkor’, *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 22, no. 2 (2012): 265, reminds us that yet earlier explanations invoked Alexander the Great or the Roman emperor Trajan as the foreign power behind Angkor’s monuments.

⁴ Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 109; Pierre-Yves Manguin, ‘The Archaeology of Early Maritime Polities of Southeast Asia’, in *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, ed. Ian C. Glover and Peter Bellwood (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 293–94; Alison K. Carter and Nam C. Kim, ‘Globalization at the Dawn of History: The Emergence of Global Cultures in the Mekong and Red River Deltas’, in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, ed. Tamar Hodos (London & New York: Routledge, 2017), 730.

⁵ Francis Allard, ‘Stirrings at the Periphery: History, Archaeology, and the Study of Dian’, *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 2, no. 4 (1998): 327–32; Francis Allard, ‘Globalization at the Crossroads: The Case of Southeast China during the Pre- and Early Imperial Period’, in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, ed. Tamar Hodos (London & New York: Routledge, 2017), 458–68; Carter and Kim, ‘Globalization at the Dawn of History’, 732–33.

⁶ Ian W. Mabbett, ‘The “Indianization” of Southeast Asia: Reflections on the Historic Sources’, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 8, no. 2 (1977): 155–56; Michael Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics in Pre-Angkor Cambodia: The 7th-8th Centuries* (Tokyo: Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for UNESCO, The Toyo Bunko, 1998), 51–56; Manguin, ‘Archaeology of Early Maritime Polities’, 282–83.

⁷ Mabbett, ‘The “Indianization” of Southeast Asia: Historic Sources’, 155–61; Paul Wheatley, ‘Urban Genesis in Mainland Southeast Asia’, in *Early South East Asia: Essays in Archaeology, History, and*

1.2. Development of long-distance connections, contact and interaction

The primary role of a 'foreign' agency or ideology in these processes of sociocultural change has been further critiqued, especially through archaeological and anthropological approaches to culture change. Archaeological excavations have shown that the development of socio-political complexity followed local trajectories beginning in prehistory, before the earliest evidence for significant connections with South or East Asian cultures.⁸ Nonetheless, the development of exchange networks between communities was still important. Socio-political complexity followed from the development of social stratification in prehistoric communities, which is especially visible in associated burial contexts where differential distribution of certain objects is interpretable as indicating wealth and status due to the materials, labour and craft skill involved in their production.⁹ These differences are understood to represent emerging disparities in social status, and with it the development of community leadership and elites. Of particular note are the objects indicating status or prestige through their rarity as exotica – that is, having a distant origin and, consequently, being uncommon and harder to acquire.¹⁰ It is theorised that such prestige items could be operationalised in inter-elite negotiation and symbolic displays of social status, and what they imply about having access to resources.¹¹ In addition to being able to reward others for services, elite members of society could gather followers, command

Historical Geography, ed. R.B. Smith and William Watson (New York & Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1979), 292–300.

⁸ Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 55–57; Manguin, 'Archaeology of Early Maritime Polities', 282–83; Higham, 'Long and Winding Road', 267–87; Carter and Kim, 'Globalization at the Dawn of History', 730.

⁹ Charles F.W. Higham, *Early Cultures of Mainland Southeast Asia* (Bangkok: River Books, 2002), 224–27; Elisabeth A. Bacus, 'The Archaeology of the Philippine Archipelago', in *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, ed. Ian C. Glover and Peter Bellwood (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 263–66; O'Reilly, *Early Civilizations of Southeast Asia*, 156–57.

¹⁰ See Sections 2.1 and 2.4 on the relationship between foreignness and exoticness.

¹¹ Jan Wisseman Christie, 'Trade and State Formation in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra, 300 B.C.-A.D. 700', in *The Southeast Asian Port and Polity: Rise and Demise*, ed. J. Kathirithamby-Wells and John Villiers (Singapore: NUS Press, 1990), 46; Bérénice Bellina and Praon Silapanth, 'Weaving Cultural Identities on Trans-Asiatic Networks: Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula – an Early Socio-Political Landscape', *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 93 (2006): 259–60; Bérénice Bellina and Praon Silapanth, 'Khao Sam Kaeo and the Upper Thai Peninsula: Understanding the Mechanisms of Early Trans-Asiatic Trade and Cultural Exchange', in *Uncovering Southeast Asia's Past: Selected Papers from the 10th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists*, ed. Elisabeth A. Bacus, Ian C. Glover, and Vincent C. Pigott (Singapore: NUS Press, 2006), 379.

communal labour, control craft production, and build alliances with elites in other communities to stabilise supplies of goods and connect with more distant exchange networks.

These processes are detectable in their early phases in Bronze Age Mainland Southeast Asia,¹² but social stratification and the accessing of long-distance exchange networks become especially visible around the mid-1st millennium BCE as communities transitioned to an Iron Age (Figure 1.1).¹³ Large bronze objects and semiprecious stone personal ornaments became indicators of status and prestige, being products of skilled craftsmanship and raw materials with uneven patterns of distribution.¹⁴ The products themselves show long-distance intra-regional distributions and stylistic relationships between distant communities, notably bronzes associated with the Dian and Đông Sơn cultures in what is today southern China and northern Vietnam, and nephrite ear ornaments associated with the Sa Huỳnh-Kalanay complex connecting Taiwan, the Philippines and coastal Southeast Asia.¹⁵ By the 4th-3rd centuries BCE these intra-regional networks were connected with extra-regional networks, contemporary with greater geopolitical stability in Mauryan India (322-187 BCE) and Qin China (221-206

¹² Southeast Asia is often understood to include the culturally-related areas of what is today southern China during the prehistoric and early historic periods. They remained incompletely integrated frontier zones through the period covered by this research.

¹³ Charles F.W. Higham, 'Mainland Southeast Asia from the Neolithic to the Iron Age', in *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, ed. Ian C. Glover and Peter Bellwood (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 53–63.

¹⁴ Jan Wisseman Christie, 'State Formation in Early Maritime Southeast Asia: A Consideration of the Theories and the Data', *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 151, no. 2 (1995): 244; Higham, 'Mainland Southeast Asia from the Neolithic to the Iron Age', 57–64; Bellina and Silapanth, 'Khao Sam Kaeo and the Upper Thai Peninsula', 379.

¹⁵ Peter Bellwood, 'Southeast Asia before History', in *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia Volume 1: From Early Times to c.1500*, ed. Nicholas Tarling, Rev. edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 121–31; Wisseman Christie, 'State Formation in Early Maritime Southeast Asia', 252; Miksic and Goh, *Ancient Southeast Asia*, 109–11; Phạm Minh Huyền, 'Northern Vietnam from the Neolithic to the Han period, Part II: The Metal Age in the north of Vietnam', in *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, ed. Ian C. Glover and Peter Bellwood (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 200; Carter and Kim, 'Globalization at the Dawn of History', 737–38 & 742–43; Bacus, 'The Archaeology of the Philippine Archipelago', 263–64; Hsiao-chun Hung and Peter Bellwood, 'Movement of Raw Materials and Manufactured Goods across the South China Sea after 500 BCE: From Taiwan to Thailand, and Back', in *50 Years of Archaeology in Southeast Asia: Essays in Honour of Ian Glover*, ed. Bérénice Bellina et al. (Bangkok: River Books, 2010), 234–45; Hsiao-chun Hung et al., 'Coastal Connectivity: Long-Term Trading Networks across the South China Sea', *Journal of Island & Coastal Archaeology* 8 (2013): 384–404; Ambra Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums across Early Southeast Asia: Exchange Routes and Connected Cultural Spheres* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2014).

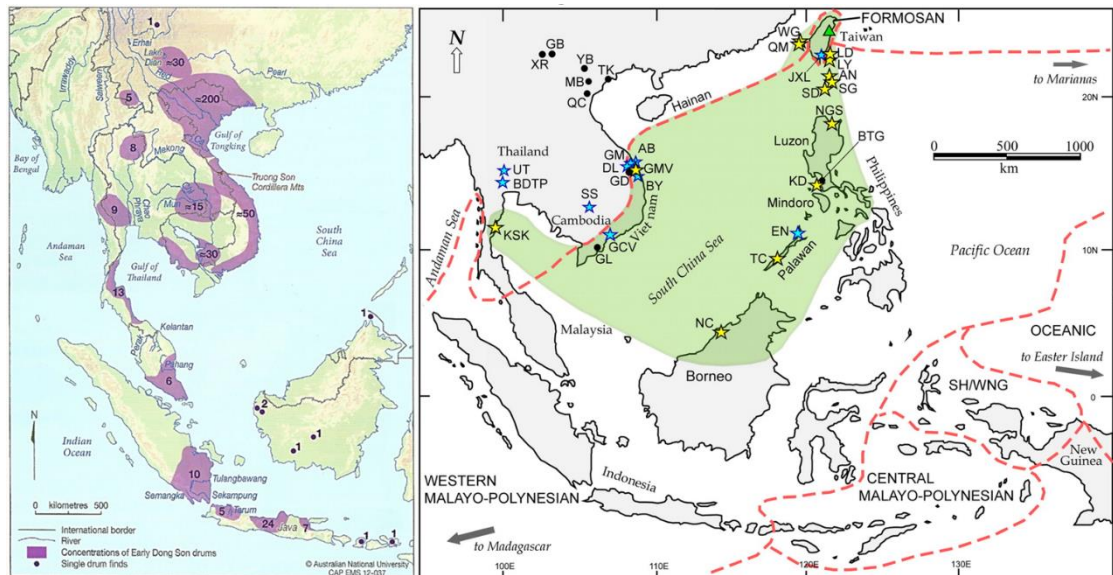


Figure 1.1 Late prehistoric long-distance exchange networks. Left: distribution of Đông Sơn-type bronze drums c.300 BCE – c.100 CE. Reproduced from Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums*, Fig. 2.1, with the permission of the author and Australian National University, College of Asia and the Pacific, CartoGIS Services. Right: distribution of Taiwanese nephrite artefacts (yellow stars, green zone) in Sa Huỳnh-Kalanay network; KSK = Khao Sam Kaeo. Reproduced from Hung et al, 'Ancient jades map 3000 years', Fig. 3, with the permission of Hsiao-chun Hung.

BCE).¹⁶ Archaeologically, there are imported objects, and locally-produced objects either using raw materials sourced extra-regionally or exhibiting knowledge of extra-regional forms.¹⁷ In the north, bronze *ge* polearms and ritual vessels in Yunnan, Lingnan and Bắc Bộ showed formal relationships with Sinitic forms further north,¹⁸ while architectural features of rampart construction and roofing at the high-status settlement of Cổ Loa in Bắc Bộ show similarities with the *hangtu* stamped earth method and ceramic tiles used in China, all perhaps known indirectly via intermediate

¹⁶ Wisseman Christie, 'State Formation in Early Maritime Southeast Asia', 247; Bérénice Bellina and Ian C. Glover, 'The Archaeology of Early Contact with India and the Mediterranean World, from the Fourth Century BC to the Fourth Century AD', in *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, ed. Ian C. Glover and Peter Bellwood (Abingdon & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 69.

¹⁷ Noteworthy as an apparently early example of this category of material, are the five nephrite *chuong* (Chinese: *zhang*) sceptres from the Xóm Rến and Phụng Nguyễn sites in the Bắc Bộ area c.1300 BCE. The geographically nearest comparators are reported from Sichuan and the area of Hong Kong, but the Bắc Bộ examples are often considered local products. On these objects, see: Diệp Đình Hoa, 'New Findings on Zhang in the Phung Nguyễn Culture', *South Pacific Study* 17, no. 1 (1996): 83–101; Peter Bellwood, 'Das Neolithikum', in *Schätze der Archäologie Vietnams*, ed. Andreas Reinecke (Herne, Chemnitz, Mannheim & Berlin/Bonn: LWL-Museum für Archäologie, Staatlichen Museum für Archäologie, Curt-Engelhorn-Stiftung für die REM & Deutschen Archäologischen Institut, 2016), 79–80. Archaeobotanical studies are beginning to suggest earlier maritime transfers of agricultural plant species.

¹⁸ Po-yi Chiang, 'The *Ge* of the Shizhaishan Cultural Complex', *Bulletin of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association* 30 (2010): 105–9; Phạm, 'The Metal Age in the North of Vietnam', 199–200.

sites.¹⁹ A number of small polities developed on the Thai-Malay Peninsula, apparently through exchange relationships with communities in the Bay of Bengal and the South China Sea areas. A settlement at Khao Sam Kaeo (เขาสามแก้ว) developed an intensive craft industry producing carnelian, agate and glass ornaments employing raw materials and production techniques from South Asia; the interpretation of a related settlement at Phu Khao Thong (ภูเขาทอง) is limited by looting.²⁰ Finished beads were distributed along regional exchange networks as far east as coastal Vietnam, as part of an early trans-Asiatic exchange route.²¹ The growth of social elites accessing the distant and exotic through long-distance exchange meant that, by the 4th-3rd centuries BCE, exchange networks and interaction spheres already connected communities across thousands of kilometres. This will no doubt have facilitated the movement of individuals over greater distances than previously.

Interregional contacts intensified and began to stabilise by the end of the 1st millennium BCE. Notable developments include the Han Chinese occupation of Yunnan, Lingnan and Bắc Bộ, the expansion of the Nanhai maritime trade involving the occupied southern coast of what is today China, the growth of Indo-Roman maritime trade, and sailors beginning to use the monsoon winds to travel bidirectionally across the Bay of Bengal between Peninsular India and the Thai-Malay Peninsula (Figure 1.2).²² Nanhai and Indian trade sought a range of animal, plant and mineral resources from Southeast Asian forests and seas in exchange for Chinese and Indian products. Consequently, the quantity of exotic goods available to Southeast Asian communities

¹⁹ Nam C. Kim, 'Lasting Monuments and Durable Institutions: Labor, Urbanism, and Statehood in Northern Vietnam and Beyond', *Journal of Archaeological Research* 21, no. 3 (2013): 251; Nam C. Kim, *The Origins of Ancient Vietnam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 169, 181–82 & 244–45; Carter and Kim, 'Globalization at the Dawn of History', 743.

²⁰ Bellina and Glover, 'Archaeology of Early Contact', 73–75; Bellina and Silapanth, 'Khao Sam Kaeo and the Upper Thai Peninsula', 385–91; Bérénice Bellina et al., 'The Development of Coastal Polities in the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula', in *Before Siam: Essays in Art and Archaeology*, ed. Nicolas Revire and Stephen A. Murphy (Bangkok: River Books & The Siam Society, 2014), 72–79.

²¹ William Southworth, 'The Coastal States of Champa', in *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, ed. Ian C. Glover and Peter Bellwood (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 212; Lâm Thị Mỹ Dung, 'Central Vietnam during the Period from 500 BCE to CE 500', in *Early Interactions between South and Southeast Asia: Reflections on Cross-Cultural Exchange*, ed. Pierre-Yves Manguin, A. Mani, and Geoff Wade (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2011), 11–12.

²² Wang Gungwu, 'The Nanhai Trade: A Study of the Early History of Chinese Trade in the South China Sea', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 31, no. 2 (1958): 16–31; Wisseman Christie, 'State Formation in Early Maritime Southeast Asia', 251–53; Bellina and Glover, 'Archaeology of Early Contact', 70–71; Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 31 & 40.

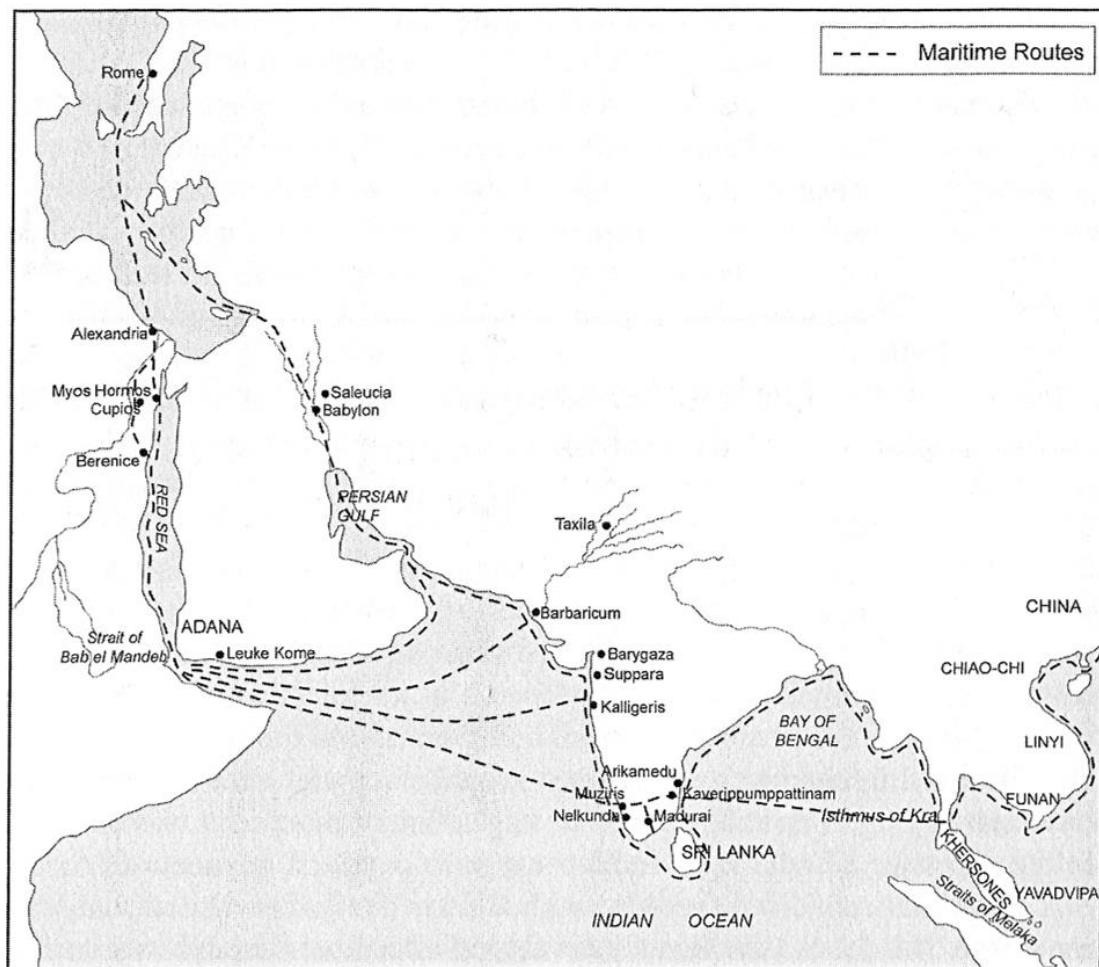


Figure 1.2 Maritime trade routes connecting Mediterranean area, India, Southeast Asia and China, c.100-600 CE. Reproduced from Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, Map 2.1, with the permission of Rowman & Littlefield; permission conveyed through Copyright Clearance Center, Inc.

increased considerably, especially on the coasts. Han Chinese ceramics, bronze mirrors, seals and seal impressions have been retrieved from late Đông Sơn and late Sa Huỳnh contexts and at Khao Sam Kaeo.²³ Chinese-type brick tombs and ceramic funerary models are known from Han-controlled Yunnan, Lingnan and Bắc Bộ.²⁴ South Asian ceramics, semiprecious stone beads, seals with Indic inscriptions, and regionally-made knobbed bronzeware following South Asian forms in other materials, have been found at Khao Sam Kaeo and sites in Vietnam, Java and Bali around the turn of the 1st

²³ Bellwood, 'Southeast Asia before History', 125 & 131; Higham, 'Mainland Southeast Asia from the Neolithic to the Iron Age', 58; Southworth, 'The Coastal States of Champa', 212–13; Bellina and Silapanth, 'Weaving Cultural Identities', 278; Bellina et al., 'The Development of Coastal Polities in the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula', 77.

²⁴ Tống Trung Tín, 'Archaeological Aspects of Han Dynasty Rule in the Early First Millennium AD', in *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, ed. Ian C. Glover and Peter Bellwood (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 202–3; Institute of Minority Ethnic Culture of Dali College, *Dali: A History of 4000 Years*, trans. Shaoxian Bu (Kunming: Yunnan University Press, 2009), 21–22; Allard, 'Globalization at the Crossroads', 459–66.

millennium CE.²⁵ By the early centuries CE, Roman coins and Indo-Roman intaglios, pendants, cameos and finger-rings, and possibly beads from the Iranian world, have been found along with Indian coins, beads, seals, steatite containers and ceramics, including spouted *kuṇḍikā* water-pots and sherds inscribed with Indic characters, at many sites in Lower and Upper Myanmar, Central Thailand, the Thai-Malay Peninsula, southern and central Vietnam, and the Indonesian Archipelago as far as Bali.²⁶ There is also evidence for the construction of wooden buildings roofed with semi-cylindrical tiles and circular eave tiles following a Chinese design at the 1st-3rd century CE early Cham sites of Trà Kiệu and Gò Cẩm in Central Vietnam, and from early Pyu contexts near Tagaung (တကောင်း) and at Śrī Kṣetra (သရေခေတ္တရာ) in Upper Myanmar, which are less closely dated.²⁷ From the same time frame, grooved and perforated terracotta tiles represent a different but similarly novel roofing system at Óc Eo in the Mekong Delta, possibly following a South Asian design.²⁸ This combination of exotica and novel architectural technologies, clearly indicates the interconnectedness of a continuous long-distance network of routes linking the Mediterranean area with South, Southeast and East Asia. This has been recognised as representing early globalisation, a process

²⁵ Wisseman Christie, 'Trade and State Formation in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra', 41; Bellina and Glover, 'Archaeology of Early Contact', 75–79; Bellina and Silapanth, 'Weaving Cultural Identities', 280–82; Lâm, 'Central Vietnam during the Period from 500 BCE to CE 500', 9–13; Bellina et al., 'The Development of Coastal Polities in the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula', 76 & 79–82.

²⁶ Himanshu Prabha Ray, *The Winds of Change: Buddhism and the Maritime Links of Early Southeast Asia* (Delhi & New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 97 & 111–12; Bellina and Glover, 'Archaeology of Early Contact', 71–72 & 80–83; Phasook Indrawooth, 'The Archaeology of the Early Buddhist Kingdoms of Thailand', in *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, ed. Ian C. Glover and Peter Bellwood (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 122–25; Manguin, 'Archaeology of Early Maritime Polities', 286; Brigitte Borell, Bérénice Bellina, and Chaisuwan Boonyarit, 'Contacts between the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula and the Mediterranean World', in *Before Siam: Essays in Art and Archaeology*, ed. Nicolas Revire and Stephen A. Murphy (Bangkok: River Books & The Siam Society, 2014), 98–117; Bellina et al., 'The Development of Coastal Polities in the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula', 81–82.

²⁷ Ian C. Glover, 'Decorated Roof Tiles from Ancient Simhapura - an Early Cham City in Central Vietnam', in *รวมบทความทางวิชาการ ๗๒ พระราชทานอาจารย์ ศาสตราจารย์หม่อมเจ้าสุภัทรดิศ ดิศกุล / Studies and Reflections on Asian Art History and Archaeology: Essays in Honour of H.S.H. Professor Subhadradis Diskul* (Bangkok: Phinnēt Printing, 1995), 311–22; Ian C. Glover and Nguyễn Kim Dung, 'Excavations at Gò Cẩm, Quảng Nam, 2000-3: Linyi and the Emergence of the Cham Kingdoms', in *The Cham of Vietnam: History, Society and Art*, ed. Trần Kỳ Phương and Bruce M. Lockhart (Singapore: NUS Press, 2011), 61 & 65–77; Elizabeth H. Moore and Win Maung, 'Change in the Landscape of First Millennium AD Myanmar', *SOAS Bulletin of Burma Research* 4, no. 2 (2006): 20–23; Elizabeth H. Moore and Nyunt Han, 'New Finds at Tagaung, an Ancient City of Myanmar', *SPAFA Journal* 16, no. 3 (2006): 8–12; Elizabeth H. Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar* (Bangkok: River Books, 2007), 190–91; Charlotte Galloway, 'Sri Ksetra Museum Collection Inventory Version 1.0' (Canberra: Australian National University, 2016), unnumbered document pages 302-03 & 376-77 of 508.

²⁸ Manguin, 'Archeology of Early Maritime Polities', 291–92.

and phenomenon known to have the potential to transform participant cultures.²⁹ The beginnings of interregional shipping along established oceanic routes greatly enhanced the potential geographical reach of individuals engaging in long-distance travel, especially the ships' crews themselves.³⁰

The nature of intercultural contact in this period clearly differed between Chinese socio-political domination in the north and the socioeconomic character of connections to the south.³¹ Nonetheless, both encounters had significant impacts on subsequent sociocultural developments and local cultural expression. In the north, resistance to Chinese military and administrative control continued alongside the engagement of some elites with Chinese cultural forms and involvement in Han administration, but the allegiance of both local elites and non-elite populations continued to vary for the next millennium. Local continuities with the bronze drum tradition are seen in some parts of Lingnan and Bắc Bộ into the 6th century, alongside the emergence of a Han-Việt social identity, and a similarly variable engagement with Chinese political systems is seen in Dian areas too.³² In coastal areas to the south, the connection to extra-regional trade networks appears to have spurred the development of multiple port settlements, acting as entrepôts connecting merchant shipping with supplies of valuable natural resources channelled from inland and local coastal networks, and supplying provisions for onward travel.³³ It is also likely that annual patterns of long-distance trade developed from merchants realising the economic benefits of using monsoon winds to accomplish return trips within a year, and this may mean that ships stayed longer at some ports to wait for the monsoon to reverse direction.³⁴ Such changes to the quantity and patterns of trade interactions will have intensified intercultural and interpersonal contact between locals and

²⁹ Bellina and Glover, 'Archaeology of Early Contact'; Carter and Kim, 'Globalization at the Dawn of History', 738–45.

³⁰ See Chapter 4 for a consideration of some of the active participants in long-distance travel from this period onwards, for whom we begin to know more about their biography and motivations for travel.

³¹ Carter and Kim, 'Globalization at the Dawn of History', 732–33 & 744.

³² Francis Allard, 'China's Early Impact on Eastern Yunnan: Incorporation, Acculturation, and the Convergence of Evidence', *Journal of Indo-Pacific Archaeology* 35 (2015): 28–34; Catherine Churchman, *The People Between the Rivers: The Rise and Fall of a Bronze Drum Culture, 200-750 CE* (Lanham, Boulder, New York & London: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016), 31–35.

³³ Wisseman Christie, 'Trade and State Formation in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra', 54–55; Manguin, 'Archaeology of Early Maritime Polities', 283–93; Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 39.

³⁴ Bellina and Silapanth, 'Weaving Cultural Identities', 261.

visitors, providing a social space for cultural exchange. In a reconfiguration of earlier ideas on the 'Indianisation' of Southeast Asian cultures, scholars have come to recognise the primary role of local elites in driving the sociocultural changes visible in the subsequent Indic material culture of these early historic societies. They are understood to have engaged South Asian ritual specialists, brahmins or Buddhist monks, perhaps from about the 3rd century CE, as part of socio-political strategies to enhance or reinforce their social status, and selectively appropriated aspects of Indic religiopolitical ideologies that articulated with pre-existing cultural systems.³⁵ Local variation in these cultural systems is therefore understood to explain the multiple Southeast Asian expressions of Buddhism and Brahmanism,³⁶ both being ritual frameworks demonstrating their adaptability in accommodating local beliefs as they spread into Peninsular India during the same time frame.³⁷ It is possible that social elites also sought to demonstrate their worldly connectedness and the ability, as before, to access and engage the exotic.³⁸

1.3. Seeing the 'foreigner': the need for a methodology

In this broad overview, I have sought to highlight the growing intercultural interactions involving long distance connections – growing in the distances involved, intensity of interactions, and potential membership of the category of 'foreigner'. It is against this

³⁵ Opinions differ on whether this engagement occurred primarily through the mechanism of Southeast Asian elites inviting South Asian monks and brahmins to travel to their polities, or through Southeast Asians travelling to South Asia. See: Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 51–60; Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 21–25; Manguin, 'Archaeology of Early Maritime Polities', 294–305; Johannes Bronkhorst, 'The Spread of Sanskrit in Southeast Asia', in *Early Interactions between South and Southeast Asia: Reflections on Cross-Cultural Exchange*, ed. Pierre-Yves Manguin, A. Mani, and Geoff Wade (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2011), 265–71; Carter and Kim, 'Globalization at the Dawn of History', 733 & 739–41; Stephen A. Murphy and Leedom Lefferts, 'Globalizing Indian Religions and Southeast Asian Localisms: Incentives for the Adoption of Buddhism and Brahmanism in First Millennium CE Southeast Asia', in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, ed. Tamar Hodos (London & New York: Routledge, 2017), 771.

³⁶ Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 55–59.

³⁷ Robert DeCaroli, *Haunting the Buddha: Indian Popular Religions and the Formation of Buddhism* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 143–71; Hermann Kulke, 'Indian colonies, Indianization or cultural convergence? Reflections on the changing image of India's role in South-East Asia', in *Onderzoek in Zuidoost-Azië: Agenda's voor de Jaren Negentig*, ed. Henk Schulte Nordholt, Semaian 3 (Leiden: Vakgroep Talen en Culturen van Zuidoost-Azië en Oceanië, Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden, 1990), 22–32.

³⁸ Bérénice Bellina and Ian C. Glover, 'The Earliest Iconographic and Archaeological Evidence for Animal and Cultural Transfers between South and Southeast Asia', in *Penser, Dire et Représenter l'animal Dans Le Monde Indien*, ed. Nalini Balbir and Georges-Jean Pinault (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 2009), 387–89; Carter and Kim, 'Globalization at the Dawn of History', 739.

background of important sociocultural and political changes following initial engagement with non-local forms of religion, statecraft and aspects of culture, and the role of long-distance intercultural connections in these, that artistic representations claimed to represent ‘foreigners’ physically present in Southeast Asia during this early period acquire their potential significance.³⁹ Our sources for understanding these long-distance connections in early Southeast Asia have included textual sources from China and South Asia, epigraphic sources in Southeast Asian contexts, provenance analyses of archaeological exotica, and scholarly inferences from stylistic comparisons of an iconographic, architectural, literary or palaeographic nature. Locally-produced artistic representations of apparently non-local figures could therefore potentially provide an additional, but so far barely explored, local source of information on these early long-distance connections and perhaps some of those physically travelling such distances – a source of information that, appropriately interpreted, may contribute under-represented local perspectives to our historical reconstructions.⁴⁰

³⁹ Archaeological evidence for the establishment of stable long-distance connections and the associated sociocultural changes that followed, makes potential representations of long-distance travellers from this early period of particular interest, and it is these that form the focus of the present research. Representations from later centuries, being more numerous and accompanied by more textual material to assist interpretation, are nonetheless of great interest methodologically and it is intended that future research will explore these also. Among this material are representations in Bagan temples thought to represent Mongols (Claudine Bautze-Picron, ‘Bagan Murals and the Sino-Tibetan World’, in *Buddhist Encounters and Identities Across East Asia*, ed. Ann Heirman, Carmen Meinert, and Christoph Anderl (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2018), 21–51), Angkorian reliefs with Cham or Malyaṅ, ‘Syam Kuk’ and Chinese (Bernard Philippe Groslier, ‘Inscriptions du Bayon’, in *Le Bayon*, Publications de l’École française d’Extrême-Orient: Mémoires Archéologiques, III–2 (Paris: École française d’Extrême-Orient, 1973), 156–158; Groslier, ‘Les Syām Kuk des bas-reliefs d’Angkor Vat’, in *Orients pour Georges Condominas* (Toulouse & Paris: Editions Privat & Sudestasië, 1981), 107–26), figurines from Majapahit (H.R.A. Muller, *Javanese Terracottas: Terra Incognita* (Lochem: Uitgeversmaatschappij De Tijdstroom B.V., 1978)), and possibly Cham ‘slaves’ on 12th-13th century Vietnamese ceramics (John Stevenson, ‘Ivory-Glazed Wares of Ly and Tran’, in *Vietnamese Ceramics: A Separate Tradition*, ed. John Stevenson and John Guy (Chicago (IL) & Boulder (CO): Art Media Resources & Avery Press, 1997), 118–19).

⁴⁰ Some archaeological exotica demonstrate an impressive capacity for travelling long distances, but the identity of the people and mechanisms involved in their transportation often remain unclear. Consider, for example, the early Indian figurine excavated at Pompeii from beneath the volcanic ash of the 79 CE eruption, interpreted as a *yakṣi* (see e.g. Mirella Levi d’Ancona, ‘An Indian Statuette from Pompeii’, *Artibus Asiae* 13, no. 3 (1950): 166–80), or the c.6th century Buddha figure excavated from a Viking site on the Swedish island of Helgö (see e.g. Bo Gyllensvärd, ‘The Buddha found at Helgö’, in *Excavations at Helgö XVI: Exotic and Sacral Finds from Helgö* (Stockholm: Kungliga Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien & Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2004), 11–28). These are no doubt imported objects that represented divine figures in their places of production, but the details of their transportation, including the number and identity of the human transporters involved, and how far each travelled, is unknown. Locally-produced figures identifiable as representing ‘foreigners’ may provide additional insights on the possibility and extent of individual long-distance travel and interpersonal contact. Each form of evidence contributes different perspectives, but the latter is the particular focus of this research.

However, a methodology for critically approaching the recognition and interpretation of apparent ‘foreigners’ in ancient art has not been articulated in a unified discussion, while the focussed study of such representations from premodern Southeast Asian cultural contexts has barely begun.⁴¹ Productive discussions of many of the relevant interpretive issues have developed alongside the study of specific corpuses of ancient art from other parts of the world, but the resulting methodological and interpretive similarities do not appear to have been brought together for theoretical consideration. There has therefore been very little reference to these methodological approaches in the interpretation of claimed ‘foreigner’ representations from Southeast Asia, and notably the sociological concept of ‘the Other’ is virtually absent. So far, assertions of identity have mostly relied, with a few exceptions, on the subjectivity of personal opinions advanced without a clear methodological framework. This has meant that the same representation has been assigned multiple identities by different commentators, but with little theoretical comment on why these discrepancies arise.

This thesis seeks to begin to unpick some of the issues associated with interpreting such ancient visual material, to develop a methodological framework that can offer a more informed approach. The methodology may not always allow the interpretation of identity for the represented figures but should allow greater confidence in identifying figures with an appropriate level of specificity, and to recognise when interpretive limits have been reached. This permits a more measured assessment of the significance of the figures in their iconographic context. The sources used for developing the methodology are necessarily multidisciplinary, drawing on appropriate materials for examining the sociological, cultural, biological, geographical and ideological aspects of the perception of foreignness. There are further historical, art historical and archaeological considerations when applying the methodology to ancient visual material.

The structure of this thesis reflects this progression from considering the theoretical basis for perceptions and representations of foreignness, to the development of an interpretive methodology, then trialling and reflecting on its application with selected early historic Southeast Asian material. In this way, Chapter 2 will consider the

⁴¹ A rare example is Bautze-Picron, ‘Bagan Murals and the Sino-Tibetan World’.

theoretical framework of identity, difference and otherness in the contexts of ethnicity and nationality, and the construction and reification of foreignness as a representation of perceived difference and cultural or geographical distance. Chapter 3 will then survey existing discussions of how foreignness and foreign identities have been represented in ancient art, drawing especially on three cultural contexts where scholarly discussions are sufficiently developed to have exposed and examined some of the important interpretive issues. Additional issues relevant to early Southeast Asia, as a space of significant engagement with non-local cultural forms, will also be considered. Chapter 4 will develop this Southeast Asian contextualisation by highlighting the extent of long-distance connectedness, intercultural encounters and inter-polity traffic, as a prelude to three case studies. Chapter 5 will study a geographical and temporal cluster of claimed representations of 'foreigners' at the pre-Angkorian site of Sambor Prei Kuk in Cambodia. Chapter 6 will consider the significance of a repeated association of foreign-dressed figures with horses in several cultural contexts of the early-mid 1st millennium CE. Chapter 7 will then scrutinise a group of sculptures from Dvāravatī contexts in Thailand which have been assigned a range of identities, and critically assess what can be said of their identity in the absence of a clear iconographic context and based primarily on their appearance. Chapter 8 will conclude the thesis by reflecting on the methodology and its application with early Southeast Asian material, and how it can contribute new insights and suggest additional directions of research on Southeast Asia's past.

2. Foreignness: a theoretical framework

Foreignness in the ancient world was, as it is today even in the politico-legal framework of nation-states, a problematic and subjective status, one that is perceived and ascribed, contextual and contested. Even so, studies of ancient textual material have made significant progress in recovering and reconstructing attitudes towards perceived foreigners in several cultural contexts. For example, it is understood that by the late 1st millennium BCE, the Brahmanical elite of northern India had established the hierarchical socio-ritual framework of the *varṇāśramadharmā* which elevated *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas* above other social classes, but which simultaneously excluded the culturally foreign and ritually impure *mlecchā*, a category that included the ‘barbarian hordes’ perceived to be pouring into India from the northwest.⁴² Similarly, from the ethnocentric perspective of the Zhou dynasty (1046-256 BCE) court, the culturally non-Chinese populations across its borders were considered uncivilised, even subhuman, on account of behaviours judged to be improper.⁴³ This apparent structuring of intercultural and interpersonal difference across borders is seen elsewhere in the ancient world, and is considered by many to be a universal characteristic of human cultures.⁴⁴ However, we should recognise the analytical role of structuralist approaches in presuming the existence of such binary oppositions, approaches that originated in European anthropological and psychological inquiry.⁴⁵ Alternative conceptual frameworks may develop in the future but at this time, the conceptual framework of otherness offers a widely-used and productive framework for understanding foreignness.⁴⁶

⁴² Aloka Parasher, *Mlecchas in Early India: A Study in Attitudes towards Outsiders Upto AD 600* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1991).

⁴³ Yuri Pines, ‘Beasts or Humans: Pre-Imperial Origins of the “Sino-Barbarian” Dichotomy’, in *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World*, ed. Reuven Amitai and Michael Biran (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2005), 59–102.

⁴⁴ Raymond Corbey and Joep Leerssen, ‘Studying Alterity: Backgrounds and Perspectives’, in *Alterity, Identity, Image: Selves and Others in Society and Scholarship*, ed. Raymond Corbey and Joep Leerssen (Amsterdam & Atlanta (GA): Rodopi, 1991), vi–viii.

⁴⁵ Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (London & New York: Routledge, 1978), 355–60.

⁴⁶ Corbey and Leerssen, ‘Studying Alterity’, xiii–xvii.

2.1. Otherness and foreignness

The concept of otherness or alterity, used widely in the fields of psychoanalysis, anthropology and cultural studies, expresses the perception of difference in those with which we, as the Self, do not identify.⁴⁷ Indeed, the perception of Others is instrumental in defining the identity of the Self. The perception of otherness arises due to conceptual boundaries that seem to differentiate the Other from the Self, the out-group from the in-group, 'them' from 'us'.⁴⁸ This leads to the sense of belonging or not belonging.⁴⁹ Conceptual boundaries are understood to develop due to social conditioning processes in early life, where growing up under the care and influence of a family group, and as part of a community, derives a cognitive framework where aspects of appearance and behaviour become seen as normal or correct.⁵⁰ This socialisation of the cognitive framework promotes group cohesion and cultural identity because people share notions of what is normal; we see this with language, gesture and dress.

The framework of otherness enables us to understand many aspects of identity including ethnicity, social groups, gender and belief systems, which may have spatial, cultural, moral, ritual or temporal dimensions.⁵¹ Foreignness is a form of otherness where the Other is perceived as strange or unfamiliar, as having a distant or non-local origin, and implies a qualitative uncommonness in its present context. These are clearly not intrinsic characteristics, but perceptual, relational and contextual.⁵² Foreignness is a perceptual status, one that is ascribed by the Self as percipient. It is a relational status, because of the conceptual boundary between Self and Other, familiar

⁴⁷ J. Mitchell Miller, 'Otherness', in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, ed. Lisa M. Given, vol. 2 (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi & Singapore: SAGE Publications, 2008), 587.

⁴⁸ Giuseppe Sciortino, 'Ethnicity, Race, Nationhood, Foreignness, and Many Other Things: Prolegomena to a Cultural Sociology of Difference-Based Interactions', in *The Oxford Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, ed. Jeffrey C. Alexander, Ronald N. Jacobs, and Philip Smith (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 373–78; Rebecca Saunders, 'Theoretical Dialogue', in *The Concept of the Foreign: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue*, ed. Rebecca Saunders (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2003), 3.

⁴⁹ Saunders, 'Theoretical Dialogue', 19–24; Saskia Sassen, *Guests and Aliens* (New York: The New Press, 1999), 84–85; Corbey and Leerssen, 'Studying Alterity', vii.

⁵⁰ Saunders, 'Theoretical Dialogue', 13; Corinna Albrecht, 'Foreigner', in *Imagology - The Cultural Construction of Literary Representations of National Characteristics: A Critical Survey*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, *Studia Imagologica* 13 (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2007), 327.

⁵¹ David Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion: Society and Difference in the West* (London & New York: Routledge, 1995), 49–51; Saunders, 'Theoretical Dialogue', 3–5; Miller, 'Otherness', 587.

⁵² Albrecht, 'Foreigner', 326–27; Saunders, 'Theoretical Dialogue', 3.

and unfamiliar, local and distant. And it is a contextual status, because the same person or object may be perceived as foreign in one place but not another. Perceptual, relational, contextual.

However, the conceptual boundary and the binary opposition it structures are not fixed or stable. For example, the perceived degree of foreignness may vary with the ability to communicate, linguistically or with gestures, as it seems to reduce the distance across the conceptual boundary.⁵³ The ability to communicate is enhanced by learning the language, even partially, or speaking a related language. This suggests the way that foreignness is perceived would vary for visitors who remain only a short time, remain longer, who settle and join the community, or who make return visits. Alternatively, the local group may adopt certain characteristics initially associated with the foreign if they are considered beneficial or benign and are compatible with the local context.⁵⁴ In terms of the conceptual boundary, such 'localisation' processes may redefine foreign attributes as local, thereby reducing perceived difference so that a more theoretically borderline position is approached. Furthermore, the unfamiliarity associated with foreignness implies incomplete knowledge which, if completed using assumptions, might derive a positive, neutral or negative characterisation.⁵⁵ Such processes can lead to foreign people or items being perceived as exotic and desirable, or ominous and threatening, depending on the local value system. This indicates that foreignness, as well as being a perceptual, relational and contextual status, is itself value-neutral.

2.2. Ethnicity and ethnic difference

Ethnicity is an important aspect of identity that can also be related to conceptual boundaries separating Self and Other. A definition of ethnicity has proven difficult to agree on and scholars consequently debate what contributes to a sense of ethnic identity, and their relative importance. It is sometimes misunderstood as a fixed and

⁵³ Georg Simmel, *On Individuality and Social Forms*, ed. David N. Levine (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 143–44; Saunders, 'Theoretical Dialogue', 10–11.

⁵⁴ Saunders, 'Theoretical Dialogue', 7–8; See Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 49–55 for a discussion of these ideas in Southeast Asian contexts.

⁵⁵ Saunders, 'Theoretical Dialogue', 7–8; Mark Liechty, 'Selective Exclusion: Foreigners, Foreign Goods, and Foreignness in Modern Nepali History', *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 2, no. 1 (1997): 44–48.

objective identity or is assumed to be simply a preferred term avoiding the problematics of 'race' and 'tribe'.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, there is significant consensus that ethnicity is a multidimensional identity construction that is not fixed but continuously negotiated in different sociocultural and interpersonal contexts. Ethnicity is widely considered to involve shared cultural features including language and religion, and a belief in shared history and origins involving attachment to a geographical location and kinship-derived phenotypic relatedness.⁵⁷ Each of these may relate to conceptual boundaries that permit the articulation of ethnic identity and negotiation of ethnic difference.⁵⁸

It is theorised that these components of ethnicity represent its deep-seated construction, while characteristics like dress and language may be superficial secondary indicators of the underlying ethnic identity.⁵⁹ These help to recognise ethnic similarity or difference, and are therefore used in articulating and negotiating inter-ethnic boundaries.⁶⁰ They can be understood as relating to the socially-conditioned cognitive framework, discussed above, that developed notions of normative behaviour and appearance during childhood, and which therefore enhances a sense of group membership. The use of dress, including garment types, fashions of wearing, textile patterns and colours, accessories, bodily adornment, hairstyles and body modification, show huge variety and many studies have demonstrated that they can function in

⁵⁶ Steve Fenton, *Ethnicity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003), 14–20 & 52–90; Stephen Spencer, *Race and Ethnicity: Culture, Identity and Representation* (London & New York: Routledge, 2006), 47–52; Richard Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and Explorations*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi & Singapore: SAGE Publications, 2008), 17–24, 46–51 & 77–86.

⁵⁷ Phenotype describes the observable characteristics of the physical body. At the macro-level appropriate to interpersonal observation, rather than characteristics not visible to the unaided eye, we might include variation in, for example, stature, skin colouration, facial shape, hair colour and straightness, and eye colour.

⁵⁸ Manning Nash, *The Cauldron of Ethnicity in the Modern World* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 10–14; Thomas H. Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London & Sterling: Pluto Press, 2002), 12–15 & 34–39; Fenton, *Ethnicity*, 20–23 & 106–12; Spencer, *Race and Ethnicity*, 8–10 & 45–47; Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity*, 10–15 & 55–62; Sciortino, 'Ethnicity, Race, Nationhood, Foreignness', 372–80; Joanne B. Eicher, 'Introduction: Dress as Expression of Ethnic Identity', in *Dress and Ethnicity: Change Across Space and Time*, ed. Joanne B. Eicher (Oxford & Washington DC: Berg, 1995), 3–5.

⁵⁹ Nash, *Cauldron of Ethnicity*, 10–12; Eicher, 'Dress as an Expression of Ethnic Identity', 5.

⁶⁰ Joanne B. Eicher and Tonye V. Erekosima, 'Why Do They Call It Kalabari? Cultural Authentication and the Demarcation of Ethnic Identity', in *Dress and Ethnicity: Change Across Space and Time*, ed. Joanne B. Eicher (Oxford & Washington DC: Berg, 1995), 144–45.

expressing ethnic identity and difference.⁶¹ Language, including gestural communication, is clearly significant for group cohesion and because it is usually learned from one's community during childhood it implies long-standing membership of the group.⁶² Physical appearance relates in part to parentage so similarities in appearance may be interpreted as visually communicating something about possible kinship or relatedness. Each of these is also relevant to perceptions of foreignness and will be discussed further below.⁶³

2.3. Ethnicity, nationality and foreignness

Foreignness has a politico-legal meaning today involving nationality, citizenship and geographical borders, as well as the metaphorical meanings relating to unfamiliarity and distance discussed above. The politico-legal definition of foreignness prioritises reference to physical (if sometimes disputed) territorial boundaries between nation-states rather than conceptual ones. In this framework, a person's identity, their nationality, is tied to citizenship status and legal rights conferred by the state, which represents the politico-legal counterpart of conceptually belonging.⁶⁴

However, the geopolitical formations known as nation-states have a specific historical origin with European modernity, and spread with increasing globalisation and European colonialism.⁶⁵ In many cases, the establishment and demarcation of territorial boundaries represents a physical manifestation of the realisation of ethnic difference, as determined by the dominant ethnic groups that claimed historical association with, or ownership of, the territory, sometimes related to a traditional ethnic 'homeland'.⁶⁶ This made manifest the aspect of ethnicity relating to a belief in shared history and origins, and means that there is often a complex relationship between ethnicity, nationality and politico-legal foreignness today. The idea of

⁶¹ For example, see the many studies from various global contexts in Joanne B. Eicher, ed., *Dress and Ethnicity: Change Across Space and Time* (Oxford & Washington DC: Berg, 1995).

⁶² Nash, *Cauldron of Ethnicity*, 12.

⁶³ See Section 2.4.

⁶⁴ Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Malden & Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1986), 135–38; Sassen, *Guests and Aliens*, 116–24.

⁶⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised (London & New York: Verso, 2006), 114–32; Saunders, 'Theoretical Dialogue', 4–5; Sassen, *Guests and Aliens*, 33.

⁶⁶ Smith, *Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 28–29 & 183–90; Sassen, *Guests and Aliens*, 77–79 & 96.

territory and boundaries of course predates the nation-state by some margin, although there are often difficulties in defining their precise location and character in the ancient landscape, how they were understood by wider society or the political allegiance of local inhabitants.⁶⁷ Boundaries will have been conceptualised differently by nomadic and settled groups. It is in relation to this slightly less well-defined geopolitical organisation of landscape that the term ‘foreignness’ is sometimes used to denote something analogous to an ‘international’ status. Nonetheless, perceived associations with specific parts of the subdivided landscape will have certainly contributed to notions of belonging and foreignness, and to the geospatial distribution of premodern populations and ethnic groups.

2.4. Perception of foreignness: difference, distance and unfamiliarity

We have seen that ethnicity is important in personal and group identity and has contributed to the formation of nation-states which underscore modern definitions of foreignness. Aspects of ethnicity include language, religion, a belief in shared origins and ancestral relationships with landscapes, dress, and cultural associations of phenotypic similarity. These are involved in the articulation and negotiation of ethnic identity and difference across conceptual boundaries that developed during childhood due to socialisation processes.

The socially-conditioned cognitive framework of course influences how social situations are experienced and interpreted. Where something is commonplace, usual or normative in a given context, it may be perceived and experienced as ‘normal’. Conversely, where something is uncommon, unusual or atypical in a context, it may be perceived and experienced as ‘strange’.⁶⁸ This characterisation as ‘normal’ or ‘strange’ is therefore understood to occur at the time of encounter and follows from the structuring of the cognitive framework that processes it. The perception and experience are subjective but determine the characterisation and cognitive encoding

⁶⁷ Daniel-Erasmus Khan, ‘Territory and Boundaries’, in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of International Law*, ed. Bardo Fassbender and Anne Peters (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 226–33.

⁶⁸ Albrecht, ‘Foreigner’, 326.

of the Other – *as Other*.⁶⁹ These are the perceptual, relational and contextual aspects of foreignness discussed earlier.

The contextual uncommonness of the foreign relates to distance, whether geographical or cultural. This is because distributional patterns lead to relative commonness in one location but uncommonness in another. Such geographical patterning underlies exchange and trade relationships because the uneven distribution of a material or product means it may have increased desirability and value in locations where it is uncommon. Exotica traded over long distances may be utilised by social elites as symbols of status, due to the ascription of value to its rarity owing to its distant origins.⁷⁰ Conversely, mistrust may result from the unfamiliarity associated with distant origins and lead to a rejection of foreign goods.⁷¹ On a ritual level, materials or objects gained from a distant source sometimes acquire a mystical significance and power through their association with a ritually-charged distant location.⁷²

The same is true with many of the features of ethnicity. They show geographical patterning, so that their difference can lead to a perception of otherness, while their contextual uncommonness or association with distance may lead to the perception of foreignness. Perceptual, relational, contextual.

The discernible geographical patterning of language and language family distributions and interrelationships has led to their use in helping to reconstruct human migrations.⁷³ This indicates a recognised relationship between language and geography, although there are complicating factors. When an individual travels a long distance, the difference of their language, perhaps even from a different language family, may mean speech is unintelligible and perceived as foreign.

⁶⁹ Manfred Beller, 'Perception, Image, Imagology', in *Imagology - The Cultural Construction of Literary Representations of National Characteristics: A Critical Survey*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, *Studia Imagologica* 13 (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2007), 4–7.

⁷⁰ Elizabeth M. Brumfiel and Timothy K. Earle, 'Specialization, Exchange and Complex Societies: An Introduction', in *Specialization, Exchange and Complex Societies*, ed. Elizabeth M. Brumfiel and Timothy K. Earle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 7–9.

⁷¹ Liechty, 'Selective Exclusion', 44–48.

⁷² Mary W. Helms, *Ulysses' Sail: An Ethnographic Odyssey of Power, Knowledge, and Geographical Distance* (Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 1988), 111–15.

⁷³ Peter Bellwood, *First Migrants: Ancient Migration in Global Perspective* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 22–30.

Geographical patterning of human phenotypic variation has understandably been a controversial subject in the past, because it is commonly but uncritically equated with the problematic concept of 'race'. Phenotypic difference is certainly objectively observable and measurable between individuals, but comparisons involving more than two people inherently require a level of generalisation, whether statistically or through stereotype, and problems may arise if this generalisation is not recognised during interpretation of apparent differences. Regarding 'race', genetic analyses have demonstrated great biological variety within claimed 'races', that there is no evidence they have ever been genetically distinct populations, that phenotypic similarities do not necessarily imply relatedness, and that it can instead be understood as a socially-constructed category.⁷⁴ Recent studies have shown that phenotypic variation is often correlated with climatic or environmental factors which themselves show geographical patterning, arising as ecogeographic variation in ancestral populations; alternatively, the patterning may be due to a gene's proximity on the DNA to another which is adaptively significant, so that the two were inherited together.⁷⁵ For example, skin colour shows latitudinal variation, relating to underlying variation in melanin deposition in the skin which is protective against the higher levels of solar ultraviolet radiation experienced near the equator.⁷⁶ Nasal shape shows variation with temperature and humidity because the nasal passages help regulate moisture of inspired air entering the lungs.⁷⁷ Hair form, hair colour and facial hair growth are less obviously related to environmental selection pressures, but are still recognised to show particular geographical patterning, and are possibly co-transmitted with adaptively significant genes.⁷⁸ Geographical patterning of single phenotypic traits may

⁷⁴ Stephen Molnar, *Human Variation: Races, Types, and Ethnic Groups*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs (N.J.): Prentice-Hall, 1983), 1–6 & 16–24; Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity*, 80–81; Alan R. Templeton, 'Human Races: A Genetic and Evolutionary Perspective', *American Anthropologist* 100, no. 3 (1998): 632–50; Anne Morning, 'Does Genomics Challenge the Social Construction of Race?', *Sociological Theory* 32, no. 3 (2014): 189–207.

⁷⁵ Graham Coop et al., 'The Role of Geography in Human Adaptation', *PLoS Genetics* 5, no. 6 (2009): 9–12.

⁷⁶ Nina G. Jablonski and George Chaplin, 'The Evolution of Human Skin Coloration', *Journal of Human Evolution* 39 (2000): 58–64.

⁷⁷ Marlijn L. Noback, Katerina Harvati, and Fred Spoor, 'Climate-Related Variation of the Human Nasal Cavity', *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 145, no. 4 (2011): 10–14; Arslan A. Zaidi et al., 'Investigating the Case of Human Nose Shape and Climate Adaptation', *PLoS Genetics* 13, no. 3 (2017): 11–18.

⁷⁸ Raymond Firth, *Symbols Public and Private* (Ithaca (NY): Cornell University Press, 1973), 265–66; Molnar, *Human Variation*, 75–76; Sarah E. Medland et al., 'Common Variants in the Trichohyalin Gene

form clines and clusters when mapped,⁷⁹ but further phenotypic variety is generated when patterns for multiple traits are combined. These remain only statistical generalisations of measured distributions; because phenotypic traits have genetic bases they can be inherited, so that the geographical patterning of phenotypic variation in ancient populations has been subsequently modified through migration, settlement and marriage practices. Nonetheless, geographical patterning of phenotypic variation remains observable and measurable. When an individual travels a long distance and has a different combination of phenotypic traits to what is more common locally, this may lead to a perception of otherness, while their contextual uncommonness may lead to the perception of foreignness.

Dress and adornment are widely recognised to function in social signalling – they communicate information about identity, social role and group membership. This includes age, gender, marital status, social status, social conformity, respectability, occupation, political obedience or statement, ritual or religious affiliation, commitment or role and, as already discussed, ethnicity.⁸⁰ Hairstyle and facial hairstyle can signify the same range of characteristics, for instance the religious affiliation and commitment of uncut Sikh hair or the respectability of adherence to traditions indicated by moustache grooming in South Asian men.⁸¹ Tattooing and scarification are important in signalling in some societies. However, in each case the signalling system developed within a specific sociocultural context, so its message is better understood by those in the same social group because they have a compatibly socially-

Are Associated with Straight Hair in Europeans', *American Journal of Human Genetics* 85 (2009): 752–54; Barnaby J. Dixson and Paul L. Vasey, 'Beards Augment Perceptions of Men's Age, Social Status, and Aggressiveness, but Not Attractiveness', *Behavioral Ecology* 23, no. 3 (2012): 481; Jingze Tan et al., 'The Adaptive Variant EDARV370A Is Associated with Straight Hair in East Asians', *Human Genetics* 132, no. 10 (2013): 1188–91; Sandra Wilde et al., 'Direct Evidence for Positive Selection of Skin, Hair, and Eye Pigmentation in Europeans during the Last 5,000 Y', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 111, no. 13 (2014): 4835.

⁷⁹ Clines are gradients of change in a trait, typically tracking a line along which there is gradual change in an environmental or geographical characteristic. Clusters are closely-located groups of a trait that, unlike clines, are discontinuously distributed.

⁸⁰ Michael Argyle, *Bodily Communication* (London: Methuen & Co, 1975), 329–33 & 341–43; Emma Tarlo, *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India* (London: Hurst & Company, 1996), 4–18; Jasleen Dhamija, 'Textile: The Non-Verbal Language', in *Global Textile Encounters*, ed. Marie-Louise Nosch, Feng Zhao, and Lotika Varadarajan, Ancient Textiles Series 20 (Oxford & Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2014), 304–8; Eicher, 'Dress as an Expression of Ethnic Identity', 1–5.

⁸¹ Firth, *Symbols Public and Private*, 265–67 & 271–91; Patrick Olivelle, 'Hair and Society: Social Significance of Hair in South Asian Traditions', in *Hair: Its Power and Meaning in Asian Cultures*, ed. Alf Hillebeitel and Barbara D. Miller (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 13–41.

conditioned cognitive framework.⁸² Messages are therefore less likely to be understood by members of a distant community where sociocultural values likely differ in some way. When an individual travels a long distance, differences in dress may be compounded by a misunderstanding or ignorance of the social information it communicates, and may lead to a perception of otherness, while its contextual uncommonness may lead to the perception of foreignness.

Language, phenotype and dress are geographically patterned and contribute to the perception of ethnic difference. As superficial secondary indicators of ethnicity, they are observable, even without direct interpersonal interaction. Single differences may lead to the perception of otherness, as indicated for each above, but their combination may be cumulative and if also contextually uncommon perhaps contribute to perceptions of unfamiliarity and cultural foreignness.

Local beliefs may also influence the perception of foreignness. Mary Helms has described, using historical ethnographic source materials, how pre-existing conceptions of geographical space and distance can influence the perception of long-distance visitors. Local meanings given to remote and unvisited distance may include the cosmological, ancestor-related and supernatural, which can lead to the ascription of ritual or supernatural knowledge, power or character.⁸³ This is related to how the foreigner's unfamiliarity facilitates the making of assumptions about unknown aspects of their character. Helms goes on to explain how access to this ascribed ritual or supernatural knowledge and power is often monopolised and controlled by politico-religious elites, in the same way that access to material exotica may be monopolised for similar ascribed meanings or perhaps for more mundane social negotiations of power.⁸⁴ This may lead to associations with elites or social exclusion, or both.

2.5. Reification of foreignness

Despite the perceptual, relational and contextual nature of foreignness, the cognitive framework has, through its processing of difference and social conditioning,

⁸² Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiology*, trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 25–27; Tarlo, *Clothing Matters*, 6–7.

⁸³ Helms, *Ulysses' Sail*, 33–49 & 94–110 & 131–62.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 111–30.

constructed a subjective mental representation which is perceived as Other, as foreigner.⁸⁵ This reifies the category of the Other, of the foreigner, in the mind of the Self, which further lends itself to visual representation. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁸⁵ Beller, 'Perception, Image, Imagology', 4.

3. Visual representation of foreignness in ancient art: interpretive and methodological frameworks

To develop a methodology for seeing the ‘foreigner’ in ancient visual art, for recognising and interpreting their representations, it is essential to further understand the cognitive processes involved in representation – both mental and visual representations. Because they result from cognitive processes, representations are not simply mimetic copies of the real but contain meaning.⁸⁶ In discussions of othering as representation, it has been suggested that:

“they do not so much reflect a world as already exists (as a mirror will passively reflect its surroundings); rather they are ways of constructing and directing our view of the world with the help of language... representations bring the world into being, as an object of knowledge and as a source of meaning.”⁸⁷

In this chapter, the role of semiotics in representation and perception will be considered, including how discourse is embedded in representations, whether intentionally or unintentionally. This discussion will be illustrated through reference to existing bodies of literature on representations of the ‘foreigner’ in ancient visual art, mainly from Egypt, Greece and China. In these areas, scholars have engaged deeply with the literature on representation, perception, othering and semiotics, so that by consolidating what has been learned there, a methodology for seeing the ‘foreigner’ in ancient Southeast Asian art can be advanced. Notice will be paid to the limitations of interpretation, but it will be seen that the aspects noted in the previous chapter as relating to perceptions of difference and distance, are often discernible in the representations under discussion.

⁸⁶ David Summers, ‘Representation’, in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, 2nd ed. (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 3–18; Ann Rigney, ‘Representation’, in *Imagology - The Cultural Construction of Literary Representations of National Characteristics: A Critical Survey*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, *Studia Imagologica* 13 (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2007), 415–17; Fred Dervin, ‘Cultural Identity, Representation, and Othering’, in *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication* (London & New York: Routledge, 2013), 185–86.

⁸⁷ Rigney, ‘Representation’, 415.

3.1. Discursiveness of representations of foreigners

In the previous chapter, the cognitive structuring of interpersonal encounter and perception were discussed, with the result that otherness is already constituted in the encoded mental representation and the constructed categories of the Other and the foreigner become reified. It is recognised that the initial visual process of seeing is more complex than it might first appear, because the vision focuses on salient features in the visual field.⁸⁸ These features are those which help to characterise visual information efficiently within the existing cognitive framework. Features that are not commonly encountered in the visual field of a given context therefore draw the vision's focus, so that they are interpreted, semiotically-speaking, as signs indicating difference.⁸⁹ This process is a normal part of the construction of one's social identity and applies to all forms of social otherness.⁹⁰

An outcome of these processes is that representations of the Other tend to emphasise the same subjectively striking characteristics, the signs indicating difference. These characteristics are prioritised because they signify otherness economically but result in stereotyped representations that are generalising, typically essentialising, and which can be learned from the community.⁹¹ Stereotyped representations of the Self (auto-stereotypes) are formed alongside stereotyped representations of the Other (hetero-stereotypes), emphasising characteristics that signify the Self in opposition to Others.⁹² Therefore, representations and stereotypes inherently contain discourse, that is, the selection of forms used in the representational act reflect the perspective of its producer, whether done intentionally or not. This is simply because the Self has determined the characteristics of the Other.⁹³ The Other did not produce the image –

⁸⁸ Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1974), 42–46; Beller, 'Perception, Image, Imagology', 4–5.

⁸⁹ Dervin, 'Cultural Identity, Representation, and Othering', 187.

⁹⁰ Dervin, 187; Albrecht, 'Foreigner', 326.

⁹¹ Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 23–25; Dervin, 'Cultural Identity, Representation, and Othering', 186. Although the term 'stereotype' is often used of a value-negative representation, it is worth recalling that the characterisation of foreignness as either positive or negative follows from subjective perceptions of the relationship and distance between Self and Other. Stereotypes can similarly also be positive.

⁹² Dervin, 'Cultural Identity, Representation, and Othering', 186; Beller, 'Perception, Image, Imagology', 12–13.

⁹³ Dervin, 'Cultural Identity, Representation, and Othering', 185–86; Ann Rigney, 'Discourse', in *Imagology - The Cultural Construction of Literary Representations of National Characteristics: A Critical*

if they had, we would be looking at an image of a Self. This asymmetric distribution of involvement in the representational act means that there is also an asymmetric distribution of power and control over what is represented, how it is expressed and contextualised. There is clearly scope for representations to be intentionally co-opted for ideological purposes, but they can also express latent discourses embedded in the mind of the producer of the representation.⁹⁴ The very act of representing difference draws attention to their status as Other, discursively marking difference as intrinsically significant.⁹⁵ Semiotics analytical methodology reveals the discursive aspects of representations, which combine what is depicted (the *signifier*) with how it is depicted (the *signified*) to produce meaningful *signs* for contextual interpretation.⁹⁶

The existing literature on the processes of othering and the field of study known as imagology, draw heavily on studies of literary and textual representations of Others rather than those in visual art.⁹⁷ Studies of othering in visual art do of course exist,⁹⁸ but most relate to representations from the Enlightenment period onward, focussing on issues around the representation of 'race'. The problematic nature of 'race' in biological terms was outlined earlier, but it is important here to recognise that its current meaning originated in a specific historical context, as a social construct associating characterological traits with biological difference.⁹⁹ The idea developed from a combination of scientific endeavours in classifying the natural world, early anthropology, global exploration and the rise of imperialism, with Eurocentric discourses drawing on all of these. While claims have been made for the existence of the 'race' concept in the pre-Enlightenment world, these are not widely accepted and are instead considered to demonstrate ethnocentrism, the ideological position that the in-group's culture represents the status of correctness and normalcy while that of

Survey, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, *Studia Imagologica* 13 (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2007), 313–14.

⁹⁴ Spencer, *Race and Ethnicity*, 17–20; Rigney, 'Discourse', 313–14.

⁹⁵ Spencer, *Race and Ethnicity*, 3.

⁹⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), 5–6.

⁹⁷ Beller, 'Perception, Image, Imagology', 7–10; Joep Leerssen, 'Imagology: History and Method', in *Imagology - The Cultural Construction of Literary Representations of National Characteristics: A Critical Survey*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, *Studia Imagologica* 13 (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2007), 26.

⁹⁸ Visual stereotypes are sometimes termed 'visiotypes'; see Beller, 'Perception, Image, Imagology', 9.

⁹⁹ Fenton, *Ethnicity*, 18–20 & 53–54; Spencer, *Race and Ethnicity*, 33–52; Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity*, 80.

the out-group is wrong and deviant.¹⁰⁰ Studies of visual representations of ‘race’-based otherness from the Enlightenment onwards have therefore interpreted its semiotics in its historical context. Such studies are less relevant to the present research because the visual representations originated in pre-Enlightenment periods and cultures.

Instead, this research draws on studies of material that is principally archaeological in nature, to highlight the additional issues relevant to the interpretation of ancient representations of the ‘foreigner’. The material below shows that othering and representations of foreignness are discernible in ancient visual art, despite the effects of incomplete archaeological survival on the interpretability of its discursive content. By recognising the limitations of what can be convincingly retrieved from archaeological material, an informed methodology can be developed.

The following discussion draws mainly on material from three ancient cultures – pharaonic Egypt (c.3100-30 BCE), Archaic and Classical Greece (8th-4th centuries BCE) and Tang China (618-907 CE). These have been selected because the figures are known from contemporary documentary sources to represent people perceived as foreigners, with sufficient material surviving for scholars to have convincingly demonstrated discursive processes of othering operating in these visual representations, but also because multiple scholars have contributed to discussions exploring the interpretive issues.¹⁰¹ Cross-cultural comparative approaches can

¹⁰⁰ Spencer, *Race and Ethnicity*, 34; Erich S. Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 197–207.

¹⁰¹ Any selection of material to develop a wider framework risks bias. Representations of apparent ‘foreigners’ have also been suggested and discussed in other ancient cultural contexts, including in the Ajañṭā cave murals (see e.g. M.K. Dhavalikar, ‘Foreigners in the Ajanta Paintings’, in *Foreigners in Ancient India and Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in Art and Literature*, ed. D.C. Sircar (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1970), 11–24), the Tibetan Buddhist temples at Alchi in Kashmir (see e.g. Roger Goepper, ‘Murals in the Early Temples of Alchi’, in *On the Path to Void: Buddhist Art of the Tibetan Realm*, ed. Pratapaditya Pal (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 1996), 226–43), murals from Afrasiab (Samarkand) (see e.g. Sergey A. Yatsenko, ‘The Costume of Foreign Embassies and Inhabitants of Samarkand on Wall Painting of the 7th c. in the “Hall of Ambassadors” from Afrasiab as a Historical Source’, *Transoxiana* 8 (2004): 1–29), in ancient Roman art (see e.g. Rolf Michael Schneider, ‘Friend and Foe: The Orient in Rome’, in *The Age of the Parthians*, ed. Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis and Sarah Stewart (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 50–86), and in Chinese art predating the Tang period (see e.g. Michèle Pirazzoli-t’Serstevens, ‘Imperial Aura and the Image of the Other in Han Art’, in *Conceiving the Empire: China and Rome Compared*, ed. Fritz-Heiner Mutschler and Achim Mittag (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 299–317). The three ancient cultural contexts discussed in this chapter benefit from extensive discussion by multiple scholars to highlight important interpretive issues relating to such representations, but material is clearly known in other ancient cultural contexts and could further contribute to such studies.

become problematic if the inferences are too specific, but it is seen that a similar group of representational components were used to represent difference, otherness and foreignness. Moreover, these can be related to the perceptual and cognitive processes outlined above. Some of the conclusions may seem common sense but it is important to demonstrate that any generalisation is grounded in theory and documented examples. We can see how ancient artists signified difference and distance, how this related to conceptions of foreignness and how discourse was embedded.

3.2. Visual representations of cultural and geographical distance

The literatures on these three historical contexts share many of the same insights on the visual attributes used by ancient artists to signify foreignness. Some relate to features involved in the articulation of ethnic identity and difference, but in ways that enable scholars to also associate them with distance and foreignness. Other visual attributes relate more to the representational context, including behaviours and roles, indications of geographical distance, and compositional roles including interactions with auto-stereotypes. However, we should first appreciate that each group of representations has an associated body of documentary sources that help with interpretation.

3.2.1. Documentary sources referring to ‘foreigners’

Ancient Egyptian inscriptions on stone monuments and texts on papyri, containing ritual, administrative and literary material, have survived in sufficient numbers in Egypt’s dry climate to permit insights into the representation of groups perceived as foreigners. Significant quantities of source material have been translated because Egyptian scripts were deciphered early in Egyptological study. Textual sources name the most commonly represented groups of foreigners as the ‘Nine Bows’, an ascriptive label. They were an ideologically-based grouping of Egypt’s traditional enemies who personified the forces of cosmological chaos (*isfet*) located outside its borders, the name indicating the totality of enemies.¹⁰² The pharaoh maintained cosmic order

¹⁰² Dominique Valbelle, *Les Neuf Arcs: L’Égyptien et les Étrangers de la Préhistoire à la Conquête d’Alexandre* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1990), 46–47; Mu-chou Poo, *Enemies of Civilization: Attitudes Toward Foreigners in Ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 43; Charlotte Booth, *The Role of Foreigners in Ancient Egypt: A Study of Non-Stereotypical Artistic*

(*ma'at*) through acts that ritually smote the enemy or crushed them underfoot. There has been debate over whether real foreigners were ever ritually killed to this end. However, the consensus is that, at least for most of ancient Egyptian history, the destruction of the chaotic forces that the 'Nine Bows' symbolised was ritually enacted through the production of visual art depicting its performance for divine and human audiences.¹⁰³ Its permanence in stone relief ensured the ritual act depicted was performed continuously.¹⁰⁴ The visual distinction of Egyptian and foreigner was therefore an important one.

Surviving textual sources refer to this ideology extensively and even label some of the figural art, so that the identity of the foreigners represented is often known with certainty. This has permitted the elucidation of the visual semiotic encoding of different foreign identities – as ascribed by the Egyptians themselves. These are generally interpreted as representing ethnic difference by Egyptologists, which permits the recognition of foreigners in art where the text is lost or was never present.¹⁰⁵ While some foreign identities reflected newly-emergent rival geopolitical entities, the three principal foreign groups of Nubians (from Kush, in what is today Sudan), Libyans (from the desert west of the Nile Valley) and 'Asiatics' (from Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia to the northeast) were consistently depicted as the traditional enemies subjugated.

Beyond the ritual and ideological sources, other documents provide a more nuanced reconstruction of Egyptian interactions with foreigners. By the New Kingdom (c.1550-1070 BCE) large numbers of foreign immigrants were settled and inter-married with Egyptian spouses, many working in menial positions or as slaves, but also in

Representations, BAR International Series 1426 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2005), 9. The number three represented plurality, so that three times three represented totality.

¹⁰³ John Baines, 'Communication and Display: The Integration of Early Egyptian Art and Writing', *Antiquity* 63 (1989): 478–79; John Baines, 'Contextualizing Egyptian Representations of Society and Ethnicity', in *The Study of the Ancient Near East in the Twenty-First Century: The William Foxwell Albright Centennial Conference*, ed. Jerrold S. Cooper and Glenn M. Schwartz (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 350–53.

¹⁰⁴ Heather Lee McCarthy, 'The Function of "Emblematic" Scenes of the King's Domination of Foreign Enemies and Narrative Battle Scenes in Ramesses II's Nubian Temples', *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 30 (2003): 69.

¹⁰⁵ Anthony Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity in Ancient Egypt', in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, vol. I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1995), *passim*; Baines, 'Representations of Society and Ethnicity', 363–82; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, *passim*.

shipbuilding and smithing, or as architects, weavers, dancers or singers. There are several examples of foreigners climbing to quite significant positions in Egyptian society. Aside from foreign dynastic inter-marriage and entry to the royal harem, which can be construed as elite politicking, foreigners acted as soldiers, police, translators, scribes, elite soldiers, butlers, fan-bearers and high-level bureaucrats.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Syrian butlers, Nubian fan-bearers and Sherden bodyguards seem to have been expressly sought by the New Kingdom period elite, including the palace.¹⁰⁷ There appear to have been attempts to encourage or enforce acculturation of the immigrant groups through the adoption of Egyptian names, language, religion, customs and dress, with the intended result being the Egyptianisation of settled foreigners through the replacement of non-Egyptian cultural traits – which can be understood as an ethnocentric approach to social integration through a negotiation of ethnic difference.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, speaking a non-Egyptian language and cultural or geographic origin were more common identifiers of foreignness in the textual sources.¹⁰⁹ Occasional examples of less stereotyped visual representations have been explained through the integration of individuals into Egyptian society, modifying the hetero-stereotypes of Egyptian royal art.¹¹⁰ During the Late period (c.712-332 BCE) texts reveal an increasing demonisation of foreigners, whose malefic influence could be countered through incantations, which apparently reflects reduced Egyptian influence abroad and the regularity of foreign political administrations in post-imperial Egypt.¹¹¹

The ancient Greek textual sources are also sufficiently numerous and detailed to help derive a nuanced understanding of Greek representations of foreigners, including that some of the conceptual boundaries were changing through the period in question. Greek colonies were established in the Mediterranean and Black Seas from the 8th century BCE, which brought Greeks into more intensive contact with the foreign groups

¹⁰⁶ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 228–29; Baines, 'Representations of Society and Ethnicity', 375–77; Andrew Gordon, 'Foreigners', in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, ed. Donald B. Redford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 544–47; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 106–12; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 18–19, 33–34, 38–41 & 45–48.

¹⁰⁷ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 228–29.

¹⁰⁸ Leahy, 232–34; Baines, 'Representations of Society and Ethnicity', 378–80; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 134–38; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 39.

¹⁰⁹ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 232; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 44.

¹¹⁰ Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 21–24, 35–36, 43–44 & 49–52.

¹¹¹ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 233–34; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 82–83.

represented visually, and this appears to have contributed to a greater sense of Greek identity.¹¹² Relations also strengthened between Hellenic city-states that were initially independent but culturally-related, as indicated by the shared use of the Greek language; alliances formed against a common enemy during the Graeco-Persian Wars of 499-449 BCE against Achaemenid Persia (c.550-330 BCE) were important in the continued development of Greek identity.¹¹³ Shared language is particularly relevant since the primary Greek designation of foreignness and otherness in the textual sources seems to relate to linguistic difference – *barbaros* (pl. *barbaroi*), deriving the term ‘barbarian’, is possibly an onomatopoeic term referring to the subjectively nonsensical babble of a foreign tongue or a foreigner not speaking Greek correctly.¹¹⁴ In addition to language, the early ‘ethnographic’ commentaries of Herodotus (c.484-425 BCE) emphasise differences in customs and dress amongst the foreign groups he encountered.¹¹⁵ Such texts help Classicists retrieve the names of items of foreign dress and weaponry which reinforce their difference to Greek counterparts. Again, literary compositions provide additional insights where the subject matter includes foreign identities and distant lands.¹¹⁶

The primary context for these representations is black-figure and red-figure pottery, the former preceding the latter chronologically, which had several centres of production in the Mediterranean area. Some of the figures on the pottery are labelled in ways that assist with interpreting their identity, though this is not necessarily an unproblematic process. They also appear in sculpture, although this is mainly limited to monumental contexts of the later Classical period.

Documentary sources on Chinese history are numerous, in part due to the long-standing tradition at the imperial court of recording historical events in the reigns of its dynasts, and to periodically compile and summarise past histories. Indeed, Chinese

¹¹² Adolfo J. Domínguez, ‘Hellenic Identity and Greek Colonisation’, *Ancient West & East* 4, no. 2 (2005): 446–55; Wilfried Nippel, ‘Ethnic Images in Classical Antiquity’, in *Imagology - The Cultural Construction of Literary Representations of National Characteristics: A Critical Survey*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, *Studia Imagologica* 13 (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2007), 33–34.

¹¹³ Nippel, ‘Ethnic Images’, 34–35.

¹¹⁴ Domínguez, ‘Hellenic Identity’, 449–50; Manfred Beller, ‘Barbarian’, in *Imagology - The Cultural Construction of Literary Representations of National Characteristics: A Critical Survey*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, *Studia Imagologica* 13 (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2007), 266.

¹¹⁵ Nippel, ‘Ethnic Images’, 35–38.

¹¹⁶ For example, *The Persians*, a 5th century BCE play by Aeschylus, and *The Odyssey*, a c.8th-7th century BCE poem by Homer.

histories have provided significant amounts of information for understanding Southeast Asia's past. A significant body of literary material survives too, which has been interpreted for historical insights by specialists cognisant of its styles and imagery. While earlier representations of foreigners are known, the quantity surges during the Tang period due to the regrowth of Silk Road trade following the reunification of China, first under the Sui dynasty (581-618 CE).¹¹⁷ A period of cosmopolitanism followed, engaging with a range of cultural exotica brought by foreign merchants, who could also settle because of foreign quarters established in Chinese cities; it meant that contact between Chinese and certain non-Chinese groups was more common.¹¹⁸

The most common context for their representation was as tomb figures, or *mingqi*, intended to serve the tomb occupant in the afterlife, but also connoting status and the acquisition of exotic wealth, and possibly the particular skills that the foreign groups were considered to possess.¹¹⁹ *Mingqi* had been more naturalistic since the tomb of Qin Shihuangdi (d.210 BCE) to ensure effective performance of duties, so greater attention was paid to artistic detail, resulting in a mixture of some stereotyping with individual variety.¹²⁰ Similar foreigners also appear in tomb paintings, Buddhist cave temples and on screens and scrolls, but with less frequency.¹²¹ Nonetheless, the *mingqi* are not individually labelled in ways that allow the certain identification of specific foreign identities, as discussed further below.

¹¹⁷ Ezekiel Schloss, *Foreigners in Ancient Chinese Art: From Private and Museum Collections* (New York: China Institute in America, 1969), Introduction p.3; William Watson, *The Arts of China to AD 900* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1995), 232.

¹¹⁸ Edward H. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of T'ang Exotics* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1963), 10–22 & 28–39; Marc S. Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 22.

¹¹⁹ Watson, *Arts of China*, 230; Marc S. Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses: Physiognomy and the Depiction of Barbarians in Tang China', in *Political Frontiers, Ethnic Boundaries, and Human Geographies in Chinese History* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 139.

¹²⁰ Janet Baker, *Seeking Immortality: Chinese Tomb Sculpture from the Schloss Collection* (Santa Ana: Bowers Museum of Cultural Art, 1996), 20; Lothar Ledderose, *Ten Thousand Things: Module and Mass Production in Chinese Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 67–68.

¹²¹ Patricia Eichenbaum Karetzky, 'Foreigners in Tang and Pre-Tang Painting', *Oriental Art* 30 (1984): 160–66; Baker, *Seeking Immortality*, 37–38; Chao-Hui Jenny Liu, 'Horse and Grooms', in *China at the Court of the Emperors: Unknown Masterpieces from Han Tradition to Tang Elegance (25-907)*, ed. Sabrina Rastelli (Florence & Milan: Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi & Skira, 2008), 310–11.

3.2.2. Linguistic difference

Language was identified above as an important component in the articulation of ethnic identity and difference. We might suppose that a visual medium would not provide a suitable context for the representation of linguistic difference. However, the Greek material may offer such an example, which is notable because of the emphasis on linguistic difference in the generalising label of *barbaroi*.

Representations of *barbaroi* interpreted as ‘Scythians’, based on differences in dress discussed below, appear to refer to their becoming inebriated through not mixing wine with water as was Greek custom, as an ethnocentric assertion of their uncivilised character. Such images appear on pottery types used in the *symposion*, a conventionalised gathering of Greek elite males for social and political exchange in the context of drinking wine and games. The comedic value of the drunk ‘Scythian’ seems to have enabled the needling of fellow symposiasts who drank too much.¹²² Importantly, some of the inscriptions labelling ‘Scythian’-dressed figures read as nonsense in Greek, which may have been an attempt by the artist to visually represent the unintelligible nature of ‘barbaric’ foreign speech, to both parody the ‘barbarian’ and ‘barbarise’ any inebriated symposiasts who read them aloud.¹²³ Recently, however, it has been suggested that some of these nonsense inscriptions may convey context-relevant vocabulary from languages of the Caucasus.¹²⁴ This raises the possibility that specific foreign phonetics or words, not simply generalised linguistic foreignness, were represented (using Greek characters) to visually identify foreigners. If accepted, this latter interpretation presents a fascinating manipulation of visual art to represent linguistic foreignness.

3.2.3. Phenotypic difference

Phenotypic similarity is relevant to the construction of ethnicity because of its relationship to a belief in shared history and origins, to shared ancestry. Phenotypic

¹²² François Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, trans. Andrew Szegedy-Maszak (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 5–9, 19–28, 90–91 & 110–12; François Lissarrague, ‘The Athenian Image of the Foreigner’, in *Greeks and Barbarians*, ed. Thomas Harrison, trans. Antonia Nevill (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), 110–12.

¹²³ Ann Steiner, *Reading Greek Vases* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 205.

¹²⁴ Adrienne Mayor, John Colarusso, and David Saunders, ‘Making Sense of Nonsense Inscriptions Associated with Amazons and Scythians on Athenian Vases’, *Hesperia* 83 (2014): 465–85.

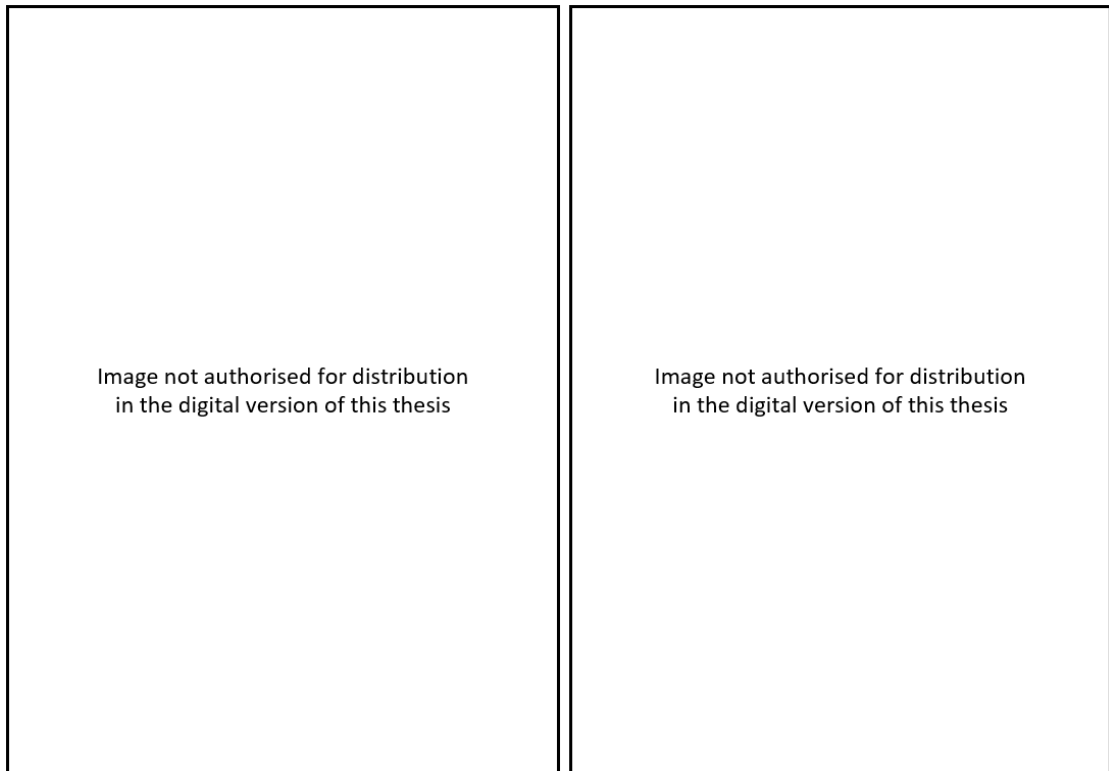


Figure 3.1 Details of Nubian and 'Asiatic' on a ceremonial cane from the tomb of Tutankhamun, KV62, Valley of the Kings, Egypt, c.1325 BCE. Reproduced from Desroches-Noblecourt, *Tutankhamen*, Pl. XVIII).

variation was shown to be geographically patterned, so that differentiation of physical features in visual representations potentially relates to phenotypic difference of long-distance visitors. The combined corpus of material studied here shows that phenotypic difference is not always represented, and that we must remain aware of the potential for embedded ideological discourse and characterisation.

In Egyptian art, the 'Nine Bows' were represented with stereotyped features. Nubians were represented as dark-skinned with short, curly, reddish-brown or black hair (Figures 3.1-3.2); there is some suggestion that people from Upper Nubia (further south) were occasionally further distinguished visually from those of Lower Nubia (neighbouring Egypt) by being represented with darker skin.¹²⁵ Libyans and 'Asiatics' were represented with pale skin and a prominent nose (Figures 3.1-3.2).¹²⁶ These are all hetero-stereotypes that visually distinguish these foreigners, the majority of which are male, from each other and from Egyptian male auto-stereotypes represented with

¹²⁵ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 9.

¹²⁶ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Baines, 'Representations of Society and Ethnicity', 367; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 9–10.

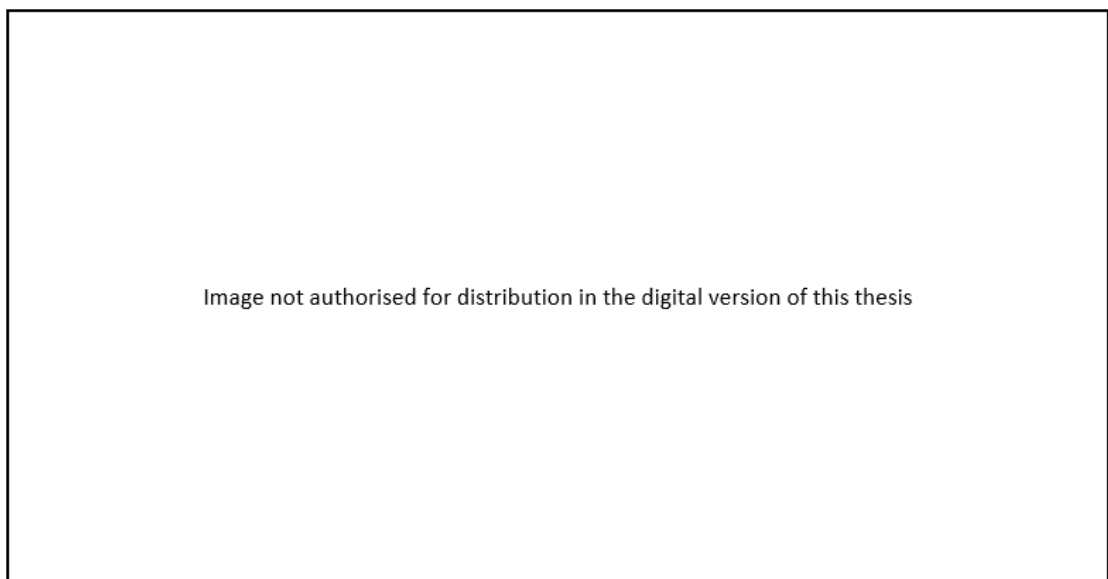
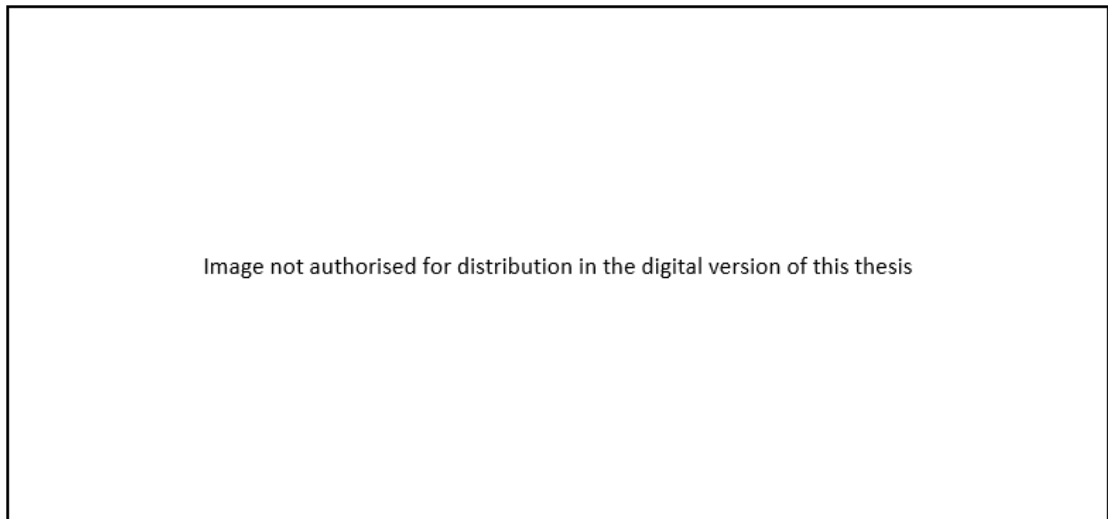


Figure 3.2 Details of 'Asiatic', Libyan and two Nubians on a ceremonial footstool from the tomb of Tutankhamun, KV62, Valley of the Kings, Egypt, c.1325 BCE. Reproduced from Desroches-Noblecourt, *Tutankhamen*, Pl. XI.

reddish-brown skin (Figure 3.3).¹²⁷ From this summary, it is clear that some attention was paid to representing features perceived to distinguish foreign groups from the Egyptian Self, the semiotic signs of difference. This was done through representing differences in skin colour, nasal profile, hair form and colour.¹²⁸ The possibility of physiognomic characterisation is not much discussed in the literature.

'Scythian', Thracian and Persian figures on Greek black-figure and red-figure pottery were not normally visually differentiated physically. However, Africans in 6th century BCE representations do appear to have been differenced in this way. Egyptians were

¹²⁷ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 9.

¹²⁸ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 55–56.

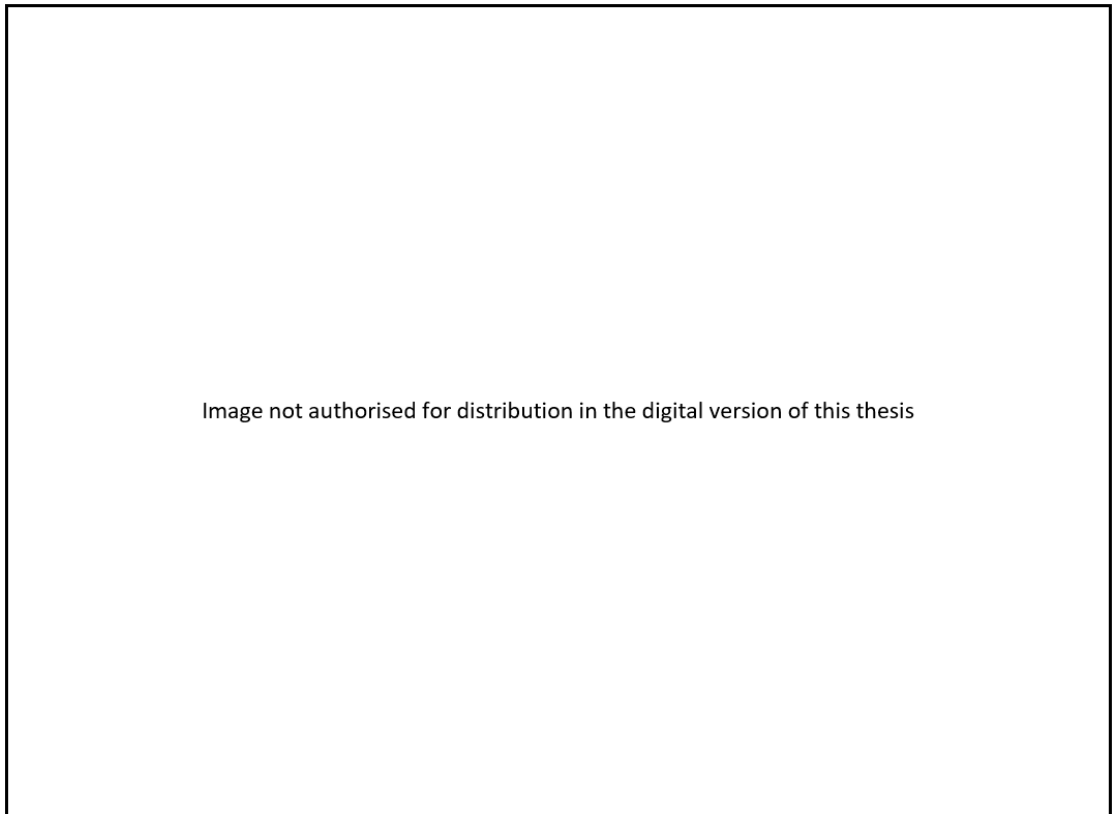


Figure 3.3 Details of Egyptians in a wall painting from the tomb of Khnumhotep II, BH3, Beni Hasan, Egypt, c.1880 BCE. Reproduced from Shedid, 'A House for Eternity', Fig.39.

shown with shaved or partially-shaved heads and dressed in a Greek *chiton*, but were sometimes differentiated with thicker lips and a flatter nose.¹²⁹ The figures are mostly Egyptian priests in depictions of the myth of Heracles's killing of Busiris, so that some aspects of their appearance may relate to the social role of priest (Figure 3.4).¹³⁰ A similar differentiation was more consistently used to represent Ethiopians, who were additionally given curly hair, dressed in patterned loincloths and armed with clubs, typically as warriors associated with the mythical Ethiopian king Memnon who might be in heroic (Greek) dress.¹³¹ While skin colour was not differentiated on black-figure or red-figure pottery, perhaps due to restrictions of the medium, a series of contemporary moulded head-shaped vases (Figure 3.5) and occasional representations on white-ground pottery demonstrate that skin colour was also

¹²⁹ Brian A. Sparkes, 'Some Greek Images of Others', in *The Cultural Life of Images: Visual Representation in Archaeology* (London & New York: Routledge, 1997), 146 & 149–50; Lissarrague, 'Athenian Image', 122–23.

¹³⁰ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 149; Lissarrague, 'Athenian Image', 122–23.

¹³¹ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 147–49; Margaret C. Miller, 'Orientalism and Ornamentalism: Athenian Reactions to Achaemenid Persia', *Arts: The Proceedings of the Sydney University Arts Association* 28 (2006): 128.



Figure 3.4 Heracles slaying Busiris with Egyptian priests fleeing, on red-figure kylix, found at Vulci, Italy, attributed to Epiktetos, c.510 BCE. British Museum, 1843,1103.9. Photograph © Trustees of the British Museum, licenced under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

employed for differentiation in visual art.¹³² Indeed, the name *Aithiops* denoted ‘sunburnt face’ so difference in skin colour was associated with this particular foreign group.¹³³

Tang Chinese *mingqi* present a particular issue because, although those understood to represent foreigners are visually differentiated from Chinese figures by their physical appearance, they are not identified with labels or inscriptions. The identity categories used by Chinese artists cannot therefore be readily recovered. Earlier attempts to determine identities asserted specific ‘racial’ identities, including the identification of ‘mixed race’ identities, mainly through direct assessment of physical characteristics without comparison to Self-images.¹³⁴ The same studies note differences in dress, with some comparison to figures in other artistic traditions including those relating to the proposed foreign identities. Irrespective of the issues around using the notion of ‘race’, this approach’s subjectivity and inconsistency is seen not only in the assertion of

¹³² Sparkes, ‘Images of Others’, 146–48; Lissarrague, ‘Athenian Image’, 108–10; Gruen, *Rethinking the Other*, 216–18.

¹³³ Gruen, *Rethinking the Other*, 197–98.

¹³⁴ Jane Gaston Mahler, *The Westerners Among the Figurines of the T’ang Dynasty of China* (Roma: Instituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1959), 195–203; Schloss, *Foreigners in Ancient Chinese Art*, Catalogue nos.1-10a & 34-58. Both authors explicitly refer to “(mixed) racial types” with identities assigned by phenotype, for example, “of mixed racial type, with deep-set eyes, prominent nose, and wide mouth characteristic of Northeastern Iranians” (Mahler, description for Frontispiece, p.195), and “his dark skin, indicated by the vestiges of black pigment, and his curly hair point to a different racial admixture” (Schloss, no.37).

different identities for similar figures by the same commentator,¹³⁵ and the assertion of the same identity for differentiated figures by the same commentator,¹³⁶ but also in the assertion of different identities for the same figural type by different commentators.¹³⁷ More recent studies make much clearer reference to Chinese textual sources and comparisons to visual representations of Chinese, whose identity is inferred from the correlation of court-associated dress with having the more common physical characteristics. They offer less specific ethno-geographical identifications or simply ‘foreigner’.¹³⁸ For example, the non-Chinese *hu*



Figure 3.5 Greek high-handled *kantharos* in the form of adorsed Greek and African heads, acquired in Tanagra (?), Greece, considered c.510-480 BCE. Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Henry Lillie Pierce Fund, 98.926, www.mfa.org.

¹³⁵ Schloss, *Foreigners in Ancient Chinese Art*, identifies no.1 as ‘Western Asian’ and no.2 as ‘Altaic Turk’ but the facial features (being the characteristic used by the author to determine “racial type”) and hairstyle are nearly identical to this researcher’s eye.

¹³⁶ Schloss (*ibid.*) identifies both no.5 and no.7 as ‘Altaic Turks’ despite the first possessing a round face and the second a longer face with square jaw (again, facial features are used by the author to determine “racial type”), explained through no.7 having a different “admixture” more closely relating him to Western Turks, while no.10a is identified as ‘Western Turkic’ but described as having “an oval face”.

¹³⁷ Mahler, *Westerners*, 200–201, identifies dancing and drumming figures with curlier hair and wearing draped garment, necklace and anklets (Pls. XXIV & XXV) as Southeast Asians; Schloss, *Foreigners in Ancient Chinese Art*, nos. 34–36, identifies them as ‘Northern Indian (?)’ as “[t]he physiognomy... strongly suggests an Afghan or Northern Indian type”, while noting that yet other commentators identify them as “Graeco-Roman types”.

¹³⁸ Suichu Ru, ‘Excavations at Xi’an of the Tang Dynasty’, in *Out of China’s Earth: Archaeological Discoveries in the People’s Republic of China*, ed. Hao Qian, Heyi Chen, and Suichu Ru (London & Beijing: Frederick Muller & China Pictorial, 1981), 165–67; Baker, *Seeking Immortality*, 31–37; Michael Knight, ‘Tang Pottery Funerary Figures from Xi’an, Shaanxi Province’, in *The Golden Age of Chinese Archaeology: Celebrated Discoveries from the People’s Republic of China*, ed. Xiaoneng Yang (Washington, Kansas City, New Haven & London: National Gallery of Art, Nelson-Atkins Museum & Yale University Press, 1999), 490–94; Abramson, ‘Deep Eyes and High Noses’, 119–40; Denise Patry Leidy, ‘Merchant from West Asia’, in *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 AD*, ed. James C.Y. Watt et al. (New York, New Haven & London: Metropolitan Museum of Art & Yale University Press, 2004), 313–14; Sabrina Rastelli, ed., *China at the Court of the Emperors: Unknown Masterpieces from Han Tradition to Tang Elegance (25-907)* (Florence & Milan: Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi & Skira, 2008), 284–86 & 309–10.



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<https://www.metmuseum.org/>

Figure 3.6 Left: *mingqi* of Central Asian wine-seller, c.8th century CE, acquired by the Seattle Art Museum, Seattle (Eugene Fuller memorial collection). Photograph courtesy Dan Waugh. Right: *mingqi* of Chinese civic official, excavated from the tomb of Zheng Rentai in Liqian, Shaanxi Province, c.664 CE. Reproduced from Liu, 'Officials', cat. 184a.

('barbarians') from the western regions are repeatedly described in Tang sources using the phrase "deep eyes and high noses" (*shenmu gaobi*), which provides a Chinese perspective for consideration against the *mingqi* facial differentiation, even though it contains a discursive aspect, as will be discussed.¹³⁹ Figures with these emphasised physical characteristics in comparison to Chinese figures are often thickly bearded (Figure 3.6) and dressed in clothing that is comparable to representations of Central Asians in non-Chinese artistic traditions, including from Central Asia itself.¹⁴⁰ There are still attempts by scholars to distinguish sub-groups and Tang artists do appear to have

¹³⁹ Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses', 124–30.

¹⁴⁰ Abramson, 124–25; Sergey A. Yatsenko, 'Sogdian Costume in Chinese and Sogdian Art of the 6th-8th Centuries', in *Serica – Da Qin: Studies in Archaeology, Philology and History of Sino-Western Relations (Selected Problems)*, ed. Gościwit Malinowski, Aleksander Paroń, and Bartłomiej Sz. Szmoniewski (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo GAJT, 2012), 110–12.

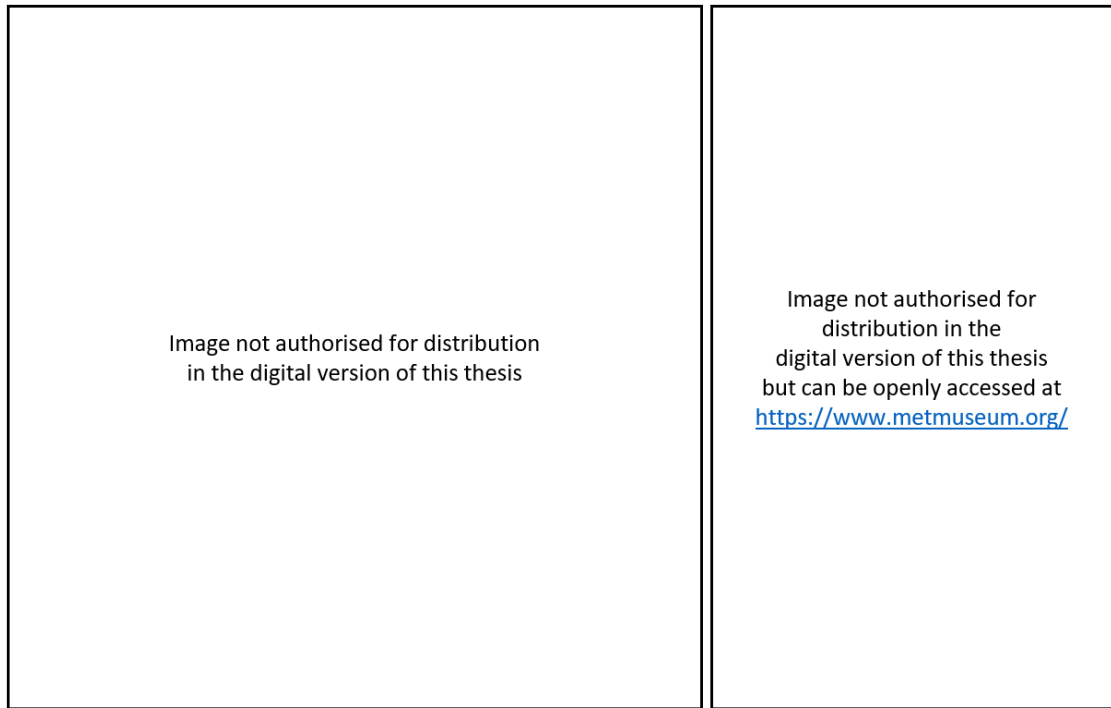


Figure 3.7 Left: *mingqi* of South or Southeast Asian dancers or drummers, Tang period; acquired by the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. Reproduced from Mahler, *Westerners*, Pl. XXIV c-d. Right: *mingqi* of African attendant, excavated from the tomb of Pei Tai in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, Tang period. Reproduced from Zhixin, 'Foreign attendants', cat. 204a.

differentiated further within our general category of 'Central Asian',¹⁴¹ but other researchers feel positive identification of these sub-groups may not be possible.¹⁴² Therefore, we cannot yet determine how different foreign identity categories were visually differentiated by Tang artists, but there is clearly differentiation between Chinese and foreign, and between apparently different foreign groups.

Another *mingqi* type is interpreted to represent South and Southeast Asians. They were given darker skin colour which often appears bluish today, and curled shortish hair without headwear, as per their description in Tang texts.¹⁴³ They wear a draped garment and consequently the chest and limbs are more exposed than Chinese figures, and prominent bodily adornment around the neck and ankles (Figure 3.7). Some *mingqi* representing Africans are known, differentiated from representations of Chinese by similar skin colour to the South and Southeast Asian type, but with broader nose, more prominent eyes and apparently less emphasis on the curled hair (Figure

¹⁴¹ Yatsenko, 'Sogdian Costume', 110; Frantz Grenet, 'Les marchands sogdiens dans les mers du Sud à l'époque préislamique', *Cahiers d'Asie Centrale* 1–2 (1996): 73–75.

¹⁴² Baker, *Seeking Immortality*, 32; Leidy, 'Merchant', 313.

¹⁴³ Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses', 125; compare comments of Mahler, *Westerners*, 200–201.

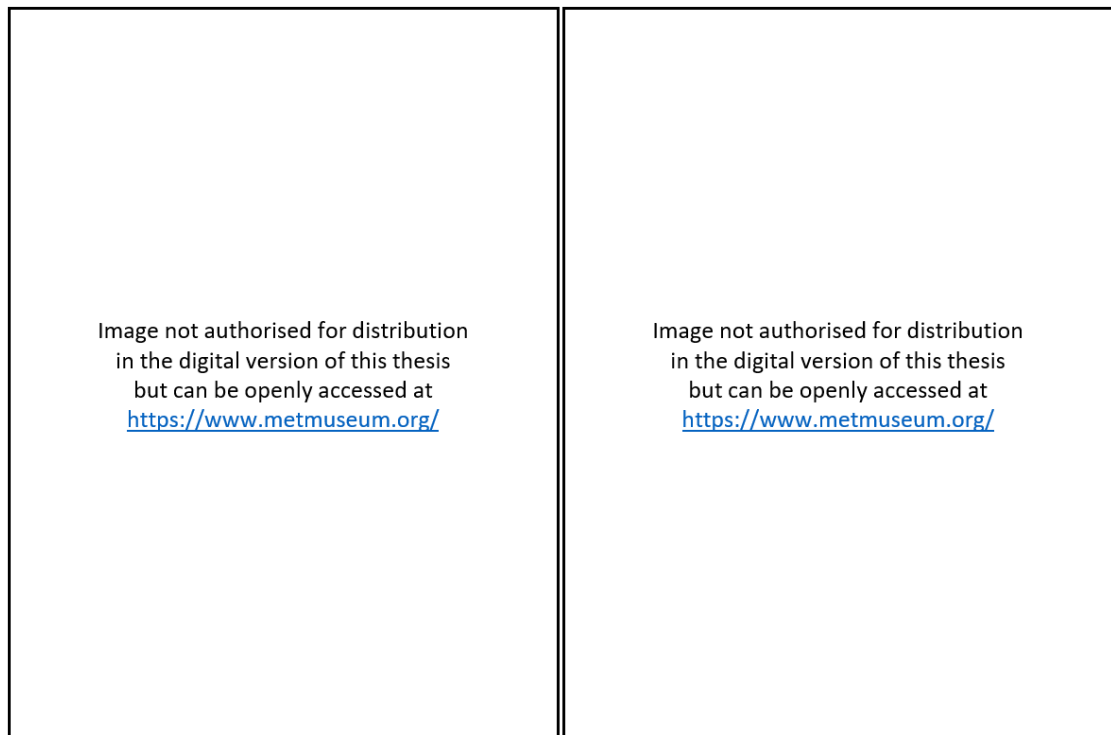


Figure 3.8 Left: *mingqi* of West or Central Asian merchant, excavated in Luoyang, Henan Province, c.7th-early 8th century CE. Reproduced from Leidy, 'Merchant', cat. 205. Right: *mingqi* of Central Asian horseback hunter with cheetah, excavated from the tomb of Princess Yongtai in Qianxian, Shaanxi Province, c.706 CE. Reproduced from Liu, 'Mounted hunter', cat. 198.

3.7).¹⁴⁴ Exposure of chest and limbs also occurs in examples wearing only a short lower garment, but others wear long robes.

The issues faced in recovering identity categories with the *mingqi* are nonetheless instructive. They highlight the subjectivity of the modern viewer's interpretation, and the unreliability of directly interpreting identity without supporting documentary evidence. Without being able to align the representations with textual sources, we cannot comment on the role of ascriptive identities. However, they show that a non-specific identification as 'foreign' is acceptable and informative, and also that comparison with contemporaneous Self-representations offers a valuable methodological approach to offering such an identification.

Aside from the historical interest of *mingqi* for their dress and exoticness, the representation of physical and behavioural traits is recognised to be ideologically discursive. Physiognomy, the relationship between physical attributes and an

¹⁴⁴ Sun Zhixin, 'Two Foreign Attendants', in *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 AD*, ed. James C.Y. Watt et al. (New York, New Haven & London: Metropolitan Museum of Art & Yale University Press, 2004), 312.

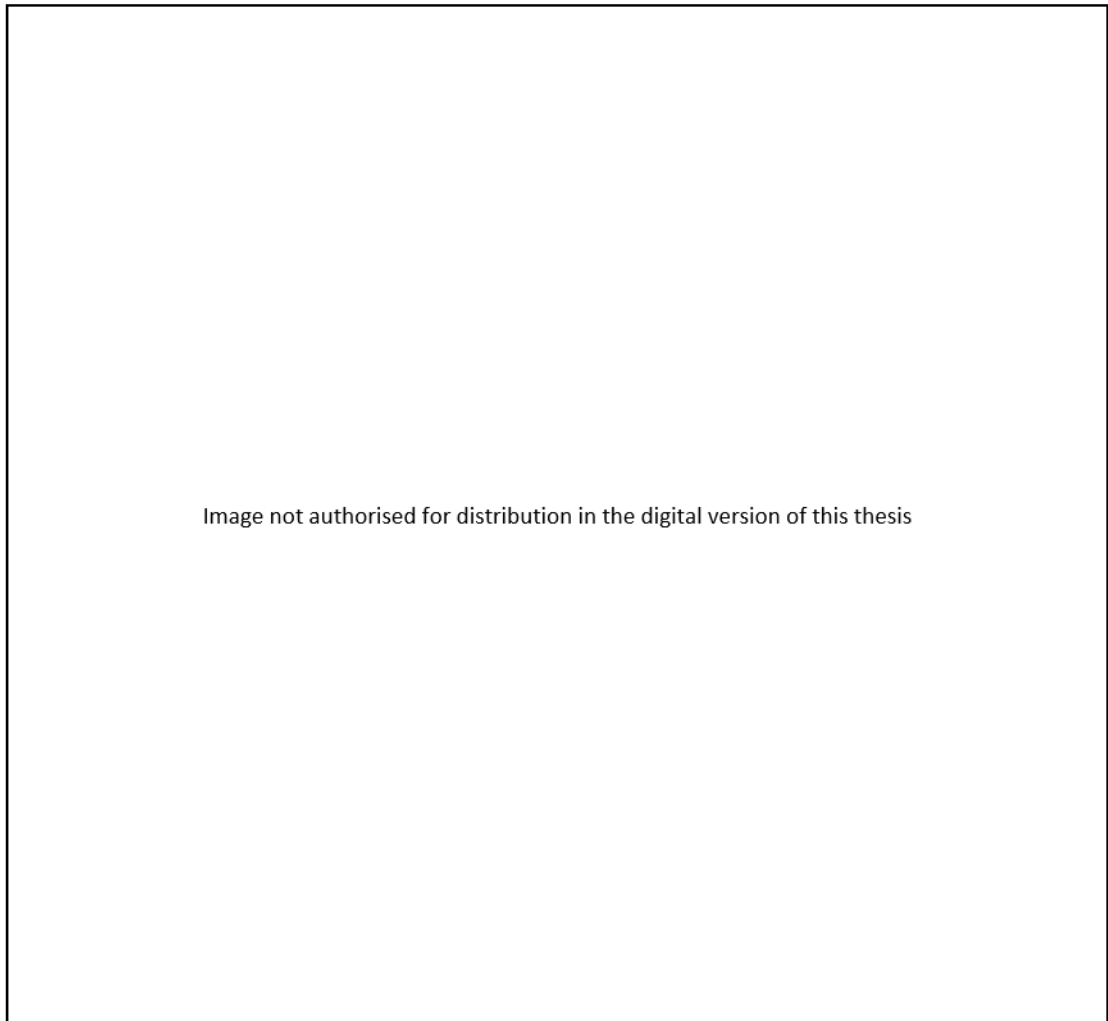


Figure 3.9 Early photograph of view into a side-chamber in the tomb of Princess Yongtai in Qianxian, Shaanxi Province, excavated 1960-1962, dated 706 CE. Reproduced from Brinker & Goepper, *Kunstschätze*, Fig.166.

individual's character, was a popular and highly reputable system of 'knowledge' in Tang China.¹⁴⁵ Positive traits of erect stance, balanced posture and unexaggerated facial features were contrasted with negative traits of bodily contortion and deformity, and disproportionate or grimacing facial features associated with a barbaric or animalistic character.¹⁴⁶ This adds further discursive meaning to the erect and composed Chinese court official (Figure 3.6), especially when contrasted with the merchant bent over with a heavy bag (Figure 3.8), the mounted hunter twisting to deal with his cheetah (Figure 3.8), the groom straining against his camel (Figure 3.20), the multiple role-relationships between foreigners and animals, the shouting foreigner open-mouthed, and the dancer with legs and arms positioned asymmetrically (Figure

¹⁴⁵ Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses', 128–29.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 129–35 & 138–39.

3.7). Art historians are familiar with seeing *mingqi* as individual art objects, but their original context of use was in compositional juxtapositions that emphasised such physiognomic differences (Figure 3.9). Choosing to reveal the foreign torso's muscularity through representing them shirtless highlighted their physical deviation from the Tang Chinese ideal of a balanced physique, while possibly also referencing demonic iconography in contemporary Chinese Buddhist art.¹⁴⁷ Frightening tomb guardian figures and Buddhist protective *lokapāla* acquired exaggeration of the same physiognomy, grimacing and bearded with deep-set, bulging eyes and prominent noses.¹⁴⁸ There was clearly some characterological discourse embedded in the differentiation of physical features, undress and posture emphasised with the western *hu*, and perhaps also in the undress of South and Southeast Asians and Africans.¹⁴⁹

These examples from Egypt, Greece and China highlight that the discursiveness of differences in physical features can range from simply representing their status as Other to embedded ideological meaning. While representations of phenotypic difference are sometimes discernible, direct interpretation of a foreign identity without both a contextualising comparison to images of Self, and independent evidence for the contemporaneous contact with members of that foreign group, are highly subjective and unreliable. In such cases, a generalised identity as 'foreign' may be preferable.

3.2.4. Differences in dress

Dress, including bodily adornment, hairstyle, facial hairstyle and tattooing, was highlighted as important in articulating ethnic identity and in the negotiation of ethnic difference. Dress was also noted to function in social signalling in its original cultural context, but in a distant cultural context its difference from local dress may contribute to perceptions of foreignness.

In Egyptian elite art, Nubians were represented with short, curly, reddish-brown or black hair, the absence of beard, wearing large earrings and often an animal-skin kilt

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 135–37.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 141–44.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 137.

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Figure 3.10 Detail of 'Asiatics' in wall painting from tomb of Khnumhotep II, BH3, Beni Hasan, Egypt, c.1880 BCE. Reproduced from Shedid, 'A House for Eternity', Fig.35.

(Figures 3.1-3.2).¹⁵⁰ Libyans were represented with a pointed beard; the earliest representations show them wearing only a penis sheath, comparable to contemporaneous representations of Egyptians, but later they were further differentiated visually into groups with patterned long cloaks or kilts, and a variety of hairstyles including side-locks (Figure 3.2).¹⁵¹ 'Asiatics' were represented with shoulder-length hair and a full beard, a headband and colourful patterned clothes including cloaks (Figures 3.1, 3.2 & 3.10).¹⁵² Egyptian male auto-stereotypes were represented beardless or with a short goatee, and wearing a simple white kilt (Figure 3.3).¹⁵³ Among the other foreigners known in Egyptian visual art are, for example, Cretans who were represented with reddish-brown skin like the Egyptian auto-stereotype but with long dark hair, and wearing patterned kilts.¹⁵⁴ Great attention was clearly paid to representing features of dress perceived to distinguish foreign groups from the Egyptian Self, including hairstyle, facial hairstyle, type of dress and its patterning, and bodily adornment.¹⁵⁵

Greek artists also paid close attention to representing differences in dress on black-figure and red-figure pottery, and the role of dress in visually distinguishing Self from

¹⁵⁰ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 9.

¹⁵¹ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Baines, 'Representations of Society and Ethnicity', 367; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 9–10.

¹⁵² Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Abdel Ghaffar Shedid, 'A House for Eternity: The Tombs of Governors and Officials', in *Egypt: The World of the Pharaohs*, ed. Regine Schulz and Matthias Seidel (Köln: Könnemann, 1998), 124; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 9; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 55.

¹⁵³ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 9.

¹⁵⁴ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 10 & 54–65.

¹⁵⁵ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 55–56.



Figure 3.11 Detail of 'Scythian' archer and Greek warrior on a Greek red-figure *amphora*, found at Vulci, Italy, attributed to the Dikaios painter, c.510-500 BCE. British Museum, 1843,1103.88. Photograph © Trustees of the British Museum, licenced under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

Other identities is enhanced through the frequent compositional juxtaposition of Greek and *barbaroi*. The Greek Self often represented in this context is typically a male hoplite warrior, sometimes a named legendary hero but often anonymous (Figures 3.4 & 3.11). He is often represented naked except for a Corinthian helmet, perhaps a short cloak (*chlamys*), or wearing a thigh-length *chiton* with cuirass, and wearing greaves but barefoot. He typically carried a large concave circular shield (*aspis*) and long spear, or a short sword.¹⁵⁶ Where naked, this is commonly understood to indicate 'heroic nudity', that is, nakedness acts semiotically to convey the hoplite's possession of the prowess and vigour of heroes like Heracles, represented similarly. It promoted the visual display of the hoplite's muscularity, athleticism, youth and implicit supremacy,

¹⁵⁶ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 133–35; Gruen, *Rethinking the Other*, 40.



Figure 3.12 Left: detail of 'Scythian' archer on a Greek black-figure *pinax* (plate), found at Vulci, Italy, attributed to Psiax, c.520-500 BCE. British Museum, 1867,0508.941. Photograph © Trustees of the British Museum, licenced under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/). Right: detail of Thracians with Orpheus on Greek red-figure *pelike*, no attribution recorded, c.430 BCE. British Museum, 1846,0925.10. Photograph © Trustees of the British Museum, licenced under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

and when juxtaposed with representations of *barbaroi* their differentiation based on dress is very apparent.¹⁵⁷ Indeed, there is evidence from the later Classical period that a Greek soldier's tanned skin, gained through exercising naked, was perceived to differentiate him from the paler-skinned *barbaros* soldier who less often disrobed.¹⁵⁸

Scythians are widely considered to be identifiable in earlier 6th century BCE representations wearing either a long-sleeved trouser suit (*anaxyrides*) or separate long-sleeved tunic and trousers, often patterned with stippling or stripes, and a tall cap tapering to a sharp point or rounded tip which is inclined or flopped forward, and with lappet extensions hanging at either side (*kurbasia* or *kidaris*) (Figures 3.11 & 3.12).¹⁵⁹ These are close-fitting clothes constructed by sewing multiple pieces of fabric, unlike Greek dress which was draped and fastened, or involved less stitch-work making

¹⁵⁷ Larissa Bonfante, 'Nudity as a Costume in Classical Art', *American Journal of Archaeology* 93, no. 4 (1989): 549–52; Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 135. Youth was implied by a small penis, and this is a common feature for the hoplites represented.

¹⁵⁸ Bonfante, 'Nudity', 555.

¹⁵⁹ H.A. Shapiro, 'Amazons, Thracians, and Scythians', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 24, no. 2 (1983): 111; Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 137–38; Judith M. Barringer, 'Skythian Hunters on Attic Vases', in *Greek Vases, Images, and Controversies* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 15; Robin Osborne, 'Images of a Warrior on a Group of Athenian Vases and Their Public', in *Greek Vases, Images, and Controversies* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 44; Margarita Gleba, 'You Are What You Wear: Scythian Costume as Identity', in *Dressing the Past* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2008), 14–17.

them looser. Often represented barefoot like Greeks, Scythians may also be wearing boots.¹⁶⁰ Material is also differentiated, especially the distinctive recurved Scythian composite bow and its box which was also a quiver (*gorytos*), or sometimes a small axe or spear with crescent-shaped shield (*pelta*).¹⁶¹ A short beard is sometimes seen.¹⁶²

These variant combinations of features are sometimes interpreted as representing the Scythians as an ethnic group until c.500 BCE, but the real-world situation was more complex. The identity 'Scythian' encompasses multiple Central Asian ethnic groups in Greek and Achaemenid Persian historical sources, but scholars do not distinguish them further in the visual art and, in some scholars' views, these dress combinations appear to correlate better with an archer role.¹⁶³

Thracians, *barbaroi* from modern-day Bulgaria, northeast Greece and northwest Turkey, were commonly represented wearing a patterned heavy cloak (*zeira*), boots (*embades*) and a small pointed fox-skin cap with tail (*alopekis*).¹⁶⁴ They carried the *pelta* shield and a spear (Figure 3.12). Thracian women were typically represented with tattoos.¹⁶⁵

Representations of Persians appeared in the early 5th century BCE, especially as enemies of the Greek hoplite warrior.¹⁶⁶ This oppositional composition reflected contemporaneous political events that framed Persia as an inimical foreign power that physically crossed the geo-cultural boundary marking the perceived extent of Greek culture in the eastern Mediterranean. *Barbaroi* had brought war to the Aegean.

¹⁶⁰ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 137; Barringer, 'Skythian Hunters', 15.

¹⁶¹ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 137; Barringer, 'Skythian Hunters', 15.

¹⁶² Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 137–39.

¹⁶³ Sparkes, 137; Askold I. Ivantchik, 'Who Were the Scythian Archers on Archaic Attic Vases?', in *Scythians and Greeks: Cultural Interactions in Scythia, Athens and the Early Roman Empire (Sixth Century BC - First Century AD)*, ed. David Braund (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2005), 100–113; Askold I. Ivantchik, "'Scythian" Archers on Archaic Attic Vases: Problems of Interpretation', *Ancient Civilizations from Scythia to Siberia* 12, no. 3–4 (2006): 198–232; Gleba, 'Scythian Costume', 14–17.

¹⁶⁴ Shapiro, 'Amazons, Thracians, and Scythians', 107; Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 139; Desponia Tsiafakis, 'Battles between Athenians and Thracians: An Abstract Representation or Realistic Scene?', in *Pitye: Studia in Honorem Prof. Ivan Marazov* (Sofia: Anubis Publishing, 2002), 365; Desponia Tsiafakis, 'Thracian Influence in Athenian Imagery of 5th Century BC: The Case of Orpheus', in *Thrace and the Aegean: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Thracology*, ed. Alexander Fol, vol. 1 (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Press, 2002), 727.

¹⁶⁵ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 141; Tsiafakis, 'Orpheus', 728.

¹⁶⁶ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 142; Lissarrague, 'Athenian Image', 117; Miller, 'Orientalism and Ornamentalism', 131–32.

Persians were typically represented with patterned trousers and jacket or tunic, sometimes a cuirass, a soft cap with a curled and forward-inclined projection and hanging lappets (*tiara* or *kidaris*), and shoes with ties and up-curved tips (Figure 3.13). Materiel might include a spear and full-length wicker

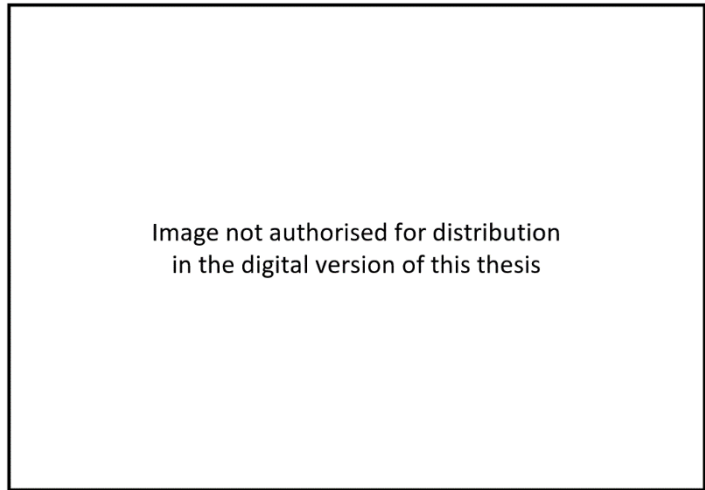


Figure 3.13 Detail of Greek warrior fighting Persian on Greek red-figure cup, by the Oxford Brygos painter, c.480 BCE. Reproduced from Miller, 'Persians: The Oriental Other', Fig.1.

shield (*gerron*), a bow with quiver, a battle axe or narrow-headed pick-*klevets* (object and name of Central Asian origin), a large curved sword (*kopis*) or occasionally a long-handled sickle-headed weapon (*harpe* or *dorydrepanon*) related to the Mesopotamian sickle-sword known from contemporaneous Persian iconography.¹⁶⁷ The pick-*klevets* and *harpe/dorydrepanon* indicate specific geographical associations.¹⁶⁸ Physically, Persians were represented similarly to Greeks, but a thick beard was not uncommon.¹⁶⁹

With the Graeco-Persian Wars, representations of *barbaroi* became more generalised, or dress and weapons appear to become distributed more indiscriminately than their earlier 'ethnic' affiliations. Clearly there was already scope for confusion arising from the wider non-Greek use of trousers, boots and the bow, and the similarity of 'Scythian' and Persian caps which scholars variously, and sometimes interchangeably, call the *tiara*, *kidaris* and *kurbasia*.¹⁷⁰ However, a Persianization of foreign dress follows, so that Scythians and even Ethiopians are represented with Persian elements of dress,¹⁷¹ and scholars often disagree over the interpretation of ethnicity on 5th

¹⁶⁷ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 142–44; Lissarrague, 'Athenian Image', 117–18; Margaret C. Miller, 'In Strange Company: Persians in Early Attic Theatre Imagery', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 17 (2004): 167–72; Valerii P. Nikonorov, 'The Parade Hatchet-Klevets from Old Nisa (a Contribution to the Study of the Combat Hatchets and Their Cult in Ancient Central Eurasia)', *Anabasis* 4 (2013): 185 & 190–91.

¹⁶⁸ Miller, 'Strange Company', 168–71; Nikonorov, 'Parade Hatchet-Klevets', 187–97.

¹⁶⁹ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 143; Miller, 'Strange Company', 167–68.

¹⁷⁰ Ivantchik, "'Scythian' Archers: Problems', 257–60; Gruen, *Rethinking the Other*, 40–44.

¹⁷¹ Shapiro, 'Amazons, Thracians, and Scythians', 113–14; Miller, 'Orientalism and Ornamentalism', 127–33; Marguerite Johnson, 'Marked Bodies: Divine, Human, and Bestial', in *A Cultural History of the Human*

century BCE red-figure pottery.¹⁷² Several reasons may explain this phenomenon. These include the presence of non-Persian contingents in the Persian armies, new information on the inter-relationships between *barbaroi*, or an ideologically-driven generalisation of *barbaroi* as ‘Oriental’, exotic, or negatively ‘barbarian’.¹⁷³ Whichever is correct, although the same identities are no longer reliably indicated semiotically, the dress still represented an ascribed *barbaroi* identity that was visually differentiated from Greeks.



Figure 3.14 Parthian prisoners on the Arch of Septimius Severus, Rome, Italy, 3rd century CE. Photograph by Amphipolis, [Captive Parthians](#), Wikimedia Commons, licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#); cropped from original.

The Persianization of *barbaroi* dress directly informed subsequent Roman representations of ‘Oriental’ peoples. The ‘Phrygian cap’ especially, being a soft felt cap tapering to an inclined-forward peak, but lacking lappets, is related to the *kurbasia*, *tiara* and *kidaris* discussed above. It was used iconographically to indicate the perceived ‘Oriental’ association of legendary and divine figures like Orpheus, Paris, Midas, Attis and Mithras, as well as with Roman representations of Parthians, who had become the Roman Empire’s own Persian enemy (Figure 3.14).¹⁷⁴ Cloak, trousers and boots also commonly appear in these images.

As noted previously, it is not yet possible to identify the different foreign categories visually represented by Tang artists, but differentiation using dress is still discernible. Tang artists often represented Central Asians with a thick, full beard that projected from the face, possibly related to the use of wax for stiffening and enlarging it (Figures

Body in Antiquity, ed. Daniel H. Garrison, A Cultural History of the Human Body 1 (Oxford & New York: Berg, 2010), 208.

¹⁷² Gruen, *Rethinking the Other*, 44.

¹⁷³ Miller, ‘Orientalism and Ornamentalism’, 130–31; Beller, ‘Barbarian’, 267.

¹⁷⁴ Margaret C. Miller, ‘Barbarian Lineage in Classical Greek Mythology and Art: Pelops, Danaos and Kadmos’, in *Cultural Borrowings and Ethnic Appropriations in Antiquity*, ed. Erich S. Gruen (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005), 72–76; Schneider, ‘Friend and Foe: The Orient in Rome’, 58–75.

3.6 and 3.8), as opposed to Self-images which were clean-shaven or with small chin-beard or thin moustache (Figure 3.6).¹⁷⁵ Central Asian dress was typically a belted open-collared shin-length robe (*kuapao*) or knee-length tunic, tall boots and headwear which differentiated them from the longer, looser gowns and court regalia of the Chinese figures.¹⁷⁶ Some Central Asians are represented with hairstyles because they lack headwear. Indeed, hairstyles appear to have been used to mark inter-ethnic difference in Central Asia, but having the hair uncovered was associated by the Chinese with *hu* particularly and considered improper.¹⁷⁷ Sometimes Central Asians were represented shirtless, displaying the muscular torso, but Chinese are fully clothed.¹⁷⁸ Similar features are seen in painting.¹⁷⁹ *Mingqi* representing South and Southeast Asians and Africans were discussed above in the context of represented phenotypic difference, noting the greater exposure of the skin due to draped dress or a short garment, and also the representation of neck chains and anklets.

Tang *mingqi* also provide examples of apparent mismatch between identity based on physical features or dress, with textual evidence showing that the wearing of foreign dress happened in practice. Figures identified as non-Chinese based on differences in physical features, wear the *futou*, a Chinese form of headwear comprising a cloth wrapped around the hair into a forward-inclined knot. Historical sources confirm it was sometimes adopted by non-Chinese to signal allegiance to the emperor (Figures 3.6 and 3.8 (right)).¹⁸⁰ Similarly, *mingqi* with physical features suggesting Chinese women, but wearing Central Asian dress, are commonly represented riding horses.¹⁸¹ Historical sources confirm that during the 7th-8th century there was a fashion among Tang women for wearing Central Asian dress due to its exotic nature, especially male dress, which led to calls from more conservative members of Chinese society to ban the

¹⁷⁵ Ru, 'Excavations at Xi'an', 165; Knight, 'Figures from Xi'an', 492; Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses', 124–25; Leidy, 'Merchant', 313; Rastelli, *Court of the Emperors*, 285 & 310.

¹⁷⁶ Knight, 'Figures from Xi'an', 501–5; Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses', 125–27; Chao-Hui Jenny Liu, 'Civil and Military Officials', in *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 AD*, ed. James C.Y. Watt et al. (New York, New Haven & London: Metropolitan Museum of Art & Yale University Press, 2004), 292; Leidy, 'Merchant', 313; Rastelli, *Court of the Emperors*, 285–86 & 310.

¹⁷⁷ Ru, 'Excavations at Xi'an', 167; Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses', 125–27.

¹⁷⁸ Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses', 135–36.

¹⁷⁹ Karetzky, 'Foreigners', 160–65; Liu, 'Horse and Grooms', 310–11.

¹⁸⁰ Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses', 125; Rastelli, *Court of the Emperors*, 285.

¹⁸¹ Baker, *Seeking Immortality*, 33; Chao-Hui Jenny Liu, 'Horse and Female Rider', in *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 AD*, ed. James C.Y. Watt et al. (New York, New Haven & London: Metropolitan Museum of Art & Yale University Press, 2004), 291; Rastelli, *Court of the Emperors*, 306.

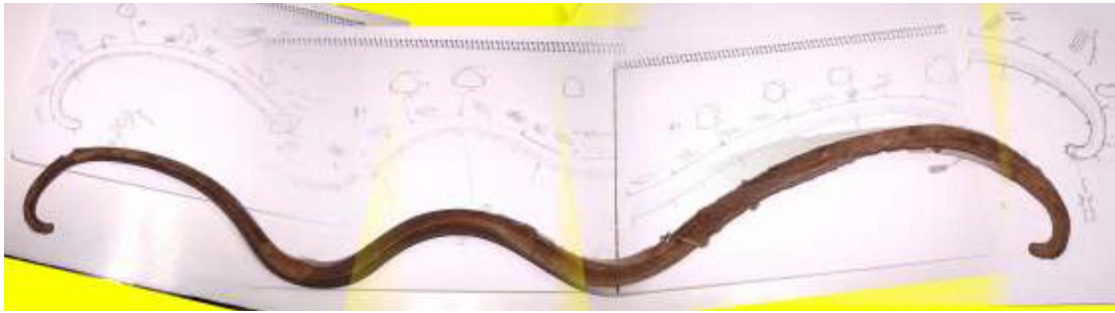


Figure 3.15 Recurved 'Scythian' bow from the Yanghai cemetery, Tarim Basin, early/mid-1st millennium BCE. Reproduced from Karpowicz & Selby, 'Scythian-Style Bows', Fig.1, with the permission of Stephen Selby.

practice.¹⁸² These two examples demonstrate the value of considering differences in dress and physical appearance in combination when interpreting the identity represented.

3.2.5. Visual references to geographical distance

A notable pattern in these three corpora of representations of foreigners is the inclusion of compositional details that signify long distance locations and associations. They are typically exotic objects, non-local landscape features, and non-local flora and fauna. The exotic objects may relate to non-local customs, trade goods or weaponry.

In Egyptian art, Nubians are sometimes represented with an ostrich plume on the head, being an item imported from Kush, but it appears to label the Nubian identity rather than indicate an item of dress (Figure 3.2).¹⁸³ Similarly, 'Asiatics' were sometimes represented carrying a duckbill axe¹⁸⁴ – a form known archaeologically from Middle Bronze Age deposits primarily in Syria-Palestine and Mesopotamia.¹⁸⁵ This practice was seen in Greek representations too, with the distinctive recurved bows held by the 'Scythian' figures (Figure 3.11), as these are known archaeologically from Central Asia (Figure 3.15)¹⁸⁶ and can therefore be understood to indicate a distant association. The same was noted above for the pick-*klevets* in Greek

¹⁸² Schafer, *Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 28–29.

¹⁸³ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 9.

¹⁸⁴ Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 226; Shedid, 'House for Eternity', 124; Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 9; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 55.

¹⁸⁵ Eliezer D. Oren, *The Northern Cemetery of Beth Shan* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 61–62.

¹⁸⁶ Bede Dwyer, 'Scythian-Style Bows Discovered in Xinjiang - from the Photographs and Drawings of Stephen Selby', Asian Traditional Archery Research Network, 2004, http://www.atarn.org/chinese/scythian_bows.htm; Adam Karpowicz and Stephen Selby, 'Scythian Bow from Xinjiang', *Journal of the Society of Archer-Antiquaries* 53 (2010).



Figure 3.16 Detail of packboard with ewer on *mingqi* of camel, c.8th century CE. Acquired by the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, no. 1964-9-1. Photograph is in the public domain.

representations of Persians. Tang Chinese artists did something similar when representing the ewer, a vessel type of West Asian origin associated with wine, held by West or Central Asians (Figure 3.8 (left)) or strapped to their camels (Figure 3.16).¹⁸⁷

The same can be argued for items of dress which have geographical associations, beyond their semiotic role in differentiating dress. For example, Greek representations of Central Asians in trousered garments and tall caps were clearly differentiated from Greek dress, but evidence from archaeological contexts and non-Greek art corroborate the connection with Central Asia. Trousers have been excavated from dry burial contexts in the Tarim Basin suggesting their use by the equestrian Subeshi archaeological culture since at least the 11th century BCE, based on AMS radiocarbon dating of trouser fibres directly and of associated burial objects (Figure 3.17).¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ Mahler, *Westerners*, 195; Schafer, *Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 141–45; Elfriede R. Knauer, *The Camel's Load in Life and Death: Iconography and Ideology of Chinese Pottery Figurines from Han to Tang and Their Relevance to Trade along the Silk Routes* (Zürich: Akanthus, 1998), 85–92; Leidy, 'Merchant', 313–14; James C.Y. Watt, 'Bird-Headed Ewer with Molded Decoration', in *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 AD*, ed. James C.Y. Watt et al. (New York, New Haven & London: Metropolitan Museum of Art & Yale University Press, 2004), 322.

¹⁸⁸ Ulrike Beck et al., 'The Invention of Trousers and Its Likely Affiliation with Horseback Riding and Mobility: A Case Study of Late 2nd Millennium BC Finds from Turfan in Eastern Central Asia', *Quaternary International* 348 (2014): 228 & 232–34.

Interestingly, two of the earliest known pairs are patterned with stripes and bands of rhombi, comparable with Greek representations of *barbaroi* with patterned trousers. Leather boots and tall conical headwear have been found in archaeological contexts in the same area, including one that is particularly pointed and often compared to a witch's hat.¹⁸⁹ Some commentators have productively compared Greek with Achaemenid Persian representations of Central Asian groups, some of which are labelled and closely datable, and with figural representations produced by Central Asian archaeological cultures themselves.¹⁹⁰ The independent

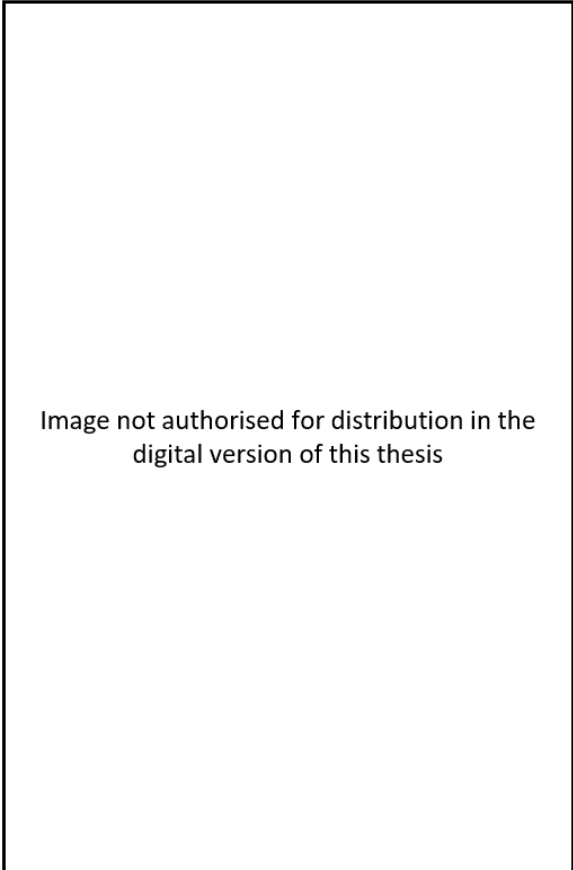


Figure 3.17 Trousers from the Yanghai cemetery, Tarim Basin, end-2nd millennium BCE. Reproduced from Beck et al, 'Invention of trousers', Fig.2.

depiction of comparable forms of dress and their archaeological survival allow questions of representational accuracy, generalisation, stereotyping and othering to be considered. It has been argued that such comparisons should not seek to verify ideological discourse;¹⁹¹ here, the purpose is simply to confirm an association with distance.

Another group of representations evoke distant locations through the inclusion of landscape elements and associated flora and fauna. For example, an Egyptian representation of one of its foreign enemies being subjugated includes mountainous terrain as its backdrop, and is considered to refer to their mountainous homeland which differs to the flatter Nile Valley forming the centre of the Egyptian polity (Figure

¹⁸⁹ Beck et al., 225–26; Victor H. Mair, 'The Silk Road in History and Pre-History', *Arts of Asia* 41, no. 1 (2011): 121; Amelia Williams, 'Ancient Felt Hats of the Eurasian Steppe', ed. Victor H. Mair, *Sino-Platonic Papers* 228 (2012): 66–93.
¹⁹⁰ Gleba, 'Scythian Costume', *passim*.
¹⁹¹ Leerssen, 'History and Method', 27.



Figure 3.18 Ivory label depicting the pharaoh Den smiting a foreign enemy identified hieroglyphically as from the east. From Abydos, Egypt. c.2985 BCE. British Museum, EA55586. Photograph © Trustees of the British Museum, licenced under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

3.18).¹⁹² It may also be significant that the Egyptian hieroglyph for ‘foreign lands’ was a symbolic group of three humped mountains.¹⁹³ Greek representations of Africans sometimes included geographically-associated items such as crocodiles, camels and palm trees (Figure 3.19).¹⁹⁴ There is probably a similar connection between Tang *mingqi* camels and the Silk Road trade routes to the Western Regions, because where people are included they are usually foreigners.

3.2.6. Iconographic roles, societal roles and customs

The figures identified as foreigners in this material based on differences in dress, physical characteristics and visual references to geographical distance are typically

¹⁹² Edna R. Russmann, *Eternal Egypt: Masterworks of Ancient Art from the British Museum* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 68.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ Sparkes, ‘Images of Others’, 144–46; Knauer, *Camel’s Load*, 23–24.

represented in particular roles or performing particular actions. By referring to contextual documentary sources these can often be understood as reflecting associations between foreigners and societal roles or customs. The first relates to the reasons behind the presence of foreigners in local society, and the occupational roles they

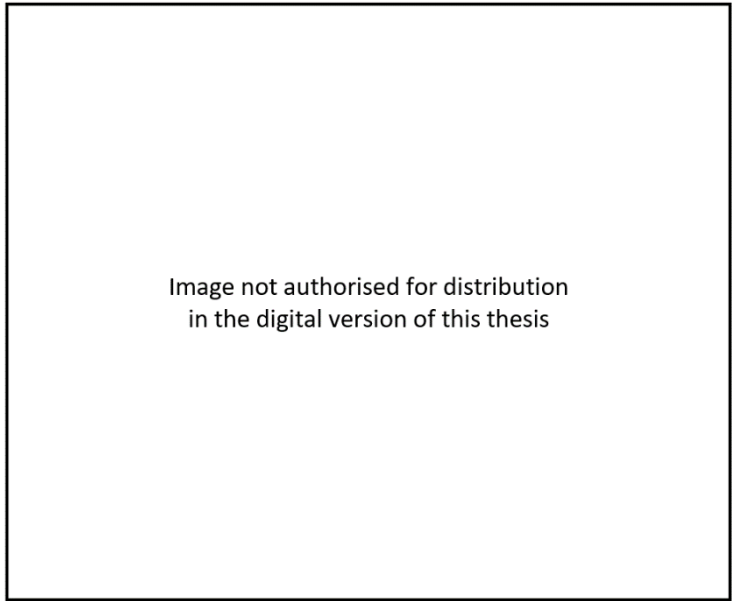


Figure 3.19 Detail of African groom with camel and palm tree, on Greek red-figure *pelike*, no provenance information, attributed to the Argos painter, c.480-470 BCE. Reproduced from Knauer, *Camel's Load*, Fig.5.

hold, which may be related to resources and skills that are acquired in a distant place. The second represents aspects of culture relevant to ethnic identity, customs which may be perceived as foreign in the local context.

In the Greek material, an example is seen with figures usually interpreted as 'Scythian' on the basis of their dress, with whom there is a high incidence of archery (Figures 3.11 and 3.12 (left)) – in the act of firing an arrow, holding a bow as the principal weapon, or inscriptions referring to archery.¹⁹⁵ They appear both as adversaries and attendants to Greek hoplites in martial and hunt scenes, and notably some images of Greek narrative characters are also represented in this dress when using a bow.¹⁹⁶ Labels or pseudonyms inscribed next to 'Scythian'-dressed figures may emphasise an archer identity, for example Euthybolos ("straight-shooter"), Eubolos ("fine-shooter") and Toxamis (etymologically cognate with 'bow').¹⁹⁷ One suggestion, based on a consideration of historical events in the wider Mediterranean, is that these 6th-century BCE figures represent Medes rather than 'Scythians', another group with Central Asian

¹⁹⁵ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 137; Ivantchik, 'Who Were the Scythian Archers?', 100–113; Ivantchik, "'Scythian' Archers: Problems', 198–232; Gleba, 'Scythian Costume', 14–17.

¹⁹⁶ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 138–39; Ivantchik, 'Who Were the Scythian Archers?', 102–5; Ivantchik, "'Scythian' Archers: Problems', 203–8.

¹⁹⁷ Ivantchik, 'Who Were the Scythian Archers?', 106–11; Ivantchik, "'Scythian' Archers: Problems', 210–24.

origins and an early presence in Persia, who Greek colonists in the eastern Mediterranean interacted with.¹⁹⁸ Scholars have found it difficult to interpret an ethnic identity for figures dressed this way.

This does not preclude the possibility that real encounters with ‘Scythians’ also contributed to the association between this foreign form of dress and an archer role, but evidence in Greece itself for interaction with ‘Scythians’ postdates the 6th century BCE representations. ‘Scythians’ had been enrolled as mounted archers in the Achaemenid Persian army from the 6th century BCE,¹⁹⁹ while their earliest attested presence in Greece was as archer-policemen in Athens from (at least) 476 BCE,²⁰⁰ subsequently also active as archers in the Athenian army.²⁰¹ Later in the 5th century BCE, Herodotus identified the bow as the principal weapon of the ‘Scythians’ who were perceived as excellent archers, and described their appearance as wearing trousers and a tall stiff cap, and also carrying a dagger and battle axe²⁰² – which correlates well with the figures in the earlier visual art. Importantly, Greek colonists in the Black Sea were established and trading with ‘Scythians’ by the mid-late 6th century BCE²⁰³ – an encounter in the colonies, as suggested for their interpretation as Medes. Greeks travelling between colonies and the Mediterranean pottery production centres may give scope for the conveyance of descriptions based on real encounters,²⁰⁴ and would also promote the perception of foreignness through geographical distance. A different interpretation seeks to explain the imagery’s proliferation during the 520-510 BCE time frame, based on a stylistic analysis of c.700 vessels, and suggests it reflected the Athenian citizens’ alarm at a perceived Scythian threat contemporary with the employment of foreign mercenaries.²⁰⁵ In this scenario the foreigner is nameable and

¹⁹⁸ Ivantchik, ‘“Scythian” Archers: Problems’, 244–52.

¹⁹⁹ Muhammad A. Dandamayev, ‘Central Asian Soldiers in Achaemenid Babylonia’, *Anabasis* 3 (2012): 43–45.

²⁰⁰ Osborne, ‘Images of a Warrior’, 45; Balbina Bähler, ‘Bobbies or Boobies? The Scythian Police Force in Classical Athens’, in *Scythians and Greeks: Cultural Interactions in Scythia, Athens and the Early Roman Empire (Sixth Century BC - First Century AD)*, ed. David Braund (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2005), 116–17.

²⁰¹ Lissarrague, ‘Athenian Image’, 115.

²⁰² Gordon Shrimpton, ‘The Persian Cavalry at Marathon’, *Phoenix* 34, no. 1 (1980): 29; Barringer, ‘Skythian Hunters’, 18.

²⁰³ Barringer, ‘Skythian Hunters’, 18; V.Y. Murzin, ‘Key Points in Scythian History’, in *Scythians and Greeks: Cultural Interactions in Scythia, Athens and the Early Roman Empire (Sixth Century BC - First Century AD)*, ed. David Braund (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2005), 34–35.

²⁰⁴ Shapiro, ‘Amazons, Thracians, and Scythians’, 112.

²⁰⁵ Osborne, ‘Images of a Warrior’, 44–52.

distantly locatable but not widely experienced or familiar but, importantly, is still potentially representable in visual art based on verbal descriptions.

Thracians were often shown as horse-riders battling Greek hoplites on foot, and documentary sources confirm the Greek view of Thrace as a source of high-quality horses, and of the Thracians as great warriors on foot or as cavalry.²⁰⁶ Military confrontations between Thracians and Greek colonies, and Greek use of Thracian mercenaries, promoted Greek familiarity with the Thracians through the 6th century BCE and Thracian dress was adopted by some Greek cavalymen as fashionable or practical.²⁰⁷ Aside from the discourse as militaristic and exotic Other, the association with horses is clearly represented visually.

The assignment of societal roles with the Chinese *mingqi* is often quite explicit, which is perhaps not surprising given the requirement for them to be active in the tomb, but notably their roles or associations are often corroborated by the textual sources.²⁰⁸ Central Asians are frequently represented as merchants including wine-sellers, camel and horse grooms, hunters with animals, and entertainers including musicians and dancers. An association with mercantilism follows from their relationship with the Silk Road cities, where whole communities of foreign merchants resided, reinforcing the association between foreign merchants and geographically distant sources of exotic goods.²⁰⁹ This is also the association of the wine-seller, a merchant type represented clutching a large wineskin of imported wine (Figure 3.6 (left)).²¹⁰ The representation of foreigners as camel and horse grooms is related to these animals' origins in the western regions (Figure 3.20).²¹¹ The Bactrian camel was domesticated in its natural range in Central Asia, and became associated with Silk Road merchant caravans, as even camels without riders are shown laden with goods (Figures 3.16 and 3.20

²⁰⁶ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 139–40; Tsiafakis, 'Battles', 365–66.

²⁰⁷ Shapiro, 'Amazons, Thracians, and Scythians', 107–9; Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 140–41; Tsiafakis, 'Battles', 365–67.

²⁰⁸ Abramson, *Ethnic Identity*, 20.

²⁰⁹ Mahler, *Westerners*, 195 & 198; Schafer, *Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, passim; Leidy, 'Merchant', 313; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity*, 139–41.

²¹⁰ Mahler, *Westerners*, 195; Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses', 135–36.

²¹¹ Mahler, *Westerners*, 198–99; Schafer, *Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 71; Schloss, *Foreigners in Ancient Chinese Art Catalogue* nos.1-10a; Ru, 'Excavations at Xi'an', 167; Knauer, *Camel's Load*, 10–11, 41–43, 57 & 78; Rastelli, *Court of the Emperors*, 284–85 & 309–11; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity*, 30–31.



Figure 3.20 *Mingqi* of Central Asian groom with camel, excavated at Guanling, Luoyang, Henan Province, c.700-750 CE. Reproduced from Rastelli, *Court of the Emperors*, cat. 55.

(right)).²¹² The horse was domesticated on the Eurasian Steppe, where local groups became skilled in equestrianism and horse husbandry over millennia. It was imported to China in great numbers as a prestige and military animal, but difficulties maintaining stocks necessitated continuous acquisition from Central Asia, and the skills of Central Asian grooms and trainers were valued.²¹³ Horseback hunting using predatory animals was a practice imported from the western regions during the Tang period, and the subject appears in both *mingqi* and paintings where the animal handlers, often Central Asian in appearance, handle hawks, falcons, hunting dogs, lynx and cheetahs (Figure 3.8 (right)).²¹⁴ The Asiatic cheetah needed importing because its natural range did not

²¹² Schafer, *Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 70–72; Knauer, *Camel's Load*, 10–11, 55–59, 68–69, 78–97 & 138–39; Rastelli, *Court of the Emperors*, 285.

²¹³ Schafer, *Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 58–66; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity*, 31; Pita Kelekna, *The Horse in Human History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 148–50.

²¹⁴ Schafer, *Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 87–88; Karetzky, 'Foreigners', 162; Knight, 'Figures from Xi'an', 492–93; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity*, 30; Chao-Hui Jenny Liu, 'Mounted Hunter with Cheetah', in *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 AD*, ed. James C.Y. Watt et al. (New York, New Haven & London: Metropolitan Museum of Art & Yale University Press, 2004), 307.

extend further east than the Pamirs and India.²¹⁵ The Central Asian horseback hunter combines the foreignness of the cultural practice, the figure and sometimes an exotic animal. Foreign entertainers, musicians and dancers are frequently represented in Tang *mingqi*, and documentary sources confirm their presence in the cosmopolitan milieu of the capital Xi'an, their performances noted for their exoticness. Cultural foreignness is represented in the musical instrument types, postures related to Sogdian whirling and leaping dances known from texts, and in orchestras being on camelback (Figure 3.21).²¹⁶ This



Figure 3.21 *Mingqi* of camel with Central Asian musicians, excavated from the tomb of Xianyu Tinghui in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, c.723 CE. Reproduced from Watt, 'Camel with musicians', cat. 200.

range of Central Asian roles includes occupations and skills related to distant resources, foreign customs and cultural practices.

The visual representation of associations between foreign identities and societal roles and customs are usually explainable using documentary sources. This highlights the non-random nature of the iconographic contexts in which they appear. Many associations are understandable on a social level – noted in the above examples were the import of foreign goods, the provision of services related to imported items because the required knowledge is unavailable locally, and the enjoyment of exotic

²¹⁵ Knight, 'Figures from Xi'an', 492; David P. Mallon, 'Cheetahs in Central Asia: A Historical Summary', *Cat News* 46 (2007): 4.

²¹⁶ Schafer, *Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 50–57; Baker, *Seeking Immortality*, 35–36; Knauer, *Camel's Load*, 62–67; Knight, 'Figures from Xi'an', 494–97; Abramson, 'Deep Eyes and High Noses', 135; James C.Y. Watt, 'Camel with Musicians; Two Entertainers', in *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 AD*, ed. James C.Y. Watt et al. (New York, New Haven & London: Metropolitan Museum of Art & Yale University Press, 2004), 309–10.

cultural entertainment. However, we should also bear in mind the possibility that local beliefs concerning ritual or cosmological dimensions of space and distance may influence the iconographic roles into which representations of foreignness are incorporated.²¹⁷ For example, it was noted above that Tang beliefs regarding physiognomy influenced the characterisation of Central Asian faces and bodies, and that the same facial features were applied to bestial tomb guardian figures to generate a frightening appearance. While societal roles and exotic customs can explain many represented artistic contexts, clearly not all can be explained this way.

3.2.7. Compositional structuring

The representation of a relationship or interaction between Self and Other was a particularly powerful mechanism by which ancient artists could actively engage with the ideologically discursive aspects of foreignness. Compositional structuring facilitated the effective articulation and expression of such ideological perspectives, but their overtly ideological nature influences how they are used in historical reconstruction.

Egyptian representations of the 'Nine Bows' is a particularly good example, reflecting the group's definition on an ascriptive and ideological basis. As well as being figural stereotypes, the principal three foreigner types are present iconographically in stereotyped roles. The scene of the pharaoh grasping a foreign enemy by the hair and moving to strike a death blow to his subjugated and inferior form, indicated variously through the enemy's diminution or relative placement as a cowering or kneeling enemy beneath the pharaoh's standing body, is repeated over a hundred times in just the surviving examples (Figures 3.18 and 3.22).²¹⁸ Symbolically the pharaoh destroyed the chaotic forces they embodied.²¹⁹ This embedded meaning has been retrieved

²¹⁷ See Section 2.4.

²¹⁸ Joachim Śliwa, 'Some Remarks Concerning Victorious Ruler Representations in Egyptian Art', *Forschungen Und Berichte* 16 (1974): 98–104; Emma Swan Hall, *The Pharaoh Smites His Enemies: A Comparative Study*, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien 44 (München & Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1986), 4–47; Alan R. Schulman, *Ceremonial Execution and Public Rewards: Some Historical Scenes on New Kingdom Private Stelae*, *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 75 (Freiburg & Göttingen: Universitätsverlag & Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), 8–62; McCarthy, "'Emblematic" Scenes', 60.

²¹⁹ Baines, 'Communication and Display', 478–79; John Baines, 'Kingship, Definition of Culture, and Legitimation', in *Ancient Egyptian Kingship*, ed. David O'Connor and David P. Silverman (Leiden, New York & Cologne: Brill, 1995), 11–14; E. Christina Köhler, 'History or Ideology? New Reflections on the Narmer Palette and the Nature of Foreign Relations in Pre- and Early Dynastic Egypt', in *Egypt and the*

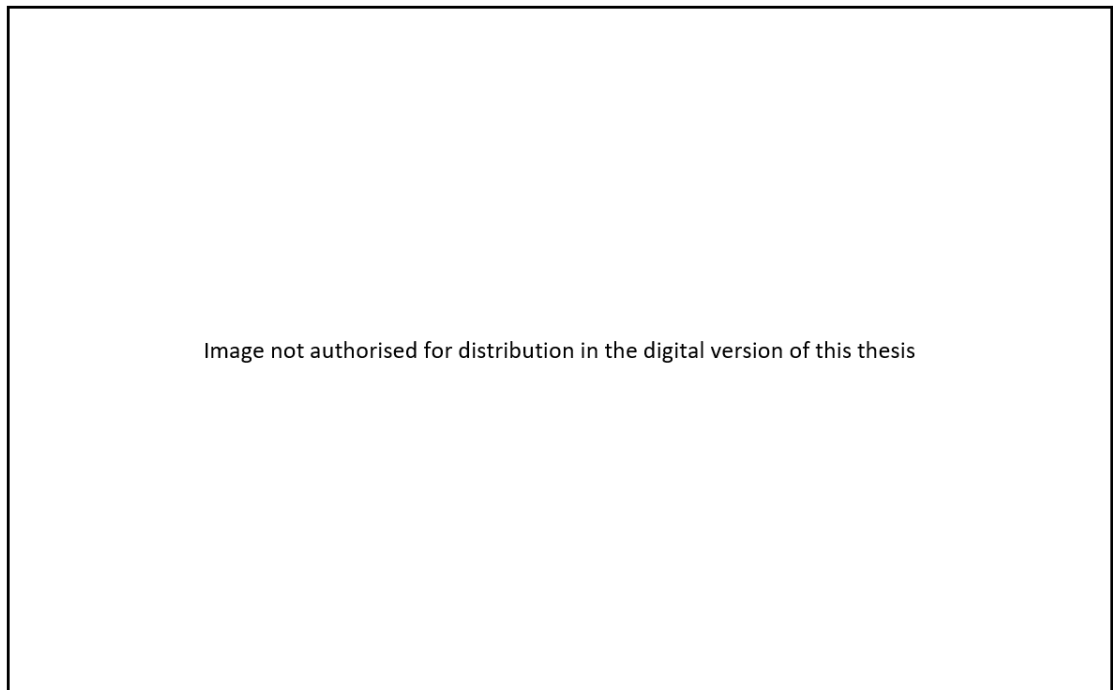


Figure 3.22 Ramesses II defeating Libyan enemy, wall relief from Small Temple, Abu Simbel, Egypt, c.1260 BCE. Reproduced from McCarthy, “‘Emblematic’ Scenes,” Fig.13.

through the interpretation of inscriptions and texts which make clear the cosmic role of the pharaoh in defeating *isfet*. Literary texts reinforce the belief in the destabilising otherness of foreigners through reference to phrases like “Asiatics in Egypt” to metaphorically express the breakdown of social order.²²⁰ A similar meaning is conveyed where the pharaoh, as human-headed sphinx, clutches the head of a trampled foreign enemy in one paw.²²¹ A foreigner may be represented bound hand and foot, their capture symbolising the quashing of threats to Egypt’s borders (Figures 3.1-3.2).²²² Similarly, foreign settlements captured or razed during the imperialist New Kingdom period (c.1550-1070 BCE) were often symbolised as crenelated boxes representing towns and given an identifiably foreign torso with bound arms.²²³ In the same period, scenes of battles against foreign enemies are more common, with the enemies represented in chaotic disarray before the pharaoh’s advancing chariot that crushes them under its wheels and horses’ hooves, or juxtaposed with a more spatially

Levant: Interrelations from the 4th through the Early 3rd Millennium BCE, ed. Edwin van den Brink and Thomas E. Levy (London & New York: Leicester University Press, 2002), 507–8.

²²⁰ Schulman, *Ceremonial Execution*, 35; Baines, ‘Kingship’, 11–14; Anthony Leahy, ‘Foreign Incursions’, in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, ed. Donald B. Redford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 549; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 74–75.

²²¹ Śliwa, ‘Victorious Ruler Representations’, 105–7; Leahy, ‘Ethnic Diversity’, 227.

²²² McCarthy, “‘Emblematic’ Scenes”, 60.

²²³ Valbelle, *Les Neuf Arcs*, 46–47; McCarthy, “‘Emblematic’ Scenes”, 60.

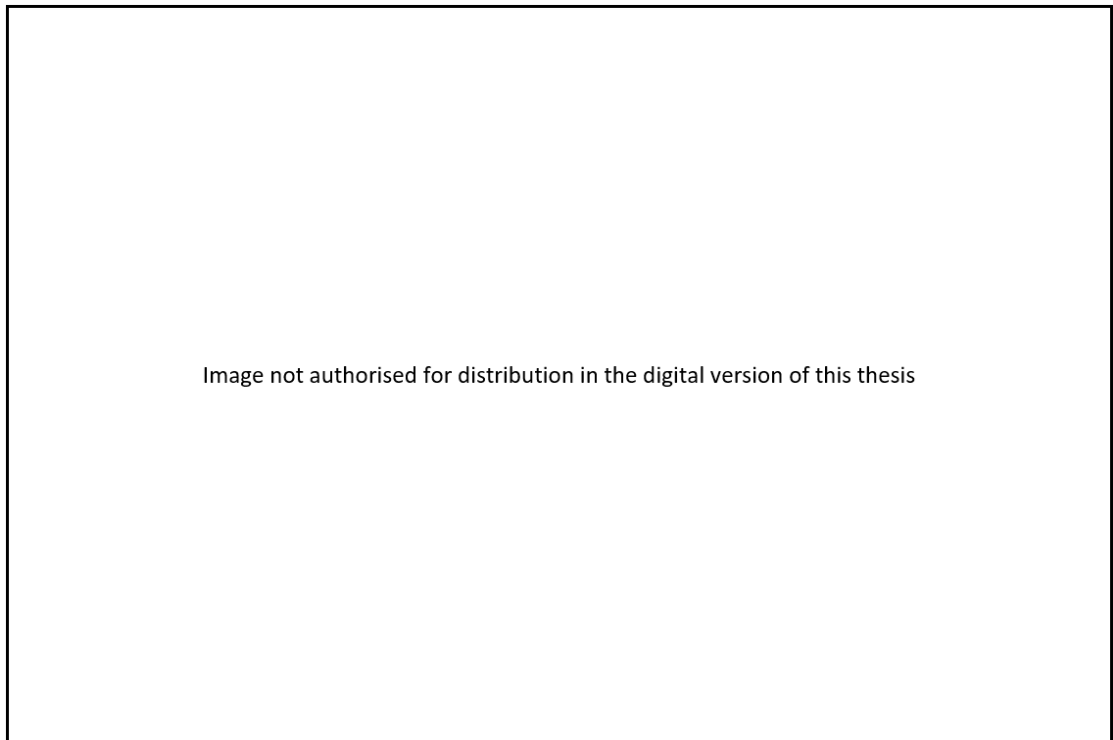


Figure 3.23 Tutankhamun crushing the 'Asiatic' enemy under his chariot, detail from painted war and hunting chest, tomb of Tutankhamun, KV62, Valley of the Kings, Egypt, c.1325 BCE. Reproduced from Desroches-Noblecourt, *Tutankhamen*, Pl. XVII.

ordered distribution of Egyptian military personnel shown in the process of victory (Figure 3.23).²²⁴ Elsewhere, foreigners were represented in contexts facilitating their routine ritual trampling and subordination by the pharaoh, such as on royal sandals, floor tiles, doorsteps, footstools, throne daises, statue plinths, walking canes, and mummy footboards (Figures 3.1-3.2).²²⁵ These compositions clearly express the ideological discourse of the Egyptian elite who sponsored its production, in visualising the pharaoh's maintenance of *ma'at* inside Egypt and the crushing of *isfet* that pertained in the lands and settlements located across its ritual boundaries.

Compositional structuring was noted above with Greek pottery, where juxtaposition helped to direct comparisons of dress and kit which, through reference to textual sources, permitted the retrieval of embedded discourse. The 'Scythian' bowman was extensively clothed, contrasting with the hoplite's 'heroic nudity'. Ideological discourse may extend to comparisons in bravery because contemporary Greek sources

²²⁴ Śliwa, 'Victorious Ruler Representations', 112–14; McCarthy, "'Emblematic" Scenes', 68–69.

²²⁵ Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt, *Tutankhamen: Life and Death of a Pharaoh* (London: The Connoisseur & Michael Joseph, 1963), 296; Śliwa, 'Victorious Ruler Representations', 115; Valbelle, *Les Neuf Arcs*, 46–47; Leahy, 'Ethnic Diversity', 227–28; McCarthy, "'Emblematic" Scenes', 60; Poo, *Enemies of Civilization*, 57–58.

suggest the bow was considered a lesser weapon due to the safe distance from which archers could engage in battle.²²⁶ Textual sources also reveal Greek discourse on the effeminate character of Persians, which justified their ridicule and subjugation, or the decadent lifestyle of Persian despots. These ideological characterisations inform many 5th century BCE visual representations where they are defeated in battle, turning away in cowardliness, riding a donkey rather than a horse, presenting a sexually submissive posture to an advancing Greek, or wear ornamental dress with extensive patterning and curled flourishes.²²⁷ However, there are some examples where the Persian is victorious, perhaps explained by documentary references to Greeks who were more sympathetic towards Persia or evidence for Greek consumption of Persian goods.²²⁸ Graeco-Persian relations were more complex than that portrayed in art made for the societal elite.

A Chinese example of compositional structuring was suggested earlier with the juxtaposition of *mingqi* in their original tomb context. It will have enhanced the physiognomic discourse present in individual *mingqi* representing contorted and grimacing foreigners and composed Chinese courtiers.

3.3. Interpreting foreignness and foreign identity

This integrative survey of three academic literatures has shown that there are multiple dimensions to the visual representation of foreignness, and several similarities in the iconographic approaches of ancient artists. There is also a clear articulation between the theoretical basis for understanding the perception of foreignness and for its representation. There are clear symbolic, semiotic and structural indications of both perceived difference and distance. This provides a strong and informed framework for application with early Southeast Asian material.

The importance of documentary sources cannot be underestimated, and fortunately they have survived in significant quantities and as a range of material, including

²²⁶ Lissarrague, 'Athenian Image', 115–17; Barringer, 'Skythian Hunters', 16.

²²⁷ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 142–44; Lissarrague, 'Athenian Image', 118–19; Miller, 'Orientalism and Ornamentalism', 132–33; Ivantchik, "'Scythian" Archers: Problems', 249–52; Gruen, *Rethinking the Other*, 40–44.

²²⁸ Sparkes, 'Images of Others', 143; Miller, 'Orientalism and Ornamentalism', 117–20; Nippel, 'Ethnic Images', 38–40; Gruen, *Rethinking the Other*, 45–46.

historical, administrative, ritual and literary sources. They are valuable for understanding symbolism and iconography, ascribed foreign identity groups and perspectives on foreignness, the presence and societal roles of foreigners, and providing nuance for ideological material. The presence of inscriptions and labels has assisted in identifying figures.

Several of the features related to the construction of ethnicity and negotiation of ethnic difference are reflected in visual representations of otherness and foreignness. It was possible to represent linguistic difference despite the medium's visual nature. Representation of phenotypic difference was apparently widely used, reflecting how geographical patterning in phenotypic variation led to its perception as signifying otherness. However, such differencing was not represented universally, and we need to remain aware that phenotypic features may be ideologically characterised, as with Tang beliefs regarding physiognomy. Representation of differences in dress was also used widely, but again there was scope for associated ideological discourse, which may be retrievable from documentary sources. Examples were identified where a simple equation between dress and identity would be problematic, such as the Persianisation of all foreign dress in Greek art, and the wearing of components of the Other's dress seen with Tang *mingqi*. Combining differences in both physical appearance and dress may indicate an iconographic strategy for representing foreignness and is relevant for interpretive approaches. Additional cultural differences may be represented, including forms of music, dance and entertainment that drew interest in distant societies because of its exotic nature. We should anticipate that other cultural forms or practices may be represented.

Several other aspects appear to relate more directly to geographical distance, rather than its effects on the perception of interpersonal difference. Landscape features, exotic objects and non-local flora and fauna were used to characterise a figure or its compositional context as foreign. Archaeological excavation has revealed the objects, and sometimes clothing, that may be represented in this way, and their provenance may confirm an association with geographical distance. Discontinuous distributions of resources lie behind certain societal roles represented for foreigners, including long-distance traders and those with specialist knowledge associated with distant

resources, for example camel and horse grooms. Notably, iconographic roles were almost always explained using available documentary sources, suggesting that the incorporation of representations of foreigners is not random.

Compositional structuring was observed to be a particularly powerful method for articulating overtly ideological perspectives of foreignness. Documentary sources provided important insights to ensure interpretive balance.

It was shown that direct approaches to interpreting identity from representations are inherently subjective and therefore unreliable; individuals may be inconsistent with their interpretations and multiple commentators may interpret identity differently. Representations must be understood as fundamentally subjective and discursive, and as constructions deriving from the cognitive framework of the Self. The Self-Other relationship is further complicated by the addition of the modern viewer as a third entity in the role of interpreter of the representation, to whom the artist-Self and represented-Other are both Others. Improvements in interpretive method can only result from attempting to approach the representation from the perspective of the artist-Self.

Such an approach must consider the effects of the cognitive processes occurring between the Self-Other 'encounter' and the production of the representation, the potential role of ascriptive categories of Others and, in the case of ancient art, changes to the artistic form or relevant populations since its production. The last of these may include changes to the artistic form associated with age or damage, and population changes that may affect modern understandings of aspects of appearance, perhaps through migration, settlement and integration. Of note is the problematic notion of 'traditional dress', where this is understood to imply the form, purpose or meaning of dress has not changed over its known history, which is unlikely because dress may have a role in articulating ethnicity, which is itself not fixed.²²⁹ Historical or archaeological evidence for the presence of foreign groups is essential for understanding possible identities represented artistically.

²²⁹ Eicher, 'Dress as an Expression of Ethnic Identity', 2.

Applying one's own cultural meanings during the interpretation of a representation produced in a different cultural context can lead to 'aberrant decoding', where the intended meaning is misread due to the non-contextual interpretive framework.²³⁰ An interpretive approach therefore needs to accumulate, explain and integrate all possible existing information about the representation, its artistic context and the cultural context of the artist, in order to get closer to comprehending its meaning from the artist's cultural perspective.²³¹ Even still, comprehension of all aspects of the representation is unlikely due to the cultural and temporal distance between modern viewer and artist-Self,²³² not least in its effect on survival of information sources.

Recreating the representation's context is especially important. Provenance and dating help to locate the object and its art in the cultural context of its production and consumption. Recreating the object's physical context provides insights on the significance and purpose of its art, and how it was experienced or used. Recreating the iconographic context helps understand the purpose of the representation and identify appropriate textual sources for interpretation.

Semiotics provides a valuable analytical approach for considering the potential significance of formal differences or similarities in colour, size, shape, pattern and compositional structuring, that may signify aspects of represented identity or relationships between figures. The role of semiotics in interpreting meaning in visual art is well established.²³³ If inferences are made using such differences or similarities, it is important to understand the artistic form's original appearance, including the potential of the artistic medium to represent details, and the role of iconographic convention.

²³⁰ Spencer, *Race and Ethnicity*, 2 & 16.

²³¹ Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory*, 72–88; Ronald Bontekoe, *Dimensions of the Hermeneutic Circle* (New York: Humanity Books, 2000), 3–7.

²³² Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory*, 43–44.

²³³ Jan Mukařovský, 'Art as Semiotic Fact', in *Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions*, ed. Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R. Titunik, trans. Irwin R. Titunik (Cambridge (Mass) & London: MIT Press, 1976), 3–9; Mieke Bal, 'Seeing Signs: The Use of Semiotics for the Understanding of Visual Art', in *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Mark A. Cheetham, Michael Ann Holly, and Keith Moxey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 74–93; Theo van Leeuwen, 'Semiotics and Iconography', in *The Handbook of Visual Analysis*, ed. Theo van Leeuwen and Carey Jewitt (London, Thousand Oaks (Cal) & New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2001), 92–118; Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials* (London: SAGE Publications, 2007), 74–106.

This interpretive framework highlights the value of considering less specific descriptions of identity. Where there is insufficient information to suggest a specific ethnic identity, the recognition of ethnic difference between ancient Self and ancient Other may still be possible. Where a specific foreign identity, labelled ascriptively or not, cannot be advanced, it may still be possible to discuss foreignness.

3.4. Personal experience, iconographic convention and stereotypy

It cannot be certain that every ancient artist who produced an image of a ‘foreigner’ had personally experienced the category of person they represented. For example, the Greek artists in the Mediterranean appear to have used information about Scythians originating in the Greek colonies. It is therefore important to recognise the contributions of the individual artist and iconographies in stereotyped representations.

In the material studied above, mechanisms existed which promoted conformity in representational art and presented certain constraints on artistic creativity. Art for the Egyptian social elite was largely produced with reference to an iconographic canon, including the use of standardised viewpoints of different body parts and grids to ensure standardisation of bodily proportions and figural composition.²³⁴ Black-figure and red-figure pottery painting was organised at the level of the workshop with apprentices learning from master painters, known in some detail from their signatures and art historical assessments of stylistic idiosyncrasies, thereby ensuring a formal consistency of artistic production.²³⁵ The pottery was used socially and traded widely, so painters saw the work of other workshops and artistic products in different media, leading to the borrowing of motifs and consequently some similarities between

²³⁴ Whitney Davis, *The Canonical Tradition in Ancient Egyptian Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 7–37.

²³⁵ Thomas Mannack, ‘Greek Decorated Pottery I: Athenian Vase-Painting’, in *A Companion to Greek Art*, ed. Tyler Jo Smith and Dimitris Plantzos (Malden & Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 47–57; Eleni Hasaki, ‘Workshops and Technology’, in *A Companion to Greek Art*, ed. Tyler Jo Smith and Dimitris Plantzos (Malden & Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 258–60.

workshops.²³⁶ Workshop organisation is known for the Tang *mingqi* also, with some constraint on creativity in the use of moulds to produce the basic figural form.²³⁷

However, there was also scope for personal contributions to both final artistic form and iconographic developments. Egyptian iconography could develop through individual manipulations within iconographic constraints involving minor addition, magnification or symbolic substitution of components enabling artists to reflect the contemporaneous in the canonical,²³⁸ as when duckbill axes were introduced iconographically as 'Asiatic' weaponry. There are apparently also several examples of non-stereotyped representations of foreigners in Egyptian art.²³⁹ The importance of individuality among Greek master artisans, indicated by the signing of their work, reflects the prestige of artistic innovation.²⁴⁰ Equally, while the basic Tang *mingqi* was mould-formed they were subsequently individualised for form, colouration and painted details, and moulds needed replacing periodically. There are also historical records of one-off commissions.²⁴¹ Clearly, in each case the organisation of artistic production permitted individual contributions alongside the iconographic or conventionalised.

Non-conventionalised representations that diverge from iconographic or stereotyped representations are logically more likely to incorporate additional sources of knowledge, and personal experience of the 'foreigner' may be among these. Indeed, this mechanism is suggested for the individualised representations interpreted as foreigners in Egyptian art that deviate from stereotyped forms while still, in some cases, referring to its formal language.²⁴² An analogous approach may help to define a subset of representations in a cultural context, such as early historic Southeast Asia, where formal relationships with foreign iconography are recognised. This is because such a relationship raises the possibility that representations interpreted as 'foreigners' may originate in iconographic appropriation or the presence of foreign craftspeople.

²³⁶ Mannack, 'Athenian Vase-Painting', 57–59.

²³⁷ Watson, *Arts of China*, 231; Baker, *Seeking Immortality*, 18.

²³⁸ Davis, *Canonical Tradition*, 64–63.

²³⁹ Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 14–67.

²⁴⁰ Hasaki, 'Workshops and Technology', 269–71.

²⁴¹ Watson, *Arts of China*, 231–35; Baker, *Seeking Immortality*, 18–20.

²⁴² Booth, *Role of Foreigners*, 21–24, 35–36, 43–44 & 49–52.

Category	Place of production	Producer	Iconographic form
	local	local	local
1	✗	✗	✗
2	✓	✗	✗
3	✓	✓	✗
4	✓	✗	✓
5	✓	✓	✓

Table 3.1 Categorisation of representations of the ‘foreigner’ in relation to aspects of iconographic production.

Table 3.1 may help to conceptualise the issues on a theoretical level. Category 1 can be understood as imported objects with representations produced by foreigners. Category 5 presents the most likely category to be of relevance for understanding local perceptions of foreignness. Assuming provenance analyses can demonstrate local production, categories 2 and 3 present foreign and local craftspeople producing objects involving the appropriation of foreign iconography. Categories 4 and 5 avoid the simple iconographic appropriation of figures that may appear to be representations of foreigners in a distant artistic context, but in practice it may be difficult to distinguish whether the craftsman was local unless they are specifically identified. Examples of craftspeople producing work in distant locations are known, for example Newar and Kashmiri artisans were employed to produce early Buddhist art in Tibet, and Greek artisans are known for Achaemenid Persia.²⁴³ It may not be possible to comment on perceptions of foreignness where the identity of the artist is unknown, because the presence of a Self-Other conceptual boundary along ethnic lines is unclear. However, if local patrons or audiences are involved in complex sociocultural negotiations of artistic form with the craftsman, then local perspectives of foreignness may still be incorporated irrespective of the craftsman’s ethnic identity. In the absence of evidence for the identity of the craftsman, it seems

²⁴³ Amy Heller, *Tibetan Art: Tracing the Development of Spiritual Ideas and Art in Tibet, 600-2000 A.D.* (Milan, Woodbridge & Wappingers’ Falls (NY): Editoriale Jaca Book & Antique Collectors’ Club, 1999), 133, 139–40, 146–77 & 184; Trudy S. Kawami, ‘Greek Art and Persian Taste: Some Animal Sculptures from Persepolis’, *American Journal of Archaeology* 90, no. 3 (1986): 259–60.

sensible to restrict discussion to cultural perspectives rather than suppose personal perceptions of foreignness could be accessed with the available material.

We now have a methodological framework for better recognising possible 'foreigners' in early historic Southeast Asian art based on combined visual indications of difference and distance with cultural and geographical dimensions. It rationalises the avoidance of direct interpretation of figural identity, and instead highlights the importance of recreating context – cultural, societal, production, iconographic – for a hermeneutic approach to seeing the 'foreigner'. Documentary and archaeological material are invaluable. The methodology highlights that there are reasonable limitations to recovering identities, but recognises this as a strength, not a failure. The possibility that representations of apparent 'foreigners' originated with iconographic appropriation also needs to be considered.

4. Foreignness in early Southeast Asia

The foregoing discussion of the representation and perception of foreignness highlighted the role of interpersonal, intercultural and geographical difference and distance across conceptual boundaries within a framework that considered aspects of ethnicity. Before proceeding with the case studies, a short discussion of some of the available kinds of evidence for studying these themes in early Southeast Asian contexts will begin to articulate their historical and social dimensions for interpreting iconographic material. This will reconnect with the discussion of increasing long-distance connections in Chapter 1.

Scholars have debated reconstructions of the peopling of Southeast Asia for decades, to understand the relationship between prehistoric populations and today's ethnic diversity. Recent work on ancient human genomes recovered from Southeast Asian remains suggests four significant immigration events can be detected, with the initial Hoabinhian hunter-gatherer populations established thousands of years before a series of migrations from what is today southern China, contemporary with the archaeological appearance of farming.²⁴⁴ Additional smaller scale migrations may of course also have occurred, but sample sizes remain small at this early stage of research.²⁴⁵ These migrations are also detectable linguistically, with estimates of the time depth of linguistic divergences and borrowing of vocabulary between languages.²⁴⁶ The genetic studies demonstrate mixing between these initially different populations rather than the replacement of one by another, indicating significant interpersonal and intercultural interaction, and the likely generation of increased phenotypic variation long before the early historic period. Facial approximation and reconstruction from skeletal remains may begin to contribute more to our

²⁴⁴ Hugh McColl et al., 'The Prehistoric Peopling of Southeast Asia', *Science* 361 (2018): 88–92; Mark Lipson et al., 'Ancient Genomes Document Multiple Waves of Migration in Southeast Asian Prehistory', *Science* 361 (2018): 92–95.

²⁴⁵ The availability of bioarchaeological data is limited by Southeast Asia's climate and the practice of cremation, which increased after engagement with Buddhism and Hinduism; see Stacey Ward and Nancy Tayles, 'Cremation in Mainland Southeast Asia: An Overview', in *The Routledge Handbook of Bioarchaeology in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands*, ed. Marc F. Oxenham and Hallie Buckley (Abingdon & New York: Routledge, 2016), 239–42.

²⁴⁶ Paul Sidwell, 'Southeast Asian Mainland: Linguistics', in *The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration*, ed. Peter Bellwood, vol. 1. Prehistory (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 259–68; Robert Blust, 'Southeast Asian Islands and Oceania: Austronesian Linguistic History', in *ibid.*, 276–82.

appreciation of this variation in the future, but initial studies are evaluating the appropriateness of the reference datasets used due to the populations they are derived from.²⁴⁷ Techniques are being developed elsewhere that infer or predict phenotypic traits such as skin, eye and hair colour from ancient DNA.²⁴⁸ It should be remembered that these kinds of data relate to individuals, and that population-level inferences would result from statistical generalisations, but in the future archaeogenetic studies will be able to contribute to an improved appreciation of phenotypic variety in ancient populations.

Archaeological evidence for prehistoric dress traditions is dominated by bodily ornament, especially beads, pendants, ear ornaments and bracelets, in bronze, semiprecious stone, glass, bone, teeth and shell.²⁴⁹ Southeast Asia's climate means that few remains of textile survive, but bark-cloth is known since the Neolithic period, as are bark-cloth beaters used in its production.²⁵⁰ Evidence for weaving is also known from the Neolithic, especially as spindle whorls, but Iron Age contexts have yielded loom fragments and shuttles, and fragments of woven textile from waterlogged burials and mineralised portions attached to metal items, although these may represent wrappings rather than clothing.²⁵¹ Iconographic representations suggest a range of

²⁴⁷ Susan Hayes et al., 'A Late Pleistocene Woman from Tham Lod, Thailand: The Influence of Today on a Face from the Past', *Antiquity* 91, no. 356 (2017): 289–301.

²⁴⁸ Gloria G. Fortes et al., 'Phenotypes from Ancient DNA: Approaches, Insights and Prospects', *Bioessays* 35 (2013): 690–95; Christine Keyser et al., 'Ancient DNA Provides New Insights into the History of South Siberian Kurgan People', *Human Genetics* 126 (2009): 404–9.

²⁴⁹ Anne Richter, *The Jewelry of Southeast Asia* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000), 10–15 & 26–29; Higham, *Early Cultures*, 139–51, 180–82 & 197–211.

²⁵⁰ Judith Cameron, 'The Archaeological Evidence for Bark-Cloth in Southeast Asia', in *Bark-Cloth in Southeast Asia*, ed. Michael C. Howard (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2006), 65–74.

²⁵¹ Textile fragments from waterlogged Đông Sơn burials, Vietnam, may represent a burial shroud; see Judith Cameron, 'New Research into Dongson Cloth from Waterlogged Sites in Vietnam', in *Uncovering Southeast Asia's Past: Selected Papers from the 10th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists*, ed. Elisabeth A. Bacus, Ian C. Glover, and Vincent C. Pigott (Singapore: NUS Press, 2006), 196–201, and Higham, *Early Cultures*, 173–74. Mineralised textiles attached to metal objects in Samon burials, Myanmar, may represent their wrappings; see Christophe Moulherat and Fabienne Médard, 'First Evidence of Archaeological Textiles in Myanmar', in *Ywa Htin: Iron Age Burials in the Samon Valley, Upper Burma*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2007), 63–65; Jean-Pierre Pautreau, 'Traces of Textile', in *Excavations in the Samon Valley: Iron Age Burials in Myanmar*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau, Anne-Sophie Coupey, and Aung Aung Kyaw (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2010), 316–19; Fabienne Médard, 'Study of Burmese Textiles', in *ibid.*, 320–27. Nonetheless, in both cases, survival was sufficient to study weave patterns, while the Đông Sơn cloth was also striped. For loom fragments from a Đông Sơn burial, see: Cameron, *op. cit.*, 198–201. For spindle whorls, see: Judith Cameron, 'The Spinning Tools from Sunget, Anaro and Savidug', in *4000 Years of Migration and Cultural Exchange: The Archaeology of the Batanes Islands, Northern Philippines*, ed. Peter Bellwood and Eusebio Dizon, *Terra Australis* 40 (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2013), 115–21; Judith

dress, including nakedness, simple loincloths, longer lower garments and headdresses, including feather headdresses on figures on Đông Sơn and Dian material.²⁵² These remind us that forest products, for which Southeast Asia became renowned in the historic period, provided much potential for additional aspects of dress for which there remains little tangible evidence.

Attachment to places in the landscape is evidenced for prehistoric Southeast Asia also, with many moated settlements known from Iron Age mainland sites especially, although earlier settlements are known, but it is worth reflecting on their relationship with identity formation. The function of the moats has been suggested as related to agricultural water storage or defence, but very few have yet been archaeologically investigated.²⁵³ However, both interpretations are consistent with the development of social identity because settlement involves an investment in modifying the landscape to construct a transgenerational space for family and kin, which derives a sense of land ownership, familiarity with landscape and association with place. A sense of belonging may result from the communality of agricultural production, earthwork construction or settlement defence and, because cemeteries are often located at the settlement in prehistoric Southeast Asia, the settlement may also become a place of social memory.²⁵⁴

Variation in phenotype, language and dress, and association with places in the landscape, are consistent with the existence of ethnic difference in late prehistoric

Cameron, 'The Spinning Tools', in *The Excavation of Ban Non Wat: The Iron Age, Summary and Conclusions*, ed. Charles F.W. Higham and A. Kijngam (Bangkok: Fine Arts Department, 2013), 115–19; Higham, *op. cit.*, 142–144.

²⁵² Richter, *The Jewelry of Southeast Asia*, 15–16; Higham, *Early Cultures*, 171–79.

²⁵³ Elizabeth H. Moore, 'Notes on Two Types of Moated Settlement in Northeast Thailand', *Journal of the Siam Society* 76 (1988): 275–83; Dougal J.W. O'Reilly and Glen Scott, 'Moated Sites of the Iron Age in the Mun River Valley, Thailand: New Discoveries Using Google Earth', *Archaeological Research in Asia* 3 (2015): 9–17.

²⁵⁴ Michael Chazan, *World Prehistory and Archaeology: Pathways through Time*, 4th ed. (New York & Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 179; Kim, *Origins of Ancient Vietnam*, 46–47, 232 & 242–43; Joanna Brück and Melissa Goodman, 'Introduction: Themes for a Critical Archaeology of Prehistoric Settlement', in *Making Places in the Prehistoric World: Themes in Settlement Archaeology*, ed. Joanna Brück and Melissa Goodman (London: UCL Press, 1999), 8–9; Sharon R. Steadman, *Archaeology of Domestic Architecture and the Human Use of Space* (London & New York: Routledge, 2016), 35–36. Matthew D. Gallon, 'Monuments and Identity at the Dvāravatī Town of Kamphaeng Saen', in *Before Siam: Essays in Art and Archaeology*, ed. Nicolas Revire and Stephen A. Murphy (Bangkok: River Books & The Siam Society, 2014), 345–47, discusses a similar role of earthwork construction in social identity in a Dvāravatī-period Thailand urban context.

Southeast Asia.²⁵⁵ It will be recalled that the late prehistoric development of long-distance intra-regional networks, including the Đông Sơn and Sa Huỳnh-Kalanay complexes, saw the semiprecious stone ornaments functioning in the signalling of social status, not necessarily ethnicity. It has been suggested that these connections between social elites of distant societies, using shared symbolic systems, may have initiated the social integration of at least the Southeast Asian maritime area,²⁵⁶ but familiarity with the long-distance travellers involved will therefore probably have varied with social position. Late prehistoric Southeast Asia therefore presents a socioculturally complex region, but the perception of otherness relating to ethnic difference and geographical distance can already be envisaged. The connection with extra-regional networks led to encounters between individuals with different ethnicities that had not previously interacted, but the same kinds of conceptual boundaries will have continued to be relevant.

References to difference in appearance, referring to both phenotype and dress, are encountered in Chinese texts but are typically expressed in ethnocentric terms. For example, the *Jinshu* (晋书) described the men of Funan as “ugly and black; their hair is curly; they go naked and barefoot”.²⁵⁷ While clearly ethnocentric, this gives some insight to how the Chinese visitor perceived their ethnic difference, because the account also noted evidence of ‘civilisation’ including agriculture, walled towns, palaces and writing. Such explicit differencing is difficult to identify in early Southeast Asian epigraphy, perhaps due to its primarily cultic nature,²⁵⁸ and too little research has been done on how ethnic difference may have been personally articulated using

²⁵⁵ Siân Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and the Present* (London & New York: Routledge, 1997), 106–27, discusses the theoretical issues surrounding an assumption of the equivalence between an archaeological culture and a single ethnic identity, something which is not being assumed here. Instead I note the variation in several aspects relevant to the construction of ethnicity over a wide geographical area, and that ethnicity is continually negotiated.

²⁵⁶ Bérénice Bellina, ‘Was There a Late Prehistoric Integrated Southeast Asian Maritime Space? Insights from Settlements and Industries’, in *Spirits and Ships: Cultural Transfers in Early Monsoon Asia*, ed. Andrea Acri, Roger Blench, and Alexandra Landmann (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2017), 252–62.

²⁵⁷ Paul Pelliot, ‘Le Fou-nan’, *Bulletin de l’École française d’Extrême-Orient* 3 (1903): 254.

²⁵⁸ It is difficult to say if the Cham epigraphic reference to “men born in other countries... terrifying, entirely black and thin” attacking the population of Nha Trang in 774, destroying the temple, and identified by historians as Javanese, represents something of this nature or a visual characterisation. See: George Coedès, ‘Some Problems in the Ancient History of the Hinduized States of South-East Asia’, *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 5, no. 2 (1964): 6; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, p.387 n.191.

aspects of dress. Early iconographic material rarely uses compositional structuring to juxtapose representations of identity that might be understood as being based in ethnic difference, but this seems likely for Dian material representing combatants with differences in dress and hairstyle.²⁵⁹ Nonetheless, there are epigraphic references to different ethnic identities, for example pre-Angkorian inscription K.76 refers to ethnically Mon ‘slaves’ given to a temple,²⁶⁰ and it has been suggested that the *Maleñ* and perhaps *vrau* of pre-Angkorian inscriptions may also represent ethnonyms.²⁶¹ It is also relevant that, while the earliest inscriptions were often in Sanskrit, locally-dominant ethnicities came to use their own vernacular languages alongside – Khmer, Javanese, Pyu, Mon, Malay and Cham.²⁶² In the north, the Chinese occupation of Yunnan, Lingnan and Bắc Bộ was established from the late-2nd century BCE, but for another millennium the area remained an incompletely-integrated frontier zone. Local elites continued to assert local identities while engaging with Chinese culture, and the region was still perceived from central China as a peripheral source of exotica.²⁶³ Ethnicity clearly mattered in early historic Southeast Asia, and in some cases, such as the Khmer, would come to shape early state formation.²⁶⁴

Perceptions of geographical space contribute to the conceptual boundaries that shape identity and the sense of belonging, as discussed above, so that considerations of the ethnic and geopolitical dimensions of landscape and topography should inform our

²⁵⁹ Wang Ningsheng, ‘Ancient Ethnic Groups as Represented on Bronzes from Yunnan, China’, in *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity*, ed. Stephen Shennan (London & New York: Routledge, 1989), 197–205; Francis Allard, ‘Stirrings at the Periphery: History, Archaeology, and the Study of Dian’, *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 2, no. 4 (1998): 336–37. See also Section 6.6.2 on terracotta plaques from Kyontu, Myanmar.

²⁶⁰ George Coedès, ed., *Inscriptions du Cambodge, Volume 5* (Paris: École française d’Extrême-Orient, 1953), 7; J.M. Jacob, ‘Pre-Angkor Cambodia: Evidence from the Inscriptions in Khmer Concerning the Common People and Their Environment’, in *Early South East Asia: Essays in Archaeology, History, and Historical Geography*, ed. R.B. Smith and William Watson (New York & Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1979), 410. Christian Bauer, ‘Language and Ethnicity: The Mon in Burma and Thailand’, in *Ethnic Groups Across National Boundaries in Mainland Southeast Asia*, ed. Gehan Wijeyewardene (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1990), 15, notes two other pre-Angkorian inscriptions referring to Mon.

²⁶¹ For discussions of the issues, see: Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 127, 188, 223–24, 249, 360–61 & 442; Ian Lowman, ‘The Descendants of Kambu: The Political Imagination of Angkorian Cambodia’ (PhD Thesis, University of California, 2011), 29–36.

²⁶² Arlo Griffiths, ‘Early Indic Inscriptions of Southeast Asia’, in *Lost Kingdoms: Hindu-Buddhist Sculpture of Early Southeast Asia*, ed. John Guy (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014), 55.

²⁶³ Allard, ‘China’s Early Impact on Eastern Yunnan’, 30–34; Allard, ‘Globalization at the Crossroads’, 466–68; Churchman, *The People Between the Rivers*, 99–118; Edward H. Schafer, *The Vermillion Bird: T’ang Images of the South* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), 1–2.

²⁶⁴ Lowman, ‘The Descendants of Kambu’, 36–43.

interpretations of otherness and foreignness. For many years, early Chinese misapprehensions of geopolitical complexity in Southeast Asia influenced modern scholarship's reconstruction of early polities, such as Funan as centralised state rather than a group of small polities.²⁶⁵ Geopolitical models based on *maṇḍala* formations of small polities ('galactic polity') that involve alliance-building and domains of authority under able leadership, rather than territorial conquest and occupation, have instead been suggested for many areas of early Southeast Asia.²⁶⁶ Polities may physically neighbour each other in mainland contexts such as pre-Angkorian Cambodia, but for Śrīvijaya, which the sea divided, or rather connected, epigraphic data suggest that multiple low-density settlements stretched from estuaries up rivers and tributaries, forming an interconnected social space that is quite different to European conceptions of 'territory'.²⁶⁷

Available sources indicate that long-distance travellers in the Southeast Asian region reflect similar societal roles to those discussed in the previous chapter. Merchants of course travelled long distances,²⁶⁸ some associated with guilds that employed armed guards to protect goods from theft.²⁶⁹ The ships that transported them were often crewed by Southeast Asians and, while cargo transfer between vessels doubtless occurred, it is very likely these crews travelled outside the region.²⁷⁰ These ships are

²⁶⁵ Claude Jacques, "'Funan", "Zhenla": The Reality Concealed by These Chinese Views of Indochina', in *Early South East Asia: Essays in Archaeology, History, and Historical Geography*, ed. R.B. Smith and William Watson (New York & Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1979), 375–78.

²⁶⁶ Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 17–21, 27–40 & 107–54; Renée Hagesteijn, *Circles of Kings: Political Dynamics in Early Continental Southeast Asia* (Dordrecht & Providence: Foris Publications, 1989); Miriam T. Stark, 'Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian Cambodia', in *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, ed. Ian C. Glover and Peter Bellwood (Abingdon & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 96–97.

²⁶⁷ Pierre-Yves Manguin, 'Les cités-États de l'Asie du Sud-Est côtière: de l'ancienneté et de la permanence des formes urbaines', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 87, no. 1 (2000): 157–68.

²⁶⁸ Miksic (1990a) in O'Reilly, *Early Civilizations of Southeast Asia*, 44, notes that Chinese traders were less common in Southeast Asia until the 11th century because of official restrictions on travel.

²⁶⁹ A 9th-century inscription from Koh Kho Khao (เกาะคอเขา) in Peninsular Thailand, refers to the Maṇigrāmam, a Tamil armed merchant guild, and has been interpreted at this known port site as indicating the presence of armed guards protecting mercantile interests and goods, see: K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, 'Takuapa and Its Tamil Inscription', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 22, no. 1 (1949): 28–30; Meera Abraham, *Two Medieval Merchant Guilds of South India* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1988), 29–33; John Guy, 'Tamil Merchants and the Hindu-Buddhist Diaspora in Early Southeast Asia', in *Early Interactions between South and Southeast Asia: Reflections on Cross-Cultural Exchange*, ed. Pierre-Yves Manguin, A. Mani, and Geoff Wade (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2011), 250–51.

²⁷⁰ Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 44–46; Anthony Christie, 'An Obscure Passage from the Periplus: ΚΟΛΑΝΔΙΟΦΩΝΤΑ ΤΑ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΑ', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 19, no. 2 (1957):

known to have carried passengers too. Indian brahmins are recorded in pre-Angkorian Cambodia as religious officiants and court advisors,²⁷¹ while Indian and Chinese Buddhist monks travelled between India and China, as pilgrims and transporting texts for translation.²⁷² Indeed, Buddhist monks from Funan were among those engaged for translation of religious texts at the Chinese court.²⁷³ Successive courts recorded the arrival of approximately 250 embassies from early Southeast Asian polities up to 900.²⁷⁴ They brought exotic gifts of local products and live animals, and exotic entertainment in the form of musicians and dancers.²⁷⁵ It is possible a court-appointed interpreter acted as linguistic and social mediator as well as chaperone for such missions.²⁷⁶ Chinese delegations sometimes visited these polities, leaving their descriptions in the Chinese histories. Craftspeople travelled too, such as the Tamil goldsmith Perumpadan, whose inscribed touchstone was discovered at Khuan Luk Pat (ควนลูกปัด) in Peninsular Thailand.²⁷⁷ Inter-polity conflict led to long-distance movements of military forces, especially notable in relation to China's southern frontier, for example the naval battles between China and Linyi, the northernmost polity in the Cham-dominated areas.²⁷⁸ The use of foreign soldiers is also known, such

345–53. Manguin, 'Archaeology of Early Maritime Polities', 283, notes linguistic evidence for knowledge of Southeast Asian ship types in early South India. Bimala Churn Law, *India as Described in Early Texts of Buddhism and Jainism* (London: Luzac & Co., 1941), 188, highlights a reference to Malay merchants visiting an Indian ruler in the Buddhist *Apadāna*, but its historicity must be uncertain.

²⁷¹ Bronkhorst, 'Spread of Sanskrit in Southeast Asia', 268–70; Alexis Sanderson, 'The Śaiva Religion among the Khmers (Part I)', *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 90–91 (2003): 401. Charles Holcombe, 'Trade-Buddhism: Maritime Trade, Immigration, and the Buddhist Landfall in Early Japan', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 119, no. 2 (1999): 285, notes Guṇabhadra, a brahmin from central India who reached Guangzhou in 435.

²⁷² Tansen Sen, 'Buddhism and the Maritime Crossings', in *China and Beyond in the Mediaeval Period: Cultural Crossings and Inter-Regional Connections*, ed. Dorothy C. Wong and Gustav Heldt (Amherst (MA) & Delhi: Cambria Press & Manohar, 2014), 41–55.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 45.

²⁷⁴ Wang, 'The Nanzhai Trade', 118–23; Hans Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade in the Chinese World 589–1276* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2005), 9–100 & 259–75. This figure includes Nanzhao.

²⁷⁵ Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade*, 82–98 & 272–73.

²⁷⁶ Rachel Lung, *Interpreters in Early Imperial China* (Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2011), 6–20, describes this situation for Han China's interaction with southwestern tribes, but little information is available on such practicalities.

²⁷⁷ Amara Srisuchat, 'Merchants, Merchandise, Markets: Archaeological Evidence in Thailand Concerning Maritime Trade Interaction between Thailand and Other Countries before the 16th Century A.D.', in *Ancient Trades and Cultural Contacts in Southeast Asia*, ed. Amara Srisuchat (Bangkok: Office of the National Culture Commission, 1996), 250; Guy, 'Tamil Merchants and the Hindu-Buddhist Diaspora', 248–49. South Asian craftsmen are thought to have been present at late prehistoric Khao Sam Kaeo; see Bellina et al., 'The Development of Coastal Polities in the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula', 72–79.

²⁷⁸ Southworth, 'The Coastal States of Champa', 217–21.

as the inclusion of Pyu in the Nanzhao army against Tang Chinese-controlled northern Vietnam in 862-3.²⁷⁹ The general difference between the primarily imperialistic or socioeconomic background of intercultural interactions with Chinese and Indian cultures is noted,²⁸⁰ but there were clearly many reasons for long-distance travel, as elsewhere. Individuals will therefore have experienced foreignness in different ways owing to the social role they possessed in the wider socio-political context, as soldiers or sailors, court officials and entertainers, but these examples also highlight that people's encounters with foreignness also varied through personal travel to distant places or long-distance travellers visiting the local community.

Even in the context of a local community, people's individual experience of foreign visitors may have differed. For instance, taking the merchant example, early port settlements had developed through supplying long-distance traders with goods and provisions, but because it became possible for them to use the annual cycle of the monsoon winds to make return trips in a year, stopovers might be planned to wait for the winds to reverse.²⁸¹ A range of port services may develop in addition to the trade goods and craft production, such as dockside loaders/unloaders, porters, pilots, providers of accommodation, boat repairs, pedlars, food-sellers and guards, but the intensity of interaction may have varied with each. Examples are known of foreign merchants settling, such as Zhu Pole, an Indian trader known by his Chinese name, who settled in Guangzhou in the 5th century and had a family there, which indicates a level of social integration and cultural change.²⁸² In a globalising context, engagement with and integration of the foreign can bring sociocultural change, as has been noted with the localisation of Indian and Chinese cultural forms.²⁸³ However, the local elite may have controlled access to foreign merchants in order to monopolise access to exotica as part of securing their social status, as discussed in Chapter 1. It is known from historical examples that allowing foreign merchants, or other foreigners such as

²⁷⁹ Charles Backus, *The Nan-Chao Kingdom and T'ang China's Southwestern Frontier* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 138–39.

²⁸⁰ Carter and Kim, 'Globalization at the Dawn of History', 744.

²⁸¹ Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 21–29 & 37–46.

²⁸² Sen, 'Buddhism and the Maritime Crossings', 44. Indian brahmins are also known to have married locally and stayed, see: Pelliot, 'Le Fou-nan', 279; Coedès, *Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, 24–25 & 52.

²⁸³ Carter and Kim, 'Globalization at the Dawn of History', 739.

craftspeople, to settle in socially segregated areas enabled elites to restrict access to the materials and global networks that would help to enhance their socio-political power.²⁸⁴ Foreigners are more likely to possess knowledge of the non-local world that is otherwise not known locally, or have socio-economic connections in other parts of the network, and these may be exploitable. However, segregation limited the foreigner's interaction with the local community and hindered their integration which, from the perspective of the non-elite local community, will have reinforced their foreignness. For those whose social roles were displaced by elite emphasis on the foreigners providing their services instead, this may lead to negative perceptions of the foreigners.²⁸⁵

In this brief overview, it has been possible to begin to explore some of the potential dimensions of difference and distance in early Southeast Asia. Extending long-distance connections brought people into contact with ethnic Others, some of whom may have been perceived in a way that we experience today as foreignness. As networks globalised, potential membership of the constructed and subjective category of 'foreigner' will have increased. Familiar landscapes had already acquired meaning, as home, as ancestral, as owned, and the unfamiliar that came from outside will also have acquired meaning, but one that was similarly ascribed – perceptual, relational, contextual. In the same way that access to exotic prestige items was monopolised by elites for their symbolic power and connectedness to the global, access to foreigners – merchants, craftspeople, ritual specialists – may also have been restricted through social practices of segregation. Where integration occurred, sociocultural change may have followed, with a reconfiguration of the conceptual boundaries marking difference.

4.1. The research archive: representations from early Southeast Asia

I have attempted to survey the literature to develop a core archive of representations that have been claimed to represent foreigners, and through fieldwork I have added

²⁸⁴ Helms, *Ulysses' Sail*, 94–110; Bellina, 'Was There a Late Prehistoric Integrated Southeast Asian Maritime Space?', 256–59.

²⁸⁵ Helms, *Ulysses' Sail*, 108–10.

others which share their characteristics and so should be considered alongside. It is not possible to study all this material in depth in this thesis, so an inventory is presented as Appendix 1 and a small selection is discussed in greater depth as the case studies that follow. As well as asking questions of identity and meaning, these case studies seek to highlight the methodological aspects discussed in the previous chapter.

5. Case study 1: Sambor Prei Kuk

This first case study demonstrates the importance of documentary sources and material evidence for reconstructing a historical and sociocultural framework of long-distance connections, to give greater context to apparent representations of ‘foreigners’ while recognising its limitations. It was seen in Chapter 3 that this is essential when considering possible identity, in characterising the artistic contexts and roles in which they appear. Pre-Angkorian Cambodia has a good quantity of epigraphic, architectural and iconographic material by early historic standards, enabling better reconstructions that utilise local sources. Given the relationships between pre-Angkorian and South Asian visual and material culture, this case study also highlights the methodological requirement to develop a good understanding of relevant South Asian forms, to more reliably recognise where Southeast Asian forms differ iconographically through the novel incorporation of apparently ‘foreign’ figures.

Pre-Angkorian culture provides a particularly interesting case study because the claimed ‘foreigners’ are both spatially and temporally clustered – they occur primarily at the site of Sambor Prei Kuk (ប្រាសាទសំបួរព្រៃគុក) in artistic contexts dating to the early 7th century CE. They are found in three separate iconographic compositions at the site’s brick shrines, as the heads in horseshoe arch motifs (*gavākṣa*), as horse-riders flanking Indra on a ‘decorative lintel’ (*torāṇa* arch), and as figures in ‘flying palace’ reliefs on their walls. No prior attempt appears to have been made to consider them in a single discussion but, before bringing them together in their shared historical context, each compositional type will be analysed separately to better characterise and contextualise the figures in question. This is clearly important methodologically, but it is especially important here because the work of interpreting pre-Angkorian art and architecture is less developed than that of the Angkorian period. For this reason, each composition will be presented first with a more general interpretation of its form and significance, based on new research for this thesis, before considering how the apparently ‘foreign’ figures are incorporated. The following discussion will begin with some preliminary orientation by considering what is known of pre-Angkorian culture and the site of Sambor Prei Kuk, before looking in turn at the *gavākṣa* and the heads they contain, the *torāṇa* and the composition of Indra with horse-riders, and the ‘flying

palace’ and its occupants. The perceived foreignness of some of the figures will then be considered against both the evidence for long-distance connections and the roles they appear to perform in the art.

As with the material discussed in Chapter 3, a range of sources is necessary. Art historical approaches will be used to interpret the form and iconography of these three compositions, as well as the representation of difference, and iconographic and stylistic comparisons with South Asian art where appropriate. Pre-Angkorian inscriptions provide useful data for developing interpretations of the iconography and for understanding the long-distance connectedness of the area. These are supplemented by archaeological data where available and external historical sources where appropriate, remaining critically aware of their potential for othering and misunderstanding. The resulting reconstructions highlight local production and local or localised iconographies, which provide a firmer basis for considering the possibility that the presence of people with long-distance associations lies behind their artistic representation.

5.1. Sambor Prei Kuk and pre-Angkorian Cambodia

The study of ancient Cambodia is broadly divided into the pre-Angkorian period (late 6th century – 802 CE) and the Angkorian period (802-1431 CE), separated by the event of the foundation of the Khmer empire. This followed an earlier Mekong Delta polity or polities known historiographically under the Chinese name of ‘Funan’ (扶南) or archaeologically as the Óc Eo culture (c.1st-6th century CE). Sambor Prei Kuk’s temple architecture is known to date primarily to early in the pre-Angkorian period, but with some modifications in the 10th century.²⁸⁶ Pre-Angkorian temple architecture was mostly constructed in brick with stone elements concentrated at the doorway for structural support, with artistic forms sculpted into both the brick and stone surfaces (Figure 5.1), and originally contained an iconic image of the resident deity. A small number were constructed entirely in stone. Temples may contain one or more structures or ‘towers’ depending on their size and complexity, and are known by the

²⁸⁶ Bruno Bruguier and Juliette Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk et le bassin du Tonlé Sap*, Guide archéologique du Cambodge 2 (Phnom Penh: Éditions du Patrimoine, 2011), 169.



Figure 5.1 Pre-Angkorian *prasats* in brick and stone, at Sambor Prei Kuk (S1) and Angkor Borei (Asram Maha Russei). Photographs: Author.

Khmer term *prasat*, derived from the Sanskrit *prāsāda* meaning ‘temple’ or ‘palace’.²⁸⁷ The Sambor Prei Kuk site is extensive (Figure 5.2) with three main *prasat* groups in the eastern sector, conventionally referred to as North, Central and South groups with numbered *prasats* prefixed with N, C and S (Figure 5.3). These are associated with enclosure walls, and causeways which stretched 2 km east to a suspected canal and port linking to the Stung Sen river.²⁸⁸ Many other *prasats* exist in the surrounding land and the urban area to the west, which was surrounded on three sides by moat infrastructure 2 km in length. The urban area is separated from the main groups of *prasats* by a natural stream, and at site M.90 in its approximate centre a laterite

²⁸⁷ Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1946), 1, 134–37.

²⁸⁸ Naoko Nagumo, Toshihiko Sugai, and Sumiko Kubo, ‘Location of a Pre-Angkor Capital City in Relation to Geomorphological Features of Lower Reach of the Stung Sen River, Central Cambodia’, *Geodinamica Acta* 23, no. 5–6 (2010): 264–67; Ichita Shimoda and Sae Shimamoto, ‘Spatial and Chronological Sketch of the Ancient City of Sambor Prei Kuk’, *Aséanie* 30 (2012): 17–20; Heng Piphah, ‘Speculation on Landscape Use in and around Sambor Prei Kuk’, in *Old Myths and New Approaches: Interpreting Ancient Religious Sites in Southeast Asia*, ed. Alexandra Haendel (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2012), 184–89. The contemporaneity of the possible canal and port features with the early 7th-century North and South groups has not yet been demonstrated archaeologically.

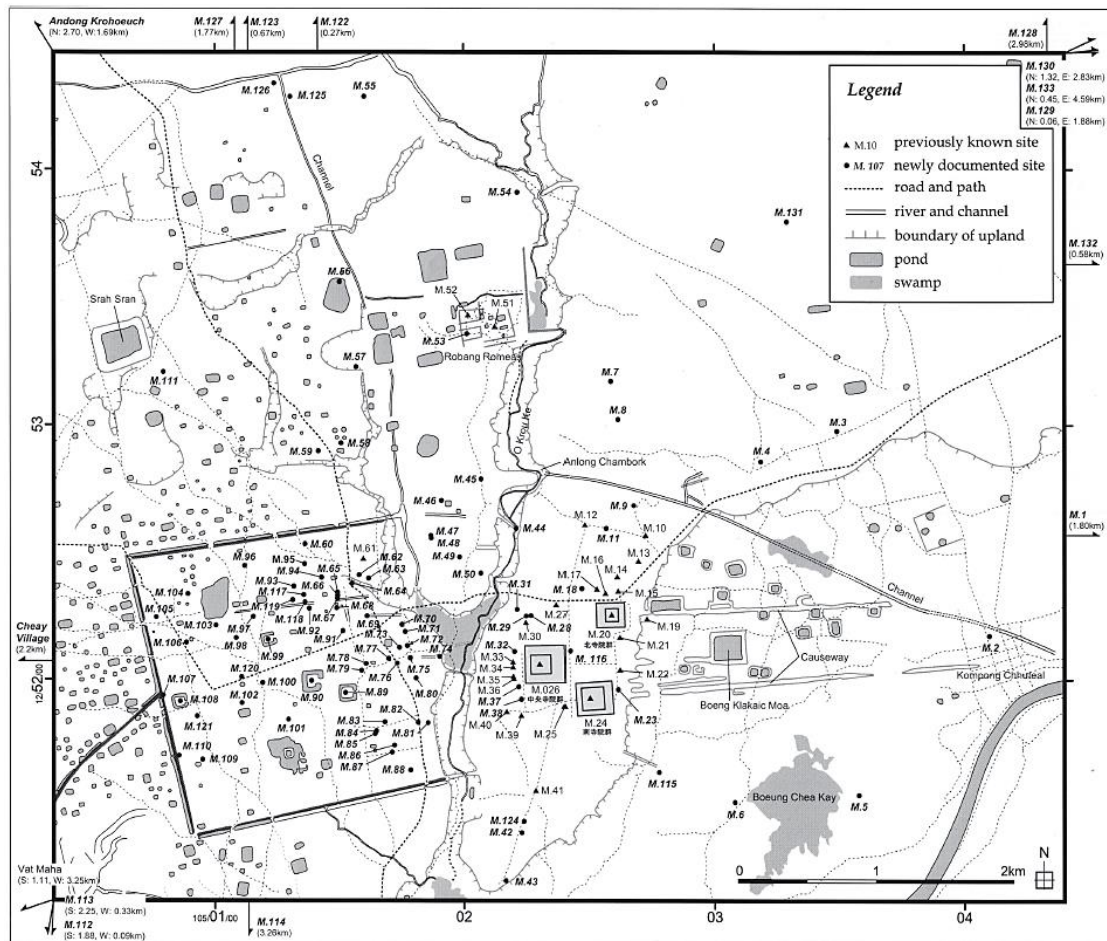


Figure 5.2 Sambor Prei Kuk archaeological site. Reproduced from Shimoda, *Ancient Khmer City of Isanapura*, Fig.1.7, with permission from the author.

platform of apparent pre-Angkorian date was excavated, interpreted as the base for a palace-related construction of perishable materials.²⁸⁹

The study of Sambor Prei Kuk’s art, architecture, archaeology and epigraphy developed alongside that of pre-Angkorian Cambodia more generally, after the site first became known to French scholars in colonial Indochina in 1894.²⁹⁰ Pre-Angkorian art and architecture received its first synthesis by Henri Parmentier in 1927 before the full extent of the Sambor Prei Kuk site was known.²⁹¹ This was supplemented subsequently by a series of stylistic and iconographic studies by French art historians

²⁸⁹ Shimoda and Shimamoto, ‘Spatial and Chronological Sketch’, 21–24; Ichita Shimoda, So Sokuntheary, and Chhum Menghong, *គម្រោងអភិរក្សប្រាសាទសំបូរព្រៃកុក / Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project*, trans. Mai Yoshikawa and Robert McCarthy (Kompong Thom: Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project, 2016), 34–39 of 47.

²⁹⁰ Shimoda and Shimamoto, ‘Spatial and Chronological Sketch’, 12–13.

²⁹¹ Henri Parmentier, *L’Art Khmer Primitif*, 2 vols (Paris: L’ École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1927). This was followed soon after by Henri Parmentier, ‘Complément à l’art khmèr primitif’, *Bulletin de l’École française d’Extrême-Orient* 35 (1935): 1–115.

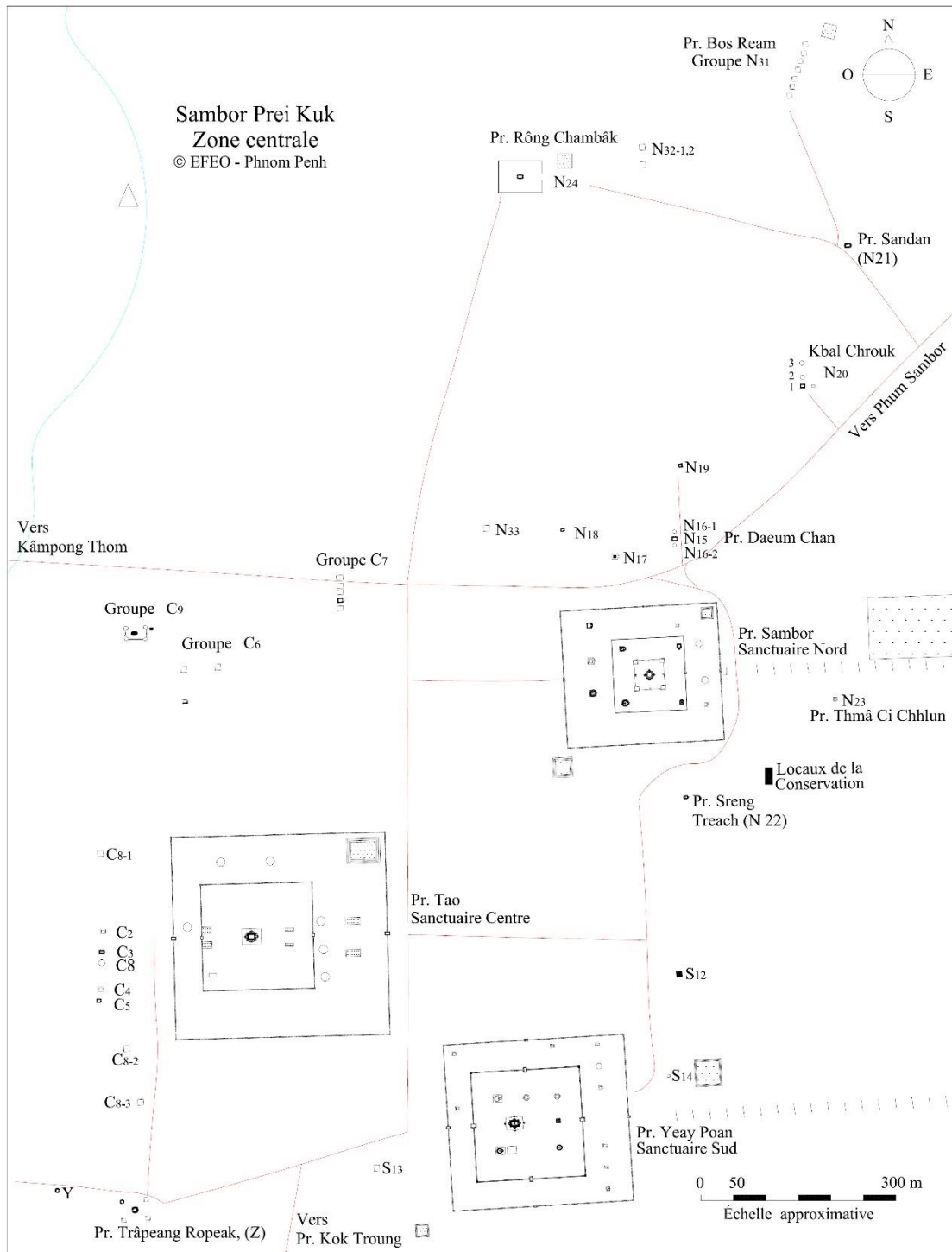


Figure 5.3 Main *prasat* groups in eastern sector of Sambor Prei Kuk: North, Central and South groups (N, C, S). Map courtesy of Bruno Bruguier.

in the 1950s-1970s including, most notably, Pierre Dupont, Philippe Stern and Mireille Bénisti.²⁹² Despite being several decades or more old already, these studies remain important references for the study of pre-Angkorian material culture. This is due to reduced field research during the Khmer Rouge period in Cambodia, and because studies by the Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project have prioritised the recording, restoration and conservation of monuments since their establishment in 2001.²⁹³ This important work has nonetheless generated new insights on methods of architectural construction at the site and provided an intensive survey of the moated urban area (Figure 5.2). Archaeological excavations conducted by the Conservation Project have added to the relatively few that were done previously, but importantly these have begun to investigate the urban area too.²⁹⁴ The site's Sanskrit and Old Khmer inscriptions were collected and translated mainly by George Coedès and Louis Finot, the bulk being published together in French translation in 1952, and very few have been discovered since.²⁹⁵ These studies of Sambor Prei Kuk's material culture have permitted some important insights that are relevant for the present research.

Epigraphic studies have led scholars to conclude that Sambor Prei Kuk represents the ancient city of Īśānapura, associated especially with the rulers Īśānavarman (r. c.616-c.637) and Bhavavarman II (r. c.637-c.655).²⁹⁶ As well as the wealth of social information in pre-Angkorian epigraphy,²⁹⁷ this identification means that Chinese texts describing social and cultural aspects of Īśānapura can be consulted, such as the *Suishu*

²⁹² Philippe Stern, 'Évolution du linteau khmer', *Revue des Arts Asiatiques* 8, no. 1 (1934): 251–56; Pierre Dupont, 'Les linteaux khmers du VII^e siècle', *Artibus Asiae* 15, no. 1–2 (1952): 31–83; Pierre Dupont, 'La statuaire préangkorienne', *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 15 (1955): 1–240; Mireille Bénisti's many studies of the 1970s are collated and translated into English as *Stylistics of Early Khmer Art*, trans. K. Thanikaimony, 2 vols (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts & Aryan Books International, 2003).

²⁹³ See Shimoda, So, and Chhum, *Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project*, for a summary of this work. Several earlier progress reports are also available. The project is run and staffed jointly between Cambodia's own Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and a team from Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan. Their work contributed greatly to the successful inscription of Sambor Prei Kuk as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2017.

²⁹⁴ A summary of these appears in Shimoda and Shimamoto, 'Spatial and Chronological Sketch', 31–41 & 47–64. Unfortunately, the earlier excavations are less well documented.

²⁹⁵ George Coedès, ed., *Inscriptions du Cambodge, Volume 4* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1952), 3–35; Louis Finot, 'Nouvelles inscriptions de Sambor', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 28, no. 1 (1928): 43–46. This material is mainly available in French translation, but some work on providing English translations was done by Jacinta A. Beckwith, 'Pre-Angkor Cambodia: The Transition from Prehistory to History' (MA Thesis, University of Otago, 2002).

²⁹⁶ Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 4; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 335.

²⁹⁷ Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, *passim*.

(隋书) completed in 636, with relevant sections incorporated into Ma Duanlin's *Wenxian Tongkao* (文献通考) completed in 1317.²⁹⁸ Xuanzang, the Chinese Buddhist monk who travelled overland to India and back between 629 and 645, heard about Īsānapura and other Southeast Asian centres while in northeastern India in c.635.²⁹⁹ These references demonstrate that the Īsānapura of Īsānavarman was known to some degree in contemporary India and China.

Epigraphic studies have also contributed to an improved understanding of the pre-Angkorian geopolitical and ethnic landscapes, which is important when considering the perceptual dimensions of foreignness. The use of Old Khmer for inscriptions indicates the dominant ethnicity of the pre-Angkorian elite, but the presence of non-Khmer personal names and Chamic titles indicates that society was multi-ethnic.³⁰⁰ Archaeological studies of prehistoric sites in the region suggest pre-Angkorian culture's origins can be traced to the arrival of people who migrated downriver from the Mun valley area of Northeast Thailand via the Mekong valley into what is today southern Laos and Cambodia.³⁰¹ Inscriptions and material remains of the 5th-6th century are known in the vicinity of Wat Phu (វត្តឃុំ; ប្រាសាទវត្តឃុំ) and Thala Borivat (ថាឡាបរិវត្ត), north and south of the modern Cambodia-Laos border.³⁰² A small group of late-6th/early-7th century inscriptions across northern Cambodia and its modern border with Thailand mark the campaigns of Īsānavarman's predecessors.³⁰³ Linguistic studies suggest other Austroasiatic-speaking populations were already present.³⁰⁴ Cham populations, with Austronesian ancestry, occupied large parts of the coastal

²⁹⁸ An English translation of this account is found in Coedès, *Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, 74–76. Other relevant Chinese documentary material is listed by Miriam T. Stark, 'From Funan to Angkor: Collapse and Regeneration in Ancient Cambodia', in *After Collapse: The Regeneration of Complex Societies*, ed. Glenn M. Schwartz and John J. Nichols (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2006), 167 fn.3.

²⁹⁹ Li Rongxi, ed., *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions*, Taishō Volume 51 (Moraga (CA): BDK America, Inc., 1996), 267; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 340.

³⁰⁰ Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 220–25. See also p.111 for an official called Paseṅapati, a non-Khmer name.

³⁰¹ Higham, 'Long and Winding Road', 283–86.

³⁰² George Coedès, 'Nouvelles données sur les origines du royaume khmèr: la stèle de Vät Luong Käu près de Vät Phu', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 48, no. 1 (1956): 209–20; Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 226–28; Heng Piphall, 'Transition to the Pre-Angkorian Period (300–500 CE): Thala Borivat and a Regional Perspective', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 47, no. 3 (2016): 484–505.

³⁰³ Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 71–79.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 63–64.

areas across the Annamite Mountains (Dãy Trường Sơn) that mark much of the modern Cambodia-Vietnam border.³⁰⁵ The ethnic composition of the population in the Funan area remains unclear, and its inscriptions are in Sanskrit only.³⁰⁶ To the west beyond what is today Eastern Thailand were the early Dvāravatī centres, with primarily Mon-speaking populations.³⁰⁷ Chinese sources knew the pre-Angkorian area as ‘Zhenla’ (真臘) which, as with Funan, projected a state-like geopolitical complexity onto an area that is today understood to have comprised a number of urbanised centres of pre-Angkorian culture, competing for local dominance.³⁰⁸ Pre-Angkorian epigraphy records around thirty such *pura* – Śambhupura, Vyādhapura, Tāmrapura, Dhruvapura, Jyeṣṭhapura – only a few of which have archaeological identifications proposed. Epigraphic studies suggest that pre-Angkorian elites sought to extend authority over others by demonstrating their superior spiritual status, gathering an entourage of supporters convinced of their innate power and appropriateness for leadership, and military action where required.³⁰⁹ This emphasis on authority and allegiance reinforces the flexibility of the pre-Angkorian geopolitical landscape, and the need for close attention to sources when thinking about the notion of ‘territory’.³¹⁰ It is not until the epigraphic appearance of the name Kambujadeśa in the 9th century that shared ethnicity is seen to have explicitly informed the conception of polity, following the geopolitical consolidation of multiple *pura* achieved by Jayavarman II (r. c.770-c.835).³¹¹ Distant, extra-regional places are nonetheless referred to in pre-Angkorian inscriptions, including Dakṣiṇāpatha, Madhyadeśa, Mālava and Kāñcīpura

³⁰⁵ Southworth, ‘The Coastal States of Champa’, 211.

³⁰⁶ Michael Vickery, ‘Funan Reviewed: Deconstructing the Ancients’, *Bulletin de l’École Française d’Extrême-Orient* 90–91 (2004 2003): 122–25, provides a summary of viewpoints. Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 48, notes a trend for considering Funan to have had a multi-ethnic population.

³⁰⁷ Indrawooth, ‘Archaeology of the Early Buddhist Kingdoms of Thailand’, 135–36.

³⁰⁸ Jacques, ‘“Funan”, “Zhenla”’: The Reality Concealed by These Chinese Views of Indochina’, 375–78; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 24–25 & 321–22; Robert L. Brown, *The Dvāravatī Wheels of the Law and the Indianization of South East Asia* (Leiden, New York & Köln: Brill, 1996), 13–16.

³⁰⁹ Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 17–22. Brown, *Dvāravatī Wheels of the Law*, 7–12. Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 372, disagreed with this reconstruction, relying heavily on the reconstruction of a royal lineage from Rudravarman to the Īśānapura rulers, but this lineage is not itself proven; see Section 5.2.4 fn.375.

³¹⁰ Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 91–138 & 328–66, presents a hugely valuable analysis of geographic extents of rulers’ areas of control, based on the distribution of epigraphic references to rulers. Stark, ‘From Funan to Angkor’, 146–55, sought to incorporate this kind of detail into geopolitical reconstructions.

³¹¹ Lowman, ‘The Descendants of Kambu’, 29–44.

in India.³¹² The many vectors of difference and distance are found in this material, with ethnicity, language, material culture, ancestry, migration, association with landscape, geopolitical formations and distant lands all represented.

Sambor Prei Kuk's material remains show that Śaivism was prominent, with a *liṅga* found in many *prasats* during surveys and excavations, and inscriptions naming resident deities understood to combine Śiva with local deities and given Sanskrit names such as Gambhīreśvara (K.439 and K.148, North group) and Prabhāsomesvara (K.439, South group). Epigraphic studies have also shown that Īśānapura's early rulers supported the Pāśupatas, a devotional sect of Śaivite ascetics, who in their official capacities provided ritual and intellectual services to the court.³¹³ Two are named, being Vidyāviśesa who officiated at Sambor Prei Kuk *prasat* S17-17 according to inscription K.604 dated 627, which eulogises Īśānavarman,³¹⁴ and Vidyāpuṣpa who officiated at the *prasat* at Phnom Preah Vihear (ភ្នំព្រះវិហារ) in Kompong Chhnang province, south of Sambor Prei Kuk, according to its undated inscription K.733 which praises Bhavavarman II.³¹⁵ Other inscriptions, which do not name specific Pāśupatas but which use the language of asceticism and Śaivite devotionism, can be understood as indicating wider Pāśupata practice in pre-Angkorian Cambodia and its close connection with the elite.³¹⁶ The *Pāśupatasūtra* and its commentary, the *Pañcārthabhāṣya* of Kauṇḍinya, show that this involved the performance of austerities and yogic meditation in devotion to Rudra-Śiva as supreme deity with the aim of, through his grace, joining him after death, in a dualist sense.³¹⁷ These texts, along with historical references, represent Pāśupata ascetics as almost naked and covered in

³¹² George Coedès, ed., *Inscriptions du Cambodge, Volume 1* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1937), 7–8; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 124, 193–94 & 205. There is the possibility of the perception of foreignness on a more local scale in inscriptions such as K.440 at Sambor Prei Kuk, where 'foreign kings' (*parabhūbhṛtaḥ*) are referenced, but it is unclear how precisely the Sanskrit term reflects the Khmer perception of otherness and distance; see Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 5–11, st.14.

³¹³ Kamaleswar Bhattacharya, *Les Religions Brahmaniques dans l'Ancien Cambodge d'après l'Épigraphie et l'Iconographie* (Paris: L' École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1961), 43; O.W. Wolters, 'Khmer "Hinduism" in the Seventh Century', in *Early South East Asia: Essays in Archaeology, History, and Historical Geography*, ed. R.B. Smith and William Watson (New York & Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1979), 431–33.

³¹⁴ Finot, 'Nouvelles inscriptions de Sambor', 44–46; Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 17–19.

³¹⁵ Coedès, *IC*, vol.1, 3–5.

³¹⁶ Wolters, 'Khmer "Hinduism"', 432–34.

³¹⁷ David N. Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas: Two Lost Śaivite Sects* (New Delhi: Thomson Press (India) Limited, 1972), 182–92; Minoru Hara, *Pāśupata Studies*, ed. Jun Takashima (Vienna: Institut für Südasiens-, Tibet- und Buddhismuskunde, 2002), 33–36 & 57–62.

ashes, often with a mass of matted hair, which, in our framework for understanding the perception of foreignness, would suggest visual differences in appearance and custom that would surely be noticed at first encounter. That Pāsupatas were active at Sambor Prei Kuk is potentially significant for several reasons. They were viewed with some scepticism among Vaidika *brāhmanas* in India, who represented the prevailing orthodoxy, because they deviated from Brahmanical norms in several ways.³¹⁸ They were devoted to Śiva rather than worshipping multiple deities, they became ascetic renunciants much earlier in life than was normally sanctioned according to the *varṇāśramadharmā* system, and they apparently showed disregard for the ritual significance of caste and purity as defined by Brahmanical orthodoxy. This may help to explain their initial presence in pre-Angkorian Cambodia, if the *Dharmaśāstra* prohibitions against leaving Āryāvarta and sailing overseas were disregarded.³¹⁹

From an art historical perspective, the Pāsupata-affiliated texts provide important material for beginning to penetrate the meaning of pre-Angkorian iconography further, as is explored in this chapter. This is because, until recently, studies of Pāsupatism relied primarily on the *Pāsupatasūtra* and *Pañcārthabhāṣya*, but now further texts in the Śivadharmā corpus are being studied and edited. They suggest an affiliated lay devotional element and temple-based worship in addition to asceticism, and the relevance of certain Purāṇas including the *Vāyu*, *Brahmaṇḍa*, *Skanda* and *Liṅga Purāṇas*.³²⁰ These developments postdate the more intensive period of pre-Angkorian art historical studies up to the 1970s so that new iconographic analyses can be developed for Sambor Prei Kuk's *prasats* in a Pāsupata context. In the short term, some preliminary inferences for the iconographic forms of relevance to this research,

³¹⁸ Lorenzen, *Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas*, 1–12; Romila Thapar, *Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1979), 69–76; Patrick Olivelle, *Samnyāsa Upaniṣads: Hindu Scriptures on Asceticism and Renunciation* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 51–57; Alexis Sanderson, 'Tolerance, Exclusivity, Inclusivity, and Persecution in Indian Religion during the Early Mediaeval Period', in *Honoris Causa: Essays in Honour of Aweek Sarkar* (London: Allen Lane, 2015), 159–60.

³¹⁹ Wolters, 'Khmer "Hinduism"', 433.

³²⁰ Peter Bisschop and Arlo Griffiths, 'The Pāsupata Observance (*Atharvavedapariśiṣṭa* 40)', *Indo-Iranian Journal* 46 (2003): 323; Peter Bisschop, 'Śaivism in the Gupta-Vākāṭaka Age', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 20, no. 4 (2010): 483–86; Hans T. Bakker, *The World of the Skandapurāṇa: Northern India in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2014), 137–40.



Figure 5.4 Four of twelve heads claimed to represent foreigners inside *gavākṣa* motifs on the cornice of a stone pedestal inside *prasat S2 (maṇḍapa)*, South group, Sambor Prei Kuk. Dimensions: 18-22 cm (height, depending on damage). Photographs: Author.

because of the representations of ‘foreigners’ they are said to contain, will be made using the available texts.

5.2. Figural heads inside *gavākṣa* on the S2 pedestal

No dedicated academic study has been published on the twelve arch-shaped motifs containing figural heads on the stone pedestal inside monument S2 (Figure 5.4). Brief comments draw attention to the contextually unusual appearance of the figures in both academic and popular publications, typically identifying them as Indian, Persian,

European or simply ‘foreign’, or compare them with Gandhāran or Hellenistic art in a general sense without specific examples.³²¹ The ideas behind these suggested identities will be considered in due course, but that these motifs and the figures they contain repeatedly evoke distant associations is itself significant. Part of the methodological approach outlined earlier is to clarify whether the S2 figures originated as part of a non-local iconographic form appropriated in pre-Angkorian art, or if they were novel in the pre-Angkorian context. We should therefore first characterise and compare the artistic and architectural contexts in South and Southeast Asia.

5.2.1. Horseshoe arch motifs: *gavākṣa*, *candraśālā*, *nāsī*, *kūḍu*, *caitya*-window

The horseshoe arch motif is known to have originated in South Asia, and entered the pre-Angkorian architectural sculpture repertoire as part of the wider engagement with Indian cultural forms.³²² In the academic literature on pre-Angkorian architecture they are widely referred to as *kūḍu*, a Tamil term for the motif in South Indian religious architectural tradition, meaning ‘nest’.³²³ This may seem to imply a known cultural connection with South India, but it appears the term was adopted because it was already in widespread use in the Indological literature, although alternatives were available.³²⁴ Sanskrit *gavākṣa*, *candraśālā* and *nāsī* are also known in textual sources, while the term ‘*caitya*-window’ derives from the form’s prominent appearance in the façades of rock-cut Buddhist *caitya* of the western Deccan, and is of Indological origin.³²⁵ Indological use of the term *kūḍu* can be traced to the work of Gabriel

³²¹ Parmentier, *L’Art Khmer Primitif*, 298; Claude Jacques, *The Khmer Empire: Cities and Sanctuaries from the 5th to the 13th Century*, trans. Tom White (Bangkok: River Books, 2007), 88; Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 200; Cristiano Calcagno, *Kampong Thom and Its Province: History, Geography and Archaeology of the Heartland of Cambodia* (self-published, 2011), 147; Shimoda, So, and Chhum, *Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project*, 14 of 47; Rinith Taing, ‘The Mysterious “Foreigners” Carved into the Temples of Sambor Prei Kuk’, *Phnom Penh Post*, 9 June 2017, accessed 12 June 2017, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/post-weekend/mysterious-foreigners-carved-temples-sambor-prei-kuk>.

³²² Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 146–52.

³²³ Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, ‘Early Indian Architecture: III. Palaces’, in *Ananda K. Coomaraswamy: Essays in Early Indian Architecture*, ed. Michael W. Meister (New Delhi, Delhi, Bombay, Madras & Calcutta: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts & Oxford University Press, 1992), 48; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 24.

³²⁴ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 24.

³²⁵ Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, ‘Indian Architectural Terms’, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 48 (1928): 253–54; Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 320 fn.58; Bruno Dagens, *Architecture in the Ajitāgama and the Rauravāgama (A Study of Two South Indian Texts)* (New Delhi: Sitaram Bhartia Institute of

Jouveau-Dubreuil, who acquired it in discussion with Tamil *sthapatis* working on temple constructions, rather than an ancient source.³²⁶ This is not to suggest there is no connection with South India, only that it is not the reason behind the term's use in a pre-Angkorian context. The Old Khmer term for the motif possibly reflected a cultural relationship of this kind but it is unknown today, and the Sanskrit terms do not appear in the pre-Angkorian epigraphic corpus. *Gavākṣa* has become more common in Indological usage today thanks largely to significant contributions to this subject by Stella Kramrisch, Odette Viennot and Adam Hardy, but this research has drawn more on northern Nāgara than southern Drāvida architectural traditions.³²⁷ Since, as will be shown below, there is good reason to compare with Peninsular Indian motifs, the term *nāsī* ('nose') may prove to be the preferable term from the available options, being attested in two late-1st millennium South Indian texts that are potentially relevant to Southeast Asian architecture.³²⁸ However, *gavākṣa* will be used at this stage of research,³²⁹ for consistency with the current literature, and because it recognises the interaction between Nāgara and Drāvida forms in the Deccan; this position may be revised in the future. Nonetheless, there is nothing in the descriptive terminology of the pre-Angkorian *gavākṣa* to suggest a specific geographical origin within South Asia. We are reliant instead on the formal attributes of the S2 motif to reconstruct the possible cultural relationships implied by its presence at Sambor Prei Kuk. Stylistic

Scientific Research, 1984), 81–82; Elisabeth Eva Raddock, 'Listen How the Wise One Begins Construction of a House for Viṣṇu: *Vijānatā Yathārabhyaṃ Grhaṃ Vaiṣṇavaṃ Śṛṇv Evam* - Chapters 1-14 of the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*' (PhD Thesis, University of California, 2011), 193 & 258. The above authors indicate that the *gavākṣa* is named in the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* (c.8th-9th century) and *Vācaspatya* (19th century), and the *nāsī* in the *Ajitāgama* and *Rauravāgama* (both c.8th-10th century), being sources relevant to temple architecture. *Gavākṣa* and *candraśālā* are also known for domestic architecture in ancient literary sources.

³²⁶ G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Dravidian Architecture*, trans. K. Amrita Rau (Madras: S.P.C.K. Press, 1917), 9–12 & 24–30.

³²⁷ Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 318–21; Odette Viennot, *Temples de l'Inde centrale et occidentale: étude stylistique et essai de chronologie relative du VI^e au milieu du X^e siècle*, Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient: Mémoires Archéologiques, XI (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1976), 5–66; Adam Hardy, *Indian Temple Architecture: Form and Transformation: The Karṇāṭa Drāvida Tradition 7th to 13th Centuries* (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, 1995); Adam Hardy, 'Parts and Wholes: The Story of the Gavākṣa', in *The Temple in South Asia*, ed. Adam Hardy (London: British Association for South Asian Studies, 2007), 63–82; Adam Hardy, *The Temple Architecture of India* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2007), 160–65.

³²⁸ Dagens, *Ajitāgama and Rauravāgama*, 11–12.

³²⁹ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 24, also suggested *gavākṣa* may be the preferable term as it is mentioned in architectural texts. Pinna Indorf, 'Interpreting the Hindu Temple Form: A Model Based on Its Conceptualization as a Formal Expression of Measured Movement', *Artibus Asiae* 64, no. 2 (2004): 184, uses it without specific comment.

similarities and differences between South Asian *gavākṣa* have long been recognised to indicate cultural and potentially chronological relationships; it has been argued that this is truer than with any other element of Indian religious architecture.³³⁰ From a theoretical perspective too, stylistic similarity is argued to reflect a historical connection between the production systems of two similar cultural forms.³³¹ Processes of ‘appropriation’ and ‘localisation’, whereby a form is taken from one cultural context and adapted for use in another in ways that are meaningful locally, are suggested to explain the Southeast Asian diversification of Indic iconographies and stylistic divergence – the formal similarity reveals a relationship, but the difference reveals ‘localisation’.³³² An understanding of the *gavākṣa*’s formal attributes and variability will therefore help to recognise where significant similarities occur between the S2 *gavākṣa* and their closest comparators.

A small number of systematic studies of formal variation in the *gavākṣa* across South Asia have been published,³³³ but Southeast Asian forms have not been researched to the same extent.³³⁴ Figure 5.5 shows known terminology for the *gavākṣa* components, but it should be recognised that these terms are unlikely to be universally applicable.³³⁵ The arched *mukhapatti* reflects the *gavākṣa*’s origin as a frontal

³³⁰ Coomaraswamy, ‘Palaces’, 55; Viennot, *Temples de l’Inde centrale et occidentale*, 10; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 24; George Michell, *The Hindu Temple: An Introduction to Its Meanings and Forms*, 2nd ed. (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 90–92; Hardy, ‘Parts and Wholes’, 63–63 & 74.

³³¹ Whitney Davis, ‘Style and History in Art History’, in *The Uses of Style in Archaeology*, ed. Margaret W. Conkey and Christine A. Hastorf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 26–30.

³³² Robert S. Nelson, ‘Appropriation’, in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, 2nd ed. (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 161–64; Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 49–55.

³³³ Coomaraswamy, ‘Palaces’, 47–57; Devaprasad Ghosh, ‘The Chaitya Window Motif’, in *J.N. Banerjee Volume* (Calcutta: Alumni Association, Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, University of Calcutta, 1960), 148–64; Viennot, *Temples de l’Inde centrale et occidentale*, 5–66; Hardy, ‘Parts and Wholes’.

³³⁴ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 24–29, studied its pre-Angkorian forms. Em Pheareak, ‘ចម្លាក់ក្នុងស្ថាបត្យកម្ម(គុដ្ឋ)ក្នុងសិល្បៈខ្មែរសម័យមុនអង្គរ (The kūdu sculpture of Khmer art in pre-Angkorian period)’ (BA thesis, Royal University of Fine Arts, 2017), is also recently available but I acquired a copy shortly before thesis submission, so cannot yet comment on its content. Indonesian forms appear to have been barely studied, and its relationship with antefix designs needs investigation; see, for example: Marijke J. Klokke, ‘The Buddhist Temples of the Śailendra Dynasty in Central Java’, *Arts Asiatiques* 63 (2008): 160–61.

³³⁵ The terms in the figure and discussion are taken from: K.V. Soundara Rajan, ‘Calukyas of Bādāmi: Phase I’, in *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture, Vol. 1 South India, Pt. 2 Upper Drāvidādēśa, Early Phase, A.D. 550-1075*, ed. Michael W. Meister and M.A. Dhaky (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies & Oxford University Press, 1986), 9–12; Hardy, *Indian Temple Architecture*, 53–54. They may therefore be more relevant to Deccan forms.

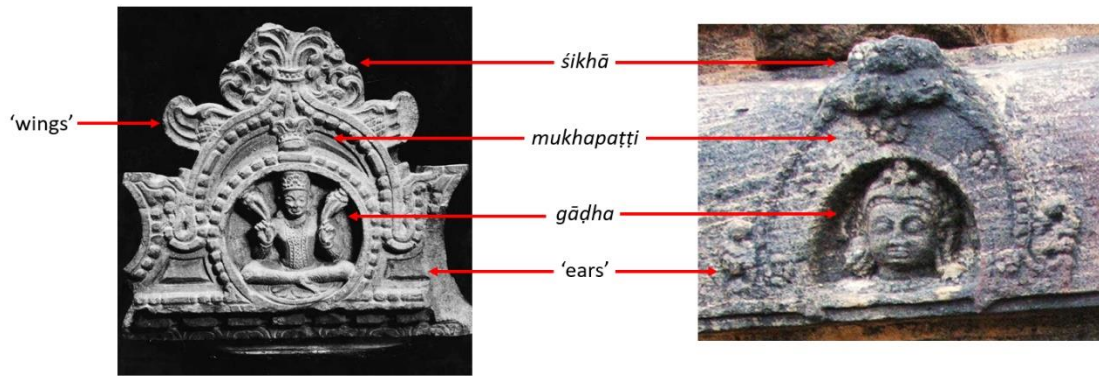


Figure 5.5 Terminology for components of *gavākṣa*. Left: *gavākṣa* from Kaṅkālī-Ṭīlā, Mathurā. Photograph: American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative no. 348.26 (Accession no. 44949), reproduced with the permission of the State Museum, Lucknow. Right: *gavākṣa* from Mālegitti Śivālaya, Bādāmi. Photograph: Author.

representation of a barrel vaulted roof or dormer-window of wooden or bamboo construction, used in both secular and religious architecture.³³⁶ It may be unpatterned, or patterned with flowers, vegetal designs or beading. The organic origins are probably further reflected in the surmounting *śikhā*, often finial or crest in English, that was pointed in early examples, apparently marking the joining of bent construction materials at a ridge.³³⁷ The *śikhā* became highly variable, incorporating the *śrīvatsa* or lotus, becoming flared or trefoiled or an inverted ‘spade-shaped’ trapezoid, plus the scope for patterning with vegetal designs, a leonine or monstrous face, eventually sculpted as a *śiṃhamukha* or *kīrtimukha* disgorging a vegetal *mukhapatṭi*.³³⁸ A windowsill is visible in earlier examples, and bilaterally at this lower edge are symmetrical projections which turn outwards and upwards, varying in relative size and extent of volute formation or patterning with foliate forms; these have been termed ‘ears’ in the absence of a Sanskrit term.³³⁹ Likewise, occasional additional appendages occurring mid-height on the extrados have been referred to as ‘wings’.³⁴⁰ The *mukhapatṭi* encloses a sub-circular or lobed *gāḍha* cavity which may be centrally placed, resulting in a *mukhapatṭi* of uniform width, or displaced downwards, causing the *mukhapatṭi* to be thicker near the *śikhā* and taper towards the ‘ears’. Earlier South Asian examples were variable in their relative proportions, but from the 7th century

³³⁶ Coomaraswamy, ‘Palaces’, 51; Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 319; Ghosh, ‘Chaitya Window Motif’, 150–52; Hardy, ‘Parts and Wholes’, 64–65.

³³⁷ Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 319.

³³⁸ Coomaraswamy, ‘Palaces’, 55; Ghosh, ‘Chaitya Window Motif’, 151–56.

³³⁹ Hardy, ‘Parts and Wholes’, 66.

³⁴⁰ Viennot, *Temples de l’Inde centrale et occidentale*, 18.

there was greater standardisation, potentially achieved using a grid.³⁴¹ Finally, the contents of the *gāḍha* are highly variable, including figures ranging from full height to just the bust, head or face, a flower, a leonine face or architectural features. This formal variability provides the basis for stylistic comparisons of attributes that may suggest cultural relationships, but before progressing with comparative analysis, a discussion of the *gavākṣa*'s architectural context and significance is important.

The origin of the *gavākṣa* in a barrel vaulted roof or dormer window was reflected in its architectural placement, rather than becoming merely decorative.³⁴² This is because the temple was conceptualised as a palace for the deity and a range of architectural forms cognate with early palatial architecture, as known from earlier reliefs, multiplied in its reduplicating tiered superstructure.³⁴³ The *gavākṣa* was one of these forms and, where it contains a figure, can be understood as a window looking out from this divine architectural space.³⁴⁴ *Gavākṣa* are consequently found on superstructures and cornices, which represent schematised rooves in the formal language of South Asian architecture.³⁴⁵ Their repetition as an array of windows in these locations is common to both Nāgara and Drāvida architecture, because these formal developments originated before the regional traditions diverged.³⁴⁶ Architectural imagery became employed over doorways and as niche pediments, and therefore *gavākṣa* appear here also.³⁴⁷

The contents of the *gāḍha* reflect this symbolism of divine space behind the window. The isolated bust or face in the *gāḍha* is often identified as a *gandharva-mukha*, the face of a *gandharva* or celestial musician, but although this term seems to be in common usage³⁴⁸ it is traceable, like the *kūḍu*, to Jouveau-Dubreuil's conversations

³⁴¹ Hardy, 'Parts and Wholes', 72–74; Hardy, *Temple Architecture of India*, 162–63.

³⁴² Coomaraswamy, 'Palaces', 55; Hardy, 'Parts and Wholes', 63.

³⁴³ Michael W. Meister, 'Prāsāda as Palace: Kūṭina Origins of the Nāgara Temple', *Artibus Asiae* 49, no. 3–4 (1989 1988): 254–80; Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 131–37, discusses *vimāna* and *prāsāda* as terms for the temple, with *vimāna* also used to describe multi-storey residential architecture in the Hindu Epics (fn.9), and *prāsāda* having a second meaning of palace.

³⁴⁴ Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 320–21.

³⁴⁵ Coomaraswamy, 'Palaces', 55; Hardy, 'Parts and Wholes', 69–72 describes how multiplying *gavākṣa* developed into the distinctive *jāla* (net) designs of Nāgara superstructures.

³⁴⁶ Meister, 'Prāsāda as Palace', 254–56.

³⁴⁷ Hardy, 'Parts and Wholes', 69–70.

³⁴⁸ Coomaraswamy, 'Palaces', 55; Coomaraswamy, 'Indian Architectural Terms', 254; Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Guardians of the Sun-Door: The Late Iconographic Essays and Drawings of A.K. Coomaraswamy*, ed. Robert Strom (Louisville (KY): Fons Vitae, 2004), 126 fn.4; Kramrisch, *The Hindu*

with contemporary Tamil *sthapatis*.³⁴⁹ As such, it is uncertain if it reflects an ancient signification. Other types of celestial beings have been identified in *gavākṣa* also, including *kinnari* and *deva*.³⁵⁰ Importantly, there are clear examples where the figure is a deity, identifiable iconographically and manifesting the temple's resident deity, although these are typically more prominent in scale and position.³⁵¹ Examples also include open flowers and leonine faces, which have been argued to represent divine light emanating from the deity's palace,³⁵² but it is unclear how widely this symbolism might be applicable. While the *gandharva-mukha* cannot provide a universal identification, a celestial or supramundane character would seem to be quite clear in South Asian traditions.³⁵³

Having surveyed the motif's names, formal components, architectural contexts and significance, we can proceed with the analysis of the S2 *gavākṣa* specifically. This will begin by considering their date, architectural context and form.

5.2.2. Chronological and architectural context of the S2 pedestal *gavākṣa*

The twelve *gavākṣa* are distributed around the cornice moulding of a stone pedestal's roofing slab, three per side (Figure 5.6). This pedestal is located inside *prasat* S2 which,

Temple, 320; S. K. Maity, *Masterpieces of Pallava Art* (Bombay: Taraporevala, 1982), Fig. S-10; Soundara Rajan, 'Calukyas of Bādāmi: Phase I', 9–12, 30, 46, 49 & 59; Margaret Prosser Allen, *Ornament in Indian Architecture* (Newark, London & Toronto: University of Delaware Press & Associated University Presses, 1991), 103; Hardy, *Indian Temple Architecture*, 40 & 54.

³⁴⁹ Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Dravidian Architecture*, 9–12 & 30.

³⁵⁰ Soundara Rajan, 'Calukyas of Bādāmi: Phase I', 9–12, 46, 49 & 59; Ghosh, 'Chaitya Window Motif', 149.

³⁵¹ B.N. Goswamy, *Essence of Indian Art* (Ahmedabad & San Francisco: Mapin Publishing & Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, 1986), 151, identifies Durgā Mahiṣāsūramardīnī for a 5th-century *gavākṣa* from the Śiva temple at Bhūmarā, Madhya Pradesh, showing the presence of deities in *gavākṣa* began early in its history; Doris Meth Srinivasan, 'From Transcendence to Materiality: Para Śiva, Sadāśiva, and Maheśa in Indian Art', *Artibus Asiae* 50, no. 1–2 (1990): 129–31, shows how a vertical series of *gavākṣa* on the superstructural axis of the 7th-century Paraśūrāmeśvara temple in Bhuvaneśvar, Orissa, contain representations of progressively manifest forms of Śiva; Soundara Rajan, 'Calukyas of Bādāmi: Phase I', 53, notes the *śukanāsa* (a large *nāsī* at the superstructure's base above the *garbhagrha* entrance within) of the late 7th century Tāraka-Brahmā temple at Ālampur, Telangana, containing a dancing Naṭeśa figure; George Michell, *Temple Architecture and Art of the Early Chalukyas: Badami, Mahakuta, Aihole, Pattadakal* (New Delhi: Nyogi Books, 2014), 178–79 shows a similar feature at the 8th-century Jambuliṅgēśvara temple at Paṭṭadakal, Karnataka, containing Śiva Naṭarāja with Pārvatī and his bull mount; we should also note here Bénisti, *Stylistics*, Figs. 253 & 258, showing seated Buddhas in *gavākṣa* on a 6th-century stupa at Nālandā, Bihar. See Appendix 2 for several others that are iconographically recognisable as named deities, and for the specific examples named in this footnote under the specific sections for these temples.

³⁵² Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 320.

³⁵³ Hardy, *Temple Architecture of India*, 41, accommodates this issue in his use of 'heavenly faces'.

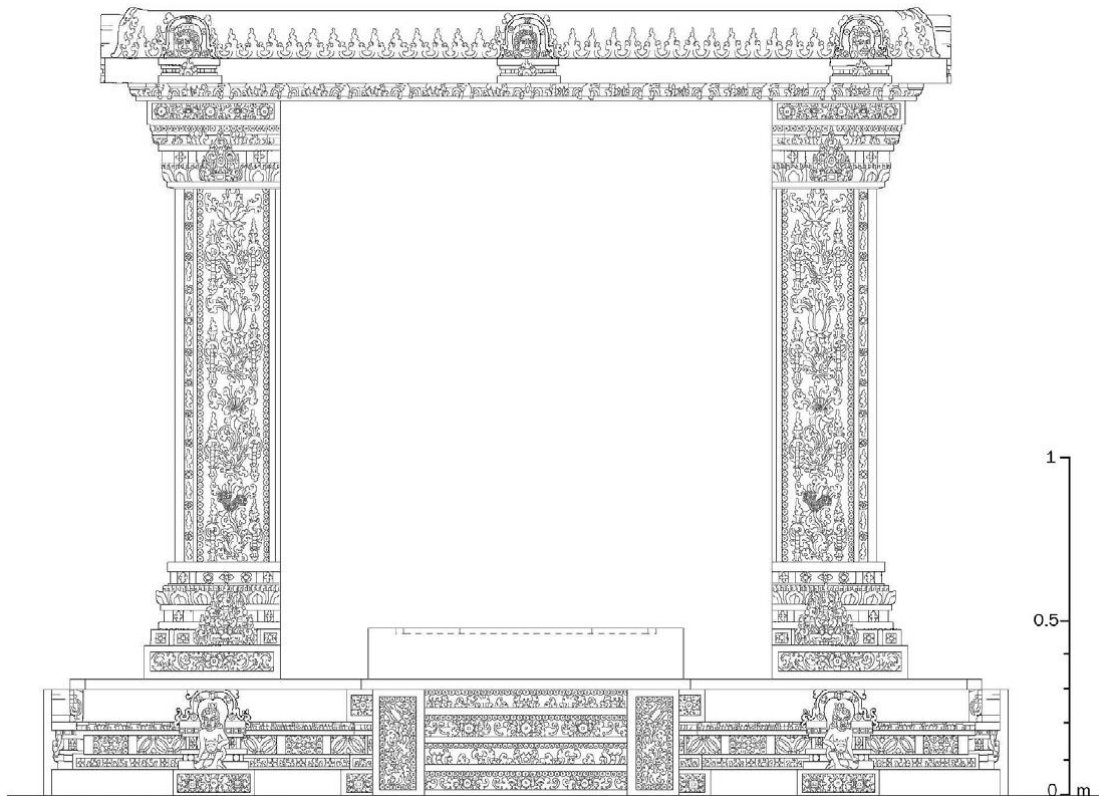


Figure 5.6 Pedestal inside *prasat* S2 (*mandapa*), South group, Sambor Prei Kuk, with *gavākṣa* on cornice. Reproduced from So et al, *Report*, Fig.38, with permission from the Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project. Drawing © Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project, Waseda University and Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts.

because of its position between the central South group *prasat* S1 and eastern entrance structures, is understood to have had a *mandapa* function housing an image of Śiva's bull mount.³⁵⁴ This image's existence is referred to in inscription K.440 from the second enclosure gateway S15, where it is described as being of silver, and in relationship with a golden *Śivaliṅga* in the main *prasat*.³⁵⁵ The content of K.440 is largely duplicated in the more fragmentary inscription K.442 on the S2 pedestal base itself, but the reference to *Vṛṣabha* can be reconstructed for K.442 from the undamaged K.440.³⁵⁶ The pedestal cornice with *gavākṣa* is therefore believed to have sheltered a silver image of *Vṛṣabha*, the bull mount of Śiva.

³⁵⁴ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 54–55; Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 4; Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 200–201.

³⁵⁵ Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 5–6 & 11. See *śloka* 32 and 34.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 11–14. See *śloka* 30. Coedès equates *Vṛṣabha* with *Nandin* (pp.4-6) but see Gouriswar Bhattacharya, 'Nandin and *Vṛṣabha*', *Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* Supplement III/2 (XIX, Deutscher Orientalistentag vom 28. September bis 4. Oktober 1975 in Freiburg im Breisgau) (1977): 1545–67, for a discussion of these two originally-distinct beings. K.440 and K.442 explicitly refer to *Vṛṣabha*.

The pedestal is considered to date from the early 7th century as K.442 names Īśānavarman.³⁵⁷ The reason for the epigraphic duplication between K.442 and K.440 is unclear but a palaeographic assessment of K.442 is compatible with its production during Īśānavarman's reign.³⁵⁸ Besides the pedestal itself, the wider South group architecture presents a relatively consistent picture of early-7th century construction activities, that would make this complex largely contemporary with Īśānavarman. There is considered to be a stylistic consistency among the South group structures, suggesting they were largely completed within a single phase of construction, including *prasat* S17-17 which contained inscription K.604 that names Īśānavarman and is dated 627.³⁵⁹ This stylistic consistency has been questioned previously, and a revision for a later date near the middle of the 7th century was suggested for S1.³⁶⁰ An early-7th century date for the pedestal in S2, and therefore of its *gavākṣa*, seems fairly secure.

5.2.3. Stylistic comparison of the S2 pedestal *gavākṣa*

It is necessary to present an extensive survey of South and Southeast Asian *gavākṣa* forms for the resulting conclusions to be as objective as possible and independently verifiable by the reader, rather than rely on the authority of an art historical claim. Comparative material has therefore been compiled from across South and Southeast Asia up to the late 8th century (Appendix 2) for comparison to the S2 *gavākṣa* that have been independently dated to the early 7th century. This extended date range is intended to accommodate the effects of imprecise dating methodologies. The approach taken here prioritises stylistic comparison based on form, so is less encumbered by the problems and subjectivities associated with using stylistic

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 11–14; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 124.

³⁵⁸ Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 11.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 3–4; Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 192.

³⁶⁰ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 303–24 discusses the range of opinions on the dating of *prasats* S1 and S9, concluding that S1 should be dated on stylistic grounds to 'a little beyond Sambor norms and before Prei Kmeng norms' (p.323); Smitthi Siribhadra and Mayuree Veraprasert, *Lintels: A Comparative Study of Khmer Lintels in Thailand and Cambodia* (Bangkok: Fine Arts Department, 1990), 39, give a more recent summary of the framework against which this stylistic chronology is structured, giving Sambor Prei Kuk style as after 600-c.650, thereby overlapping with Prei Kmeng style, given as c.635-c.700. Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 192, also note that the second enclosure, in laterite rather than brick like the first enclosure, may be later than the original early-7th century construction phase.

comparisons for dating purposes.³⁶¹ Issues of dating may be considered once formal similarities have narrowed down the comparative material.

The S2 *gavākṣa mukhapatti* has a uniform width and non-beaded border. It bears five four-petalled flowers, arranged symmetrically with one in the central top position and the lower pair level with the 'ears', while the higher pair often appear abbreviated as two concentric circles. Foliate 'wings' are on the extrados between the apex and 'ears'. The *gāḍha* contains a head only, being the figures claimed to represent 'foreigners'. The whole is positioned on an abacus-like socle with horizontal mouldings and a central foliate motif. Due to physical damage the *śikhā* is lost from all twelve *gavākṣa*, but its base is visible in three cases.³⁶²

The closest comparators for the S2 *gavākṣa* form, aside from others at Sambor Prei Kuk, are concentrated in the western Deccan area on Early Cālukya (543-753) monuments at Aihole, Mahākūṭa and Bādāmi. Appendix 2 permits us to say, with some confidence, that the *mukhapatti* with uniform width and floral pattern is a feature of Peninsular Indian forms, while the 'wings' are a feature of northern Indian forms, reaching only as far south as the Deccan. The S2 *śikhā* cannot be assessed directly, but where this feature survives elsewhere at Sambor Prei Kuk there are no 'spade-shaped' examples of South Indian type; instead we see a short but indistinct protuberance, a tall pointed *śikhā* or its absence.³⁶³ A *mukhapatti* open at the base rather than enclosing a circular *gāḍha*, thereby giving a more arched profile, and the presence of a head inside the *gāḍha*, are both widely distributed features not indicating a particular geographical connection. The same constellation of features is seen at S2 and Early Cālukya temple sites (Figure 5.7), but apparently not elsewhere, and this comparison is suggestive of a cultural connection. This conclusion is consistent with that of Bénisti, who highlighted Bādāmi, Aihole, Māmallapuram and Tiruccirappalli as

³⁶¹ Davis, 'Style and History', 23–26.

³⁶² Prasat S2's collapse in 2006 caused some damage, but see Michel Tranet, *Sambaur-Prei-Kuk: Monuments d'Içanavarma I (615-628)*, vol. 2 (1996-1997) (Phnom Penh: Travail d'Inventaire Finance par la Fondation Toyota, 1997), 61–62 & 74–76 for earlier photographs showing that *śikhā* loss predated this event. One of the fragmentary *śikhā* bases is visible p.74 (top). Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 54–55, described S2 as being a ruin at its initial recording, with the east doorway collapsed and the pedestal undermined and in pieces due to looting.

³⁶³ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 28 & fn.1, suggests the absence of a thin shaft connecting the *mukhapatti*'s apex to the *śikhā* is further evidence of this. Certainly, what remains of the S2 *śikhā* seems wider than such a feature.

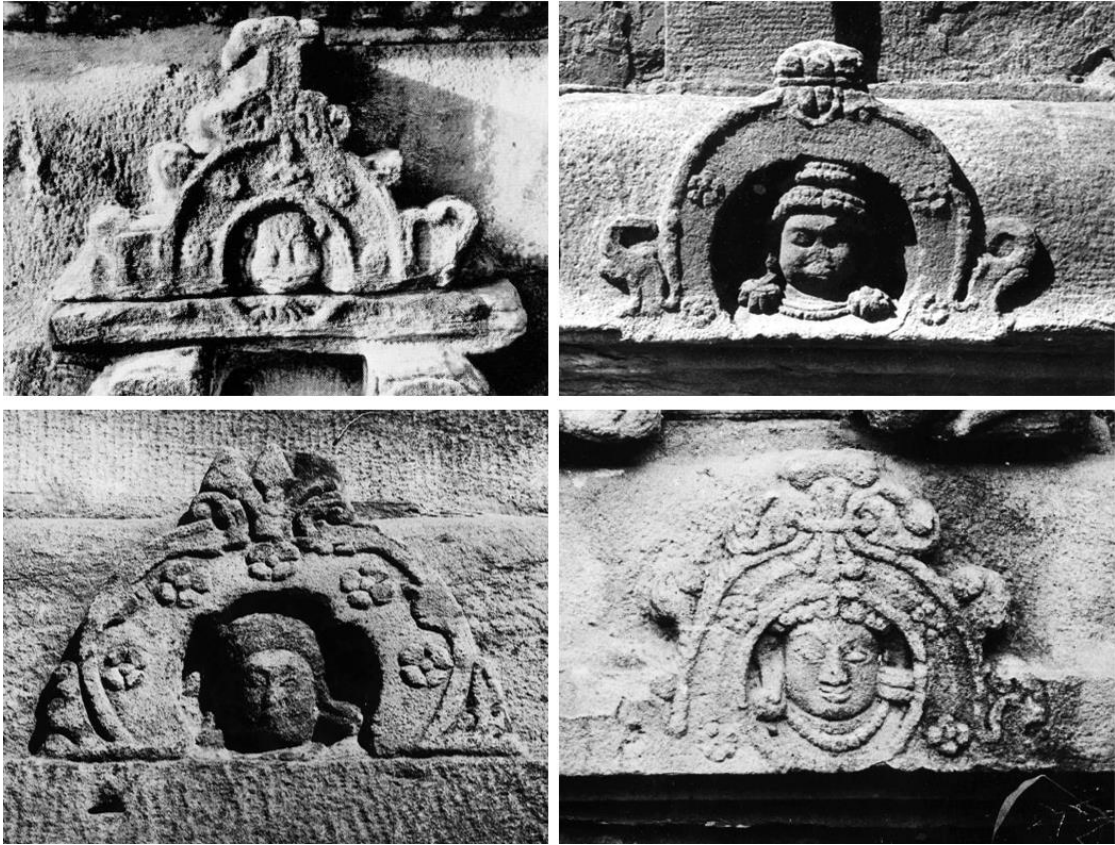


Figure 5.7 *Gavākṣas* from Early Cālukya temples. Clockwise from upper left: Cikka-Mahākūṭa (near Mahākūṭa), Mēguṭi (Aihole), Mallikārjuna (Mahākūṭa), Upper Śivālaya (Bādāmi); see also footnote 365. Photographs: American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative nos. 202.82 (Accession no. 30641), 398.96 (Accession no. 55046), 203.67 (Accession no. 31136) and 396.65 (Accession no. 54895).

the closest comparators.³⁶⁴ While I have prioritised form in my comparative analysis, it is notable that there is also a close chronological relationship between S2 and the Early Cālukya temple sites, despite the comparative material dating up to the 8th century. The Early Cālukya temples in question are dated by Indologists, independently of the dating of the S2 pedestal, to the early decades of the 7th century.³⁶⁵

³⁶⁴ Bénisti, 27–29. Bénisti frequently treated all pre-Angkorian *gavākṣa* together in her comparison with Indian forms, while my analysis has sought to restrict analysis to Sambor Prei Kuk, to recognise the geopolitical complexity of pre-Angkorian Cambodia (see Section 5.1). Mahākūṭa *gavākṣa* did not feature in her analysis.

³⁶⁵ It is not that any single known *gavākṣa* at Aihole, Mahākūṭa or Bādāmi could be imputed as having provided a direct model for the S2 *gavākṣa*, but rather the reservoir of stylistic attributes evidenced at these nearby sites includes the components of the S2 *gavākṣa*. This is the polythetic set described by Davis, ‘Style and History’, 19. The *mukhapatti* of uniform width and ‘wings’ appear together at Cikka-Mahākūṭa near Mahākūṭa (c.600-620), open-arched *mukhapatti* with heads at Mēguṭi (established 634/5) and Upper Śivālaya (before 642) in Aihole and Bādāmi, and the ‘wings’ and heads in the same temple at Gauḍarguḍi (c.625-642) in Aihole. Several of these features are co-located at the Mallikārjuna temple in Mahākūṭa, possibly slightly later (either c.630 or c.690). This may relate to the vagaries of archaeological survival, but the geographical connection is established. The dates in this footnote are from Soundara Rajan, ‘Calukyas of Bādāmi: Phase I’, 26, 31, 48–49, 51–52 & 64.



Figure 5.8 *Gavākṣa* from Sambor Prei Kuk. 4 rows, left to right: S10 (x3), S11, S12, N1, N11, N15, N17 (x3), N21 (x5). Photographs: Author.

To briefly consider the architectural context of the S2 *gavākṣa* again, given the apparent Early Cālukya connection, it is noted that four-pillared *maṇḍapa* for images of Vṛṣabha, with steps and *gavākṣa* on the superstructure, are present at Mahākūṭa.³⁶⁶ However, there are differences in pillar design and reliefs, and the location of the sixteen *gavākṣa*, rather than twelve, and some of these features have a wider distribution in South Asia.

5.2.4. Foreignness and *gavākṣa* heads

While the best comparators for the S2 *gavākṣa* form are primarily found elsewhere at Sambor Prei Kuk (Figure 5.8) and Early Cālukya sites in the western Deccan, specific comparators for the head component are more difficult to identify among these

³⁶⁶ M.A. Dhaky, 'On the Vṛṣamaṇḍapa at Mahākūṭa', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay* 47–48 (1972–1973): 71–74; Carol Radcliffe Bolon, 'The Mahākūṭa Pillar and Its Temples', *Artibus Asiae* 41, no. 2–3 (1979): 256 & 263.

gavākṣa, and indeed more widely in South and Southeast Asia. The survey presented in Appendix 2 appears to be the most geographically extensive yet prepared for the pre-9th century period, but clearly no survey can be absolutely exhaustive, and an unknown quantity will have been lost through destructive processes or await rediscovery.

It is important first to characterise the formal features of the S2 heads which have led commentators to see foreignness, and to consider

other possible factors involved in this perception. The primary visual signifiers of the S2 heads' difference to other figures at Sambor Prei Kuk are indicated to be the bushy moustache, facial features including a comparatively prominent nose and less round face, and possibly the long, curled hair (Figure 5.9).³⁶⁷ The diadem feature on top of the head, sometimes interpreted as a topknot, and the oblique directionality of some of the heads looking out from the *gāḍha* also contribute to their formal difference and distinctiveness among the Sambor Prei Kuk *gavākṣa*. Disc-shaped ear ornaments are found widely on the site's *gavākṣa* heads.

It seems likely that, aside from the S2 heads' formal differences, the location and choice of material enhance their apparent distinctiveness. Production in stone rather than brick enabled the sculpting of greater depth and detail, providing scope for more naturalistic sculpture almost in the round with greater potential for dynamic



Figure 5.9 Detail of four of the S2 heads, with curled hair, moustaches, disc-shaped ear ornaments and diadems. Photographs: Author.

³⁶⁷ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 298; Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 200; Calcagno, *Kampong Thom and Its Province*, 147; Taing, 'The Mysterious "Foreigners" Carved into the Temples of Sambor Prei Kuk'.



Figure 5.10 Figures gripping the sill of the *gavākṣa* at monument N17, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photographs: Author.

emergence from the *gāḍha*. Dynamic emergence and naturalistic detail are also seen at N17 where the figures' hands grip the sill at the *gavākṣa* base,³⁶⁸ indicating comprehension of the *gavākṣa* as representing a window, not simply a decorative motif (Figure 5.10). The stone *gavākṣa* have mostly survived with less damage compared to those in brick, which are either weathered or lost through *prasat* structural damage; the S2 pedestal was also sheltered from the elements to a degree by the S2 brick *prasat*. Many of the remaining brick *gavākṣa* are further obscured by foliage or variation in brick coloration, or their location high on doorway features, whereas the S2 *gavākṣa* are visible from ground level and readily studied by modern viewers. These characteristics of greater dynamism, naturalism, survival and accessible location potentially influence the sense of their unusualness at Sambor Prei Kuk. Coupled with the artistic skill in producing lifelike heads that differ to each other, and therefore less like a repeating motif, these combined characteristics may suggest a distinctiveness and individualism leading to the supposition that they were modelled on real people.

However, the *gavākṣa*'s origin in South Asia and iconographic appropriation at Sambor Prei Kuk are important when considering possible mechanisms behind the form of the heads in the S2 *gāḍha*. The formal features and apparent difference of the heads should be contextualised with what is known of *gavākṣa*'s significance. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge assertions that the heads are visually dissimilar to the local population, although such assertions tend to rely on generalisations across

³⁶⁸ The hands-on-windowsill feature of the N17 *gavākṣa* is also found at Wat Vihear Thom, Ajañtā caves 1 and 19, and U Thong. See Appendix 2 sites 68, 124 and 132.

the modern populations, assume those populations are little changed since the 7th century, and assume the heads are reliable depictions rather than considering issues associated with othering.³⁶⁹ These issues will be considered next.

In the early 7th century, the *gavākṣa*, and the architectural language of which it was part, will have only relatively recently appeared in the Cambodian interior, although earlier interactions between South Asian brahmins and Southeast Asians at port settlements had begun in the c.3rd century.³⁷⁰ The architectural language itself may therefore have been perceived by many inhabitants of *Īśānapura* as possessing a degree of foreignness.³⁷¹ Earlier wooden architecture related to Indic forms has been postulated, though not satisfactorily demonstrated,³⁷² but brick architecture predating that at Sambor Prei Kuk has been identified in the Thala Borivat area to the northeast, as noted earlier.³⁷³ New material relevant to studies of the *gavākṣa* may yet be recovered in the north Cambodian landscape.

Looking across the wider geographical area, other early *gavākṣa* and related material from the c.6th-7th centuries have been found at sites in the Mekong Delta area, central Vietnam and southern Laos, and these share certain formal features with those at S2 (Figure 5.11). Near Núi Sam in southern Vietnam, and at Cung-sơn and near Tam-kỳ in central Vietnam, sites associated with Funan and Cham cultural areas, figural busts emerged dynamically almost in the round from their architectural contexts, understood to have been *gavākṣa* or related elevated architectural niche features.³⁷⁴ These bear comparison with the way that figural busts emerged from arched *gavākṣa* on the superstructure of the c.5th-century brick temple at Bhītargāon in Uttar

³⁶⁹ Calcagno, *Kampong Thom and Its Province*, 147; Taing, 'The Mysterious "Foreigners" Carved into the Temples of Sambor Prei Kuk'.

³⁷⁰ See Section 1.2.

³⁷¹ See Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 58-67, on the initial foreignness of Indic material culture during the process of localisation.

³⁷² Henri Parmentier, 'La construction dans l'architecture khmère classique', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 35 (1935): 245-50; Jean Boisselier, *Asie du Sud-Est, Tome 1: Le Cambodge*, Manuel d'Archéologie d'Extrême-Orient 1 (Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard et Cie, 1966), 45-46.

³⁷³ Heng, 'Transition to the Pre-Angkorian Period', 486 & 491.

³⁷⁴ Louis Malleret, *L'Archéologie du Delta du Mékong*, vol. 1, Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1959), 297-98, 319-20 & Plate LXXI; John Guy, 'Catalogue', in *Lost Kingdoms: Hindu-Buddhist Sculpture of Early Southeast Asia*, ed. John Guy (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014), 187; Jean-Yves Claeys, 'Chronique de l'année 1937: Archéologie chame', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 37 (1937): 615-17; Southworth, 'The Coastal States of Champa', 222-23 & Figure 9.12.

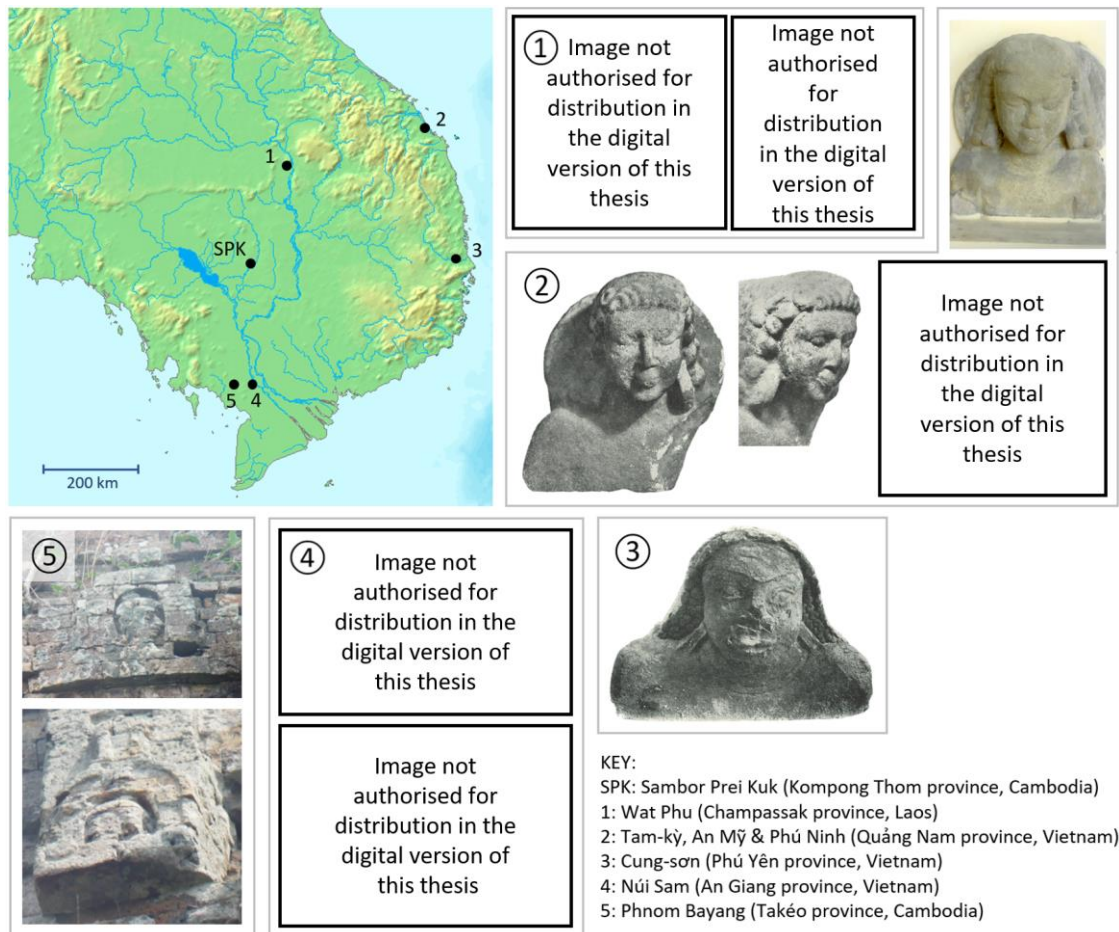


Figure 5.11 *Gavākṣa* and related architectural sculptural material from the areas surrounding Sambor Prei Kuk, c.6th-7th century. Photographs: ① reproduced from Hawixbrock et al., *Wat Phu Museum Collections*, pp.104-107; ② reproduced from Claeys, 'Chronique de l'année 1937: Archéologie chame', Pl. XCIII, with the knowledge of BEFEO, © Jean-Yves Claeys; Le Bonheur, 'The Art of Champa', Fig.129; Phú Ninh figure photograph (top right) courtesy William Southworth; ③ reproduced from Claeys, 'Chronique de l'année 1937: Archéologie chame', Pl. XCII-A, with the knowledge of BEFEO, © Jean-Yves Claeys; ④ reproduced from Guy, 'Catalogue', in *Lost Kingdoms*, Cat. 107; Malleret, *L'Archéologie du Delta du Mékong*, Vol.1, Pl. LXXI; ⑤ Photographs: Author. Base map: Wikimedia Commons, modified under licence [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).

Pradesh,³⁷⁵ or contemporary *gavākṣa* from Rajasthan.³⁷⁶ Those from Cung-sơn and Tam-kỳ possess long, curled hair and disc-shaped ear ornaments,³⁷⁷ as does a deity from An Mỹ with moustache and diadem, also thought to have occupied an architecturally elevated niche.³⁷⁸ Examples from the Wat Phu site in southern Laos

³⁷⁵ Mohammad Zaheer, *The Temple of Bhītargāon* (Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1981), 102-105 & Plates 129-148. Other brick temples comparable to that at Bhītargāon will have been present in Gupta-period northern India, but this example with surviving superstructure provides evidence for the elevated placement of its terracotta *gavākṣa*-type features.

³⁷⁶ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 24, 26-7 & Figure 261. Also shown in Appendix 2.

³⁷⁷ Long hair and disc-shaped ear ornaments are not uncommon at the Bhītargāon temple also. See Appendix 2, site 32.

³⁷⁸ Albert Le Bonheur, 'The Art of Champa', in *Art of Southeast Asia*, ed. Maud Girard-Geslan et al., trans. J.A. Underwood (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998), 258 & Figure 129; Trần Kỳ Phương, 'Male Deity', in

may possess similar ear ornaments, represented frontally as circular, but some wore a diadem and others wore headwear that has been interpreted as possibly a kind of cap.³⁷⁹ If the latter interpretation is correct, they would recall the capped heads in *gavākṣa* at Ajañtā (Figure 5.13). *Gavākṣa* are also found on the early 7th-century Prasat Phnom Bayang (ប្រាសាទភ្នំបាយង់) in southern Cambodia near the modern border with Vietnam, shown in profile and possibly possessing comparable facial features, moustache and a feature on top of the head, but their height on the superstructure limits conclusions at this time. Many of the features of the S2 heads are therefore found with contemporary *gavākṣa*-type material in mainland Southeast Asia.

This brief survey of regional comparators for the S2 *gavākṣa* heads highlights several reasons to consider the role of iconographic appropriation further, even though a specific comparator has not been identified in South Asian *gavākṣa* so far. The sharing of formal features and iconographic details with others associated with surrounding polities casts a different light on the heads' apparent uniqueness when viewed from Sambor Prei Kuk alone, suggesting iconography may have played a role. Equally, the similarities of Southeast Asian *gavākṣa* to specific near-contemporary South Asian examples, and their architectural placement on building types that had appeared relatively recently in the local landscape, together suggest knowledge of the figures' significance as supramundane beings was probably retained. These comparisons reinforce the potential relevance of iconographic appropriation and localisation for understanding not only the forms of Southeast Asian *gavākṣa*, but also of the figures within. This is also true at Sambor Prei Kuk, where they are located on the cornices of sacred structures and above *prasat* doorway features. These anthropomorphic divine beings emerged materially from their architectural contexts in a way that gave new expression to the presence of spiritual beings in the Khmer cultural context.³⁸⁰ The

Vibrancy in Stone: Masterpieces of the Collection of the Đà Nẵng Museum of Cham Sculpture, ed. Trần Kỳ Phương, Võ Văn Thắng, and Peter D. Sharrock (Bangkok: River Books, 2018), 126-27. Other objects of this type show female deities, discussed in the same references.

³⁷⁹ Christine Hawixbrock, 'Le musée de Vat Phu et les collections archéologiques de Champassak', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 97-98 (2010): 285 & Figures 9-10; Christine Hawixbrock et al., *វត្តភ្នំ វិហារស័ក - Vat Phu Champassak: Collections du musée de Vat Phu / Vat Phu Museum Collections*, trans. Maïr Hyman (Vat Phu Champassak World Heritage Department & Departement du Patrimoine mondial de Vat Phu Champassak, 2012), 104-107.

³⁸⁰ Ian W. Mabbett and David P. Chandler, *The Khmers* (Oxford & Cambridge (Mass): Blackwell Publishing, 1995), 108-24.

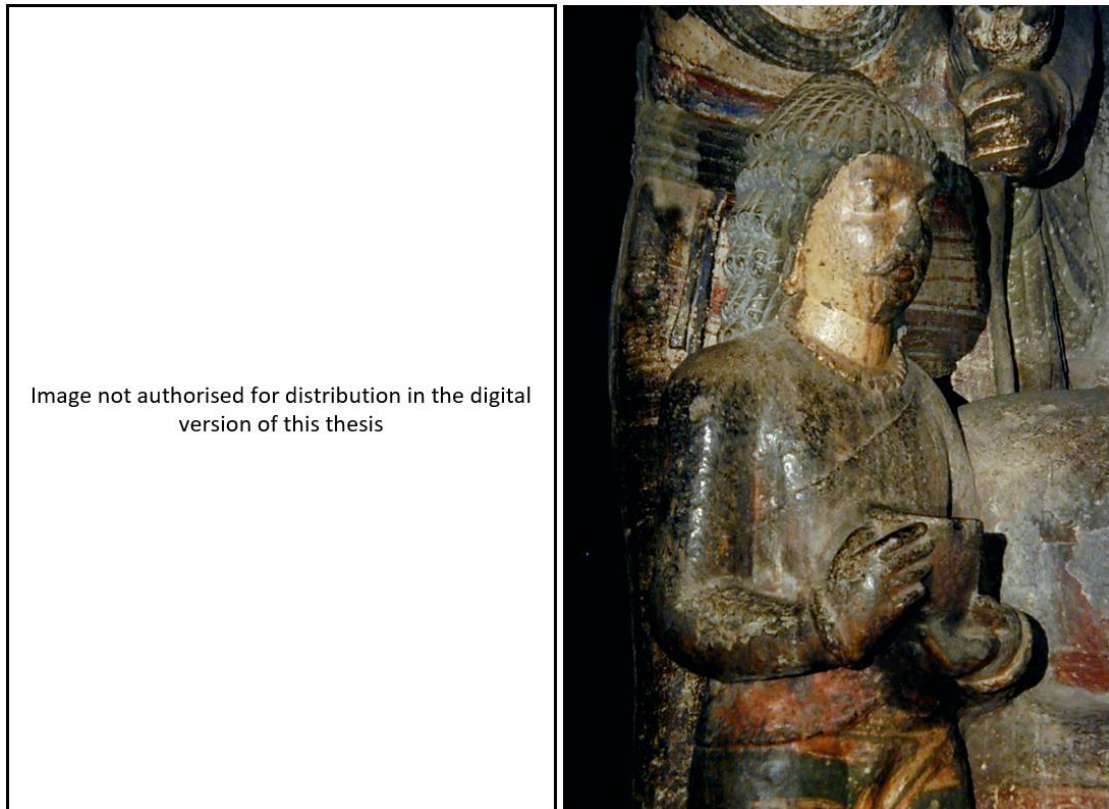


Figure 5.12 Human devotees in art from Haḍḍa, Afghanistan, c.1st-3rd century CE (Gandhāran) (left), and Ajaṅṭā cave 17, c.5th-6th century (right). Photographs: (left) reproduced from Rosenfield, *Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, Fig.95; (right) courtesy Joachim K. Bautze.

otherness of *gavākṣa* heads therefore echoes the otherness of the wider architectural language and so, even though heads like those in the S2 *gavākṣa* are not easily identified for South Asian *gavākṣa*, comparisons with other elements of South Asian visual culture are of interest.

Such comparisons made with Gandhāran art refer to similarities in the facial features and moustache, but are perhaps reinforced by the diadem at S2 which is sometimes interpreted as a topknot.³⁸¹ Human figures in Gandhāran art, represented for example as devotees, show similar combinations of facial features, moustache and long, curled or wavy hair (Figure 5.12), commonly seen also with Gandhāran bodhisattvas.³⁸²

³⁸¹ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 298; Jacques, *Khmer Empire*, 88; Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 200; Calcagno, *Kampong Thom and Its Province*, 147; Shimoda, So, and Chhum, *Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project*, 14 of 47; Taing, 'The Mysterious "Foreigners" Carved into the Temples of Sambor Prei Kuk'.

³⁸² Carolyn Woodford Schmidt, 'Aristocratic Devotees in Early Buddhist Art from Greater Gandhāra: Characteristics, Chronology, and Symbolism', *South Asian Studies* 21 (2005): 25–28 & 32–41; Carolyn Woodford Schmidt, 'Ongoing Typological Studies of Bodhisattva Images from Greater Gandhāra: Four Jaṭāmukha Conventions for Images of the Maitreya-Type', in *South Asian Archaeology 2007: Proceedings of the 19th Meeting of the European Association of South Asian Archaeology in Ravenna, Italy, July 2007*, ed. Pierfrancesco Callieri and Luca Colliva, vol. 2 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010), 316–18.

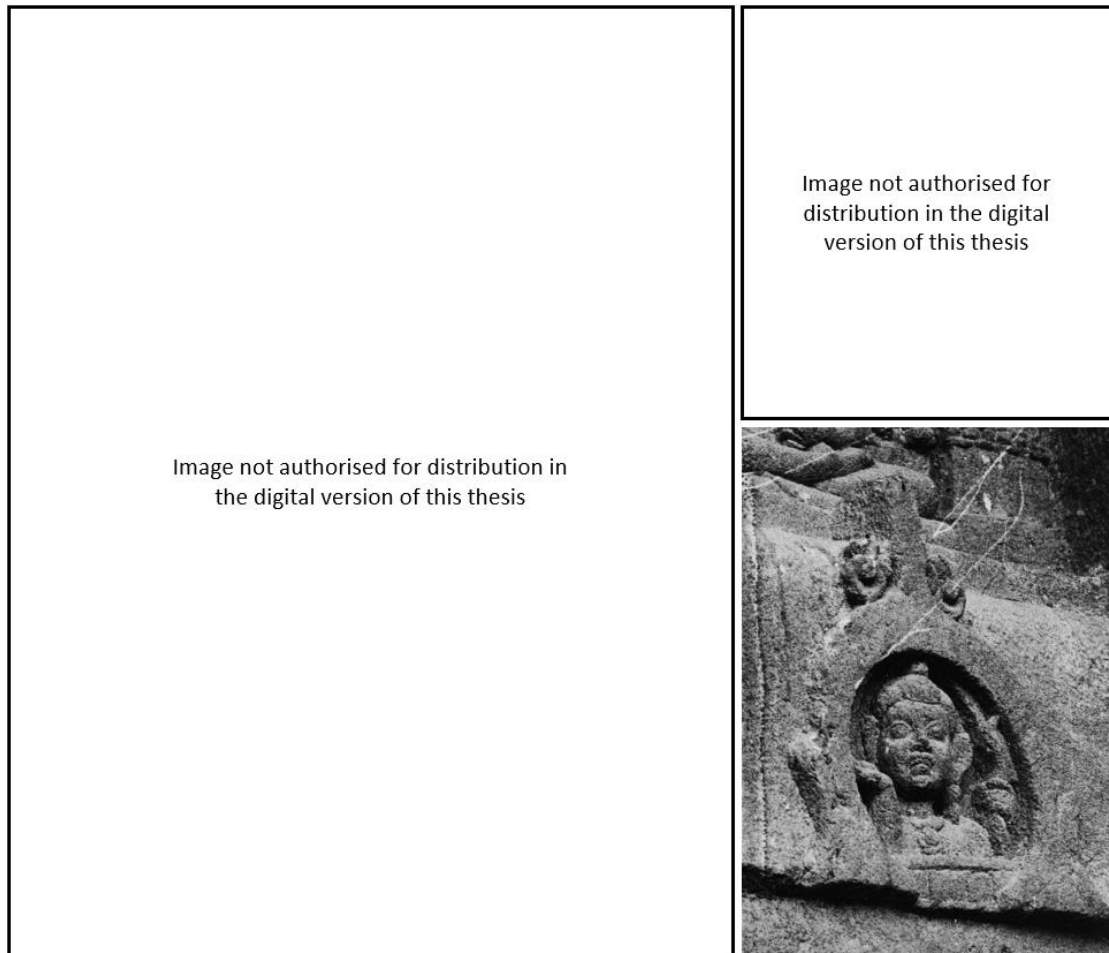


Figure 5.13 *Gavākṣa* heads at Ajaṅṭā caves 1 and 19, with moustaches and/or conical caps with a non-local affiliation. It is not clear if all the heads are moustached. Photographs: (left) reproduced from Takata & Taeda, *Ajanta*, Pl. 149; (upper right) reproduced from Spink, *Ajanta: History and Development*, Vol.4, Pl. 18; (lower right) American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative no. W. Spink 1380/72 (Accession no. 98521).

However, there is no independent archaeological or historical evidence to suggest a connection with northwestern India in the 7th century. Earlier connections between the regions, in the Funan period, are suggested by a Buddha head and forms of jewellery related to Gandhāran styles, found at Óc Eo in the Mekong Delta and Prohear and southern Cambodia.³⁸³ Indeed, the *Liangshu* (梁書) records that a party travelled from Funan to Kuṣāṇa northern India and returned with a representative of a royal

³⁸³ Louis Malleret, *L'Archéologie du Delta du Mékong*, vol. 2, Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1960), 201–2 & Pl.LXXXIV no.432; Ambra Calo et al., 'Sembiran and Pacung on the North Coast of Bali: A Strategic Crossroads for Early Trans-Asiatic Exchange', *Antiquity* 89 (2015): 392–93; Michèle H.S. Demandt, 'Early Gold Ornaments of Southeast Asia: Production, Trade, and Consumption', *Asian Perspectives* 54, no. 2 (2015): 311–13. An object from Óc Eo is suggested to be inscribed with Kharoṣṭhī characters by B.N. Mukherjee, 'A Kharoṣṭhī-Brāhmī Seal-Matrix from Oc-Eo (S.E. Asia)', *Monthly Bulletin of the Asiatic Society* 19, no. 6 (1990): 1–4, but this identification is disputed by Harry Falk, 'The Alleged Kharoṣṭhī-Brāhmī Mixed Script and Some New Seals from Bengal', *Zeitschrift Für Indologie Und Südasiastudien* 30 (2013): 105–24.

court in c.245, so interpersonal contact apparently also occurred,³⁸⁴ and the adoption of similar dress practices by some members of Funan’s society cannot be excluded. More importantly, it has been shown the S2 *gavākṣa* form was stylistically related to those in the 7th-century western Deccan rather than Gandhāra, and comparable devotee figures can also be identified in the Ajaṅṭā caves (Figure 5.12). No overtly similar heads have been identified in Ajaṅṭā *gavākṣa* but a few have moustaches, although this feature was unusual even for South Asian *gavākṣa*, and wear caps with a non-local association (Figure 5.13).³⁸⁵

If contemporary social realities regarding personal appearance could influence the representation of supramundane figures, as would also be relevant to the incorporation of representations of ‘foreigners’ into *gavākṣa*, then it is relevant to consider other possible social identities comparable with the appearance of the S2 *gavākṣa* heads. As well as the South Asian devotees above, the Pāśupatas are an important group to consider because they are understood to have been active at several Early Cālukyan sites,³⁸⁶ as well as in Īśānapura where there is documentary evidence for their presence.³⁸⁷ Ascetics are usually represented with unkempt hair and beard in early South and Southeast Asian art, but the *Pāśupatavrata* (Pāśupata observance) referred to matted hair (*jaṭā*), a shaved head (*muṇḍa*) and hair tuft(s) (*śikhā*).³⁸⁸ Nonetheless, iconographic Pāśupata-related figures suggest further possibilities. For example, an image of Lakulīśa, Pāśupatism’s founder, appears beardless with hair falling in curls onto his shoulders at the 6th-century Pāśupata cave at Jogeśvarī, as do the cave’s two *dvārapāla*, also suggested to represent Pāśupatas (Figure 5.14), while two of Lakulīśa’s four disciples appear there without the facial hair

³⁸⁴ See Section 6.2.3.

³⁸⁵ Claudine Bautze-Picron, “‘Nidhis’ and Other Images of Richness and Fertility in Ajaṅṭā’, *East and West* 52, no. 1–4 (2002): 248. See Appendix 2 site 37 for a fragmentary *gavākṣa* from the Mundeśvari temple in Rohtas, Bihar, containing a moustached head identified as Bhairava.

³⁸⁶ Pāśupata iconography is suggested for the 6th century at Bādāmi cave 2, and 7th-8th century at Aihole, Mahākūṭa, Siddhanakolla, Paṭṭadakal and Ālampur. See: K.V. Soundara Rajan, *Cave Temples of the Deccan* (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1981), 52; B. Rajendra Prasad, *Chalukyan Temples of Andhradesa* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1983), 8–9; K.V. Soundara Rajan, *Secularism in Indian Art* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1988), 97–98; Carol Radcliffe Bolon, *Forms of the Goddess Lajjā Gaurī in Indian Art* (Philadelphia: College Art Association & University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 24–28; Vasundhara Filliozat, ‘Pāśupata Śaivism in Karnāṭaka and Cambodia’, *Sikṣācakr* 4 (2001): 25–26; Mohite, ‘Mahakuta’, 54, 65–67 & 140–46.

³⁸⁷ See Section 5.1.

³⁸⁸ Bisschop and Griffiths, ‘The Pāśupata Observance’, 331.

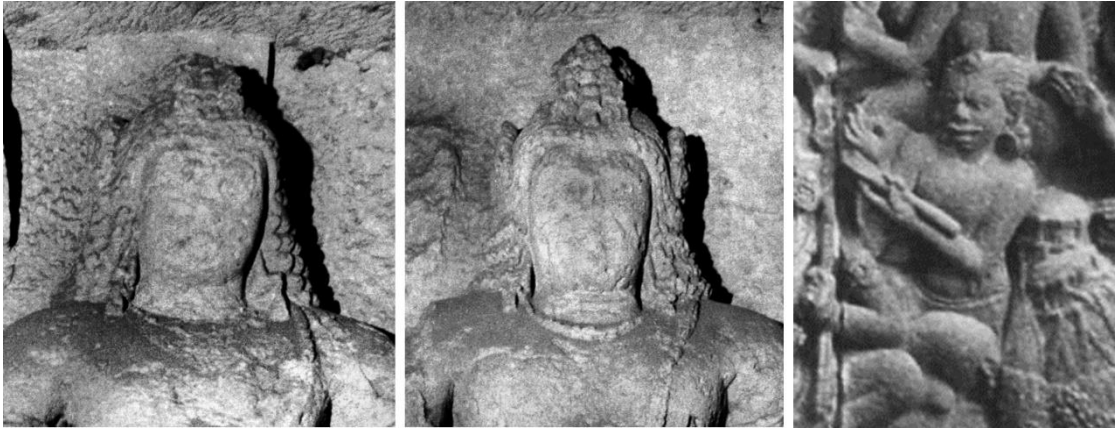


Figure 5.14 Left & middle: *dvārapālas* at the Pāsupata cave at Jogeśvarī, 6th century. Photographs: John C. Huntington, courtesy Huntington Photographic Archive of Buddhist and Asian Art, scan nos. 7053 & 7054. Right: figure with palm-leaf manuscript at Candi Śiva, Prambanan, in the company of Pāsupatas. Photograph by Roy Jordaan, reproduced from Aciri, 'Birds, Bards, Buffoons and Brahmins', Fig.10, with the permission of the photographer.

or piled *jaṭā* of the others.³⁸⁹ Pāsupatas identified at c.7th-8th century Orissan temples show *jaṭā* and *śikhā* but some have no facial hair.³⁹⁰ Pāsupatas identified in 8th-9th century Central Javanese art, perhaps of a later Śaiva group, are mostly bearded with *jaṭā* but an associated figure reading from a palm-leaf manuscript in one relief has shorter hair and just a moustache (Figure 5.14).³⁹¹ If these all actually represent Pāsupatas, then the curled hair falling onto the shoulders and moustaches without beards may provide possible comparators for the S2 heads.

While considering social realities, we should also consider what is known of the appearance of people living in Īśānapura and the wider landscape. Contemporary historical information is available in Chinese accounts describing the people of Funan, the Cham polities and Īśānapura itself, but comparable information describing groups inhabiting upland or forest areas is not available, to my knowledge.³⁹² These

³⁸⁹ M.A. Dhaky, 'Mauryas of Purī', in *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture, Vol. 2 North India, Pt. 1 Foundations of North Indian Style, c.250 B.C.-A.D.1000*, ed. Michael W. Meister, M.A. Dhaky, and Krishna Deva (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies & Oxford University Press, 1988), 88–89 & Pl.173; Parul Pandya Dhar, 'Some Early Torāṇa Representations from the Maharashtra Caves', in *Prajñādhara: Essays on Asian Art, History, Epigraphy and Culture, in Honour of Gouriswar Bhattacharya*, ed. Gerd J.R. Mevissen and Arundhati Banerji, vol. 1 (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2009), 172–73 & Pl.17.8. The *dvārapāla* faces are worn and the presence or absence of moustaches is unclear.

³⁹⁰ Thomas E. Donaldson, 'Bhikṣāṇamūrti Images from Orissa', *Artibus Asiae* 47, no. 1 (1986): 62 & Fig.29. See also Thomas E. Donaldson, 'Lakulīśa and Rājaguru: Metamorphosis of the "teacher" in the Iconographic Program of the Orissan Temple', in *Studies in Hindu and Buddhist Art*, ed. P.K. Mishra (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1999), 133 & Fig.3, for Lakulīśa surrounded by disciples with *jaṭā* but lacking facial hair.

³⁹¹ Andrea Aciri, 'Birds, Bards, Buffoons and Brahmins: (Re-)Tracing the Indic Roots of Some Ancient and Modern Performing Characters from Java and Bali', *Archipel* 88 (2014): 31–37.

³⁹² Maleñ and *vrau* identities were mentioned in Section 4 but their relationship to this issue is unclear.

documentary sources predate any population changes associated with Vietnamese expansion southward from the Bắc Bộ area, helping to avoid unqualified assumptions based on modern-day populations. Nonetheless, they should be understood as generalising and ethnocentric representations of people the Chinese authors saw as Other. The *Jinshu*, completed in 648 using information contemporary with the Jin dynasty (265-420), notes the men of Funan had curly hair.³⁹³ The *Liangshu*, completed in 635 using information contemporary with the Liang dynasty (502-557), reported hair was worn long and loose in earlier Funan, but men are described as curly-haired with facial hair in the contemporary period.³⁹⁴ The *Suishu* and *Jiutangshu* (舊唐書), the latter a 10th-century compilation of earlier sources, referred to Chams as having deep-set eyes, straight prominent noses and frizzy hair typically worn in a kind of topknot, being of course subjective impressions in comparison to the image of Self.³⁹⁵ The *Suishu* description of the inhabitants of Īśānapura refers to the men only as “of small stature and dark complexion” with rolled-up hair, but lacks further detail.³⁹⁶ Populations were of course more interconnected than the Chinese sources imply. The ethnicity of Funan’s population remains uncertain,³⁹⁷ but given the intense involvement in long-distance maritime trade and shipping in earlier centuries, it seems likely to have developed a multi-ethnic society before the 7th century.³⁹⁸ Four early-7th century inscriptions clustered in the Mekong Delta and southern Cambodia area contain titles with Chamic elements. It is not always clear if these refer to people or deities but at least some appear to be officials, and either interpretation would suggest

³⁹³ Pelliot, ‘Le Fou-nan’, 254.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 265 & 269–70; Coedès, *Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, 59. The growing of facial hair is implied by the recorded practice of shaving the beard during mourning.

³⁹⁵ Georges Maspero, *The Champa Kingdom: The History of an Extinct Vietnamese Culture*, trans. Walter E.J. Tips (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 2002), 2–3; Coedès, *Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, 50; Schafer, *Vermillion Bird*, 73.

³⁹⁶ Coedès, *Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, 75.

³⁹⁷ Michael Vickery was a proponent of Funan’s population having been Khmer, based on (a) a Chinese report that Funan’s language bore similarity to that of Dunsun, the name of which is considered to derive from proto-Mon and so part of the Austroasiatic language family (formerly termed Mon-Khmer), (b) the presence of 7th-century Old Khmer inscriptions in the previous Funan area, and (c) an apparent familial connection between Rudravarman, last ruler of Funan, and Bhavavarman I, Īśānavarman’s ancestor. See especially Vickery, ‘Funan Reviewed: Deconstructing the Ancients’, 122–25 & 131–36. The last of these arguments refers to a series of inscriptions recording lineages of officials who served rulers spanning the Funan-Zhenla divide, but as historical documents their primary purpose was to record the familial relationships of the officials, without explicit comment on relationships between rulers.

³⁹⁸ See Vickery, 122–25, for a discussion of some possibilities.



Figure 5.15 Lotus crowns on heads of Lakulīśa at the Saṅgameśvara temple, Mahākūṭa (left), and Narasimha at Bādāmi cave 3 (right). Photographs: (left) Susan L. Huntington, courtesy Huntington Photographic Archive of Buddhist and Asian Art, scan no. 22157; (right) Author.

some of the population had Cham affiliations.³⁹⁹ These documentary and iconographic sources may be supplemented in the future by analyses of bioarchaeological material, including ancient DNA, that may provide insights on an individual's hair form, for example. Nonetheless, even keeping in mind the nature of the sources, some of these descriptions of curly hair worn long, with facial hair and prominent noses are of interest when considering the S2 heads. Given the above evidence relating to South and Southeast Asian societies, there seems little reason to invoke a European or Persian identity, groups for which there is presently no evidence at Sambor Prei Kuk.

Whether or not the appearance of particular social identities, in South or Southeast Asia, had any relationship with the appearance of the S2 *gavākṣa* heads, their iconography identifies them as supramundane beings. The diadem typically has four visible elongate pointed shapes which, given the established stylistic relationship with Early Cālukya art, possibly represents a lotus crown with the petals opening upwards, an iconographic detail seen on two images identified as Lakulīśa at Mahākūṭa, images of Narasimha and Gaṇeśa at Bādāmi, and of Narasimha at Aihole (Figure 5.15).⁴⁰⁰ Of

³⁹⁹ Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 220–22.

⁴⁰⁰ Aschwin Lippe, 'Additions and Replacements in Early Chālukya Temples', *Archives of Asian Art* 23 (1969-1970): 9; Aschwin Lippe, 'Early Chālukya Icons', *Artibus Asiae* 34, no. 4 (1972): 275–76; Meena M. Mohite, 'Mahakuta' (PhD Thesis, Karnatak University, 2007), 142–43. These images are suggested to range in date from the late 6th to late 7th century, but it clearly recurs as an iconographic form in Early Cālukyan art. Mohite identifies the standing ithyphallic figure with club at the Saṅgameśvara temple, Mahākūṭa, as Lakulīśa, but see Carol Radcliffe Bolon, 'Calukyās of Bādāmi: Karṇāṭa', in *Encyclopaedia of*



Figure 5.16 Moustached and curly-haired *yakṣa*-like beings and *nāga* riding *makara* on pre-Angkorian *torāṇa*. Clockwise from top left: Sambor Prei Kuk *prasat* S7 (x2), Prasat Phnom Thom (Kompong Cham), Dambang Dek (Kompong Cham) and an unprovenanced *torāṇa* arch in the Kompong Thom Museum (x2). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Guimet Museum, Paris, the National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, and the Kompong Thom Museum.

note, lotiform or solar imagery may be behind the flower occupying some *gāḍha* at Sambor Prei Kuk.⁴⁰¹ The moustache also appears to have had an iconographic role in pre-Angkorian art, because a finer moustache is found on many Viṣṇu and Harihara icons,⁴⁰² but bushier moustaches occur with some *yakṣa*-like beings and *nāga* riding *makara* on *torāṇa* (Figure 5.16), though not ubiquitously. Notably, these same *makara*-riding figures often also have long, curled hair and disc-shaped ear ornaments, and sometimes features above their heads that bear comparison with the diadems

Indian Temple Architecture, Vol. 2 North India, Pt. 1 Foundations of North Indian Style, c.250 B.C.-A.D.1000, ed. Michael W. Meister, M.A. Dhaky, and Krishna Deva (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies & Oxford University Press, 1988), 286 & Pl.596, for its identification as Śiva Pāśupati and more generally as Śiva ūrdhvarētas.

⁴⁰¹ Flowers sometimes formed the contents of *gāḍha* in South Asian *gavākṣa*.

⁴⁰² Dupont, 'La statuaire préangkorienne', 137, 168, 171, 173, 174, 179, 183 & 186.

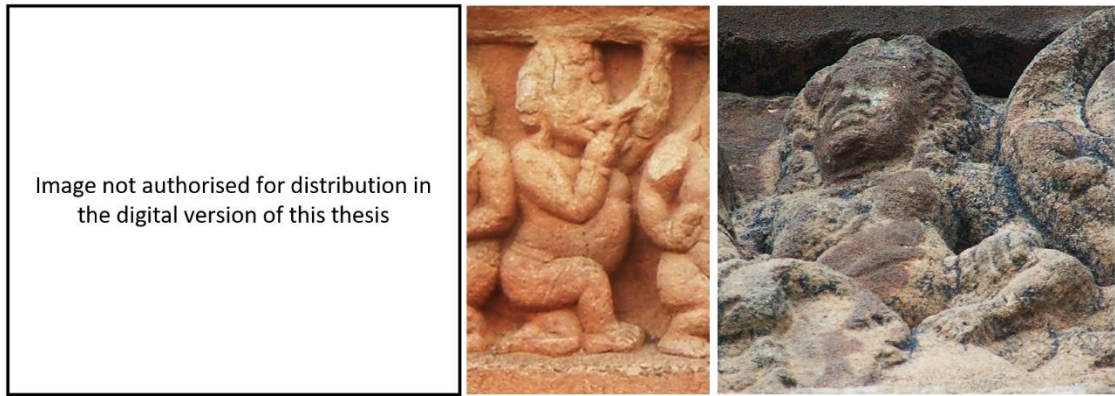


Figure 5.17 South Asian *gaṇa* and *makara*-rider from Vākāṭaka and Early Cālukya art. Left: *gaṇa* from Mansar. Reproduced from Bautze-Picron, 'Jewels for a King – Part II', Fig.25. Middle: *gaṇa* from Bādāmi cave 2. Photograph: Author. Right: *makara*-rider from Mālegitti Śivālaya, Bādāmi. Photograph: Author.

discussed above. Moustaches are known for similar beings in early South Asian art, for example some *yakṣa* figures from the Kuṣāṇa period, and *gaṇa* and *makara*-riding figures in Vākāṭaka and Early Cālukya art (Figure 5.17), but again not ubiquitously.⁴⁰³ Of course, because the S2 *gavākṣa* heads appear without their bodies, we can say nothing about their stature that might inform these comparisons further.⁴⁰⁴ The presence of such beings in *gavākṣa* is not necessarily inconsistent because it was noted that early South Asian *gavākṣa* contained many forms of deity, and that the emphasis on the *gandharvamukha* label for the heads was apparently of more recent origin.⁴⁰⁵ These iconographic observations reinforce the supramundane character of the S2 *gavākṣa* heads and the potential role of iconographic appropriation in their form, even though the comparators discussed are not located in *gavākṣa*.

The S2 *gavākṣa* heads present a complex set of issues, and the precise mechanism behind their form at Sambor Prei Kuk remains only partially resolved. A close stylistic relationship between the site's *gavākṣa* and those of contemporary Early Cālukyan architecture, reinforced by the subsequent studies in this chapter, highlights the western Deccan area as a source of further comparative material. The S2 *gavākṣa* heads' identity as supramundane beings seems clear from iconographic comparisons with other figures at Sambor Prei Kuk including those riding *makara* and others in

⁴⁰³ Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1928-1931 (reprint 2001), 72 & Pl.2-1; R.N. Misra, *Yaksha Cult and Iconography* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1979), 69 & 123–25; Claudine Bautze-Picron, 'Jewels for a King – Part II', *Indo-Asiatische Zeitschrift* 15 (2011): 42-43.

⁴⁰⁴ An identity as *gaṇas* would be appropriate for the Śaivite context of the S2 Vṛṣabha pedestal, but other supramundane being identities remain possible at this stage.

⁴⁰⁵ Figures with dwarf-like proportions occupy the *gāḍha* of some *gavākṣa* in Appendix 2.

Cālukyan material, but also because an understanding of the *gavākṣa*'s significance as a window into divine space is clearly indicated at Sambor Prei Kuk. This is seen in the retention of their architectural placement from South Asian precursors, and by their material depth in stone from which the beings dynamically emerge at S2 and N17. It is likely the *prasat* architecture and its anthropomorphic spiritual beings will have been unfamiliar to many in the area of Īśānapura, following its relatively recent appearance in the north Cambodian landscape. The S2 *gavākṣa* heads were embedded in the *prasat*'s otherness, and this, along with the comparable iconographic features of *gavākṣa* figures associated with other nearby polities of the 6th-7th century, suggests that an iconographic component to the S2 heads' contextually unusual form is quite plausible. Comparators for the heads are indeed difficult to identify if the search is restricted to *gavākṣa* only, but the survey of South Asian *gavākṣa* showed that many types of divine being could appear within and that an identification as *gandharvamukha* appears to be a more recent development. Comparisons to South Asian *yakṣa* and *gaṇa* are therefore perhaps quite reasonable, and consistent with the similarity of some pre-Angkorian *yakṣa*-like *makara*-riders, but the ubiquity of the moustache feature at S2 compared to its more occasional occurrence in South Asian comparators is notable, and one of the primary reasons behind claims of the S2 heads' foreignness. Whether this can be explained entirely by iconographic appropriation of forms derived in South Asia, or if local perceptions of social or ethnic otherness at Īśānapura were also involved, is not clear. Nonetheless, it is evident that claimed foreign identities for these figures are sometimes derived through the direct interpretation of physical appearance with its inherent subjectivity, uncritical methodology and assumptions about populations in the past, rather than the integration of documentary sources, art historical analyses and archaeological material to characterise contemporary long-distance connections and better contextualise differences in appearance.

5.3. Horse-riders on the *torāṇa* of *prasat* S7

The apparent foreignness of the dress of two horse-riders on a *torāṇa* arch associated with *prasat* S7 (Figure 5.18) has evoked comment twice, but has only once led to an



Figure 5.18 *Toraṇa* arch from *prasat S7*, South group, Sambor Prei Kuk. Guimet Museum, MG 18853. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to the Guimet Museum, Paris.

assertion of a foreign identity, specifically Indo-Scythian.⁴⁰⁶ These issues will be returned to later, because first a characterisation of the *torana* object type, its comparators, and the iconography of the horse-riders is necessary. As with the S2 *gavākṣa*, it is methodologically important to study iconographic relationships with South Asian forms in order to consider the possible role of iconographic appropriation in the appearance of apparently foreign dress at Sambor Prei Kuk.

5.3.1. Pre-Angkorian *torana*

The academic literature on pre-Angkorian and Angkorian art and architecture has for many years referred to the ‘decorative lintel’. These were installed over the doorways of ancient Khmer monuments, and their carved designs have been extensively used as a stylistic dating aid.⁴⁰⁷ Nonetheless, both components of this descriptive label are problematic. The carved designs should not be considered purely ‘decorative’ because, within their cultural context, they would have been understood as functionally protecting the doorway, as outlined below. Equally, true lintels of greater dimensions were installed behind them, fully functional in supporting the weight of the structural materials above.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁶ Parmentier, *L’Art Khmer Primitif*, 305; Louis Malleret, ‘Une nouvelle statue préangkorienne de Sūrya dans le Bas-Mékong’, *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 23 (1966): 118.

⁴⁰⁷ Dupont, ‘Les linteaux khmèrs du VII^e siècle’; Jean Boisselier, *Le Cambodge*, 145–56; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 272; Siribhadra and Veraprasert, *Lintels*, 37–49.

⁴⁰⁸ Boisselier, *Le Cambodge*, 130; Ichita Shimoda et al., ‘Diversity of Brick Shrines in the Sambor Prei Kuk Monument’ (National Conference on Style of Khmer Architecture, Royal Academy of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, 2006), 12–14 of 16.

In their original doorway context, they articulated with small columns ('colonnettes' in the French literature) either side of the entrance, forming a portal that is sculpturally separate to the surrounding architectural surface. This articulation and separateness is visually emphasised by the presence of abaci carved into the base of the 'decorative lintel', and the production of these elements in different materials to the surrounding masonry – in brick architecture, these portals were usually of sandstone. The portals have been recognised as formally and functionally related to South Asian *torana* which, in the absence of an Old Khmer term, currently provides the most appropriate label.⁴⁰⁹



Figure 5.19 Art historical styles of *torana* arch from the pre-Angkorian period. From top (attributes considered stylistic): Thala Borivat (convergent *makara*, single arch inflection point), Sambor Prei Kuk (convergent *makara*, three arch inflection points), Prei Kmeng (*makara* replaced, flattened arch with 3 or 5 motifs, foliation not uncommon). National Museum of Cambodia, ñ.1753, ñ.1792 & ñ.1938. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

The early South Asian *torana* was a free-standing arched portal located at a monument's ritual boundary, and became integrated with the Hindu temple doorway by the mid-1st millennium CE.⁴¹⁰ Some of the imagery on the earliest known pre-Angkorian *torana*, known by their stylistic labels as the Thala Borivat and Sambor Prei Kuk styles (Figure 5.19), was present in earlier South Asian forms, and should be

⁴⁰⁹ Parul Pandya Dhar, *The Torana in Indian and Southeast Asian Architecture* (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 2010), 214–21; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 104, discusses Kuṣāṇa period *torana* while comparing Indian *makara*-arches above doors and niches with Khmer 'decorative lintels', noting "this form could constitute a distant origin of later forms", but their full significance at portals appears not to have been fully appreciated.

⁴¹⁰ Dhar, *Torana*, 1; B.N. Misra, 'Early Torana-Gateways as Predecessors of Temple-Doorways in Ancient Mālavadeśa', in *History and Art: Essays on History, Art, Culture and Archaeology Presented to Prof. K.D. Bajpai in Honour of His Fifty Years of Indological Studies*, ed. Krishna Deva, Lallanji Gopal, and Shri Bhagwan Singh (Delhi: Ramanand Vidya Bhawan, 1989), 52–64.

understood to have ultimately originated there.⁴¹¹ This includes the arch composed of multiple arcs with motifs at the inflection points⁴¹² and patterned with jewels or flowers, the presence of monstrous *makara* with riders at opposite sides of the span from whose mouths the arch and often a *vyāla* emerges, and the presence of pendant garlands, flowers and pearls under the arch.⁴¹³ The primary significance of this imagery is understood to relate to auspiciousness and perhaps apotropaism at the doorway (Figure 5.20).⁴¹⁴ It is not uncommon for doorways of ritual structures to



Figure 5.20 *Toraṇa* (arch and columns) *in situ* at the doorway of *prasat* S1, South group, Sambor Prei Kuk; right hand column of *toraṇa* missing. Photograph: Author.

accumulate symbolic imagery of this kind, since their opening is a material discontinuity that represents a vulnerability in the wall's protection of the internal space.⁴¹⁵ The doorway of a ritual structure is a liminal locus of transition between

⁴¹¹ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 100–115; Parul Pandya Dhar, 'Morphology of Transformation: Toraṇa in Indian and Cambodian Architecture, ca. 5th to 9th Cent. AD', *インド考古研究 (Studies in South Asian Art and Archaeology)* 26 (2005): 33–50; Dhar, *Toraṇa*, 214–18 & 226–31.

⁴¹² Arch inflection points bearing motifs are often termed 'medallions' in the literature, following French practice.

⁴¹³ Dhar, *Toraṇa*, 215, identifies the *makara*-rider as an *udadhikumāra* (water deity); Claudine Bautze-Picron, 'Jewels for a King – Part II', *Indo-Asiatische Zeitschrift* 15 (2011): 42, considers them *gānas* (dwarfs); Pierre Baptiste, 'Linteau', in *L'art khmer dans les collections du Musée Guimet*, ed. Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zéphir (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2008), 78, compares them iconographically to both *gānas* and *yakṣas* (spirits associated with vegetation and fertility); Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, Pt.2, 48, also suggests the *yakṣa* identity. These identifications suggest water or vegetation symbolism, but the identity of the riders is likely to have been guided by that of the *makara* to some extent.

⁴¹⁴ Thomas E. Donaldson, 'Doorframes on the Earliest Orissan Temples', *Artibus Asiae* 38, no. 2–3 (1976): 189–90; Dhar, *Toraṇa*, 28–34; Jutta Jain-Neubauer, 'Udumbara: The Threshold at the Entrance of a Temple - Origin, Meaning and the Aesthetics of a Liminal Space', in *Art, Icon and Architecture in South Asia: Essays in Honour of Dr. Devangana Desai*, ed. Anila Verghese and Anna L. Dallapiccola, vol. 2 (New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 2015), 425–32.

⁴¹⁵ Maria Catedra, "'Through the Door": A View of Space from an Anthropological Perspective', in *Cognitive and Linguistic Aspects of Geographic Space*, NATO Advanced Study Institute Series D: Behavioural and Social Sciences 63 (Dordrecht & London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991), 53–58;

outside and inside, marking the transformation of space as the sacred is approached, where malevolent forces might penetrate and disrupt the ritual efficacy of the spiritual power within. The pre-Angkorian *torana* bears imagery related to water, vegetal growth, flowers, jewels, garlands and pearls over both the arch and columns which, as symbols of fertility and wealth, can be understood as auspicious; *makara* are oceanic beasts associated with the rainbow that forms the bejewelled multi-arched arch of the *torana*.⁴¹⁶ The rainbow also carries the symbolism of a bridge to the celestial world, imagery that gained three-dimensional architectural form in the Angkorian period,⁴¹⁷ so that its location at the pre-Angkorian *prasat*'s entrance to the sacred space is doubly significant. Given the continuity in imagery and doorway context between South Asia and pre-Angkorian Cambodia, it seems reasonable to suppose that the general character of auspiciousness also continued with the Sambor Prei Kuk *torana*, even if formal and symbolic details were localised.

It is in this wider symbolic and architectural context of the pre-Angkorian *torana*, that the horse-riders composition of relevance to this research occurs.

5.3.2. Chronological and architectural context of the S7 *torana*

The *torana* under study is believed to have once framed the *prasat* S7 doorway, its *makara*-arch component found nearby to the southeast in the 1920s.⁴¹⁸ The epigraphic dating and stylistic consistency of the South group *prasats* were discussed above with the S2 *gavākṣa*. An early 7th-century date for the group is established, and

Ronald L. Grimes, 'Portals', in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, 2nd ed., vol. 11 (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 7333–34; Jain-Neubauer, 'Udumbara', 423–25.

⁴¹⁶ Coomaraswamy, *Yaksas*, Pt.2, 47-55; Adrian Snodgrass, *The Symbolism of the Stupa* (Ithaca (NY): Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1985), 293–94. The presence of jewels in the ocean is referred to in duplicated inscriptions K.440 *śloka* 6 and K.442 *śloka* 6 (see Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 9 & 13) discussed in section 5.3.2, so their presence on the rainbow arch between the oceanic *makara* is of interest; Claudine Bautze-Picron, 'Jewels for a King – Part I', *Indo-Asiatische Zeitschrift* 14 (2010): 51–52, also draws attention to the rainbow as being Indra's bow (*indrathanus*) in earlier Indian texts, including a reference to it as gem-studded.

⁴¹⁷ Snodgrass, *Symbolism of the Stupa*, 282–92.

⁴¹⁸ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 60 & Fig. 6A; Dupont, 'Les linteaux khmers du VII^e siècle', 41. The next closest monument is the S4 first enclosure southern gateway, but the association with *prasat* S7 appears to have been accepted; see: Thierry Zéphir, 'Lintel', in *Sculpture of Angkor and Ancient Cambodia: Millennium of Glory*, ed. Helen Ibbitson Jessup and Thierry Zéphir (London: Thames & Hudson, 1997), 167; Thierry Zéphir, 'Khmer Art', in *Art of Southeast Asia*, ed. Maud Girard-Geslan et al., trans. J.A. Underwood (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998), 209 & Fig. 80; Baptiste, 'Linteau', 77–78 & fn.3; Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 198.

prasat S7 is both architecturally stylistically consistent and integrated into the group's regular ground plan, suggesting it was part of the complex's original conception.⁴¹⁹ Stylistically, the convergent *makara* disgorging an arch comprising four arcs with motifs at the three inflection points is entirely consistent with the Sambor Prei Kuk style (Figure 5.19), normally dated from the early-7th century to c.650, based on studies that have incorporated more directly dated examples using epigraphy on the associated architecture.⁴²⁰ Suggestions for more precise dating on stylistic grounds remain problematic.⁴²¹ However, the congruence between the style of the *prasat* and the *torana*, and the *prasat*'s integral location within the South group considered on an epigraphic basis to mostly date to the reign of Īśānavarman, means the carving of the horse-riders can be dated to the early-7th century.

5.3.3. Stylistic comparison of the S7 *torana*

Research on the stylistic comparisons of pre-Angkorian *torana* has been more extensive than with *gavākṣa*, so several assessments of South Asian comparators are already available. The two principal approaches to characterising the stylistic relationships have included analysing the forms of the overall arch and of the *makara* specifically.

Torana have been compared for the presence of the *makara* at each end of the arch, the quantity of arcs or inflection points, the presence of figural imagery under the arch, and the presence of beaded garlands and flowers hanging from it.⁴²² Early difficulties delineating the *torana* chronology purely within the pre-Angkorian context made inferences regarding relationships with South Asian forms challenging, but eventually

⁴¹⁹ Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 3–4; Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 192. *Prasats* S1 and S9 were suggested to have had a slightly later 7th century date on stylistic grounds (see fn.274).

⁴²⁰ Boisselier, *Le Cambodge*, 146; Siribhadra and Veraprasert, *Lintels*, 39.

⁴²¹ Dupont, 'Les linteaux khmers du VII^e siècle', 44–46, dated some Sambor Prei Kuk style *torana* (i.e. with *makara*) to later in the style because they had a flattened arch that is comparable to the subsequent Prei Kmeng style, while other *torana* assigned to the Prei Kmeng style, with fleurons instead of *makara*, also have an arch comprised of separate arcs (e.g. Figs. 29 & 30); Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 196–208, argued that the 'bezel-band' pattern may be used to date some Sambor Prei Kuk style *torana* to late in the style because the pattern is subsequently common in Prei Kmeng style art, but this would need to be reconciled with the pattern's appearance on the steps and base of Kuk Preah Theat, Kompong Cham, the date of which is not clear.

⁴²² Odette Viennot, 'A propos des linteaux khmers du VII^e siècle', *Arts Asiatiques* 3, no. 1 (1956): 64–68; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 100–115; Dhar, 'Morphology of Transformation', 33–47; Dhar, *Torana*, 216–17.

the Thala Borivat style was recognised to have appeared earlier than the Sambor Prei Kuk style.⁴²³ This meant that the earliest surviving pre-Angkorian *torāṇa* possessed a single inflection point with motif, which was more readily comparable to South Asian forms – the Sambor Prei Kuk style *torāṇa* with three inflection points between four arcs was considered to be a pre-Angkorian innovation that developed locally from it.⁴²⁴ Whether wooden *torāṇa* had pre-existed the Thala Borivat *torāṇa* remains unclear.⁴²⁵ The Thala Borivat style is typically dated only a generation or so before the earliest Sambor Prei Kuk style *torāṇa*, and geographically clusters around the Thala Borivat type-site just downriver from the Cambodia-Laos border.⁴²⁶ Recent archaeological excavation at the site revealed evidence of pre-Angkorian occupation predating Sambor Prei Kuk,⁴²⁷ thereby lending support to art historical interpretations of the *torāṇa*.

Scholars have consistently found the closest correlates for Thala Borivat style *torāṇa* in Peninsular India.⁴²⁸ While some scholars consider Pallava forms as comparable as Early Cālukya forms, there has been greater support for its relationship with sites in the western Deccan including the Early Cālukya sites of Bādāmi, Aihole and Paṭṭadakal, and the Maharashtra caves of Ajaṅṭā, Jogeśvari and pre-Rāṣṭrakūṭa period Ēllōrā. Stylistic studies of the *makara* with foliate vegetal tail rather than crocodilian or ichthyomorphic, its curving upturned snout and prominent teeth, plus the horn-like features over the eyes, led to similar conclusions.⁴²⁹ It is of course significant that the

⁴²³ Viennot, 'Linteaux khmers du VII^e siècle', 66–67; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 183–95.

⁴²⁴ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 109. However, it may not be this straightforward. Odette Viennot, 'Typologie du makara et essai de chronologie', *Arts Asiatiques* 1, no. 3 (1954): Pl.IV-1, shows a *makara*-arch from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, apparently forming a lintel, with three medallions containing seated Buddha images, linked by four undulations of a vegetal arch disgorged by *makara* and supported at the four arcs by dwarf-like 'putti', which predates the Sambor Prei Kuk developments in the early 7th century. This still does not mean that the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa form inspired the Sambor Prei Kuk stylistic development.

⁴²⁵ Étienne Lunet de Lajonquière, *Inventaire descriptif des monuments du Cambodge*, vol. 1, Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1902), lxxix.

⁴²⁶ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 183; Siribhadra and Veraprasert, *Lintels*, 38–39. See Section 5.1 on Thala Borivat. It should be noted that several two-arc *torāṇa* likely postdate the materials associated with the Thala Borivat site, for example at Kuk Preah Theat in Kompong Cham, and N22 at Sambor Prei Kuk.

⁴²⁷ Heng, 'Transition to the Pre-Angkorian Period', 484–505.

⁴²⁸ Viennot, 'Linteaux khmers du VII^e siècle'; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 100–115; Dhar, 'Morphology of Transformation'; Dhar, 'Some Early Torāṇa Representations from the Maharashtra Caves', 171–74; Dhar, *Torāṇa*, 216–17; Bautze-Picron, 'Jewels for a King – Part I', 46–49.

⁴²⁹ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 29–38; Bautze-Picron, 'Jewels for a King – Part I', 46–49.

conclusions regarding the closest comparators in South Asia for early *torāṇa* have been localised in the same western Deccan area as was suggested for the *gavākṣa* earlier.

5.3.4. Iconography of Indra with horse-riders on pre-Angkorian *torāṇa*

While the imagery of the *makara* disgorging the bejewelled rainbow arch, garlands, pearls and vegetal forms was present on earlier South Asian *torāṇa*, the same cannot be said for the iconographic composition of elephant- and horse-riders. It is known from at least 26 pre-Angkorian examples (Appendix 3) but no South Asian iconographic correlates have been suggested. Nonetheless, the identity of the elephant-rider as Indra riding Airāvata was recognised soon after the iconography was first encountered,⁴³⁰ and has not been disputed since. Conversely, the identity of the horse-riders is less clear, with identifications as both Aśvins and Maruts persisting in recent publications.⁴³¹ There is little discussion of why either identification is preferred, so it is essential to consider the iconographic and textual evidence for both, including their relationship with Indra.

Aśvins and Maruts are both uncommon in early South Asian visual representations, but the available evidence confirms that these are unrelated to the pre-Angkorian iconography. South Asian iconographic treatises describe the Aśvins as ornately-dressed twin gods holding the physician's herbs and books, or holding flowers, sometimes accompanied by women, enthroned together or seated on peacocks, or associated with a chariot.⁴³² In extant sculpture, they may appear as children in association with Viṣṇu Anantaśāyana⁴³³ but are more frequently represented as

⁴³⁰ Lunet de Lajonquière, *IK* vol. 1, 234–35.

⁴³¹ An Aśvin identity is preferred by: Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 158, 277 & 280; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 283, 292 & 293; Dhar, *Toraṇa*, 234; Aedeon Cremin, 'Aśvin Horse-Riders on the S Lintel at Prasat Kuk Roka, Kampong Thom, Cambodia' (online draft, 2013), https://www.academia.edu/4425438/A%C5%9Bvin_horse-riders_on_the_S_lintel_at_Prasat_Kuk_Roka_Kampong_Thom_Cambodia. A Marut identity is preferred by: Zéphir, 'Lintel', 167; Baptiste, 'Linteau', 78; Bautze-Picron, 'Jewels for a King – Part II', 45. Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 105 & 198, appear to prefer the Aśvin identity but accept the possibility of Maruts, while Maruts are also suggested for a variant *torāṇa* composition at Phnom Thom where the figures do not ride horses but are posed as adorants.

⁴³² K.P. Jog, *Aśvin: The Twin Gods in Indian Mythology, Literature and Art* (Delhi: Pratibha Prakashan, 2005), 137–43, surveys iconographic sources that refer to the Aśvins including *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, *Suprabhedāgama*, *Pūrvakāraṇāgama*, *Vaikhānasāgama*, *Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra*, *Amśumadbhedāgama* and *Śilparatna of Śrīkumāra*, many of which postdate the pre-Angkorian iconography anyway.

⁴³³ T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, vol. 1 Pt.1 (Madras: The Law Printing House, 1914), 94.



Figure 5.21 Āsṛvins with legs of a Sūrya sculpture, Brahmanasvami temple, Varmān, Rajasthan. Reproduced from Packert Atherton, *Sculpture of Early Medieval Rajasthan*, Pl.168, with the permission of the author.

standing horse-headed anthropomorphs flanking Sūrya as solar gatekeepers, as described in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and seen in sculptures from especially Rajasthan (Figure 5.21).⁴³⁴ South Asian iconographies for the Maruts are less well known, but they are described as having two arms and luxuriant hair, ornately dressed and stood on a lotus pedestal.⁴³⁵ This summary shows there is no reference to horse-riding

⁴³⁴ T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, vol. 1 Pt.2 (Madras: The Law Printing House, 1914), 305, 314–15 & Pl. XC; R.C. Agrawala, 'Animal-Faced Sculptures from Rajasthan', *Bhāratīya Vidyā* 20–21 (1961 1960): 305–6 & Pls. VI-VII; R.C. Agrawala, 'Asvins in Sculptures from Rajasthan', *Journal of Indian History* 41, no. 1 (1963): 227–28; R.C. Agrawala, 'Unpublished Temples of Rājasthān', *Arts Asiatiques* 11, no. 2 (1965): 57–59 & Fig. 22; Cynthia Packert Atherton, *The Sculpture of Early Medieval Rajasthan* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 111–12 & Pl. 168; Jog, *Āsṛvin*, 139 & 142–43.

⁴³⁵ T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, vol. 2 Pt.2 (Madras: The Law Printing House, 1916), 570, provides this description from the *Aṁśumadbhedāgama*; Joseph Campbell, *The Mythic Image* (Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 1974), 7–8, identifies a Marut in the Viṣṇu Anantaśāyana relief at the Daśavatāra temple at Deogarh, Uttar Pradesh; Karel R. van Kooij, 'Gods and Attendants in the Relief of Viṣṇu Anantaśāyana at Deogarh', in *South Asian Archaeology 1983: Papers from the Seventh International Conference of South Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe*, ed. Janine Schotsmans and Maurizio Taddei, vol. 2 (Naples: Instituto Universitario Orientale, 1985), 698–99, and Alexander Lubotsky, 'The Iconography of the Viṣṇu Temple at Deogarh and the Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa', *Ars Orientalis* 26 (1996): 77, identify this figure as either Vāyu or Sūrya based on evidence in iconographic sources.

iconography for either *Aśvins* or *Maruts* in the available sources. As such, there is greater support for the pre-Angkorian horse-rider iconography being of local origin, whether they are identified as *Aśvins* or *Maruts*.

Due to uncertainty over whether the horse-riders represent *Aśvins* or *Maruts*, proposed meanings of the composition have centred on Indra's associations with kingship, rainstorms and the eastern cardinal direction, but a more informed understanding of the imagery must include the horse-riders.⁴³⁶ To do otherwise would be to suggest the horse-riders are symbolically redundant, which seems highly unlikely for such a ritually significant context. Since Indra's identity is known, we can begin here.

Indra had been the most important deity in the *Ṛgveda*, where he was the supreme god of storms who destroyed the monstrous *Vṛtra* in battle, and was a major participant in Vedic *soma* rituals.⁴³⁷ In later Brahmanical literature including the *Purāṇas*, he occupied less prominent roles as rain-giver and king of the minor gods or *devas*, because of the elevated post-Vedic status of *Śiva*, *Viṣṇu* and *Brahmā*.⁴³⁸ This is reflected iconographically because Indra rides a horse-drawn war chariot and occasionally horseback in the *Ṛgveda*,⁴³⁹ but rides his elephant *Airāvata* in the *Mahābhārata* and *Purāṇas*.⁴⁴⁰ This continued in the Angkorian period where *Airāvata* was often shown as three-headed, but in pre-Angkorian iconography only the single-headed form is known.⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁶ The colocation of the rain-giving god, the rainbow and, if a *Marut* identity is accepted, additional atmospheric imagery of clouds and winds, has been noted by Zéphir, 'Lintel', 167, Baptiste, 'Linteau', 78, and Bautze-Picron, 'Jewels for a King – Part I', 51–52, but further evidence is needed to argue that this represents a special relationship with the rainbow since it appears on all contemporary pre-Angkorian *torāṇa* marking a liminal transition into sacred space. A preliminary discussion of these issues appears in my conference poster, see Ben Wreyford, 'Riders on the Storm: Pre-Angkorian Indra "lintel" Imagery, Kingship and the Monsoon' (15th European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists International Conference, Université Paris Ouest Nanterre la Défense, Paris, 2015).

⁴³⁷ Usha Choudhuri, *Indra and Varuna in Indian Mythology* (Delhi: Nag Publishers, 1981), 1–17; Muralidhar Mohanty, *Indra in Indian Mythology* (Kolkata: Punthi Pustak, 2008), 7–11, 89–92 & 105–7.

⁴³⁸ Choudhuri, *Indra and Varuna*, 123–72; Mohanty, *Indra*, 16–32.

⁴³⁹ Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, 'Horse-Riding in the *Ṛgveda* and *Atharvaveda*', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 62, no. 2 (1942): 139; Choudhuri, *Indra and Varuna*, 13.

⁴⁴⁰ Choudhuri, *Indra and Varuna*, 126–27 & 169; Margaret Stutley and James Stutley, *A Dictionary of Hinduism: Its Mythology, Folklore and Development 1500 BC-AD 1500* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2002), 8; Mohanty, *Indra*, 77 & 84–85.

⁴⁴¹ Vittorio Roveda, *Images of the Gods: Khmer Mythology in Cambodia, Thailand and Laos* (Bangkok: River Books, 2005), 177–87. The ubiquity of the single-headed *Airāvata* in pre-Angkorian iconography is seen in Appendix 3.



Figure 5.22 Airāvata in flight on *torāṇa* from (left) *prasat S7*, South group, Sambor Prei Kuk (Guimet Museum, MG 18853), and (right) Wat Sopheas, Kompong Cham. Photographs: (left) Author, with acknowledgement to the Guimet Museum, Paris; (right) Author.

Airāvata's presence in the iconography is significant because Indra rode him into battle and when sending rain,⁴⁴² so there appears to be a militaristic or stormy aspect to the imagery. Airāvata was aerial as a monsoon cloud,⁴⁴³ and appears in flight in pre-Angkorian iconography, signified by his forelegs bent at the wrists (Figure 5.22) in all but one pre-Angkorian example where this detail survives.⁴⁴⁴ An aerial context is reinforced by the rainbow arch. This helps to confirm that the horse-riders are indeed *devas*, for the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* and *Vāyu Purāṇa* record that they rode flying horses:

*“Horses of great splendour are the reputed sons of Gāndharvī [...] they have the velocity of the mind and they traverse the sky [...] and...] are said to be the vehicles of the Devas.”*⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴² E. Washburn Hopkins, *Epic Mythology* (Strassburg: Karl J. Trübner, 1915), 126–27; S.K. Gupta, *Elephant in Indian Art and Mythology* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1983), 22–23; Stutley and Stutley, *Dictionary of Hinduism*, 8; Mohanty, *Indra*, 84–85.

⁴⁴³ Gupta, *Elephant in Indian Art and Mythology*, 3.

⁴⁴⁴ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 277, first noted this detail. A similar posture for elephants in flight can be seen for Airāvata at Deogarh, see van Kooij, 'Gods and Attendants', Fig. 5, and for Māyā's dream at Bharhut and Sāñcī, see Gupta, *Elephant in Indian Art and Mythology*, 32–33, Figs. 15 & 17 & Pl. 25.

⁴⁴⁵ G.V. Tagare, ed., *The Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa Part II* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1958), 416 (*BdP* 2.3.3.76–77); similar imagery is found in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, see G.V. Tagare, ed., *The Vāyu Purāṇa Part II* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1960), 503 (*VāP* 5.72–74).

The *torāṇa*'s horses have raised forelegs like Airāvata and should therefore probably be understood as flying.⁴⁴⁶ This does not distinguish Aśvins from Maruts because both are *devas* in the Purāṇic literature, so potentially both could be represented riding horses. However, their relationship with Indra's imagery helps distinguish them.

Like Indra, Aśvins and Maruts played important roles in the *Ṛgveda*, but had reduced significance in the Purāṇic literature, inhabiting the celestial realm ruled by Indra. The Aśvins were divine twins with a solar or sidereal character in the *Ṛgveda*, having a role as physicians with healing skills.⁴⁴⁷ An association with horses (Sanskrit *aśva*) is evident in their name, but they rode together in a horse-drawn chariot in the *Ṛgveda*, not on horseback.⁴⁴⁸ They had a mixed relationship with Indra, especially surrounding access to *soma*, and are noted to have sometimes been in direct antagonism due to this, but in other episodes fought alongside him.⁴⁴⁹ The Maruts were a group of storm deities who repeatedly fought as warriors alongside Indra in the *Ṛgveda*, were closely associated with him and honoured at the *soma* sacrifice on multiple occasions.⁴⁵⁰ They, too, normally rode horse-drawn chariots in the *Ṛgveda*, which had cloud and wind imagery that complemented Indra's storm,⁴⁵¹ but were known to ride horseback too.⁴⁵² While horseback riding imagery became more commonplace in the Purāṇas, other aspects of Aśvins and Maruts remained distinctive.

The Aśvins retained their physician role in the Purāṇas affiliated with Pāśupata Śaivism:

*"It is from [the mountain Candra] that medicinal herbs were collected by the brothers (Aśvins) for the sake of amṛta."*⁴⁵³

⁴⁴⁶ Horses supporting Sambor Prei Kuk's 'flying palaces' are shown with forelegs raised in the same manner (see Section 5.4.2).

⁴⁴⁷ Jog, *Aśvin*, 8–19.

⁴⁴⁸ Jog, *Aśvin*, 4–16; Asko Parpola, 'The Nāsatyas, the Chariot and Proto-Aryan Religion', *Journal of Indological Studies* 16–17 (2005 2004): 7. The meaning of the name 'Aśvin' is often rendered in the English literature as "possessed of horses".

⁴⁴⁹ Jog, *Aśvin*, 19–28.

⁴⁵⁰ Uma Chakravarty, 'The Maruts', *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 72–73 (1991-1992): 612–21.

⁴⁵¹ Chakravarty, 613–14 & 618.

⁴⁵² Coomaraswamy, 'Horse-Riding in the *Ṛgveda* and *Atharvaveda*', 139.

⁴⁵³ G.V. Tagare, ed., *The Brahmanāṇḍa Purāṇa Part I* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1958), 175 (*BdP* 1.2.19.8).

*“From that semen were born the twin gods Aśvins, the excellent physicians, Nāsatya and Dasra.”*⁴⁵⁴

*“He called the Aśvini Devas in order to quell the ailments. [...] Aśvini gods caught hold of fevers [...] as well as other inimical elements and quelled them. They joyously made Devas free from fever...”*⁴⁵⁵

They also retained a connection with horses through an equine parentage.⁴⁵⁶

The Maruts retained their wind imagery and relationship with Indra in the post-Vedic literature, through the Purāṇic explanation of their birth.⁴⁵⁷ The narrative describes that Indra became aware that his mother Diti’s unborn child would grow up to kill him. To prevent this, he entered her womb and cut the foetus into pieces, which were subsequently born as Maruts. Diti forgave him but insisted the Maruts occupy the paths of the winds in Indra’s celestial realm, thereby continuing an aspect of their storm-related character. Yet more than their king and brother, Indra was explicitly made their leader as ‘lord of Maruts’, continuing their close association in the *R̥gveda*.⁴⁵⁸

The Purāṇas affiliated with Pāśupata Śaivism therefore prioritise the physician aspect of Aśvins, while the Maruts retained their closer relationship with Indra as his followers and the imagery of winds which complemented Indra’s role as rain-giver. Pre-Angkorian epigraphy reinforces this differentiation, although references to Aśvins and Maruts are few. The Kdei Añ inscription (K.55, dated 667) in southern Cambodia likens two brothers working as physicians for the pre-Angkorian ruler to the Aśvins.⁴⁵⁹ Elsewhere, the Aśvins form part of numerical formulae that define dates.⁴⁶⁰ The Maruts appear to be mentioned only once, but it is significant. They provide a

⁴⁵⁴ Tagare, *Vāyu Purāṇa Pt. II*, 655 (*VāP* 22.78).

⁴⁵⁵ G.V. Tagare, ed., *The Skanda-Purāṇa Part I* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992), 25 (*SP* I.i.4.67-68).

⁴⁵⁶ Jog, *Aśvin*, 124–26 & 132–33, and are also noted to still ride in a chariot in the Vaiṣṇava *Matsya Purāṇa*. Having equine parents may lie behind their horse-headed appearance in South Asian sculpture.

⁴⁵⁷ Choudhuri, *Indra and Varuna*, 176–77. See also: Tagare, *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa Pt. II*, 429–34 (*BḍP* 2.3.5.46-106); Tagare, *Vāyu Purāṇa Pt. II*, 518–22 (*VāP* 6.86-135); G.V. Tagare, ed., *The Skanda-Purāṇa Part II* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993), 125–26 (*SP* I.ii.14.31-46).

⁴⁵⁸ J.L. Shastri, ed., *The Liṅga-Purāṇa Part I* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1951), 226 (*LiP* I.58.4); Tagare, *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa Pt. II*, 478 (*BḍP* 2.3.8.5); G.V. Tagare, ed., *The Skanda-Purāṇa Part XII* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1955), 180 (*SP* V.i.45.6-15).

⁴⁵⁹ A. Barth, *Inscriptions Sanscrites du Cambodge* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1885), 68.

⁴⁶⁰ See, for example, *Ibid.*, 38, for K.13 at Phnom Bayang, and Beckwith, ‘Pre-Angkor Cambodia’, 171, for K.589 at Tuol Komnap.

metaphor for a royal army in an inscription from Han Chei (K.81, mid-7th century),⁴⁶¹ expressing something of the pre-Angkorian notion of the character of Maruts.⁴⁶²

The available evidence therefore favours an identification of the horse-riders as Maruts rather than Aśvins. Scholars probably suggested the Aśvins due to their combination of twinhood and association with horses, but their Purāṇic association with horse-riding is arguably no greater than that of the Maruts, who already rode horses in the *R̥gveda*. The Aśvins' relationship with Indra is weaker than the Maruts in both the *R̥gveda* and the Purāṇas.⁴⁶³ Moreover, the presence of three figures at the *torana* arch inflections is recognised as characteristic of the Sambor Prei Kuk and Prei Kmeng styles (Figure 5.19). It is not specific to this composition, so the twinhood of the Aśvins does not explain the horse-riders numbering two. The central figure of Indra, battle-ready on Airāvata and in flight, is therefore flanked by two companions who are probably Marut-*devas* riding on the backs of flying horses and embodying the celestial winds. Pre-Angkorian epigraphy suggests a military character was still associated with the Maruts in 7th-century central Cambodia, as noted above, which complements Indra's pre-Angkorian iconography.

5.3.5. Indra and the Īśānapura rulers

The image of the king of the *devas* on his elephant flanked by two military horse-riders naturally raises the question of whether this composition had a metaphorical character, because the elephant and horse had royal associations and were the primary animals of Indic warfare.⁴⁶⁴ Divine imagery has been used in expressions of kingship by ancient cultures globally, but a range of articulations between kingship and divinity are possible, from complete identification between king and god to comparisons of an allegorical nature, which may change over time or with ritual

⁴⁶¹ Barth, *Inscriptions Sanscrites du Cambodge*, 18.

⁴⁶² Both these inscriptions are within the extended area of geopolitical authority associated with Īśānavarman and his successors, giving them greater relevance to the imagery's interpretation. See Section 5.3.5 on this.

⁴⁶³ Cremin, 'Aśvin Horse-Riders at Prasat Kuk Roka', 3, also notes that the Aśvins did not have a particularly close relationship with Indra in the *R̥gveda*.

⁴⁶⁴ Uma Prasad Thapliyal, *Warfare in Ancient India: Organizational and Operational Dimensions* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2010), 62–68 & 370–73. See also Section 6.7.

context.⁴⁶⁵ Only textual sources permit the interpretation of contextual nuance, so that utilisation of the imagery of different deities in different contexts is possible.

Paul Lavy has argued that pre-Angkorian images of Harihara, visually half Śiva and half Viṣṇu and well-represented for the 7th-9th centuries, functioned in the visual expression of kingship.⁴⁶⁶ He suggests that post-Funan geopolitical changes led to an increasingly extensive area of political authority, which required the novel use of inclusive Harihara imagery to accommodate earlier northern and southern emphases on Śaivite and Vaiṣṇavite cults, respectively. Lavy includes material from Sambor Prei Kuk and sites within the area under the geopolitical authority of Īśānapura,⁴⁶⁷ also noting the involvement of Īśānavarman and Bhavavarman in Harihara's cult and the use of related imagery in expressions of kingship in contemporary epigraphic sources.⁴⁶⁸ However, this should not be understood as precluding the additional utilisation of Indra's imagery because, as indicated above, imageries may have different contexts and functions so need not be mutually exclusive or contradictory. Indeed, contemporary inscriptions provide evidence for the use of Indra in metaphorical references to kingship, for the same Īśānapura rulers and from the same period.

In K.440 and K.442, the near-duplicate inscriptions from *prasat* S15 and the S2 pedestal discussed above,⁴⁶⁹ we are told that Īśānavarman, “anxious to obtain heaven, acquired

⁴⁶⁵ A recent survey of some of these can be found in Nicole Brisch, ed., *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2012). Several examples have been suggested for early Hindu art in India. For example, see Michael D. Willis, *The Archaeology of Hindu Ritual: Temples and the Establishment of the Gods* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 49–66, who discusses several scholars' interpretations of the Varāha relief at Udayagiri as metaphor for the Gupta rescue of India from the flood of Śaka 'barbarians'.

⁴⁶⁶ Paul A. Lavy, 'As in Heaven, So on Earth: The Politics of Viṣṇu, Śiva and Harihara Images in Preangkorian Khmer Civilisation', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 34, no. 1 (2003): 21–39.

⁴⁶⁷ Emma C. Bunker, 'Harihara Images of the Pre-Angkor Period in Cambodia', *Arts of Asia* 31, no. 2 (2001): 90–107, including reference to the Harihara image recovered from Sambor Prei Kuk *prasat* N10; this image is not reproduced here, but archive photographs can be seen in Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 164. A fragmentary Harihara, not included in Lavy's analysis but perhaps reinforcing the connection with the Īśānapura rulers, was found in Chanthaburi province, Eastern Thailand, see Asger Mollerup, *Ancient Khmer Sites in Eastern Thailand* (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 2012), 10 & front cover; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 131–32 & 338, notes inscription K.502 from Chanthaburi which is accepted as indicating Īśānavarman's and Jayavarman I's authority in this area in the 7th century. The Chanthaburi Harihara image, comprising the head with part of the supporting arch suggestive of a pre-Angkorian date, is on display at the Prachinburi National Museum, Prachinburi, Thailand.

⁴⁶⁸ Lavy, 'As in Heaven, So on Earth', 32–39.

⁴⁶⁹ See Section 5.2.2.

the elephant of Indra”,⁴⁷⁰ while an Indra-Maruts *torāṇa* was retrieved from the S2 *prasat* eastern doorway.⁴⁷¹ In K.604 from *prasat* S17-17, dated 627, we are told that Īśānavarman “surpassed the lightning-holder [i.e. Indra]” by defeating the supporters of enemy kings. The inscription’s eulogistic tone highlights the metaphorical nature of this phrase.⁴⁷² A few miles from Sambor Prei Kuk at Srei Krup Leak (ស្រីគ្រប់លក្ខណ៍) is inscription K.151 of a subordinate ruler called Narasiṃhagupta who described Īśānavarman as “like Indra”, although the full context of the comparison is unclear.⁴⁷³ Īśānavarman is compared to Indra again in undated inscription K.709 from Trau Tasar in Takeo province, as he donated “a field with buffaloes, sixty oxen, some land, with a power equal to that of Indra”.⁴⁷⁴ Jayavarman I (r. c.655-681/691), ruling after Bhavavarman II, seems to have moved the political centre to a new but currently unidentified location which he named Purandarapura, ‘city of Indra’, referring to Purandara, an epithet of Indra as ‘destroyer of cities’.⁴⁷⁵

Against these epigraphic references linking ruler and Indra, it is notable that the Indra *torāṇa* distribution aligns very closely with that reconstructed for the geopolitical area under the authority of the same rulers (Figure 5.23).⁴⁷⁶ The distribution is not simply that of pre-Angkorian culture generally, because many sites lie outside this range, but relates to Īśānavarman and his successors’ domain specifically. While most of these are concentrated around Īśānapura, the outliers are instructive. Two of the *torāṇa* from Prasat Khao Noi (ปราสาทเขาน้อย) near Aranyaprathet in present-day Eastern Thailand are of the Sambor Prei Kuk style (Figure 5.24), while inscription K.506 from

⁴⁷⁰ Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 5–14, see K.440 *śloka* XX and K.442 *śloka* XIX. Coedès gives ‘a vaincu l’éléphant d’Indra’, but the original Sanskrit *nirjitaś śakravāraṇaḥ* may also give the sense of acquiring.

⁴⁷¹ Parmentier, *L’Art Khmer Primitif*, 54; Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 200.

⁴⁷² Finot, ‘Nouvelles inscriptions de Sambor’, see *śloka* III. See also Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 17–19, but he does not amend Finot’s reading of this detail. It is possible that *prasat* S17-17 also had an Indra-Maruts *torāṇa*, but further research in museum records is required to confirm this.

⁴⁷³ George Coedès, ‘Quelques précisions sur la fin du Fou-nan’, *Bulletin de l’École française d’Extrême-Orient* 43 (1943): 7. See *śloka* V. Narasiṃhagupta’s inscription is considered to be contemporary with Īśānavarman or just after, the date 598 referring to the earlier erection of a Viṣṇu image; see Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 124.

⁴⁷⁴ Coedès, *IC*, vol.5, 30–31, see *śloka* I.

⁴⁷⁵ Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 352–56; Jacques, *Khmer Empire*, 89.

⁴⁷⁶ Areas of authority for Īśānavarman and Bhavavarman II as reconstructed by Michael Vickery using the pre-Angkorian epigraphic corpus, see *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 91–138 & 328–66. Vickery notes little evidence for Īśānavarman in regions M and K, but a single inscription in each referring to a Bhavavarman appears to be considered more likely to be Bhavavarman II than I (p.122-23 cf. Table 2 p.100, and p.126). For the apparent outlier in region O, see the discussion of Wat Ksal below.

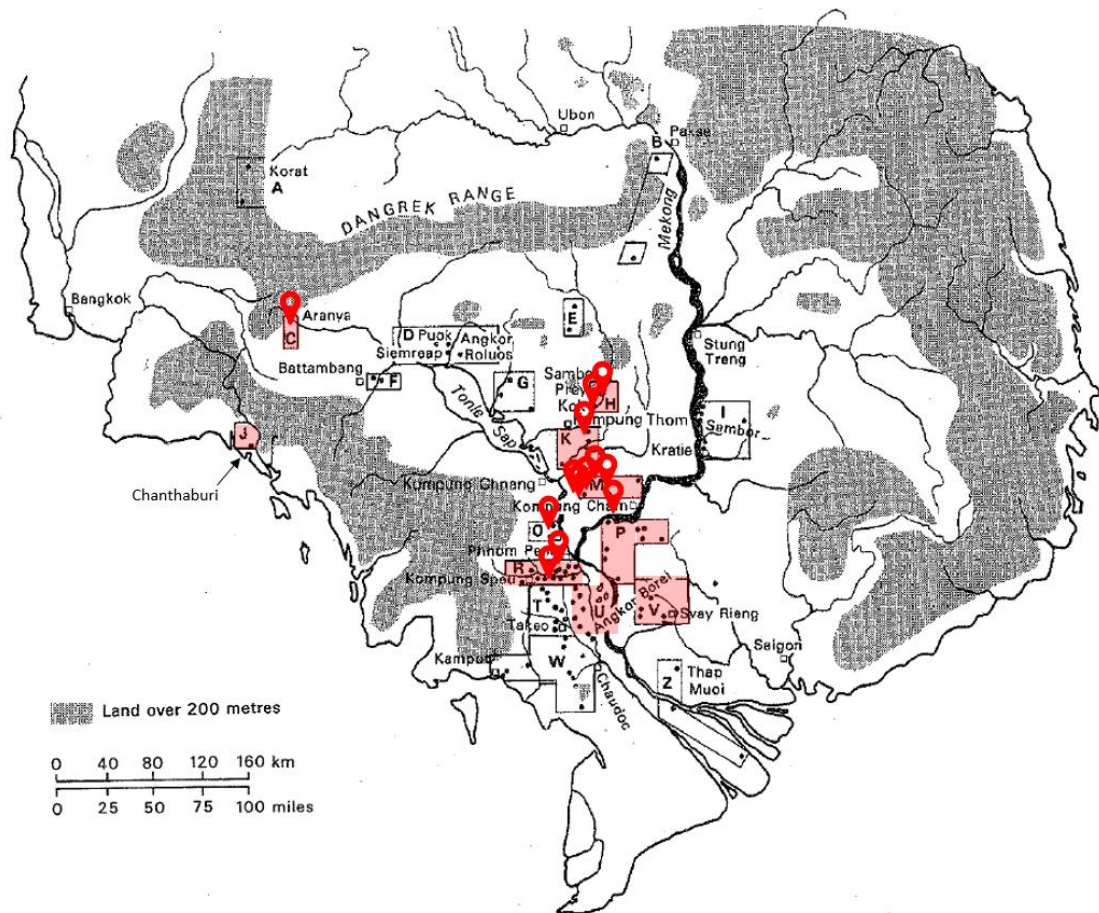


Figure 5.23 Map showing distribution of Indra-Maruts *torana* against a reconstruction of areas of authority of Īsānavarman and/or Bhavavarman II; pink zones (authority) are based on Michael Vickery’s analysis of the epigraphic corpus; red pins locate one or more *torana*, because some sites have multiple (see Appendix 3; only confirmed iconographic identifications have been plotted). Base map reproduced from Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, Map 3 (p.97) with the knowledge of UNESCO, and with the permission of Oxford Publishing Limited through PLSclear (Vickery’s base map was from J.M. Jacob, ‘Pre-Angkor Cambodia: Evidence from the Inscriptions in Khmer Concerning the Common People and Their Environment’, in *Early South East Asia: Essays in Archaeology, History, and Historical Geography*, ed. R.B. Smith and William Watson (New York & Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1979), 425, from which the scale and label indicating height asl have been reintroduced). The location of Chanthaburi has also been marked (see footnotes 467 and 620).

the same site and dated 637 records that Īsānavarman appointed a local chief named Īsvarakumāra in the local city Jyeṣṭhapura.⁴⁷⁷ Another inscription at the same site, K.1150 dating shortly afterwards, records that Śivadatta, Īsānavarman’s son and Bhavavarman II’s brother, was installed as Jyeṣṭhapura’s new chief.⁴⁷⁸ The *torana* are therefore contemporary with the Īsānapura rulers’ authority over the Jyeṣṭhapura chiefs. Looking south, three other peripheral *torana* were found near Phnom Penh (Figure 5.25). That from Tuol Ang Srah Theat (ទួលអង្គស្រះទាត់) is in Sambor Prei Kuk style, and inscriptions in this area suggest the authority of both Īsānavarman and

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 129–30 & 338.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 198–99.

Jayavarman I.⁴⁷⁹ The *torana* from Wat Ksal (វត្តខ្សាច់) (in region O in Figure 5.23), now lost and known from a single photograph, and from Wat Phum Thmei (វត្តភូមិថ្មី), both have features consistent with the Prei Kmeng style;⁴⁸⁰ as such, they may date approximately in the second half of the 7th century. The



Figure 5.24 Indra-Maruts *torana* arches from Prasat Khao Noi; further information is available in Appendix 3. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Prachinburi National Museum.

Wat Ksal *torana*'s foliate patterning is unusual and may represent a local stylistic development, different to the organisation of foliage seen with the Kompong Preah style.⁴⁸¹ The only dated inscription from this area, K.78, dates to 668-677 and Vickery considered this area under Jayavarman I's control⁴⁸² – his rule was contemporary with a significant proportion of the period normally aligned with the Prei Kmeng style. There is therefore some evidence of a correlation between the geographical distribution of the Indra-Maruts *torana* composition and epigraphic evidence for the political authority of Īsānavarman and his successors.

⁴⁷⁹ Robert Dalet, 'Fouilles', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 40, no. 2 (1940): 492, identified Indra on Airavata but misinterpreted the Marut, whose damaged profile is recognisable when compared with others in Appendix 3; also shown in Bénisti, *Stylistics*, Fig.107. The *torana* has been associated by scholars with the central *prasat* at this multiple-*prasat* site, dated to 651 based on inscription K.910; see Dalet, 492, Coedès, *IC*, vol.5, 39, Dupont, 'Les linteaux khmèrs du VII^e siècle', 61, and Bénisti, 197-198. Whether this actually dates the *torana* is unclear, with *torana* reuse known at Prasat Khao Noi and Kuk Roka. This site is in Vickery's region R (compare Bénisti, Fig.3, and Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 97 [Map 3]). K.910 does not name a ruler but 651 would probably be contemporary with Bhavavarman II (Vickery, 329-335 & 343); he is not named in region R's inscriptions but both his predecessor Īsānavarman and successor Jayavarman I are indicated to have held political authority; see George Coedès, ed., *Inscriptions du Cambodge, Volume 6* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1954), 3, and Vickery, 100 & 116-119.

⁴⁸⁰ See Appendix 3.

⁴⁸¹ Styles are, of course, largely products of art historical analyses and using stylistic features for dating purposes remains problematic; see Davis, 'Style and History', 23-26. This is perhaps more so in the politically peripheral area here. The stylistic comments of Parmentier, 'Complément', 49, would equate to simply a 7th-century date within today's more developed stylistic framework. Robert Dalet, 'Dix-huit mois de recherches archéologiques au Cambodge', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 35 (1935): 128, recorded this *torana* element embedded into the base of a later Buddha image at Wat Ksal. I thank Bertrand Porte and Bruno Bruguier for helping to locate the site using CISARK data, confirming that the *torana* is considered lost and that the immediate vicinity is disturbed by industrial development.

⁴⁸² Coedès, *IC*, vol.6, 12-13; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 119 & 350; Wat Ksal is in Vickery's region O (compare Bénisti, *Stylistics*, Fig.3, and Vickery, 97 [Map 3]).

There is therefore good reason to suspect the utilisation of Indra’s imagery by sequential rulers of Īśānavarman’s family – epigraphic references likening Īśānavarman to Indra, Jayavarman I’s choice of city name, and the geopolitically-defined distribution of imagery of Indra-as-warrior. Indeed, Robert Brown has suggested that “[i]f there is a blurring of distinction between religion and politics... [t]here would also be an impetus to spread this art to the surrounding polities as an expression of the ruler’s control”,⁴⁸³ as perhaps is seen in the peripheral examples above. Seen in this way, the Indra-Maruts composition is perhaps interpretable as referring metaphorically to the ruler with his military. The foreign-dressed horse-riding figures on the S7 *torāṇa*, seen

Image not authorised for distribution in the digital version of this thesis



Figure 5.25 Indra-Maruts *torāṇa* arches from Tuol Ang Srah Theat, Wat Ksal and Wat Phum Thmei (ñ.2092); further information is available in Appendix 3. Photographs: (top) reproduced from Bénisti, *Stylistics*, Vol.2, Fig.107; (middle) École française d’Extrême-Orient, Fonds Cambodge ref. EFEO_CAM15796; (bottom) Author, with acknowledgement to the National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

again on the Prasat Khao Noi *torāṇa* below, are certainly *devas* and interpreted here as Maruts, martial riders heading into battle with their warrior-king.

5.3.6. Foreignness and Maruts

The dress of the S7 Maruts (Figure 5.26) has received comment for its apparent foreignness. Each wears a cap which has been described as “a real Phrygian cap”⁴⁸⁴ and “a conical headdress with collapsed peak recalling the Phrygian cap of the

⁴⁸³ Brown, *Dvāravatī Wheels of the Law*, 9–10.

⁴⁸⁴ Parmentier, *L’Art Khmer Primitif*, 305.



Figure 5.26 Maruts from *torana* arch from *prasat S7*, South group, Sambor Prei Kuk. Guimet Museum, MG 18853. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to the Guimet Museum, Paris.



Figure 5.27 Exposed legs of Maruts from *S7 torana* arch, showing they are booted and barefoot. Guimet Museum, MG 18853. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to the Guimet Museum, Paris.

Śaka".⁴⁸⁵ The fine-grained stone and good preservation mean the carved details of the caps are clearly visible. However, other details of the Maruts' dress appear not to have been commented on. One Marut wears boots, indicated by an incised line half way up the shin of the visible leg, marking the upper edge of the boot shaft – this interpretation is reinforced through comparison with its partner Marut whose toes are visible, indicating he rides barefoot, while toes are not modelled for the booted Marut (Figure 5.27). Additional incised lines around the abdomen of the booted Marut indicate the upper edge of the lower garment and possibly a belt, which perhaps suggests trousers since no further incised lines occur between waist and boot to indicate a shorter garment. However, similar abdominal marks appear on the barefoot Marut, again with no further marks lower down the leg, so the identification of trousers remains inconclusive.

Two further *torāṇa* arches require comment. The Maruts on the Wat Ksal *torāṇa* arch (Figure 5.25), mentioned above as known only from a single photograph, were described as "wearing a sort of Phrygian cap".⁴⁸⁶ Unfortunately, this cannot be confirmed because the photograph was taken from an oblique angle and this detail cannot be objectively assessed, even at the highest resolution



Figure 5.28 Maruts from *torāṇa* arch from Wat Ksal. Photograph: École française d'Extrême-Orient, Fonds Cambodge ref. EFEO_CAM15796.

(Figure 5.28). However, capped Maruts also appear on one of the *torāṇa* arches from Prasat Khao Noi, now housed in the Prachinburi National Museum, Thailand (Figure 5.29). The stone type and roughness of carving make interpretation difficult and subjective for other details of their dress. For example, the form at the neck of one might be interpreted as beard or collar or necklace, while forms at the wrists may be

⁴⁸⁵ Malleret, 'Sūrya', 118.

⁴⁸⁶ Parmentier, 'Complément', 49.



Figure 5.29 Maruts from *torana* arch from north *prasat*, Prasat Khao Noi, Aranyaprathet, Thailand. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Prachinburi National Museum.



Figure 5.30 Maruts from *torana* arch from Dambang Dek. National Museum of Cambodia, ñ.1768. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to the National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

understood as cuffs or bracelets, and lines across the thighs could be viewed as a coat hem or a strap used in riding because a similar form is seen with non-capped Maruts on the Dambang Dek (ដំបងដេក) *torāṇa* arch (Figure 5.30).⁴⁸⁷

The significance of the caps and boot to the modern viewer is in indicating difference and distance. Most Maruts on pre-Angkorian *torāṇa* wear local dress, being a wrapped lower garment, often a pleated *sampot*, hair tied up into a bun, and being barefoot where this detail can be assessed (Figure 5.31). Such dress is common in pre-Angkorian art,⁴⁸⁸ and this commonness affirms the visual differentiation produced by the caps and boot. The contrasts between cap and hair-bun, and between boots and barefoot, emphasise the semiotic value of these forms. These differences are additionally significant because historical sources show that boots and this type of cap with peak flopped forward originated in Central Asia, and spread with groups migrating into West, South and East Asia⁴⁸⁹ – that is, they are associated with geographical and cultural distance when considered from a pre-Angkorian context. This distance is reflected in the terms used by previous commentators to describe the caps – associated with Phrygian and Śaka identities.

It is natural to query the significance and mechanism behind the representation of pre-Angkorian Maruts in foreign dress. Unlike the S2 *gavākṣa* heads, there is no known non-local direct comparator for the Indra-Maruts iconographic composition, which appears instead to be novel in its pre-Angkorian context. It is therefore less likely that straightforward iconographic appropriation can explain the contextually unusual dress, and another mechanism must be sought. Nonetheless, it was useful with the S2 *gavākṣa* heads to consider a more complex framework of iconographic inter-relationships, drawing on other aspects of Indic visual culture, and something similar

⁴⁸⁷ Nonetheless, I have not been able to identify this strap so far. Perhaps it is the end of a sash tied around the waist.

⁴⁸⁸ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 300–303; Jean Boisselier, *Trends in Khmer Art*, ed. Natasha Eilenberg, trans. Natasha Eilenberg and Melvin Elliott (Ithaca (NY): Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1989), 26–28, 36–38 & 44–46; Boisselier, *Le Cambodge*, 236–39.

⁴⁸⁹ Geo Widengren, 'Some Remarks on Riding Costume and Articles of Dress among Iranian Peoples in Antiquity', in *Arctica*, ed. Arne Furumark et al., *Studia Ethnographica Upsaliensia*, XI (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri AB, 1956), 228–76; Elena E. Kuzmina, *The Origin of the Indo-Iranians*, ed. J.P. Mallory (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2007), 103–4; Williams, 'Ancient Felt Hats of the Eurasian Steppe'.



Figure 5.31 Maruts in local dress. Clockwise from top left: Wat Sopheas, Kompong Cham; Prasat Phnom Thom, Kompong Cham; Prasat Trapeang Roleak, Sambor Prei Kuk (ñ.3320); *prasat* S11, Sambor Prei Kuk (ñ.81). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, and the Kompong Thom Provincial Museum, for the lower pair.

should be explored alongside interpretations that invoke the presence of foreigners locally.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁹⁰ Malleret, 'Sūrya', 118, combined the evidence of the S7 *torāṇa* arch with other iconographic, epigraphic and Chinese documentary sources to propose an Indo-Scythian identity for the horse-riders. See also Section 5.5, and especially footnote 625 on Malleret's interpretation.

To consider first how the putative presence of foreigners in pre-Angkorian Cambodia might have facilitated the representation of Maruts in foreign dress, understanding the primary characteristics of Maruts will help to conceptualise any possible associations perceived to exist between them and foreigners – it was noted earlier that the roles of foreigners in art elsewhere in the ancient world proved not to be random but instead based on societal associations.⁴⁹¹ For Maruts, these potentially include a military nature, horses, and the auspiciousness of the *prasat* doorway context. It was suggested earlier that a metaphorical relationship between Indra and Īśānapura’s rulers may have facilitated the conceptualisation of a connection between the Maruts and the ruler’s military or cavalry. Historical sources suggest the region’s elites were indeed arming themselves with cavalry in the 7th century. Pre-Angkorian inscription K.725 (mid-7th century) confirms a chief of cavalry (*mahāśvapatih*) in Jayavarman I’s army,⁴⁹² while K.81 (end-6th or mid-7th century) records the rewarding of a soldier with elephants and horses, by either Bhavavarman I or II.⁴⁹³ The *Jiutangshu* records two requests to the Tang court for horses, from Tuohan (陀洹) in 648 and Dvāratī in 650, the first of which has the backdrop of warfare against Zhenla (that is, a polity in pre-Angkorian Cambodia).⁴⁹⁴ The same text records that the ruler of Linyi, in Central Vietnam, possessed a military guard of 400 horses and 1000 elephants, at an unspecified date in the 7th-9th century.⁴⁹⁵ As is explored more fully in the next chapter, horses needed to be imported into Southeast Asia and skills associated with horse care, training and riding will need to have been learned from those more familiar with the animals and with the maintenance of cavalries. Whether these were the same

⁴⁹¹ See Section 3.2.6.

⁴⁹² Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 212.

⁴⁹³ Barth, *Inscriptions Sanscrites du Cambodge*, 18–19. See line 23. This is the Han Chei inscription that likened soldiers to Maruts. It mentions Bhavavarman as ruler, but the identity as Bhavavarman II relies on a palaeographic date, and there remains the possibility that Bhavavarman I, ancestor of Īśānavarman, is meant. See Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 122, 331–35 & 349 for discussion of the issues.

⁴⁹⁴ Geoff Wade, ‘The Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE: Some Vignettes’, in *Pferde in Asien: Geschichte, Handel Und Kultur / Horses in Asia: History, Trade and Culture*, ed. Bert G. Fragner et al. (Wien: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 165, notes Tuohan is unidentified. Hiram W. Woodward, *The Art and Architecture of Thailand from Prehistoric Times through the Thirteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2005), 89, suggests Tuohan may be located at Si Mahosot in Eastern Thailand, but Geoffrey Goble, *Maritime Southeast Asia: The View from Tang-Song China*, Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre Working Paper 16 (Singapore: Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre, ISEAS, 2014), 8, suggests a location on the Malay Peninsula.

⁴⁹⁵ Schafer, *Vermillion Bird*, 72; Wade, ‘Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE’, 167.

people as those who transported horses to mainland Southeast Asia is unknown. There is no specific evidence from pre-Angkorian Cambodia for the use of foreign personnel in cavalries, although mercenaries were noted elsewhere in early Southeast Asia,⁴⁹⁶ but the military deployment of imported animals provides a possible framework for thinking about how an association between foreigners and horses might arise. Regarding auspiciousness, the potential for foreigners to be ascribed an otherworldly character through association with a ritually-charged distant location was discussed in Chapter 2.⁴⁹⁷ In such a situation, the ascribed characteristic of otherworldliness may complement or enhance, or at least not be detrimental to, the ritual efficacy of the portal's protective imagery.

From the perspective of wider Indic iconography, beyond the imagery of Maruts specifically, there are indications of an iconographic association between horses and deities wearing similar caps and boots with tunic-type garments, a close-fitting and stitched form of dress with a 'northern' affiliation and referred to as *udīcyaveśa*.⁴⁹⁸ Kuṣāṇa and Śaka cultural affiliations with Indo-Iranian groups breeding and trading high-quality horses in the areas to the northwest, and their ancestral relationship with Central Asia, will have reinforced the association between this form of dress and riding horses.⁴⁹⁹ Sūrya images commonly wore *udīcyaveśa* in early north Indian iconography (Figure 5.32),⁵⁰⁰ and related dress is known for 7th-century Southeast Asian images of Sūrya also.⁵⁰¹ Sūrya rode a chariot drawn by seven horses in Purāṇic sources, but was not commonly associated with horse-riding.⁵⁰² South Asian iconography of Revanta,

⁴⁹⁶ See Chapter 4.

⁴⁹⁷ See Section 2.4.

⁴⁹⁸ See Jitendra Nath Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, 2nd ed. (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1956), 30–32 & 293–94, for *udīcyaveśa*. The features are discussed in more detail by J.E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, 'Foreign Elements in Indian Culture Introduced during the Scythian Period with Special Reference to Mathurā', in *Mathurā: The Cultural Heritage*, ed. Doris Meth Srinivasan (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1989), 75–77.

⁴⁹⁹ Horses were noted in Sections 3.2.4 and 3.2.6 as associated with foreignness in ancient Greece and Tang China. See also Chapter 6 for early Southeast Asian associations between horses and foreignness, and Section 6.2.3 for Indian import of high-quality horses from lands to the northwest.

⁵⁰⁰ Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, vol. 1 Pt.2, 308-312; Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, 430-40.

⁵⁰¹ Victor Goloubew, 'Les images de Sūrya au Cambodge', *Cahiers de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 22 (1940): 38–42; Malleret, 'Sūrya', 109-115; Marion Frenger, 'Images of Sūrya from Mainland Southeast Asia', in *Materializing Southeast Asia's Past: Selected Papers from the 12th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists, Volume 2*, ed. Marijke J. Klokke and Véronique Degroot (Singapore: NUS Press, 2013), 122–27.

⁵⁰² T.K. Biswas, *Horse in Early Indian Art* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1987), 21-22, 26 & 55-57.

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Figure 5.32 Horse-affiliated deities wearing dress of non-Indian origin. Upper left: Sūrya with Piṅgala and Daṇḍin on the solar chariot, from Khair Khaneh, c.5th century. Reproduced from Rosenfield, *Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, Fig.96. Upper right: Sūrya with Piṅgala and Daṇḍin in *gavākṣa* from Bhūmarā, c.5th century. Photograph by Biswarup Ganguly, [Chaitya window, Surya, c.5th century, Bhumara](#), Wikimedia Commons, licenced under [CC BY 3.0](#); cropped from original. Lower left: Revanta on horseback, from the area of Sārnāth. Reproduced from Pal, *Indian Sculpture*, vol. 1, p.254. Lower right: *dikpāla* of the northwest, probably Vāyu, from Bādāmi cave 3. Photograph: Author.

son of Sūrya, shows him riding a horse and often wearing tunic and boots, especially in early images and as indicated in iconographic texts, occasionally including ‘Phrygian cap’-like headwear (Figure 5.32).⁵⁰³ Sūrya’s attendants Piṅgala and Daṇḍin were also

⁵⁰³ B.N. Sharma, *Iconography of Revanta* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1975), 25-31 & 41-65; Martha L. Carter, ‘Revanta, an Indian Cavalier God’, *Annali Dell’Università Degli Studi Di Napoli “L’Orientale”* 48, no. 2 (1988): 127-33. See Pratapaditya Pal, *Indian Sculpture: A Catalogue of the Los*

sometimes represented in South Asian art wearing *udīcyaveśa* (Figure 5.32), and sometimes appeared as horse-riders alongside Revanta.⁵⁰⁴ Vāyu, a deity associated with the winds and one of the directional deities or *dikpāla*, often associated with the northwest, sometimes rode a horse as his *vāhana*.⁵⁰⁵ Indeed, this appears to be the case in Early Cālukya art at Bādāmi cave 3 (dated 578) where a ceiling panel bordered by the eight *dikpāla* presents the northwestern *dikpāla* riding a horse and apparently wearing a tall cap (Figure 5.32)⁵⁰⁶ – this may indicate a conceptual association between horses, capped riders in *udīcyaveśa*, and their association with the lands beyond northwest India.⁵⁰⁷ The character of these deities therefore possibly also share, in addition to an association with horses and the occasional wearing of Central Asian-type caps and boots, an elemental association with the air – the aeriality of Sūrya and thereby his attendants, and the winds of Vāyu. This combination of imagery is consistent with the aerial context for the Maruts on pre-Angkorian *torāṇa*, as lords of the winds riding flying horses alongside Indra riding the flying Airāvata.

It is therefore possible to propose two mechanisms by which foreign-dressed horse-riders appeared on pre-Angkorian *torāṇa* arches associated with Īśānapura's domain

Angeles County Museum of Art Collection, vol. 1 (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: Los Angeles County Museum of Art & University of California Press, 1986), 254–55, for the suggestion of 'Phrygian cap'-like headwear.

⁵⁰⁴ See Marion Frenger, 'Sculptures of Sūrya's Attendants from Mathurā', in *South Asian Archaeology 2007: Proceedings of the 19th Meeting of the European Association of South Asian Archaeology in Ravenna, Italy, July 2007*, ed. Pierfrancesco Callieri and Luca Colliva, vol. 2 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010), 93–96, for Kuṣāṇa period figures; see R.D. Banerji, *The Temple of Śiva at Bhumara*, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India 16 (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1924), 13 & Pl.XIV(a), and Pratapaditya Pal, *The Sensuous Immortals: A Selection of Sculptures from the Pan-Asian Collection* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1978), 38–39, for Gupta period examples; see Claudine Bautze-Picron, 'Review Article: Chefs-d'oeuvre Du Delta Du Gange, Collections Des Musées Du Bangladesh', *Journal of Bengal Art* 13–14 (2008-2009): 77 & Pls. 8.9-8.10, for post-Gupta. See Sharma, *Iconography of Revanta*, 41, for post-Gupta representations as horse-riders with Revanta.

⁵⁰⁵ Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, 520-21 & 527-28; Corinna Wessels-Mevissen, *The Gods of the Directions in Ancient India: Origin and Early Development in Art and Literature (until c.1000 A.D.)*, Monographien Zur Indischen Archäologie Kunst Und Philologie 14 (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2001), 48, 53, 64 & 102-03.

⁵⁰⁶ Vāyu is a common suggestion for this *dikpāla*. See: Gary Tarr, 'Chronology and Development of the Chālukya Cave Temples', *Ars Orientalis* 8 (1970): 167; Corinna Wessels-Mevissen, 'Some Early Sets of Dikpālas (Guardians of the Directions) at Bādāmi: A Reassessment', in *South Asian Archaeology 1995: Proceedings of the 13th Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists Cambridge, 5-9 July, 1995*, ed. F.R. Allchin and Oleg Starza-Majewski, vol. 2 (New Delhi & Calcutta: Oxford & IBH Publishing, 1997), 731–43; Wessels-Mevissen, *The Gods of the Directions in Ancient India*, 21.

⁵⁰⁷ An iconographic association between the northern direction and this kind of dress has been discussed for Ajaṅṭā by Bautze-Picron, 'Nidhis', 245–50 & 274–77.

of geopolitical authority. The importation and deployment of horses in warfare in 7th-century Southeast Asia is historically attested by a combination of pre-Angkorian epigraphy and Chinese texts, which raises the possibility of a perceived association in *Īśānapura* between foreigners and horses, including military horses. Additionally, evidence for a conceptual association between horses, foreign dress of Central Asian origin, and possibly aeriality or winds, raises the possibility of a mechanism involving an iconographic component – even though the Indra-Maruts iconography of pre-Angkorian *torāṇa* is not known to have existed in South Asia. Conceptual associations can of course be conveyed interpersonally, without a sketchbook or other physical means of transmitting iconographic forms, but detailed knowledge of the foreign dress would be necessary for its representation in pre-Angkorian Cambodia.⁵⁰⁸ These *torāṇa* reliefs therefore cannot be considered as evidence for the engagement of foreigners in horse-related roles, if taken in isolation and without substantive supporting documentation. A wider context for considering these issues is essential, including the presence at Sambor Prei Kuk of other figures wearing related forms of dress and epigraphic references to individuals from South Asia, as discussed in the remainder of this chapter, and other evidence for the presence and roles of horses in Southeast Asia, as discussed in the next chapter.

5.4. Guards in the ‘flying palaces’ of S11 and N15

The external wall surfaces of many *prasats* at Sambor Prei Kuk bear reliefs representing architectural structures that are, at least in the earliest examples, supported by winged beings and populated with figures whose iconography and composition are suggestive of a royal or divine court – hence they are often known as ‘flying palaces’, but their specific meaning remains obscure (Figure 5.33). Two pairs of guards in these ‘palaces’ have been suggested to have a ‘foreign’ appearance. Given the good survival of detail in several reliefs, and their potential significance for

⁵⁰⁸ The S7 Marut caps and boot are reasonable representations of dress that would be unfamiliar to most in early Cambodia, and notably they do not wear upper garments of *udīcyaveśa* type but are bare-chested, unlike most South Asian images – in this context we should consider the possibility of discarding uncomfortably warm stitched garments, as has been argued for some Kuṣāṇa representations by van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, ‘Foreign Elements in Indian Culture’, 76. The Prasat Khao Noi Maruts’ dress is quite unclear beyond the headwear. The identity of the artists involved is of course unknown.

understanding Khmer temple architecture and belief systems so early in the historical period, it is perhaps surprising they have received relatively little dedicated study.⁵⁰⁹

The following analysis will first summarise what is understood about the iconographic comparators for these reliefs in South Asian art. Next, it will consider the chronological and architectural context of these reliefs in Sambor Prei Kuk. A stylistic comparison between them will seek to identify the closest formal

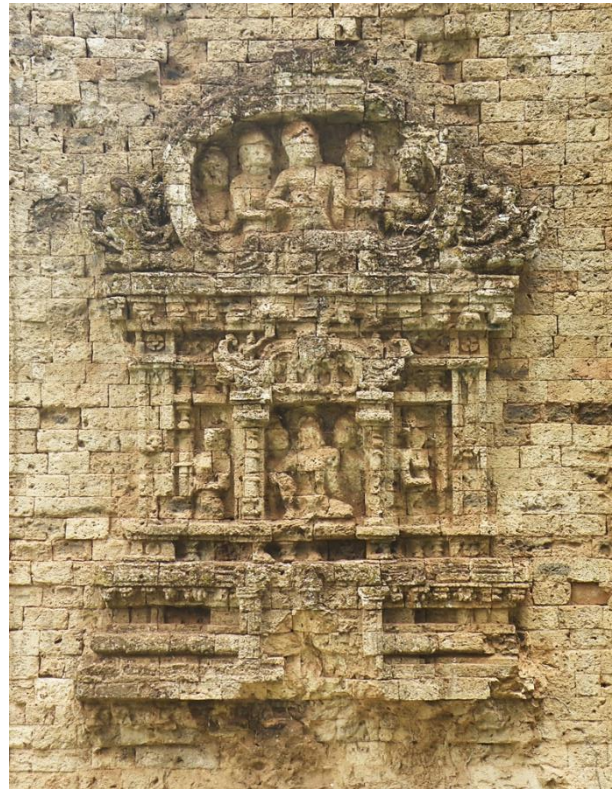


Figure 5.33 'Flying palace', east side of north elevation, *prasat* N15, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

comparators to consider cultural connections but, because there are significant innovations in the pre-Angkorian form, a formal and iconographic analysis will attempt a preliminary interpretation within the Pāśupata context of the early Sambor Prei Kuk *prasats*. The apparent representations of 'foreigners' in these reliefs will then be considered in the resulting iconographic context.

5.4.1. Edifice reductions

Architectural imagery appears extensively in South Asian temple sculpture, in many different architectural locations, and with several symbolic explanations. Early developments of the idea of temple as the palace (*prāsāda*) of the deity have been linked with the growth and repetition of architectural imagery in the temple superstructure by Michael Meister, with abbreviated representations of palatial

⁵⁰⁹ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 27–30 & 350–57; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 121–34, 217–23 & 314–24; Chen Chanratana, 'Etudes des palais volants dans l'art Khmer préangkorien' (MA Thesis, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2006); Chen Chanratana, 'ការសិក្សាអំពីចម្លាក់ប្រាសាទអណ្តែតនៅសម័យមុនអង្គរ [A study of the flying palace sculptures of the pre-Angkorian period]' (International Conference on Southeast Asian Cultural Values, Phnom Penh Hotel, Phnom Penh, 2016), 14 pp.

features incorporated into the formal language of the temple's sculptural surface.⁵¹⁰ Developing explanations of temple form as representing cosmogonic processes of divine manifestation, Adam Hardy has noted that architectural features sometimes appear as split and staggered forms that express the dynamic processes of the temple's emergence from the metaphysical into the physical world.⁵¹¹ In this imagery the expanding temple form projects, divides, reduplicates and proliferates to create myriad smaller representations of the overall temple structure or related structures. Some temples appear to host burgeoning populations of deities in palatial structures on the outer surfaces of temple walls and superstructures, many of whom are not forms of the central deity. Phyllis Granoff has argued that these may represent specifically Purāṇic conceptions of the heavenly city of the resident deity where he or she, located at its centre, is surrounded by a plethora of protectors, attendants and visiting deities in their palaces.⁵¹² Architectural imagery can therefore appear on most external temple surfaces – walls, superstructures, doorways, windows, niche pediments, architraves, bases.

Against this potentially confusing array of possible frameworks for architectural representation, Mireille Bénisti perceptively narrowed down an appropriate range of comparative material in South Asia based on form and approximate contemporaneity with the Sambor Prei Kuk 'flying palaces' (Figure 5.34)⁵¹³ – which she followed Henri Parmentier in more neutrally terming 'edifice reductions' without pre-empting their meaning. Parmentier had sought to relate these representations to the putative form of earlier local structures in perishable materials and since lost, without discussing the

⁵¹⁰ Michael W. Meister, 'On the Development of a Morphology for a Symbolic Architecture: India', *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 12 (1986): 33–50; Meister, 'Prāsāda as Palace'.

⁵¹¹ Adam Hardy, 'The Hindu Temple: A Dynamic Microcosm', in *Sacred Architecture in the Traditions of India, China, Judaism and Islam*, ed. Emily Lyle (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992), 41–57; Adam Hardy, 'Form, Transformation and Meaning in Indian Temple Architecture', in *Paradigms of Indian Architecture: Space and Time in Representation and Design*, ed. G.H.R. Tillotson (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1998), 107–35.

⁵¹² Phyllis Granoff, 'Heaven on Earth: Temples and Temple Cities of Medieval India', in *India and Beyond: Aspects of Literature, Meaning, Ritual and Thought: Essays in Honour of Frits Staal*, ed. Dick van der Meij (London & New York: Kegan Paul International, 1997), 170–93.

⁵¹³ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 126–34. I have added further examples from Bādāmi, Khambhāliḍā and Junāgaḍh (Gujarat). See Gary Michael Tartakov, 'The Beginning of Dravidian Temple Architecture in Stone', *Artibus Asiae* 42, no. 1 (1980): Figs.23-25, and J.M. Nanavati and M.A. Dhaky, 'The Maitraka and the Saindhava Temples of Gujarat', *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 26 (1969): Pls.4-6.

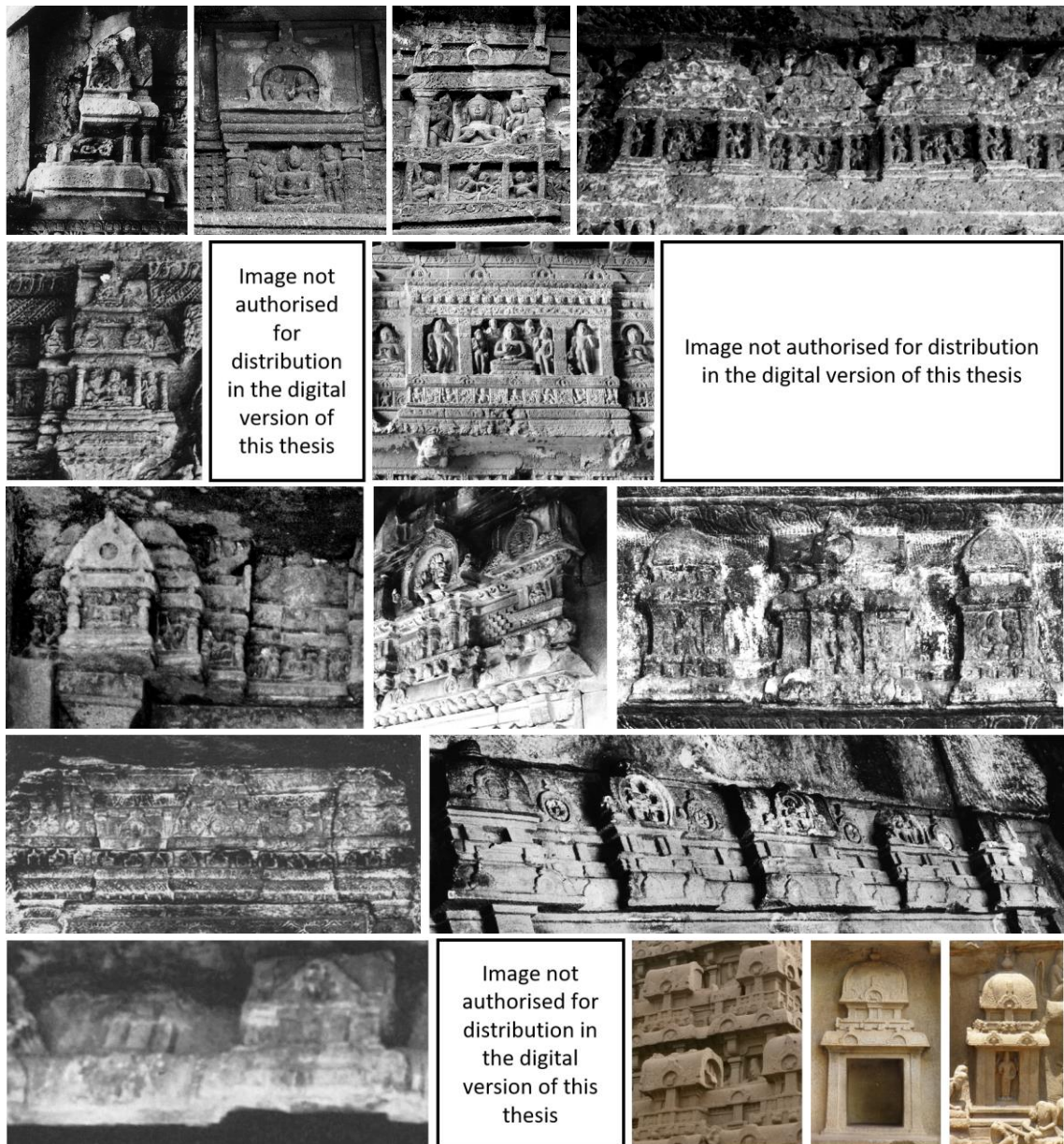


Figure 5.34 Edifice reductions from South Asia. Row 1 (left-right): Caves 1, 19 & 26, Ajañtā; Cave 3, Aurangabad. Row 2 (left-right): Jogeśvari; Cave 1, Aurangabad; Cave 26, Ajañtā; Uparkoṭ. Row 3 (left-right): Cave 7, Aurangabad; Durgā temple, Aihole; Cave 3, Bādāmi. Row 4 (left-right): Cave 2, Bādāmi; 2-storey cave, Aihole. Row 5 (left-right): Mēguṭi cave, Aihole; Khambhāliḍā; Dharmarāja Ratha, Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam & 'Great Penance' relief, Māmallapuram. Photographs: Row 1: American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative no. AAB 174.90 (Accession no. 24034); John C. Huntington, courtesy Huntington Photographic Archive of Buddhist and Asian Art, scan nos. 8336, 8519 & 7205. Row 2: American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative no. A43.57 (Accession no. 55480); Viennot, *Les Divinités Fluviales*, Pl. 9c; John C. Huntington, courtesy Huntington Photographic Archive of Buddhist and Asian Art, scan no. 8584; Nanavati & Dhaky, 'Maitraka and Saindhava temples of Gujarat', Pl. 4. Row 3: John C. Huntington, courtesy Huntington Photographic Archive of Buddhist and Asian Art, scan no. 7334; American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative nos. 204.7 (Accession no. 30544) & A42.49 (Accession no. 54954). Row 4: Tartakov, 'Beginning of Dravidian Temple Architecture', Fig.23, with permission of the author; American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative no. 399.41 (Accession no. 55270). Row 5: Tartakov, 'Beginning of Dravidian Temple Architecture', Fig.42, with permission of the author; Nanavati & Dhaky, 'Maitraka and Saindhava temples of Gujarat', Pl. 6; Author (x3).

existing South Asian traditions for edifice representation as iconographic form.⁵¹⁴ Chen Chanratana's work focusses more on their iconography and possible meanings, rather than South Asian comparators, but broadly follows both Parmentier and Bénisti in this.⁵¹⁵

It is widely recognised that there are certain similarities in architectural language and components between pre-Angkorian *prasats* and their edifice representations, for example moulded basements and *torana*. However, there are significant differences, such as the *prasat*'s lack of projecting doorway or indication of conveyance by flying creatures, that suggest they do not represent the *prasats* on which they are carved,⁵¹⁶ and are distinct from architectural expressions of dynamic expansion outlined above.⁵¹⁷ Other details reinforce this interpretation, such as the representation of Thala Borivat-style two-arc *torana* in edifice reductions on *prasats* with Sambor Prei Kuk-style four-arc *torana* at their doorways.⁵¹⁸ Commentators have tended instead to view them as celestial structures, especially with a palatial nature rather than a temple, and populated with figures with supramundane character or perhaps claiming supramundane character.⁵¹⁹ In this way, these reliefs have come to be known variously as 'celestial palaces', 'flying palaces' or *vimāna*, referring to the residences of deities which can fly through the air, as found in the Hindu epics,⁵²⁰ although few studies have tried to develop more specific interpretations of the reliefs' meaning.

⁵¹⁴ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 351–69. He refers to Pallava architecture as stylistic comparator for the putative earlier pre-Angkorian architecture and mentions the multiple pavilions in the Māmallapuram Ratha superstructures as an example of multiplication only, not as comparator for the pre-Angkorian reliefs.

⁵¹⁵ Chen, 'Palais volants', 238–41.

⁵¹⁶ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 351–57; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 121 & 134.

⁵¹⁷ Indorf, 'Interpreting the Hindu Temple Form', 205–7, considers architectural form at Sambor Prei Kuk in the context of Hardy's model of dynamically expanding temple form, but suggests the 'flying palace' remains an 'independent whole' by virtue of the flying figures which set it apart pictorially, and being offset from the central axes that emphasise projection and expansion.

⁵¹⁸ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 192.

⁵¹⁹ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 365; Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 134; H.G. Quaritch Wales, *The Universe Around Them: Cosmology and Cosmic Renewal in Indianized South-East Asia* (London: Arthur Probsthain, 1977), 114; Jacques Dumarçay, *The Palaces of South-East Asia: Architecture and Customs*, trans. Michael Smithies (Singapore, Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 3; Chen, 'Palais volants', 213–31; John Guy, 'Catalogue', 247–48; Charles F.W. Higham, 'At the Dawn of History: From Iron Age Aggrandisers to Zhenla Kings', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 47, no. 3 (2016): 436; Chen, 'Flying palace sculptures', 3–4.

⁵²⁰ Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1899), 980; Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 1, 133 n.9.

Bénisti's comparator edifice reductions were especially from Peninsular India, from Early Cālukya and Pallava monuments, and the Maharashtra caves, representing both Hinduism and Buddhism.⁵²¹ The presence of a large basement, a pillared main storey forming internal spaces and occupied by figures, and the superstructure featuring *gavākṣa* prominently or having a similar profile, unites these forms with a shared formal language (Figure 5.34). Stylistic relationships will be considered later, but it is notable that these formal comparators are appropriate in ways that Bénisti did not fully articulate. Their locations are architecturally elevated, appearing in linked rows along the upper edges of cave-temple walls, in entablatures and on *uttaraṅga* ('overdoor') above doorways.⁵²² These edifice reductions have been suggested to represent the palaces or shrines of celestial beings.⁵²³ The *uttaraṅga* bearing small edifices is particularly common in the western Deccan,⁵²⁴ apparently developing from the Gupta period temple doorway but substituting its array of *gavākṣa* for complete edifice representations⁵²⁵ – the *gavākṣa*, of course, noted earlier to have represented a supramundane architectural space.⁵²⁶ The Deccan development in the 5th-6th century of edifice reductions with prominent surmounting *gavākṣa*, celestial occupants and elevated architectural placement, provides material that is potentially relevant to understanding pre-Angkorian 'flying palaces'. Nonetheless, at Sambor Prei Kuk the form developed locally with significant growth in size, novel iconographic details, and prominent placement on the exterior walls.⁵²⁷

⁵²¹ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 126–34.

⁵²² These locations are noted by Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 126–34. A subgroup of smaller and abbreviated edifice representations, emphasising the central arch and occupied by a single figure, are found near ground level on monument N17 and the S2 pedestal, which Bénisti (pp.124 & 130) compares directly to similar features around the base of the Durgā temple, Aihole.

⁵²³ Tarr, 'Chronology and Development of the Chālukya Cave Temples', 163; Tartakov, 'Beginning of Dravidian Temple Architecture in Stone', 77; Soundara Rajan, *Cave Temples of the Deccan*, 63; Hardy, *Indian Temple Architecture*, 88; Pia Brancaccio, *The Buddhist Caves at Aurangabad: Transformations in Art and Religion* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2011), 109.

⁵²⁴ Tarr, 'Chronology and Development of the Chālukya Cave Temples', 163; Hardy, *Indian Temple Architecture*, 48.

⁵²⁵ See the examples at Nacnā, Dēvgaḍh and Sārṇāth in Krishna Deva, 'Guptas and Their Feudatories', in *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture, Vol. 2 North India, Pt. 1 Foundations of North Indian Style, c.250 B.C.-A.D.1000*, ed. Michael W. Meister, M.A. Dhaky, and Krishna Deva (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies & Oxford University Press, 1988), Pls.60, 85-86 & 95.

⁵²⁶ See Section 5.2.1.

⁵²⁷ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 133–34.

5.4.2. Chronological and architectural context of the ‘flying palaces’ of S11 and N15

‘Flying palaces’ occur on *prasats* datable by inscription to the 7th century but understanding their production process helps to confirm this dating. Carved in relief onto exterior sections of the walls which were bonded but left projecting during construction, suggests the ‘flying palaces’ in their original form were approximately contemporaneous with construction. The carved surfaces are recognised to have been coated with something like a limewash, providing a plain surface for the application of pigment, and concealing the brick colour variation and exposed burnt brick cores that today can present challenges for study and interpretation.⁵²⁸ These are still visible in places, including on the ‘flying palaces’, but occasionally the pigment appears to have been applied directly to the brick surface (Figure 5.35). Stucco is also found,⁵²⁹ but it clearly postdates the carved-brick compositions where it follows the contours of a weathered brick surface or presents a different composition to an earlier design underneath, and perhaps where applied over a painted brick surface (Figure 5.36).⁵³⁰

Stucco was therefore sometimes used to modify earlier brick-carved forms, but re-carving of brick surfaces of ‘flying palaces’ has not been noted. Both stucco and pigment are attested in the early Angkorian period,⁵³¹ but it is unclear if any such survivals at Sambor Prei Kuk are contemporaneous with the original pre-Angkorian brick carving. Further post-construction changes are



Figure 5.35 Polychrome on figures supporting 'flying palace', *prasat* N1, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

⁵²⁸ Jacques, *Khmer Empire*, 83, 88 & 98.

⁵²⁹ Boisselier, *Le Cambodge*, 228–29.

⁵³⁰ Chen, ‘Palais volants’, 99 & 243–47.

⁵³¹ Boisselier, *Le Cambodge*, 228–29; Susanne Runkel et al., ‘Interior Polychromy and Wall Paintings in Khmer Brick Temples of the 9th and 10th Century in Cambodia’, in *Connecting Empires and States: Selected Papers from the 13th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists, Volume 2*, ed. Mai Lin Tjoa-Bonatz, Andreas Reinecke, and Dominik Bonatz (Singapore: NUS Press, 2012), 276–89.

evident at the site. These include modification of N1's pediments (although its 'flying palaces' were apparently unaffected), an epigraphically-recorded 10th-century rededication of N1's cult, the erection of an outer enclosure wall for the North group, and a stylistically 10th-century cult icon recovered from the stylistically 7th-century N7 shrine.⁵³²



Figure 5.36 Stucco figure applied over earlier, larger brick-carved figure (stucco figure's waist is level with brick-carved figure's shoulders), *prasat* N21, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

The artistic creative processes surrounding each 'flying palace' are therefore complex and potentially

phased, so that its present form may differ from its 7th-century appearance, especially where stucco is present. Scientific analyses of the limewash, pigments and stucco may help to confirm composition, original colours and palette, dating and sequences of application that would enhance the appreciation of each relief's visual characteristics. Such analyses are outside the scope of this research, but it seems most likely that the visible brick-carved forms are original productions. As such, they provide the best guide to 'flying palace' form in the early 7th century, even if any contemporaneous application of additional materials had added further details that are now lost.

Prasat S11's integration into the architecturally-consistent South Group complex, discussed earlier with *S7's toraṇa*, suggests a similarly early-7th century date.⁵³³ *Prasat* N15's stone eastern *toraṇa* and three brick-carved *toraṇa* above its false doors are Sambor Prei Kuk style, suggesting an early 7th-century date. N15's *in situ* 10th-century inscription appears to be intrusive due to modification of the doorjamb, while a 7th-century inscription K.438 retrieved from a neighbouring ruined *prasat* in the same group, supports this earlier date, but because the inscription's content refers to the South Group deity it may slightly postdate the South Group.⁵³⁴

⁵³² Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 158–69; Shimoda and Shimamoto, 'Spatial and Chronological Sketch', 25–45.

⁵³³ Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 192 & 197. See Section 5.3.2 for the discussion of *S7*.

⁵³⁴ Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 25–26; Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 170–72.

5.4.3. Stylistic comparison of the pre-Angkorian ‘flying palaces’ of S11 and N15

Through stylistic considerations of the *prasats* themselves and epigraphic data where available, Bénisti established that the earlier ‘flying palaces’ are populated and more complex in formal details, becoming more schematic and without figures in later examples.⁵³⁵ The earlier examples with figures are of course those relevant to this research. Analyses have tended to categorise these according to numbers of storeys⁵³⁶ – the presence of wider lateral compartments reflects the increased wall space available away from *prasat* doorway structures. With this consideration in mind, ‘flying palace’ architectural structure is noticeably consistent within each *prasat*’s repertoire, but within this populated subset there are two basic architectural compositions, which I will term types A and B (Figure 5.37). Both consist of a base, a lower storey with one or three compartments, a *torana* portal, and a surmounting *gavākṣa*-shaped arch with finial.⁵³⁷ Type A positions the *torana* on an additional upper storey, leaving space for a doorway and arched ‘window’ on the lower storey, whereas type B has the *torana* on the lower storey where the doorway and ‘window’ might otherwise have been. Detailing of the base indicates a central projection, sometimes with steps, on which the lower storey doorway or *torana* stands. Bilateral *makara*-terminals sometimes mark the lateral extent of upper mouldings of the base. Figures consistently occupy the surmounting *gavākṣa*-arch and central doorway, ‘window’ and *torana*, and often the lateral compartments if large enough. Others may appear on steps. The whole is often supported by a row of flying beings, including anthropomorphic and leonine forms.

A comparison with the South Asian edifice reductions gathered above (Figure 5.34) can now be made. All have large bases, the lower storey with one or three compartments, and most central compartments are populated. Most show the *gavākṣa* in the context of a roof element; there may be multiple *gavākṣa* in one or more tiers (Ajaṅṭā cave 26, Jogeśvari, Aurangabad caves 1 and 3, Khambhāliḍā, Uparkoṭ, Bādāmi cave 2), or a single large *gavākṣa* visible against a barrel vaulted roof

⁵³⁵ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 121–34, 217–23 & 314–24.

⁵³⁶ See also Chen, ‘Palais volants’, 126–36.

⁵³⁷ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 122, characterises this arch as a pediment (original French: fronton).

TYPE A



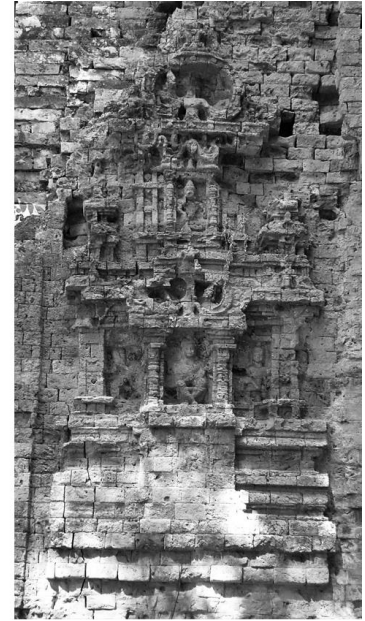
gavākṣa-shaped arch

upper storey with *toraṇa*

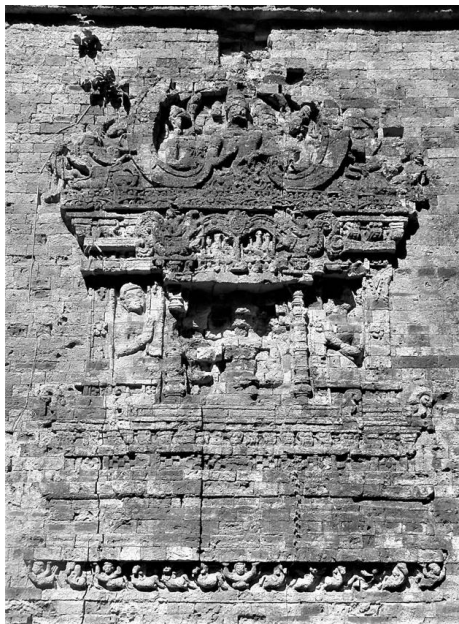
lower storey
with doorway and 'window'

base with or without steps

flying beings



TYPE B



gavākṣa-
shaped arch

single storey
with *toraṇa*

base with or
without steps

flying beings



Figure 5.37 'Flying palace' types A and B. Photographs: Author.

seen side-on and thus appearing rectangular (Ajaṅṭā caves 1 and 19, Bādāmi caves 2 and 3, Aihole Durgā temple and 2-storey cave, Mahākūṭa, Māmallapuram), or against a more angular or domed roof (Aurangabad cave 7, Mahākūṭa, Māmallapuram). Elsewhere, the domed roof approximates the *gavākṣa* profile but the *gavākṣa* is absent (Bādāmi cave 3). Of the available sample, only at Aihole are there examples where the *gavākṣa*-arch becomes the entire superstructure in the apparent absence of background roof elements (Durgā temple, 2-storey cave) (Figure 5.38) – this is the

most similar structural form to those at Sambor Prei Kuk. However, other features are noteworthy for their presence in the associated iconographic repertoire. Central figures are accompanied by others at Ajañṭā, Jogeśvari and Aurangabad, and figures appear in the *gavākṣa*-arch at Ajañṭā caves 1 and 19, and the Durgā temple and one of the Mēguṭi caves at Aihole.⁵³⁸

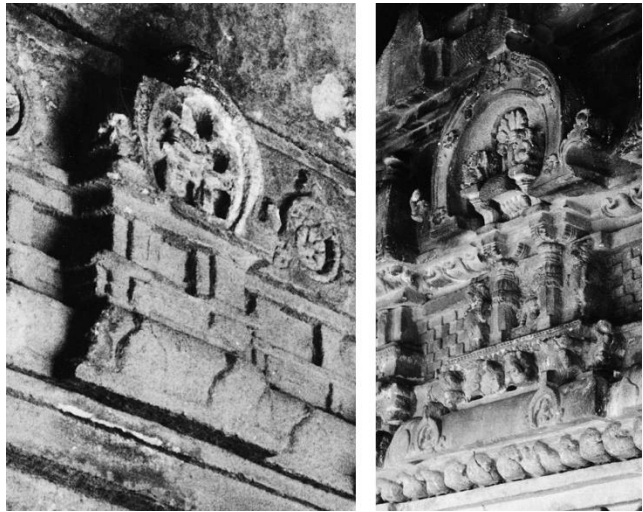


Figure 5.38 Edifice reductions at Aihole (2-storey cave, Durgā temple). Photographs: American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative nos. 399.41 (Accession no. 55270) and 204.7 (Accession no. 30544).

Anthropomorphic figures support the edifices in Ajañṭā cave 26, and what appear to be *vyāla* are present under edifices at the Durgā temple, Aihole. Edifice reductions in the 2-storey cave (lower storey) are described as possessing steps on the basement,⁵³⁹ and at Mahākūṭa appear the bilateral *makara*-terminals of the base. Importantly, the *torana* does not occur in South Asian edifice reductions but is ubiquitous at Sambor Prei Kuk and is considered a pre-Angkorian development.⁵⁴⁰

There is clearly shared formal language between Sambor Prei Kuk and the western Deccan area, showing this comparison is not based simply on the presence of edifice reductions. Cālukya examples appear to provide the best comparators for architectural features, especially surmounting *gavākṣa*-arch and details of the base. Figural components are more widely distributed. While the Durgā temple and Mahākūṭeśvara are considered to date to the later 7th century, the 2-storey cave has been suggested to date to c.600 by stylistic comparison which, if correct, would just predate the Sambor Prei Kuk ‘flying palaces’, but further research may clarify the situation further.⁵⁴¹ Besides this, there are clearly significant innovative features at Sambor Prei Kuk, and analysis in the pre-Angkorian context is important.

⁵³⁸ The Mēguṭi example is described by Soundara Rajan, *Cave Temples of the Deccan*, 76.

⁵³⁹ Soundara Rajan, *ibid.*, 74.

⁵⁴⁰ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 133–34.

⁵⁴¹ Soundara Rajan, ‘Calukyas of Bādāmi: Phase I’, 4, 22, 33–37 & 51–52. He assigns the 2-storey cave to the time frame of Cālukya ruler Maṅgaleśa (r.596-609).

5.4.4. Formal, iconographic and interpretive analyses of ‘flying palaces’

As noted, the formal analyses of Bénisti and Chen have categorised ‘flying palaces’ based especially on the number of storeys and presence of figures. Chen has sought, more than Parmentier and Bénisti, to interpret their meaning through iconographic interpretation of figures in different compartments, suggesting that ‘flying palaces’ perhaps performed different roles in honouring the deities identified in the *gavākṣa*-arch of their celestial palace, providing a mechanism for people to enter their sacred presence by being visually represented with them, and presenting aspects of daily court life.⁵⁴² Notably these deities possibly include Viṣṇu and Buddha as well as Śiva.

The present research focuses on the populated ‘flying palaces’, known to be among the earliest. These are recorded only for Sambor Prei Kuk and Prasat Phnom Bayang in Takeo province, near the modern border with southern Vietnam. Similarities are emphasised between types A and B, described above, to recognise consistent formal characteristics integral to the design, and therefore important for the interpretation of meaning in the early 7th century. This analysis seeks to characterise figures by aspects relevant to their identity including sex, hairstyle or headwear, objects held, and architectural location, to develop interpretations of their identities, roles and relationships. Symbolic aspects of architectural form are also considered. A table of analysis is presented in Appendix 4, but the results will be summarised in the following discussion.⁵⁴³ A significant number of ‘flying palace’ reliefs are damaged or weathered, partially or entirely, but analysis has included any visible details to ensure all available information is incorporated. This is based on the c.2003 photographs published in Ichita Shimoda’s inventory for Sambor Prei Kuk,⁵⁴⁴ my own photographs taken during visits there and Phnom Bayang in 2013 and 2016, along with other published and archive photographs where available.

An important first observation is that, as well as representing structures, the organisation of space is itself highly structured. A vertical line of symmetry emphasises

⁵⁴² Chen, ‘Palais volants’, 212–49; Chen, ‘Flying palace sculptures’, 3–5.

⁵⁴³ All subsequent details in the text of this section inherently refer to information collated in Appendix 4.

⁵⁴⁴ Ichita Shimoda, *Sambor Prei Kuk: The Flying Palaces of the Towers* (Kompong Thom & Tokyo: Department of the Culture and Fine Arts in Kompong Thom & Waseda University, 2003). This does not present an analysis, but rather an important pictorial record.



Figure 5.39 Figures supporting 'flying palace', *prasat* N1, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

midline features, including projections in the base, steps, doorway, 'window', *torāṇa* and *gavākṣa*-arch. As will be outlined below, vertical hierarchisation of architectural spaces and their occupants combine to express a conceptual hierarchisation, so first we will consider the base.

Supporting the entire structure is usually an odd-numbered, symmetrical array of beings displaying a mixture of Indic and possibly local forms (Figure 5.39). These are often identified as Indic leonine-bodied composite beasts termed *vyāla*,⁵⁴⁵ especially winged and horned leonine *śimha-vyāla*, and perhaps winged elephantine *gāja-vyāla*, damaged. Winged anthropomorphic beings may be a form of *nara-vyāla* or perhaps *kinnari*, but are posed like bracket figures, as appear occasionally atop columns and supporting edifice reductions (Figure 5.34).⁵⁴⁶ If the horses represented *aśva-vyāla*, they are notable for retaining equine bodies and being wingless; morphologically, they are simply horses, but wingless horses flew on the Indra-Maruts *torāṇa*.⁵⁴⁷ A long-necked beast is unrecognised, perhaps a local conception related to serpentine *sarpa-vyāla* (Figure 5.40). These otherworldly and aerial beings suggest a supramundane building able to transport its occupants in flight. Occasionally these beings are



Figure 5.40 Figure with serpentine neck supporting 'flying palace', *prasat* N15, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

⁵⁴⁵ K. Krishna Murthy, *Mythical Animals in Indian Art* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1985), 4, notes that from the Gupta period in India, the term *vyāla* came to prominence as the generic term for such mythical animals seen in artistic contexts. S.K. Tiwari, *Tribal Roots of Hinduism* (New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2002), 102–9, enumerates some of the forms encountered in texts, including several Purāṇas. Indorf, 'Interpreting the Hindu Temple Form', 207 & Figs. 18-19, implies the term *vyāla* may be appropriate for Sambor Prei Kuk contexts.

⁵⁴⁶ *Kumāra* bracket figures can be seen at column capitals in Michael W. Meister, 'Bīṭhū: Individuality and Idiom', *Ars Orientalis* 13 (1982): Figs. 11-13.

⁵⁴⁷ See Section 5.3.4.

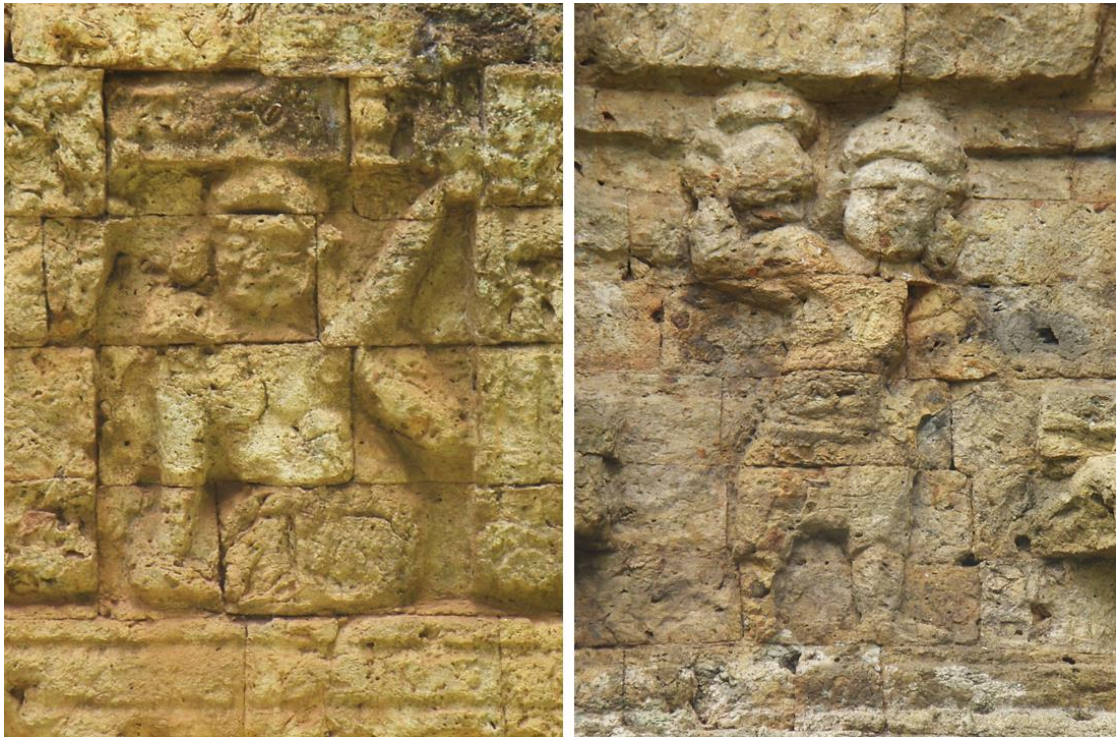


Figure 5.41 Figures of guard and water-carrier (?) on basement steps of 'flying palaces', prasat N- and S10, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photographs: Author.

replaced by what Bénisti termed the 'jutting leaves' motif,⁵⁴⁸ of uncertain significance, or are absent altogether.

Base mouldings and patterns include flowers, checks, balusters or 'jutting leaves', and occasionally *makara* heads emerge from the upper mouldings bilaterally. Steps bisect the base in approximately half the examples, and three quarters of these host a figure. Two roles are discernible for these figures by objects they hold, though at two *prasat* they appear to hold nothing. Guards with weapons, including swords and perhaps clubs, are the more numerous (Figure 5.41). At S10, figures with a pot on one shoulder are usually interpreted as water-carrying servants (Figure 5.41).⁵⁴⁹ It is the kind of role that *kñum* (serving staff, 'slaves'), listed in great numbers in pre-Angkorian inscriptions, would perform for the societal elite in residential and temple contexts.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁸ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 60–62.

⁵⁴⁹ This interpretation has some merit as the image of the water-carrying servant has a wider South Asian distribution in both art and in the *Dharmaśāstras*, where reference is made to freeing a slave by lifting the water-pot from their shoulder and smashing it. This is from the *Nāradaśmṛti* specifically, which Sanderson, 'Śaiva Religion (Part I)', 395 fn.165, notes as one of the possible *Dharmaśāstras* that pre-Angkorian society appears to have had knowledge of, based on an apparent reference to Indic manumission practices in K.666, of the mid-7th century.

⁵⁵⁰ Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 243, notes another mid-7th century inscription, K.78/K.786, which mentions a temple servant named *dik phik* ('drinking water'). Such appellations may indicate a

It should perhaps be understood here as the presence of personnel in the ‘flying palace’.

Several indications combine to suggest an elite or royal status for the main figures in the lower and, with type A, upper storeys, coupled with a divine status for the figures in the *gavākṣa*-arch. The *gavākṣa*-arch shares the symbolic language of architectural *gavākṣa* discussed earlier, presenting a celestial or supramundane space. It has a similar flowered *mukhapatti* with *śikhā*, and ‘ears’ formed by *makara* with upturned snouts.⁵⁵¹ The *torāṇa* is the primary feature between base and *gavākṣa*-arch, occupying the midline and, in type A, the upper storey closest to the *gavākṣa*-arch. The *prasat torāṇa*’s ritual significance as a transformative portal between mundane and sacred space was discussed above and its symbolism here may be related.⁵⁵² South Asian architectural texts suggest the *torāṇa* could be used in palatial contexts,⁵⁵³ but no evidence exists to consider if the same might be true in pre-Angkorian context.⁵⁵⁴

This architectural analysis is reinforced by complementary findings with the figures. The primary figure framed by the *torāṇa* either stands or is seated in *rājalīlāsana*, the posture of ‘royal ease’ with one knee raised and the other touching the ground.⁵⁵⁵ This *āsana* could be used when representing deities, as on a gold plaque excavated at Cát Tiên in southern Vietnam and interpreted as representing Śiva as Maheśvara,⁵⁵⁶ or a representation of Kubera from Nakhon Pathom, Thailand.⁵⁵⁷ However, the *Liangshu* records for c.6th-century Funan that, “when the king sits down, he squats on his side, raising his (right) knee, dropping the left knee to the ground”,⁵⁵⁸ suggesting that

kñum’s task rather than their personal name, according to Vickery (p.247). Ritual and bathing functions for water are of course also possible.

⁵⁵¹ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 26, noted that some earlier *gavākṣa* from northern India already possessed *makara* in the space here termed ‘ears’.

⁵⁵² See Section 5.3.1.

⁵⁵³ Dhar, *Toraṇa*, 29–30.

⁵⁵⁴ Shimoda, So, and Chhum, *Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project*, 38–39 of 47, record the excavation of only a laterite base of the pre-Angkorian structure at M.90.

⁵⁵⁵ A single exception appears in Appendix 4, with the figure sat in *yogāsana*; their significance is discussed shortly.

⁵⁵⁶ Lê Thị Liên, ‘Hindu Deities in Southern Vietnam: Images on Small Archaeological Artefacts’, in *Early Interactions between South and Southeast Asia: Reflections on Cross-Cultural Exchange*, ed. Pierre-Yves Manguin, A. Mani, and Geoff Wade (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2011), 412 & Fig. 20.5.

⁵⁵⁷ John Guy, ed., *Lost Kingdoms: Hindu-Buddhist Sculpture of Early Southeast Asia* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014), 247.

⁵⁵⁸ Pelliot, ‘Le Fou-nan’, 269.

rājālīāsana was performed by Funanese rulers less than a century before the ‘flying palaces’ were carved.

Considering identity through headwear iconography alone is inconclusive. For example, the simple chignon occurs on figures in the *gavākṣa*-arch but more commonly with the figures below.⁵⁵⁹ Similarly, the *kirītamukuṭa* occurs on the central figure in the *gavākṣa*-arch and occasionally figures below; it indicated the imperial *cakravartin* but was used iconographically for pre-Angkorian Viṣṇu and Indra.⁵⁶⁰ More informative, however, is the relative status of upper and lower

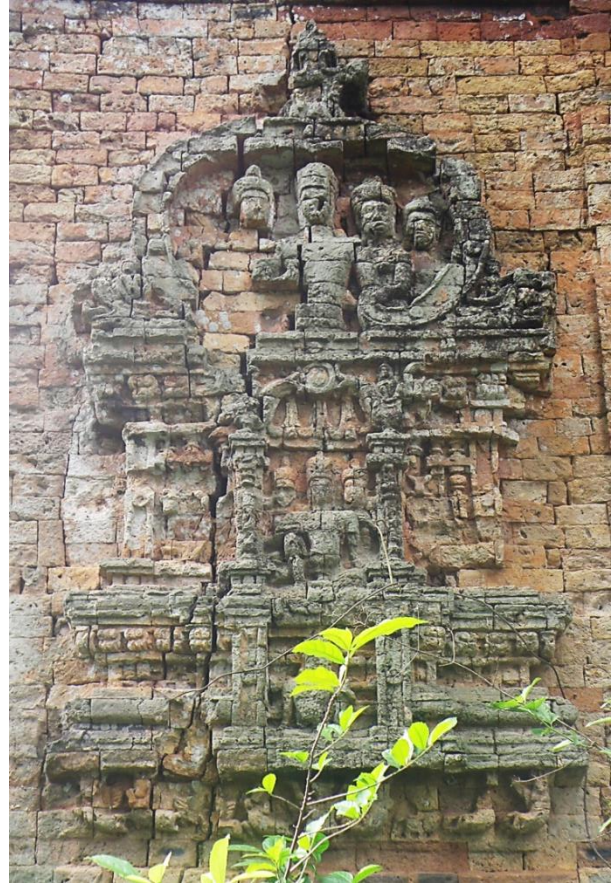


Figure 5.42 Hierarchical scaling of central figure in *gavākṣa*-arch at Prasat Tamon, where both upper and lower central figures wear the *kirītamukuṭa*. Photograph: Author.

figures, inferred from one of two visual cues within single ‘flying palaces’. Firstly, a comparison of headwear worn by the central figures inside and below the *gavākṣa*-arch may reveal differential statuses, for example the *kirītamukuṭa* being superior to the chignon. Secondly, hierarchical scaling, an artistic convention where superior status is represented in a larger figure, may be present. Neither cue is used universally, but where ‘flying palace’ survival is complete enough to permit assessment, one or other cue has been used to indicate a superior status for the central figure in the *gavākṣa*-arch in 100% of cases ($n = 31$) (Figure 5.42). This correlates with the celestial symbolism inferred for the *gavākṣa*-arch above. Overall, it would seem to suggest a

⁵⁵⁹ Parmentier, *L’Art Khmer Primitif*, 301–3, differentiated the ‘ordinary’ chignon, found widely but not on cult icons, from the high cylindrical chignon, restricted to deities. Dupont, ‘La statuaire préangkorienne’, refers to a distinctive horizontally-rolled chignon on early images of Kṛṣṇa and Paraśurāma, and the high chignon of Śiva and Harihara.

⁵⁶⁰ Boisselier, *Le Cambodge*, 284; Stanley J. O’Connor, ‘Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam’, *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 28 (1972): 44.

potentially divine status for the *gavākṣa*-arch figures, and an inferior but probably elite or ruler status beneath.

Additional details in N11's 'flying palaces' support these conclusions. In one *gavākṣa*-arch (south elevation, west side) the central figure's head appears to be framed by the remains of a *śiras cakra*, a nimbus-like feature denoting divine status in Indic art and known elsewhere in early Southeast Asia.⁵⁶¹ Another *gavākṣa*-arch (east elevation, north side) contains a figure posed in a manner recalling the iconography of Sūrya and Lakṣmī holding two lotus buds, the former



Figure 5.43 Figure with *yogapaṭṭa* band, seated under *torāṇa*, *prasat* N11, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

known from the Mekong Delta and the latter in pre-Angkorian art.⁵⁶² However, it is unclear if named deities are represented, as Chen has suggested, or if divine status is signified more generally.⁵⁶³ Finally, a figure framed by a *torāṇa* (west elevation, north side) is seated, uniquely, in *yogāsana* with a *yogapaṭṭa* around his legs (Figure 5.43), iconography that is known for non-divine meditating ascetics from early Angkorian art.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶¹ J.C. Harle, 'The "Pleated" Siras Cakra', in *Kusumāñjali: New Interpretation of Indian Art & Culture*, ed. M.S. Nagaraja Rao, vol. 2, 2 vols (Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1987), 345–47. See Michael de Havenon, 'The Earliest Viṣṇu Sculpture from Southeast Asia', *Journal of the Walters Art Museum* 64/65 (2007 2006): Fig. 12, for a Viṣṇu from Nakhon Si Thammarat; Dupont, 'La statuaire préangkorienne', Pl. XIV, for a Sūrya from Tien-thuan; Guy, *Lost Kingdoms*, 49, for a Lakṣmī from central Vietnam. This feature is best seen in Shimoda, *Sambor Prei Kuk: The Flying Palaces of the Towers*.

⁵⁶² See Malleret, 'Sūrya', Fig. 3, for a Sūrya image from Phnom Bathé in the Mekong delta; see Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 370–75, for Lakṣmī in pre-Angkorian art from Sambor Prei Kuk, Sambor on Mekong, Kuk Roka, Wat Baray and Kompong Preah.

⁵⁶³ Chen, 'Palais volants', 215–22.

⁵⁶⁴ Boisselier, *Trends in Khmer Art*, 56–57.

These preliminary conclusions concerning the hierarchisation of figures and architectural spaces are so far based primarily on formal aspects. Existing interpretations are often rather cursory or do not reference ritual texts of specific relevance to Sambor Prei Kuk, but we can now consider sources associated with Pāśupata Śaivism. It will be recalled that the pre-Angkorian elite supported Pāśupata ascetics, including at Sambor Prei Kuk, and are understood to have engaged in ascetic devotions including yoga. The aim was to acquire spiritual power through becoming more like Śiva, ultimately joining him after death in the metaphysical city of Śivapura.⁵⁶⁵ It is notable that the posthumous name '[gone to] Śivapura' appears several times in the pre-Angkorian epigraphic corpus, representing a conventional naming format seen also in the Angkorian period to indicate both the posthumous identity and destination of a ruler.⁵⁶⁶ It is generally thought a single pre-Angkorian ruler is represented by the name '[gone to] Śivapura', but if Śivapura represented the afterlife goal for many individuals, one wonders if this is necessarily the case.⁵⁶⁷

The Purāṇas affiliated with the Pāśupatas provide evocative imagery that doubtless helps to understand the 'flying palaces' of Sambor Prei Kuk. They specifically describe the posthumous reward to meritorious devotees of an aerial conveyance that they could use to get to Śivapura. The term *vimāna* is sometimes translated as 'aerial chariot' and 'heavenly chariot'. The rewarded devotee:

"...gets a great, meritorious [vimāna] which can pass through the sky, is equipped with everything desirable and resembles the moon and the sun. It will not diminish in value. It will be surrounded by celestial damsels. It can go wherever one likes to go. It will have the splendid speed of the mind. He will stay at the top of the [vimāna]

⁵⁶⁵ See Section 5.1 and Peter Bisschop, 'The Description of Śivapura in the Early Vāyu- and Skandapurāṇa', in *Mélanges Tantriques à La Mémoire d'Hélène Brunner - Tantric Studies in Honour of Hélène Brunner*, ed. Dominic Goodall and André Padoux (Pondichéry & Paris: Institut Français de Pondichéry & École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2007), 43 & 53–54.

⁵⁶⁶ Śivapura is used for a posthumous name in several pre-Angkorian inscriptions, including K.451, K.689, K.726, K.904 and K.1029. Opinions differ on the identity of the ruler given this posthumous identity, but for a discussion of the arguments involved, see especially Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 356–66.

⁵⁶⁷ This is also consistent with reconstructions of the pre-Angkorian geopolitical landscape with multiple ruling elites prior to Jayavarman II's territorial consolidation.

*being eulogised by people all round. He will be surrounded by divine flowers. Learned men say that this is the greatest of all gifts.”*⁵⁶⁸

Elsewhere, descriptions of the *vimāna*'s form note that they may be “bedecked in pearls and lapis lazuli [and] studded with perpetual flowers”,⁵⁶⁹ have a “raised platform with pillars”,⁵⁷⁰ and be drawn by a range of animals including swans⁵⁷¹ and lions.⁵⁷² Considering the imagery of the *vimāna*'s occupants, the meritorious person is transformed with a refulgent divine body,⁵⁷³ adorned with jewellery and crowns, and fanned by *cauris* waved by celestial women,⁵⁷⁴ and “rejoices on the top of the *vimāna* surrounded by *apsaras*”.⁵⁷⁵ It is possible to explain the form of the ‘flying palace’ of Sambor Prei Kuk and its hierarchical structuring through reference to the imagery of the *vimāna* in these Purāṇas – an aerial, otherworldly conveyance powered by animals, with pillars and a platform, studded with flowers and precious stones, where the rewarded devotee is transformed with a divine body and exists among celestial women, bejewelled, crowned, shining, eulogised for ever at the head of the vehicle as they go to Śivapura.⁵⁷⁶

Other formal details would be explicable in this reconstruction. The hierarchical relationship between the central figures of the *torāṇa* and *gavākṣa*-arch, realised

⁵⁶⁸ Tagare, *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa Pt. II*, 559 (*BḍP* 2.3.16.13-15). The Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages (GRETIL) confirms the original Sanskrit gives *vimāna* twice. See http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskrit/3_purana/brndp2_u.htm for 2,16.14-16, derived from a different edition. Very similar imagery in Tagare, *Vāyu Purāṇa Pt. II*, 628 (*VāP* 18.10-14).

⁵⁶⁹ Tagare, *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa Pt. II*, 504 (*BḍP* 2.3.10.116b-120). Similarly, in Tagare, *Vāyu Purāṇa Pt. II*, 580 (*VāP* 11.113).

⁵⁷⁰ Tagare, *Skanda-Purāṇa Pt. XII*, 45 (*SP* V.i.7.61-62). Architectural imagery had previously been used for the palatial aerial chariot called *Puṣpakavimāna* in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, see especially Robert P. Goldman and Sally J. Sutherland Goldman, eds., *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki: An Epic of Ancient India, Vol. V Sundarakāṇḍa* (Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 1996), 119-135 with endnotes.

⁵⁷¹ Tagare, *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa Pt. II*, 562 (*BḍP* 2.3.16.52). Tagare, *Vāyu Purāṇa Pt. II*, 632 (*VāP* 18.54).

⁵⁷² Tagare, *Skanda-Purāṇa Pt. XII*, 46 (*SP* V.i.7.73-74).

⁵⁷³ G.V. Tagare, ed., *The Skanda-Purāṇa Part IX* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996), 269 & 360 (*SP* III.iii.3.133 & 16.65).

⁵⁷⁴ G.V. Tagare, ed., *The Skanda-Purāṇa Part VIII* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1953), 226 (*SP* III.i.35.67-70); Tagare, *Skanda-Purāṇa Pt. IX*, 360 (*SP* III.iii.16.65-69).

⁵⁷⁵ Tagare, *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa Pt. II*, 509 (*BḍP* 2.3.11.47-48). Also, in Tagare, *Vāyu Purāṇa Pt. II*, 585 & 628 (*VāP* 13.10-11 & 18.3); Sometimes the meritorious person's family travels with them; see G.V. Tagare, ed., *The Skanda-Purāṇa Part V* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1994), 43 & 119 (*SP* V.i.7.38-41 and V.i.31.3).

⁵⁷⁶ The *vimāna* are often described in the context of *śrāddha* rituals for paying homage to ancestors. It would be interesting to consider if an interconnection with pre-existing Khmer beliefs relating to ancestor spirits was significant in the prominence given to *vimāna* representations on pre-Angkorian *prasats*.



Figure 5.44 Representation of building inside *gavākṣa*-arch, *prasat* N1, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.

iconographically or through scaling, may reflect the devotee's transformation from human to divine body – the *torāṇa* may act as a liminal and transformational space, analogous to its role at the *prasat* doorway, meaning the same individual is framed centrally below, then above. *Rājāḷāsana*, standing⁵⁷⁷ and *yogāsana* postures in the *torāṇa* may reflect the pre-transformational status of human devotees. Uniquely, the *gavākṣa*-arches at N1 contain a building instead of divine figures (Figure 5.44) – might this represent the celestial abode of someone who has gone to Śīvapura?

If so, this raises the question of where Śīvapura was for the other *vimāna*. Formal details elsewhere on the *prasats* may suggest an answer. On the superstructure of several *prasats* at Sambor Prei Kuk and at Phnom Bayang, are representations of architecture (further edifice reductions) which are seen to be populated with figures where preservation is sufficiently good (Figure 5.45). Inferring a formal relationship with the populated *vimāna* on the walls seems unavoidable.⁵⁷⁸ This appears to be confirmed by rows of the same winged beings and horses that support the *vimāna*, above brick-carved *torāṇa* at some of these *prasats*, as if supporting aerial architecture above (Figure 5.46); stone-carved *torāṇa* with this feature are also known but the

⁵⁷⁷ These figures do not appear to be consistently posed in a specific *bhaṅga* and many look out from windows.

⁵⁷⁸ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 121, noted these 'edifice reductions' on *prasat* superstructures, but considered them to be too overgrown to be able to contribute much to her research on stylistic chronology.



Figure 5.45 Superstructure of S1, Sambor Prei Kuk, with representations of populated architecture. Photographs: Author.

associated superstructures are not assessable (Figure 5.47). Not all *prasat* superstructures possess these architectural representations, but recent work classifying the superstructure forms at Sambor Prei Kuk⁵⁷⁹ can be used to show that *prasats* with *vimāna* on their walls usually have a superstructure with architectural representations (Appendix 4). Those that do not, are subsidiary to S1, which does.⁵⁸⁰ Some early Angkorian temples are understood to have represented the divine

⁵⁷⁹ Shimoda et al., 'Diversity of Brick Shrines', 9–12; Ichita Shimoda and Takeshi Nakagawa, 'Diversity of primitive Khmer architecture in Sambor Prei Kuk', *Journal of Architecture and Planning (Transactions of AIJ)* 80, no. 718 (2015): 2924 & 2927–33. These scholars use the terms 'high tier' and 'low tier' to differentiate superstructures with architectural representations ('aedicules', edifice reductions) from those without. The same terminology is used in Appendix 4.

⁵⁸⁰ In Appendix 4, which compiles all *prasats* with populated *vimāna* on their walls, all are 'high tier' except for the following six 'low tier'. Five of the six 'low tier' *prasats* are subsidiary to S1: S7, S8, S9, S10 and S11. The remaining 'low tier' *prasat* is N7, subsidiary to N1, which has unfortunately lost its superstructure so cannot be assessed. There are, however, architectural features remaining in the 'tympana' above N1's doorways. See also Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 65, for early reference to architectural representations at N1 besides the *vimāna* on the walls.



Figure 5.46 Row of aerial beings above *torana* of brick-carved false door at *prasat* N15, Sambor Prei Kuk. Photograph: Author.



Figure 5.47 Row of aerial beings along upper edge of stone *torana* arch from Prasat Kuk Nokor, Baray, Kompong Thom. National Museum of Cambodia, ñ.2103. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to the National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

mountain abode of Śiva in their superstructure,⁵⁸¹ and if the interpretation above has merit, the representation of Śivapura on certain pre-Angkorian *prasats* may be analogous. Perhaps most tantalising is the possibility that the Phnom Bayang temple was known as Śivapura in early Angkorian inscriptions.⁵⁸²

⁵⁸¹ Boisselier, *Le Cambodge*, 182–83; Boisselier, *Trends in Khmer Art*, 57.

⁵⁸² Arlo Griffiths, 'Imagine Lañkapura at Prambanan', in *From Lañkā Eastwards: The Rāmāyaṇa in the Literature and Visual Arts of Indonesia*, ed. Andrea Aciri, Helen Creese, and Arlo Griffiths (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2011), 134 fn.4, notes Phnom Bayang was called Śivapura. Lawrence Palmer Briggs, 'The Ancient Khmer Empire', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 41, no. 1 (1951): 102, indicates this information is based on a 9th inscription. Coedès, *Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, 72 & 113, instead

The *vimāna* had appeared in various literary contexts, including in the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa* where it was a palace-like aerial chariot.⁵⁸³ It also occurred in Buddhist literature including the *Vimāna-Vatthu*.⁵⁸⁴ The term *vimāna* had several uses, as this celestial conveyance, as temple (deity's palace), and as mundane multi-storeyed mansion.⁵⁸⁵ The pre-Angkorian conception of *vimāna* appears to have retained their palatial aspect as they are interpretable visually as edifices, the lower storey figures often having the appearance of a court with a central, often apparently royal, figure attended by others including guards. It is in this more human storey that the figures claimed to represent 'foreigners' appear.

5.4.5. Foreignness and *vimāna* guards

Foreignness has been suggested for two pairs of guards in the *vimāna* of *prasats* S11 and N15 (Figure 5.48-5.50).⁵⁸⁶ This interpretation is based on their headwear, as with the Maruts, described as a 'Persian cap' and 'foreign cap' for S11 but less explicitly for N15, and perhaps a long lower garment.⁵⁸⁷

The significance of the caps is, again, in indicating difference and distance. It was noted above that the more commonly seen dress in pre-Angkorian art includes no upper garment, a wrapped lower garment, typically the thigh-length *sampot*, hair tied in a

identified Phnom Sandak temple as Śīvapura. Sanderson, 'Śaiva Religion (Part I)', 432 fn.301, accepts that either Phnom Bayang or Phnom Sandak could be Śīvapura.

⁵⁸³ See, for example, Goldman and Sutherland Goldman, *Rāmāyaṇa Vol. V Sundarakāṇḍa*, 129–35 & 357–60 nn.9–20, for Hanumān's exploration of the Puṣpakavimāna in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (*Sundarakāṇḍa*, *sarga* 7), with its pillars, staircases, penthouses, halls and bedrooms.

⁵⁸⁴ It is unclear if such *vimāna* are related to the elevated edifice reductions identified by Bénisti in the Deccan Buddhist caves.

⁵⁸⁵ Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 980; Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 1, 131–34.

⁵⁸⁶ Chen, 'Palais volants', 232–33, also notes the moustached lower-storey occupant of the south *vimāna* on S7 having 'Indian influence' and interprets him as a dignitary.

⁵⁸⁷ Tranet, *Sambaur-Prei-Kuk vol.2*, 166; Chen, 'Palais volants', 225–28; Merika Sanguanwong, 'การศึกษาประติมากรรมชาวต่างชาติสวมหมวกทรงสูงในสมัยทวารวดี [A study of sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear from the Dvaravati period]' (BA thesis, Silpakorn University, 2011), 60–62; Heng Piphall, 'ចម្លាក់រូបជនបរទេសនៅប្រាសាទសម្បូរណ៍ព្រៃគុក [Sculptures of foreigners on the temples of Sambor Prei Kuk]', បណ្ណាញព័ត៌មានវប្បធម៌ខ្មែរ (KhmerRenaissance), no date, accessed 1 August 2017, <http://yosothor.org/publications/khmerenaissance/content-header/chapter-four/chapter-four-copy/jomlak-rob-jun-bortes-nov-prasat-sombor-prei-kuk.html>. Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 304–5, notes the N15 headwear's forward curve. Piriya Krairiksh, *The Roots of Thai Art* (Bangkok: River Books, 2012), 86, refers to foreigners with conical hats at Sambor Prei Kuk and, given these figures have received greater notice, these are likely meant. Chen, 'Flying palace sculptures', 3–4, also refers to foreigners at N15 but it is unclear which figures are indicated.



Figure 5.48 *Vimāna* at *prasats* N15 (south elevation, east side) and S11 (southeast elevation) containing guard figures described as wearing items of foreign dress. Photographs: Author.

bun, and bare feet.⁵⁸⁸ *Vimāna* guards in this local dress are well-preserved at *prasat* N11 (Figure 5.51).⁵⁸⁹ As well as foreign caps, the S11 headwear has been compared to modern Kuy headdresses, but without providing illustrations.⁵⁹⁰ I have been unable to identify ethnographic evidence for distinctive Kuy headwear,⁵⁹¹ and consequently this interpretation lacks supporting evidence. Moreover, it is methodologically problematic to assume that modern items of ethnic dress have remained unchanged for over 1300 years.⁵⁹² The N15 caps have been interpreted as conical *mukuṭa*,⁵⁹³ but close scrutiny confirms the headwear does not simply taper, but curves and drops down before connecting with an adjoining architectural element (Figure 5.52), making

⁵⁸⁸ See Section 5.3.6.

⁵⁸⁹ Chen, 'Palais volants', 225–27, also notes this comparison.

⁵⁹⁰ Louis Frédéric, *The Art of Southeast Asia: Temples and Sculpture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1965), 251. No illustration or description of the Kuy headdress is provided, so this appears to be no more than an unevicenced assertion.

⁵⁹¹ The Kuy are understood to have ancestral connections with ancient populations in Cambodia, whose presence in the area of Sambor Prei Kuk is therefore possible but not proven. However, descriptions of ethnic dress do not note headwear. See: Frédéric Bourdier, *Ethnographie des populations indigènes du nord-est cambodgien: La montagne aux pierres précieuses (Ratanakiri)* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009), 159–65, and Joachim Schliesinger, *Ethnic Groups of Cambodia Volume 2: Profile of Austro-Asiatic-Speaking Peoples* (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 2011), 111–15 & 121–23.

⁵⁹² Eicher, 'Dress as an Expression of Ethnic Identity', 1.

⁵⁹³ Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 304–5; Chen, 'Palais volants', 96.



Figure 5.49 Guards from *vimāna* of *prasat* N15. Photographs: Author.



Figure 5.50 Guards from *vimāna* of *prasat* S11. Photographs: Author.

it comparable to the S11 figures and the S7 Maruts. The long lower garment of the N15 figures does not appear to be a visual artefact arising from a confusion between brick edge and carved detail, and it seems to continue below knee-level – this is clearer in earlier photographs.⁵⁹⁴ This feature is difficult to assess at S11.⁵⁹⁵ The S11 left-hand figure's eye, brow and nose appear to be emphasised but, since these features cannot be objectively assessed for the other three figures due to weathering, it is unclear if this is significant for the group. The N15 figures hold long staffs



Figure 5.51 Local-dressed guard in *vimāna* of *prasat* N11. Photograph: Author.

across their bodies and unclear objects in their other hands,⁵⁹⁶ while those at S11 appear to hold nothing. These staffs and other weapon-like objects held by *vimāna* figures in analogous locations in other *vimāna* form the basis for their identification as guards, in combination with the court-like context.⁵⁹⁷

Pre-Angkorian *vimāna* had diverged significantly from South Asian comparators, especially in size and iconographic detail, but attendant figures had sometimes been present. The available comparators present a relatively small sample compared with the *gavākṣa*, so it is difficult to be certain these figures did not arise through iconographic appropriation, but there is nothing to suggest this occurred, on present evidence. As modern viewers, we are confronted with the occasional substitution of

⁵⁹⁴ See Chen, 'Palais volants', 96–97 & 225–27, for this interpretation and an early photograph. Parmentier, *L'Art Khmer Primitif*, 304, reconstructs these figures with long lower garments in his drawing, which may include speculative restoration. He also understood them to be women. However, there is no indication of breasts on inspection of the sculptural surface. Chen also considers them male, and further suggests one is moustached, which I am unable to objectively verify.

⁵⁹⁵ The right-hand figure may show evidence of the lower garment terminating just below the knee, but it is difficult to determine from ground-level how much of this appearance is due to brick carving or damage.

⁵⁹⁶ Chen, 'Palais volants', 225, identifies a weapon or stick/staff.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 95–96 & 225–28.

locally-dressed equivalents for figures whose difference and uncommonness in pre-Angkorian visual culture evokes the supposition of their foreignness, as with the *gavākṣa* and Maruts.

If foreign-dressed guards are confirmed as iconographically novel for pre-Angkorian *vimāna*, useful material is available to assist with further interpretation. The *Wenxian Tongkao*, as noted above, contains the record of a visit to contemporary Īśānapura.⁵⁹⁸ It describes that the ruler regularly visited an audience hall in Īśānapura's centre where he



Figure 5.52 Detail of cap of one of the N15 *vimāna* guards. Photograph: Author.

held court. It looked like a small palace,⁵⁹⁹ although we might suppose a separate residence existed. For his protection, “more than a thousand guards dressed in armour and armed with lances are ranged at the foot of the steps of the throne, in the palace halls, at the doors, and at the peristyles”. Inscription K.725 (mid-7th century) confirms the presence of royal guards for Jayavarman I also.⁶⁰⁰ These details support the palatial and courtly characterisation of the *vimāna*'s lower storey, but the N15 guards are too worn to identify their staffs as lances. Features of Īśānapura's court life are comparable to contemporary Indian court culture, as might be anticipated for a Sanskrit-using Khmer elite engaged in Śaivite devotional worship. Early Indian royal courts had a central audience hall and separate residences, guards at the gateways and doorways

⁵⁹⁸ Coedès, *Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, 74–76, contains a translation of this account.

⁵⁹⁹ The laterite platform excavated at M.90 (see Section 5.1) would be a candidate for the location of this structure.

⁶⁰⁰ Coedès, *IC*, vol.1, 8; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 212.

of concentric enclosures, plus a small group of highly-trusted bodyguards at the most private chambers.⁶⁰¹

It is therefore noteworthy that Indian kings sometimes employed foreign guards. Textual sources tend to be literary, with Yavanas as bodyguards for Tamil kings in the Sangam poems and guards of various foreign origins protecting the Gupta king and city in the *Mudrārākṣasa*, but these are understood to reflect the social reality of this practice.⁶⁰² Indeed, the employment of foreign guards finds many examples in the ancient world, and is often understood to relate to foreigners being trustworthy and personally loyal because they are not connected with local political rivals.⁶⁰³ Guards with foreign elements of dress are found in the art of Gandhāra, Mathurā and Ajañṭā, although inferring foreign identities on this basis alone is problematic because the adoption of foreign military apparel and materiel is known to have occurred.⁶⁰⁴ Such representations extend to a small corpus of *dvārapāla* ('doorkeeper') relief sculptures guarding architectural entrances at the Rāñī-gumphā at Udayagiri, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, Aihole (Figure 5.53) and possibly elsewhere.⁶⁰⁵ This small number of *dvārapāla* figures

⁶⁰¹ Daud Ali, *Courtly Culture and Political Life in Early Medieval India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 38–46 & 109–13.

⁶⁰² Kamil Zvelebil, 'The Yavanas in Old Tamil Literature', in *Charisteria Orientalia Praecipue Ad Persiam Pertinentia*, ed. Felix Tauer, Věra Kubíčková, and Ivan Hrbek (Praha: Nakladatelství Československé Akademie Věd, 1956), 404–5 & 408; Parasher, *Mlecchas in Early India*, 139–40; Ray, *Winds of Change*, 84; Elizabeth Rosen Stone, *The Buddhist Art of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1994), 78; Klaus Karttunen, *Yonas and Yavanas in Indian Literature*, *Studia Orientalia* 116 (Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 2015), 330 & 362. Karttunen adds (376–79) that Kālidāsa made the female bodyguards in two works Yavañīs.

⁶⁰³ Parasher, *Mlecchas in Early India*, 136; Karttunen, *Yonas and Yavanas in Indian Literature*, 377–78. We might also add the Sherden bodyguards of Ramesses III in Egypt, the Germanic Numerus Batavorum in Imperial Rome, or the Norse Varangian Guard in Byzantium.

⁶⁰⁴ For some suggestions of guards in foreign dress, see: Dhavalikar, 'Foreigners in the Ajanta Paintings', 11 & 20–22; Moti Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics and Coiffure in Ancient and Medieval India* (Delhi: Oriental Publishers, 1973), 86; Roshen Alkazi, *Ancient Indian Costume* (New Delhi: Art Heritage, 1983), 22, 53, 101–2, 104, 108, 117, 172–73 & 176; Sonya Rhie Quintanilla, *History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura, ca.150 BCE-100 CE* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2007), 56. Assertions of foreignness of course face the same critical issues here, but the issue of adopting foreign dress is recognised. On the introduction of certain components of military dress, especially from the northwest and Central Asia, see Thapliyal, *Warfare in Ancient India*, 294–95, and Uma Prasad Thapliyal, *Military Costume and Accoutrements in Ancient India* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2012), 114–44.

⁶⁰⁵ A.H. Longhurst, *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, Madras Presidency*, *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India* 54 (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1938), 11 & Pl.Xc; T.V.G. Sastri, 'Cultural Heritage of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (South India)', *Journal of the Oriental Institute Baroda* 11, no. 1 (1961): 16 & Fig.25; Tarr, 'Chronology and Development of the Chālukya Cave Temples', 172; J.C. Harle, 'Two Yavana Dvarapalas at Aihole', in *Professor K.A. Nilakanta Sastri Felicitation Volume*, ed. S. Ganesan et al. (Madras: Prof. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri Felicitation Committee, 1971), 210–13; Debala Mitra, *Udayagiri and Khandagiri*, 2nd ed. (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1975), 30 & Pl.VIIB; Rosen Stone, *The Buddhist Art of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, 78 & Fig.232. Harle also identifies the Pitalkhora cave 4



Figure 5.53 Foreign-dressed guards at architectural entrances in early India, at (left to right) Rāṇī-gumphā (Udayagiri), Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, and Rāvaḷaphaḍi cave (Aihole). Photographs: (left) Sailesh Patnaik, [Udayagiri Yavana warrior](#), Wikimedia Commons, licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#), cropped from original; (middle) reproduced from Longhurst, *Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Pl.X(c), as a public domain image (out of copyright); (right) Author.

are distributed geographically and temporally, and dressed differently to each other, so do not constitute an iconographic form beyond the representation of foreignness. Nonetheless, it is often suggested that they reflect the practice of employing foreign guards.⁶⁰⁶

The possibility that *vimāna* guards represent *dvārapāla* has been considered.⁶⁰⁷ However, their representation of sculpture can be excluded because, while the N15 guards occupy the entire height of their compartments, those at S11 are visually

dvārapāla as foreign, but this is not the conclusion of M.N. Deshpande, 'The Rock-Cut Caves of Pitalkhora in the Deccan', *Ancient India* 15 (1959): 75, who describes their dress closely. A *yakṣa* figure from the Bharhut *stūpa* railing is widely interpreted as wearing several items of foreign dress; see Jitendra Nath Banerjea, 'A Bharhut Railing Sculpture', in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Tenth Session, Bombay University and Bombay Historical Society, Bombay 1947* (Allahabad: Indian History Congress, 1949), 65–68, and Martha L. Carter, 'Dionysiac Aspects of Kushān Art', *Ars Orientalis* 7 (1968): 137–39; the protective character of such railing figures is explored extensively by DeCaroli, *Haunting the Buddha*. Foreignness at sacred doorways may have additional connotations.

⁶⁰⁶ Harle, 'Two Yavana Dvarapalas', provides the only survey of foreign-dressed *dvārapāla* in early India, and all known examples are noted here. Most of the references in the previous footnote make the connection with the employment of foreign guards by Indian courts.

⁶⁰⁷ Chen, 'Palais volants', 95 & 225–27.

obscured by, and emerge from, the *vimāna* architecture (Figure 5.50) – they are clearly conceived as occupants of the *vimāna*'s internal space. Furthermore, there is no evidence for *dvārapāla* represented on a structure's external walls in Southeast Asia before the 8th century, and it is certainly not evidenced at Sambor Prei Kuk.⁶⁰⁸ The *vimāna* guards therefore appear to relate more to Indian courtly practices of employing foreigners as guards than to the *dvārapāla* sculptural tradition.

It is worth considering briefly the original appearance of the *vimāna* guards under study, being not only not weathered, but once coated in a limewash with pigment enhancing details. Additional aspects of appearance likely once contributed to the visual representation of difference of these guards, perhaps emphasising the presence or colour of items of dress,⁶⁰⁹ accentuating facial features, or delineating weaponry. We cannot exclude the possibility that inscriptions in pigment once identified the main occupant of the *vimāna*.

Any such additional sources of information are lost, but enough remains to confirm that these figures were differentiated in ways consistent with a geographically distant association. On present evidence, the presence of foreign-dressed guards in celestial palace-type representations appears to be a pre-Angkorian development rather than straightforward iconographic appropriation. It therefore remains possible that the employment of foreign guards was adopted in Īśānapura, but perhaps in the knowledge of and following Indian courtly practice.

⁶⁰⁸ The earliest known *dvārapāla* appearing as wall reliefs in Southeast Asia are from the temples of Hòa Lai and Chót-mạt in Central and southern Vietnam, usually dated to the 8th century; see: Henri Mauger, 'Travaux de Chót-mạt', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 38 (1938): 418 & Pl.CIV, Boisselier, *Le Cambodge*, 243 & fn.2, and Pierre Baptiste, 'Early Cham Art: Indigenous Styles and Regional Connections', in *Lost Kingdoms: Hindu-Buddhist Sculpture of Early Southeast Asia*, ed. John Guy (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014), 73. The *dvārapāla* was known earlier in Pyu culture, although dates for individual representations are not always clear, but these were produced as relief sculptures on free-standing stone stelae such as those excavated at the central palace areas of Beikthano and Śrī Kṣetra in Myanmar, and in relief on silver plaques from the Khin Ba mound at Śrī Kṣetra; see Aung Thaw, *Report on the Excavations at Beikthano* (Rangoon: Revolutionary Government of the Union of Burma, Ministry of Union Culture, 1968), 52, Fig.81-1 & Pl.XXX, Aung Thaw, *Historical Sites in Myanmar* (Myanmar: Department of Archaeology, National Museum and Library, Ministry of Culture, 2013), 26–27, John Guy, 'A Warrior-Ruler Stele from Śrī Kṣetra, Pyu, Burma', *Journal of the Siam Society* 85, no. 1–2 (1997): 89–91, and Galloway, 'Sri Ksetra Museum Collection Inventory', 128 & 136–37.

⁶⁰⁹ Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 292–93, notes pre-Angkorian epigraphic references to the role of cloth in visually signifying differences in social status.

5.5. The ‘foreigners’ of Sambor Prei Kuk

The studies above have sought to assess claims of ‘foreigners’ represented in the art of Sambor Prei Kuk more objectively than has been previously attempted, by applying the methodological approach developed in Chapter 3. Figures have been considered from the perspectives of their visual differentiation within their cultural context, visual associations with geographical and cultural distance, their apparent iconographic roles, and the possibility of iconographic appropriation. Historical evidence for the presence of individuals with long-distance associations in early 7th century Īśānapura can now be considered.

While cultural relationships with South Asia existed in the Cambodian area earlier than at Īśānapura, not least in ‘Funan’ and Thala Borivat, the *gavākṣa* and *vimāna* similarities to early 7th century Deccan forms noted above indicate its continued relationship with India. Indeed, contemporary inscriptions record named individuals with long-distance associations of relevance. K.438 from Sambor Prei Kuk *prasat* N16-1 records the donation of a *liṅga* by the brahmin Durgasvāmin from Dakṣiṇāpatha, understood as the Deccan, who was a *mratāñ* official to Īśānavarman and married to his daughter.⁶¹⁰ K.910 from Tuol Ang Srah Theat in Kandal, located within the area under the Īśānapura rulers’ authority and dated 651, records the cult’s foundation by a brahmin named Anantasvāmin from Mālava (Malwa), in western India, a royal *guru* and *mratāñ* official.⁶¹¹ It is very likely that some of the earliest Pāsupatas were from India, but those occurring in inscriptions do not have their origins specified in the surviving portions.⁶¹² The *Xu gaoseng zhuan* (續高僧傳) records that the Indian Vajrayāna Buddhist monk Puṇyodaya was sent to Zhenla by the Tang Chinese court in

⁶¹⁰ K.438 was found in the ruined 10th-century *prasat* N16-1, evidently reused from an earlier structure, but its content reveals its contemporaneity with Īśānavarman; Vickery suggested a date in the first quarter of the 7th century. The Sanskrit reading of Dakṣiṇāpatha is not in question, and Coedès, Jacques and Sanderson agree that the Deccan is indicated; Vickery suggested this may have meant Dakṣiṇāpatti in southern Cambodia but did not rule out the Deccan. See: Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 25–27; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 124 with fn.139, 193–95, 204–5 & 335; Sanderson, ‘Śaiva Religion (Part I)’, 401; Bruguier and Lacroix, *Sambor Prei Kuk*, 171–72.

⁶¹¹ On Anantasvāmin, see: Coedès, *IC*, vol.5, 39–40; Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 116, 194 & 205; Sanderson, ‘Śaiva Religion (Part I)’, 401. Sanderson (pp.401-2) collates other references to Indian brahmins in the epigraphic record, but the only other of pre-Angkorian date is K.904 from the West Baray in Angkor, dated 713, which records the gifts of Śakrasvāmin from Madhyadeśa who was married to Śobhājayā, daughter of Jayavarman I, and a counsellor to the ruler Jayadevī. Malwa was north across the Narmada river from the Deccan.

⁶¹² Wolters, ‘Khmer “Hinduism”’, 431–33. See Section 5.1 for these epigraphically-attested Pāsupatas.

the mid-7th century.⁶¹³ We should also note the Chinese party whose account of early 7th-century Īśānapura survives in the *Suishu* and *Wenxian Tongkao*.

The earlier epigraphic record of Durgasvāmin is especially significant because it relates to the art historical inference of Īśānapura's connection with the Deccan area in the early 7th century and shows his influential position in Īśānavarman's court and family. The western Deccan, especially the Early Cālukya centres of Bādāmi, Aihole and Mahākūṭa, was especially important for appreciating imagery on Īśānapura's *prasats*. This was seen stylistically with the *gavākṣa*, *torāṇa*, *makara* and *vimāna*, and iconographically with the lotus-like crowns on the S2 *gavākṣa* heads. This list extends to include the base edifice reductions on the S2 pedestal and monument N17 which have been compared to those on the base of the Durgā temple at Aihole,⁶¹⁴ and a similar connection apparently continued later into the 7th century.⁶¹⁵ This is not to suggest that the apparent connection with Early Cālukya India excluded all others, but these symbolic architectural features suggest a close cultural relationship.

Previous scholarly efforts have met with mixed success in relating Southeast Asian artistic forms to those from specific Indian cultural contexts, leading to a variety of proposed mechanisms for the transmission and localising modifications that result in a combination of similarity and difference.⁶¹⁶ Nonetheless, it is important to

⁶¹³ Lin Li-Kouang, 'Puṇyodaya (Na-t'i), un propagateur du tantrisme en Chine et au Cambodge à l'époque de Hiuan-tsang', *Journal Asiatique* 227 (1935): 85–89. It is not specified if he visited Īśānapura. I thank Peter Sharrock for bringing Puṇyodaya's mission to pre-Angkorian Cambodia to my attention.

⁶¹⁴ Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 130. S2 and N17 predate the Durgā temple by perhaps five decades, but perhaps earlier comparators will be identified. These abbreviated edifices represent the central feature of the larger *vimāna* on *prasat* walls, comprising base, steps, *torāṇa* and figure seated in *rājāḷāsana*.

⁶¹⁵ Filliozat, 'Pāsupata Śaivism in Karnāṭaka and Cambodia', 26, suggests the Kannaḍa term *callaṇa*, describing a cloth worn as a short lower garment, is the source of Angkorian *canlyāk* which describes a similar-length garment. If this relationship is correct, the term can be traced in the pre-Angkorian epigraphic record as *canlak* at least as early as K.79 of 639, referring to Bhavavarman II; see George Coedès, ed., *Inscriptions du Cambodge, Volume 2* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1942), 69–72, for K.79, and Philip N. Jenner, *A Chrestomathy of Pre-Angkorian Khmer II: Lexicon of the Dated Inscriptions*, Southeast Asia Paper, 20 Pt.2 (Manoa: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hawai'i, 1981), 76–77, for further pre-Angkorian references to *canlak*. Guy, 'Catalogue', 160–63, notes two Śaivite *trīśūla* on stelae from Wat Phu and Vihear Thom (វិហារធំ), contemporary with Jayavarman I, which resemble the Early Cālukya form known in Bādāmi.

⁶¹⁶ Robert L. Brown, 'Indian Art Transformed: The Earliest Sculptural Styles of Southeast Asia', in *Panels of the VIIIth World Sanskrit Conference*, ed. Ellen M. Raven and Karel R. van Kooij, vol. X: Indian Art and Archaeology (Leiden, New York, København & Köln: Brill, 1992), 40–53, provides a good summary of some of the specific connections suggested for images of Gaṇeśa, Buddha, Viṣṇu and *liṅgas*, and notes suggestions of missing data in lost early Southeast Asian images in wood, and the possible influence of commercial competitiveness in maritime trade as background for changing stylistic trends. Robert L. Brown, "'Rules" for Change in the Transfer of Indian Art to Southeast Asia', in *Ancient Indonesian*

appreciate the role of human agency in artistic transmission, appropriation and localisation because complex interpersonal interactions with individuals from distant locales may be involved. Clearly, interpersonal interactions occur in specific social contexts – in this study, we have not considered the entirety of pre-Angkorian culture, but rather the subset related to the geopolitical formation centred on early-7th century Īśānapura and its court, where the representations under study cluster.

The circumstances of the long-distance travel apparently indicated by this material need to be clarified, however, because both Īśānapura and the Early Cālukya centres are far inland. While physical evidence of the route is unattainable, we can at least consider their connection to the maritime routes. Īśānapura was located on the Stung Sen which flowed into the Tonlé Sap before joining the Mekong, but epigraphic data do not clearly demonstrate that authority reached the Mekong delta area, which might ensure free passage of ships.⁶¹⁷ An alternative route was, however, available. A pre-Angkorian road has been identified, running from the western boundary of Īśānapura northwest to the area of the future Angkor.⁶¹⁸ Īśānavarman's authority was noted above to extend to Jyeṣṭhapura near Prasat Khao Noi,⁶¹⁹ but epigraphic evidence shows his authority also reached coastal Chanthaburi, in Eastern Thailand.⁶²⁰ The

Sculpture, ed. Marijke J. Klokke and Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer, *Verhandelingen van Het Koninklijk Instituut Voor Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 165 (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1994), 10–32, also surveys the proposed explanatory mechanisms for why Southeast Asian art apparently deviated from Indian models, and the role of Southeast Asian artists in mediating change. Bénisti, *Stylistics*, 156–74, had also suggested that pre-Angkorian Khmer artists recombined motifs from portable objects imported from many Indian sources.

⁶¹⁷ Vickery's southernmost regions W and Z are today in Cambodia's Takéo province and southern Vietnam, respectively. The Īśānapura kings are referred to in Takéo but the terminology of the inscriptions contemporary with Īśānavarman suggests local rulers retained some autonomy. An apparently independent ruler, Koṅgavarman, is attested in the Phnom Bayang area in southern Takéo, though undated. No references to the Īśānapura kings appear in region Z. See Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 111–15, 180, 334 & 337.

⁶¹⁸ Ichita Shimoda and Takeshi Nakagawa, '新旧の王都をつなぐ古道について—クメール古代都市イーシヤナプラの構造に関する研究 その2 / Ancient roads between new and old city: a study on a structure of the ancient city, Isanapura, Part II', *Journal of Architecture and Planning (Transactions of AIJ)* 74, no. 642 (2009): 1867–73.

⁶¹⁹ See Section 5.3.5.

⁶²⁰ George Coedès, 'L'extension du Cambodge vers le sud-ouest au VIII^e siècle (Nouvelles inscriptions de Chantaboun)', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 24 (1924): 352–58, reported several pre-Angkorian inscriptions around the lower reaches of the Chanthaburi river, one of which, K.502, refers to Īśānavarman establishing a foundation. Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 131–32, 338–39 & 350, suggested it was a retrospective reference to him, because it dated stylistically to Jayavarman I, but accepted it as evidence of Īśānavarman's authority here and access to the Gulf of Thailand. Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, 45, also views this area as Īśānavarman's seaport. See also Figure 5.23.

sparse epigraphic coverage in northern and northwestern Cambodia, and apparent references to autonomous urban centres in this area, have raised the possibility that Īśānavarman's authority was discontinuous between Īśānapura and Jyeṣṭhapura.⁶²¹ However, it has been noted that these references closely reflect interregnal dates reconstructed using other inscriptions so, rather than see them simply as indicating the existence of independent rulers, we should infer that the normal situation was one of Īśānapura's authority in the northwest with occasional opportunistic attempts by competitors to assert autonomy.⁶²² This suggests that Īśānavarman controlled at least one route, possibly two, to the seas of Southeast Asia in the early 7th century.⁶²³

Early Cālukya history has been reconstructed from over fifty inscriptions.⁶²⁴ Territorial expansion was begun under Kīrttivarman I (r.566-598), campaigning in Maharashtra and the Konkan coast. His successor Maṅgalēśa (r.598-610) campaigned in Gujarat and Malwa, and established control in the Konkan. Under Pulakeśin II (r.610-642), the Cālukyan empire expanded east into the Veṅgī area, reaching the Andhra Pradesh coast at Piṣṭapura near the Godavari delta by c.617-620, where his brother Viṣṇuvardhana established his capital. The Cālukyas were defeated in 642 by the Pallavas. This suggests the Cālukya cultural centre had access to the maritime routes from western or eastern coasts between the early 7th century and 642, a period covering the reign of Īśānavarman. It is not intended to suggest that the relationship between the Cālukyan Deccan and Īśānapura necessarily involved the Cālukya rulers or that access to maritime routes was impossible earlier, but rather that the creation

⁶²¹ Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 339.

⁶²² The independence of these northwestern chiefs was discussed by O.W. Wolters, 'North-Western Cambodia in the Seventh Century', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 37, no. 2 (1974): 355–84, who related them to envoys named in the Tang Chinese records. Vickery, *Society, Economics, and Politics*, 188 & 351–52, noted that further detail had since become available that made interregnal dates more precise, so that the relationship between interregna and assertions of independence became clearer. Brown, *Dvāravatī Wheels of the Law*, 14, also recognises that Īśānavarman held authority in this area.

⁶²³ A route via the Khao Soi Dao northern extension of the Cardamon (Krāvanh) Mountains, approximating that of the modern road 317, would exit northern Cambodia via Pailin or Battambang. Google Maps data suggest a maximum height of just over 200 m asl. For comparison, the Three Pagodas Pass between Myanmar and Thailand is at 282 m asl and a known ancient trade route; see Higham, *Early Cultures*, 216–17 & 254.

⁶²⁴ The following historical details are compiled from the following sources: K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, 'The Chālukyas of Bādāmi', in *The Early History of the Deccan, Parts I-VI*, ed. G. Yazdani (London, Bombay & New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 212–20; Tartakov, 'Beginning of Dravidian Temple Architecture in Stone', 72–76; Soundara Rajan, 'Calukyas of Bādāmi: Phase I', 3–4.

of a more stable geopolitical unit across the Deccan may have facilitated the long-distance travel of individuals like Durgasvāmin and the unidentified agents of Cālukya artistic transmission via the maritime routes.

K.438 indicates something else of importance about Durgasvāmin – he is identified as Śaka.⁶²⁵ This term and identity will probably not have had the same connotations of ‘outsiderness’ in Īśānapura as it did in northern India when the Śaka first migrated from Central Asia and settled in western India, over 600 years earlier. In much of the Brahmanical literature, the Śakas were grouped with other perceived foreigners outside the *varṇāśramadharmā* system that defined the societal hierarchy with *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas* uppermost, but mechanisms existed by which such groups could integrate.⁶²⁶ There are several examples where groups with foreign ancestry were assimilated according to their existing social roles, for example priests becoming *brāhmaṇas*, albeit with a lower status than those already established, and then adhering to the requirements of *varṇāśramadharmā*.⁶²⁷ Among the *brāhmaṇas* with non-Indian ancestry, the most well-known are the Śakadvīpī Brāhmaṇas present especially in the northwest, as their name suggests.⁶²⁸ However, potentially more relevant for understanding Durgasvāmin’s Śaka *brāhmaṇa* identity are the indications that similar *brāhmaṇa* groups with foreign ancestry were present in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and the Konkan,⁶²⁹ where Śaka populations related to the Western Kṣatrapa centres in Gujarat and Malwa plausibly lived. Narrative details in

⁶²⁵ Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 26–27, and Philip N. Jenner, *A Chrestomathy of Pre-Angkorian Khmer III: Undated Inscriptions from the Sixth to the Eighth Century*, Southeast Asia Paper, 20 Pt.3 (Manoa: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hawai’i, 1988), 32, both confirm the reading of Śaka. Vickery appears not to have commented on this detail of Durgasvāmin’s identity. As donor, Durgasvāmin was presumably involved in the inscription’s production, so this may represent his self-identification as Śaka. Malleret, ‘Sūrya’, 120, connected this reference to Śaka to the capped S7 Maruts, suggesting the presence of Indo-Scythians or Śakas since their putative integration into Funan society in earlier centuries. His hypothesis received almost no comment, but Ian W. Mabbett, ‘Hinduism in Indochina before the Rise of Angkor’, *Sri Venkateswara University Oriental Journal* 28 (1985): 41, while not rejecting the possibility, said that “this sort of conjecture rests upon fragile evidence”.

⁶²⁶ Uma Prasad Thapliyal, *Foreign Elements in Ancient Indian Society: 2nd Century BC to 7th Century AD* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1979), 28–33 & 109–12; Parasher, *Mlecchas in Early India*, 228–32 & 239–41.

⁶²⁷ Thapliyal, *Foreign Elements in Ancient Indian Society*, 119–30; Parasher, *Mlecchas in Early India*, 243–48.

⁶²⁸ Thapliyal, *Foreign Elements in Ancient Indian Society*, 122–23; Chitrarekha Gupta, *The Brahmanas of India: A Study Based on Inscriptions* (Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1983), 167–76; Parasher, *Mlecchas in Early India*, 247–48.

⁶²⁹ Thapliyal, *Foreign Elements in Ancient Indian Society*, 123–24.

some Purāṇas appear to justify the integrated status of foreign groups – notably these include the *Vāyu*, *Brahmaṇḍa* and *Skanda Purāṇas*, whose affiliation with the Pāśupatas was noted.⁶³⁰ We recall that the Pāśupatas were sometimes charged by the Brahmanical orthodoxy with disregarding the importance of caste in the *varṇāśramadharmā* system. The history behind Durgasvāmin’s *brāhmaṇa* status as a Śaka is not known, but there is clearly scope for him to have been both socially *brāhmaṇa* and apparently ethnically Śaka.

Intriguingly, this is possibly not the only epigraphic reference to Śaka in Īśānapura, because K.604 at *prasat* S17-17, dated to 627, refers to the offering of a village called Śākatīrtha, to be officiated in perpetuity by Pāśupatas.⁶³¹ Very little can be gleaned with certainty from this mention but if the interpreted reference to Śakas is correct, the village may have originated as a community of foreign origin. The socio-spatial segregation of foreigners was noted earlier as not uncommon in early societies, seen in foreign quarters or for reasons related to specific skill sets and social roles.

Given the reference to Śaka, it is of interest that the closest chronological comparator in South Asia for Sambor Prei Kuk’s foreign-dressed *vimāna* guards are the *dvārapāla* at the Rāvaḷaphaḍi cave in Aihoḷe (Figure 5.54). It has been argued it was excavated c.600, based on stylistic comparison to artistic contexts with epigraphic data.⁶³² Its *dvārapāla* are therefore considered to be very late for representations of ‘Scythian’-type dress, more common in art of the c.1st-3rd centuries when Śaka and Kuṣāṇa

⁶³⁰ Thapliyal, *ibid.*, 124, suggests the *Skanda Purāṇa* detail of the Citapāvana Brāhmaṇas being created from the funeral pyre was designed to conceal their foreign origins. Parasher, *Mlecchas in Early India*, 241–43, notes that the *Brahmaṇḍa* and *Vāyu Purāṇas* avoid designating groups like the Śakas as outsiders where other Purāṇas do, probably related to their societal integration.

⁶³¹ Coedès, *IC*, vol.4, 17, notes the apparent reference to Śakas, but offers a potential alternative interpretation as ‘the bank of teaks’ because of the long ā, but both readings are possible. Finot, ‘Nouvelles inscriptions de Sambor’, 44–46, had published the inscription without comment on the name, but Coedès does not dispute the reading on this point. Malleret, ‘Sūrya’, 120, incorporated Śākatīrtha into his interpretation regarding Śakas in pre-Angkorian Cambodia.

⁶³² Harle, ‘Two Yavana Dvarapalas’, 210 & 213, suggests c.600 because the Rāvaḷaphaḍi’s excavation is apparently widely considered to postdate Bādāmi cave 3, dated by inscription to 578. Soundara Rajan, ‘Calukyas of Bādāmi: Phase I’, 4 & 8, dates the Rāvaḷaphaḍi to the reign of Maṅgalēśa (596-609) by stylistic comparisons with the Bādāmi caves. Tarr, ‘Chronology and Development of the Chālukya Cave Temples’, places the Rāvaḷaphaḍi in the mid-6th century, before the Bādāmi caves, in an evolutionary chronological framework connecting earlier Maharashtra caves, Early Cālukya caves and later Pallava forms. Soundara Rajan’s comparisons remain within the Early Cālukya context.



Figure 5.54 Foreign-dressed *dvārapāla* at the Rāvaḷaphaḍi cave, Aihole, c.600 CE. Photographs: Author.

formed the political elites further north.⁶³³ However, some context for its appearance in Aihole is given by the range and combination of foreign and Indian dress in the art of Ajaṅṭā, suggesting the multiculturalism of western Deccan society in the 5th century, including both visiting traders and settled migrants.⁶³⁴ Given the proximity of the former Western Kṣatrapa territory in Gujarat and Malwa this probably included some people with Śaka ancestry, although epigraphic evidence suggests some travelled south earlier than this.⁶³⁵ The Rāvaḷaphaḍi *dvārapāla* wear belted tunics or coats and possibly tight trousers, and one wears a cap that tapers and inclines forward. The

⁶³³ Harle, 'Two Yavana Dvarapalas', 210–13; Tarr, 'Chronology and Development of the Chāḷukya Cave Temples', 172. Harle uses the term Yavana in its more generalised sense of foreignness, rather than the more specific association with groups with Mediterranean-area ancestry found in early sources.

⁶³⁴ Dhavalikar, 'Foreigners in the Ajanta Paintings', *passim*; Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics and Coiffure*, 101–2; Brancaccio, *Buddhist Caves at Aurangabad*, 80–88. See also Bautze-Picron, 'Nidhis', 274–77.

⁶³⁵ Dhavalikar, 'Foreigners in the Ajanta Paintings', 23–24, suggests some Śaka will have migrated south following removal of the Western Kṣatrapas from political power. Earlier references include several inscriptions at Naśik recording donations by Śakas and Yavanas, while an inscription at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa records a gift by Buddhi, the sister of Moda the Śaka; see Thapliyal, *Foreign Elements in Ancient Indian Society*, 115; Longhurst, *Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, 24; J.P. Vogel, 'Two Additional Inscriptions from Nagarjunakonda', *Epigraphia Indica* 20 (1930 1929): 14. Thapliyal (114–15) also notes the marriage between Vīrapuruṣadatta, the Īkṣvāku ruler at Vijayapurī (near Nāgārjunakoṇḍa), and Rudradharabhaṭārikā, daughter of the Śaka ruler. K. Gopalachari, *Early History of the Andhra Country* (Madras: University of Madras, 1941), 96, notes two Amarāvati inscriptions with names suggestive of a Śaka connection.

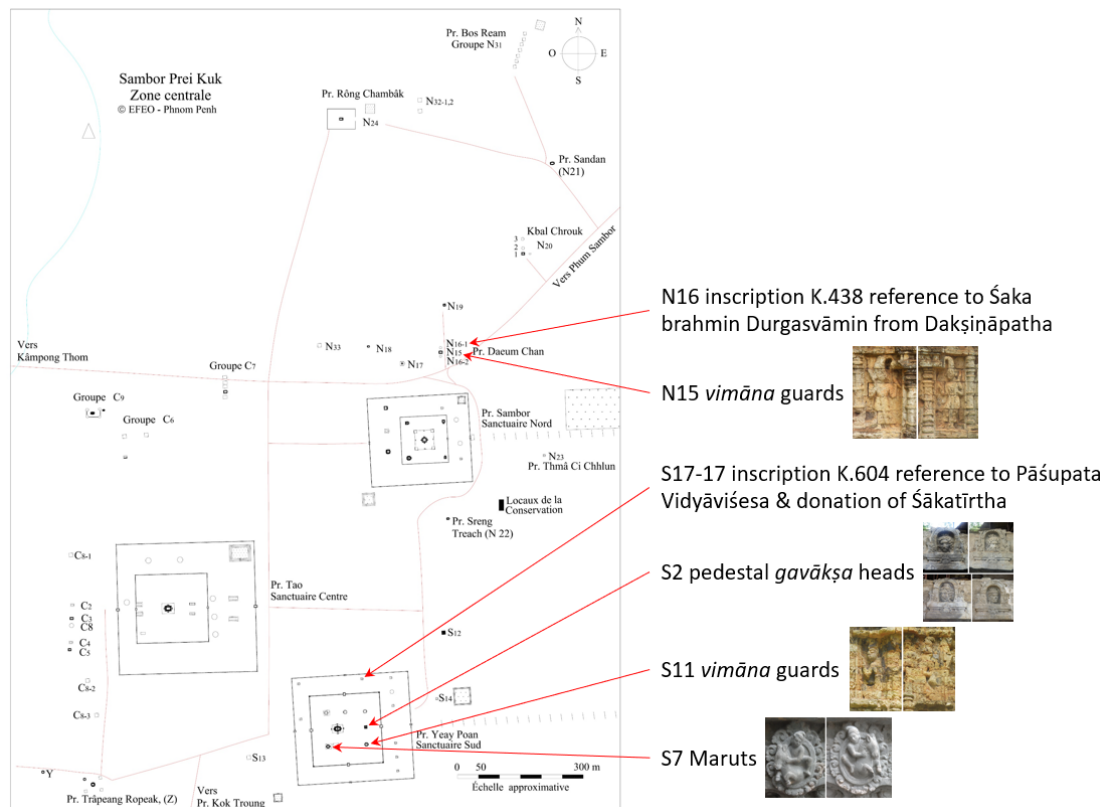


Figure 5.55 The ‘foreigners’ of Sambor Prei Kuk. Photographs: Author. Base map courtesy of Bruno Bruguier.

sculptures are worn so no comment can be made on footwear. Both hold staffs, and possibly short swords. As discussed earlier, these figures are considered to relate to the practice of employing foreign palace guards although, as with Durgasvāmin, the changing nature of Śāka identity at this date needs to be considered, as does the simple equation between dress and ethnicity in the light of Ajaṅṭā’s multiculturalism. A date of c.600 would put them within a generation of the Sambor Prei Kuk *vimāna*, dated to the early 7th century using independent epigraphic data.

The contemporaneity of this material – Durgasvāmin, Śākatīrtha, the S2 *gavākṣa* heads, the foreign-dressed Maruts and *vimāna* guards, Cālukya stylistic comparators at Aihole, Mahākūṭa and Bādāmi, the Rāvaḷaphaḍi *dvārapāla*, access to maritime routes and its clustering at Īśānapura (Figure 5.55) – presents us with the beginnings of a historical and social context for interpreting the figures claimed to represent ‘foreigners’ at Sambor Prei Kuk. However, it remains unclear whether they reflect the physical presence in Īśānapura of people with long distance associations and dressed in the way represented, or complex processes involving iconographic appropriation and the communication of additional knowledge of a sociocultural nature.

That these figures reflect the societal presence of people with distant associations is certainly possible. A close cultural relationship between Īśānapura and the Cālukyan Deccan is evident, named individuals originating in the region appear in pre-Angkorian inscriptions, epigraphic data in both areas suggest access to maritime routes in the same time frame as the figural representations were produced, and their iconographic roles correspond with the societal roles of foreigners known from other ancient contexts. Nonetheless, if societal realities do lay behind the foreign-dressed Maruts and *vimāna* guards, it would be inappropriate to assign a Central Asian identity. This is because of the simplistic nature of equating dress with identity, or assuming meanings and uses of dress remain unchanged over time, and because the negotiation of Śaka ethnicity and their integration into Indian society were clearly progressing, Durgasvāmin apparently a good example. If they actually represented Śakas, they would inherently represent an Indian identity by the 7th century, and the presence of Indians of various social backgrounds in Īśānapura may not surprise us.

Indeed, the connection between Īśānapura and the Cālukyan Deccan raises the possibility that Indian craftspeople travelled in addition to ritual specialists, even at Īśānavarman's request. The lack of evidence for the identities of artists and architects at Īśānapura is why there has been no attempt in this case study to discuss the role of the perception of foreignness by the producers of the representations, but rather to merely recognise the representation of difference and indications of distance within a pre-Angkorian context of production. It may be that future investigations will yield archaeological material that can contribute to understanding the presence and roles of people with distant associations – the urban area and peripheral sites would be of particular interest.

The presence of Indians in Īśānapura would provide some context for considering how interpersonal communication of artistic and sociocultural knowledge, as well as the transport of iconographic materials, may have contributed to the creation of novel iconographic forms that sometimes included foreign-dressed figures – even if such people were not physically present in society. It is notable that their iconographic roles relating to horses and as guards, while consistent with those known for foreigners elsewhere in the ancient world, do not constitute unproblematic evidence for the

physical presence of the people represented because Indians present in society could convey their own associations of foreignness. Further documentary or archaeological evidence is needed to support an argument for inferring the presence of foreigners other than the ritual specialists noted in inscriptions. It is also notable that the figures were incorporated into religious iconography, including the auspicious imagery of the *prasat* doorway. This may suggest that, however else the apparent difference or foreignness of the figures might have been perceived, it was not detrimental to the ritual efficacy of the art's purpose.

6. Case study 2: horses and foreignness in early Southeast Asia

This second case study presents representations with a shared association. In Chapter 3, it was shown that representations of foreigners were not assigned random roles in the ancient art surveyed because associations formed part of their ascribed identities. In each case, documentary evidence was available that explained why they were represented with particular associations and societal roles. The representation of 'foreigners' with horses is not surprising because the horse is not native to Southeast Asia, but was an exotic import, as will be discussed. Indeed, associations were seen between Central Asians and horses in Tang Chinese *mingqi*, and between Thracians and horses on Greek pottery. Documentary sources indicated the sources of horses and horse-related skills. The following case study suggests a similar explanation for why the 'foreigners' seen in early Southeast Asian art are sometimes represented in the context of horses.

6.1. Association of 'foreigners' with horses

The quantity of material presently available for this discussion is not comparable to that in the Egyptian, Greek and Chinese corpora discussed earlier. Nonetheless, the co-presence of foreign-dressed figures and horses in different cultural contexts is of interest and, it is argued, significance, despite the small numbers involved. As discussed in Chapter 3, the production of representations of 'foreigners' can result from individual perceptions as well as conventionalised stereotypes. Unique representations and the stereotyped representations that become, in a sense, iconographic, are both informative of perceptions of 'foreigners'. Associations, in this sense, can be understood as the significant co-presence of two things, without implying a statistical correlation across a corpus.

Before proceeding, some important background is necessary. For the purposes of this case study only, the definition of Southeast Asia is restricted to areas where import of horses was necessary, and therefore excludes Yunnan. Historical information relating to the sources and import of horses into Southeast Asia will be followed by a survey of the available zooarchaeological data. Since the representations appear to date to the 7th century CE at the latest within this research's time frame, the information discussed

relates to this earlier period. Further historical information pertaining to the significance of the horse in early South, East and Southeast Asia will then be discussed, including a consideration of what can be learned from the earliest representations of horses in Southeast Asia predating the earliest associated foreign-dressed figures. A synthesis of the historical, art historical and zooarchaeological information will conclude the case study.

6.2. Import of horses into early Southeast Asia

Ancestral populations of the horse (*Equus caballus*) were native to the Eurasian Steppe prior to domestication.⁶³⁶ This area provides the earliest evidence for its domestication, the chariot and horse-riding.⁶³⁷ The increased mobility associated with harnessing the horse is understood to explain the impressive geographical range of Scytho-Siberian cultures and the rapidity of bronze technology distribution across Eurasia.⁶³⁸ Indeed, it is also likely the Steppe's equestrian cultures established the trade routes that became the terrestrial Silk Roads.⁶³⁹ The mobility and prestige associated with the horse made it immensely valuable and desirable in both South and East Asia.

6.2.1. The demand for horses in South and East Asia

Horse husbandry and care faced challenges in both South and East Asia, and in both areas high-quality horses reared in Central Asia continued to be imported in large numbers. Chinese sources record that establishing breeding stocks of healthy animals for a cavalry against the nomadic 'barbarians' at its borders proved difficult, and continually imported warhorses from the Steppe.⁶⁴⁰ Similarly, in South Asia, high-

⁶³⁶ Kelekna, *Horse in Human History*, 16–20.

⁶³⁷ David W. Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language: How Bronze-Age Riders from the Eurasian Steppes Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 2007), 193–224; Elena E. Kuzmina, *The Prehistory of the Silk Road* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 34–38; Kelekna, *Horse in Human History*, 28–39.

⁶³⁸ Kelekna, *Horse in Human History*, 67–91.

⁶³⁹ Kuzmina, *Prehistory of the Silk Road*, 59–66.

⁶⁴⁰ Schafer, *Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 58–70; Christopher I. Beckwith, 'The Impact of the Horse and Silk Trade on the Economies of T'ang China and the Uighur Empire: On the Importance of International Commerce in the Early Middle Ages', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 34, no. 3 (1991): 184–85; Xinru Liu, 'Migration and Settlement of the Yuezhi-Kushan: Interaction and Interdependence of Nomadic and Sedentary Societies', *Journal of World History* 12, no. 2 (2001): 272–73.

quality warhorses were imported from the northwest and Central Asia because South Asian breeds, some of which were introduced in the Vedic period, were considered inferior in size and power.⁶⁴¹ Even in Marco Polo's time, horses were purchased in huge numbers from Arab traders because local breeds were inadequate, and because there was apparently insufficient local expertise to prevent them dying in large numbers quickly.⁶⁴² Problems included disease and the provisioning sufficient suitable feed, perhaps related to the horse's evolutionary adaptation to eating specific grasses on the Steppe.⁶⁴³ These issues translated to Southeast Asia too,⁶⁴⁴ and possibly provide a rationale for the repeated association of 'foreigners' with horses. Horses were a geographically-localised, distant resource, and 'foreigners' may have been active as traders, trainers, grooms, elite equestrian guards and mercenary cavalry.

6.2.2. Sources of horses for Southeast Asia: Yunnan

It is often supposed that Yunnan was the primary source of horses for early historic Southeast Asian polities, presumably because it is geographically connected by overland routes making their transportation easier.⁶⁴⁵ Horses had been successfully bred in Yunnan since the mid-1st millennium BCE by the Dian culture, establishing stocks in two areas but apparently smaller in size than the Central Asian warhorses.⁶⁴⁶ Representations of horses and horse-riding are common in Dian material culture, demonstrating the use of blanket-saddle, bridle and bit, but not the stirrup (Figure 6.1).⁶⁴⁷ Many representations appear in the context of bronze cowrie containers, a material expression of elite status and wealth in Dian culture, as in-the-round

⁶⁴¹ Chitrarekha Gupta, 'Horse Trade in North India: Some Reflections on Socio-Economic Life', *Journal of Ancient Indian History* 14, no. 1–2 (1984–1983): 188–92; Ranabir Chakravarti, 'Equestrian Demand and Dealers: The Early Indian Scenario (up to c.1300)', in *Pferde in Asien: Geschichte, Handel Und Kultur / Horses in Asia: History, Trade and Culture*, ed. Bert G. Fragner et al. (Wien: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 147–49.

⁶⁴² Gupta, 'Horse Trade in North India', 203.

⁶⁴³ Beckwith, 'Impact of the Horse and Silk Trade', 184–85.

⁶⁴⁴ Roger Blench, 'The Spread of the Horse into SE Asia: Evidence from Vernacular Names' (self-published, 2010), 1.

⁶⁴⁵ Blench, 1 & 11; William Gervase Clarence-Smith, 'Horse Breeding in Mainland Southeast Asia and Its Borderlands', in *Smallholders and Stockbreeders: History of Foodcrop and Livestock Farming in Southeast Asia*, ed. Peter Boomgaard and David Henley (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2004), 191.

⁶⁴⁶ Wade, 'Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE', 164–65.

⁶⁴⁷ Tzehuey Chiou-Peng, 'Horsemen in the Dian Culture of Yunnan', in *Gender and Chinese Archaeology*, ed. Katheryn M. Linduff and Yan Sun (Walnut Creek (CA): AltaMira Press, 2004), 289–313; Wade, 'Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE', 164–65.



Figure 6.1 Dian bronze cowrie container and lid with gilded horse-riders, from Shizhaishan, Yunnan (left: M10:53; right: M13:2). Photographs: (left) reproduced from Murowchick, 'Political and Ritual Significance of Bronze Production in Ancient Yunnan', Fig. 4; (right) reproduced from Chiou-Peng, 'Horses in the Dian culture of Yunnan', Fig.17.2.

compositions with themes of hunting or inter-cultural combat and subjugation.⁶⁴⁸ The horse therefore played a role in both geopolitical and symbolic aspects of Dian worldview.

Notably, some have suggested that material culture and linguistic evidence indicates Central Asians joined Dian culture in the late 1st millennium BCE.⁶⁴⁹ If correct, this presents interesting implications for considering possible identities of the represented 'foreigners' in this case study, because they may have continued to wear Central Asian-type items of dress if they continued to function in ethnic signification. A Chinese documentary source records the later Yuedan and Nanzhao horse-riders were not booted,⁶⁵⁰ but it must be noted that this is several centuries later and probably a generalisation.

The Dian were perceived as one of the 'barbarian' groups on China's southern frontier, and they were in regular conflict with Han China (206 BCE – 220 CE) as it expanded its territory south, in part to access the region's trade routes. Nonetheless, the Dian are

⁶⁴⁸ Chiou-Peng, 'Horsemen in the Dian Culture', 298–302.

⁶⁴⁹ Zhang Zengqi, 'Again on the Influence and Diffusion of the Scythian Culture in the Yunnan Bronze Age', in *The Archaeology of the Steppes: Methods and Strategies*, ed. Bruno Genito (Naples: Instituto Universitario Orientale, 1994), 667–99; Tzehuey Chiou-Peng, 'Western Yunnan and Its Steppe Affinities', in *The Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Peoples of Eastern Central Asia*, ed. Victor H. Mair, vol. 1. Archaeology, Migration and Nomadism, Linguistics (Washington D.C. & Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Man & University of Pennsylvania Museum Publications, 1998), 295–300.

⁶⁵⁰ Wade, 'Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE', 166.

known to have supplied horses to both China and to Chinese-controlled northern Vietnam in the early 1st millennium CE.⁶⁵¹ China also employed the horse geopolitically, repelling nomad raids and securing access to new lands and resources.⁶⁵² There was a symbolic dimension to its desire for the horse too, especially the legendary ‘heavenly blood-sweating horses of Ferghana’ which ultimately motivated the search for high-quality horses from Central Asia.⁶⁵³

Records of horse trade from Yunnan to Myanmar and Thailand are, however, less clear for this period. The routes into northern Thailand, northern Myanmar and Bengal appear to be historically attested since the mid-1st millennium, because they were used not just by merchants but also by diplomatic missions to China.⁶⁵⁴ The earliest suggestion of using these routes for horse trade is possibly the 7th-century *Harṣacarita* of Bānabhaṭṭa, which mentions large horses from the northwest alongside Taṅgana horses, a Tibetan or Yunnanese breed.⁶⁵⁵

6.2.3. Sources of horses for Southeast Asia: India

The transportation of horses from South to Southeast Asia is better attested than from Yunnan, for the period up to the 7th century CE. Since the late-1st millennium BCE, the lands of Kāmbōja, Sindhu, Āraṭṭa, Vanāyu, Bāhlika and Sauvīra, understood to be located in modern-day Afghanistan, western Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, as well as the land of Parasika (Persia), were renowned for their high-quality horses.⁶⁵⁶ These were larger, stronger animals, more suitable for warfare – “no horse

⁶⁵¹ Wade, 164–65; Bin Yang, ‘Horses, Silver, and Cowries: Yunnan in Global Perspective’, *Journal of World History* 15, no. 3 (2004): 294–96 & 299.

⁶⁵² H.G. Creel, ‘The Role of the Horse in Chinese History’, *American Historical Review* 70, no. 3 (1965): 658–65.

⁶⁵³ Creel, *Ibid.*, 657; Xinru Liu, *Ancient India and Ancient China: Trade and Religious Exchanges AD 1-600* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), 13–14.

⁶⁵⁴ Yang, ‘Horses, Silver, and Cowries’, 290–93.

⁶⁵⁵ Ranabir Chakravarti, ‘Early Medieval Bengal and the Trade in Horses: A Note’, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 42, no. 2 (1999): 202; M.N. Rajesh, ‘Minor Trade between India and Tibet and New Routes after the British Intervention’, in *Narratives, Routes and Intersections in Pre-Modern Asia*, ed. Radhika Seshan (London & New York: Routledge, 2017), 78–79; Yang, ‘Horses, Silver, and Cowries’, 299–300 provides evidence for the Yunnan-Bengal route from the Song period (960–1279), but miscites Chakravarti as providing evidence for Yunnan-Bengal trade in horses from the 3rd century CE; Yang perhaps conflated Chakravarti’s comments on Yunnan horses in the 13th century with earlier sources in northwest India (pp.198-202), but Chakravarti quite clearly summarises that it is “not certain whether Bengal was supplied with the northeastern horses during the early centuries of the Christian era” (p.207).

⁶⁵⁶ Gupta, ‘Horse Trade in North India’, 188–93.

could compete with a trained horse of Kāamboja”.⁶⁵⁷ Horses also played a role in the imagery of the Indic king, as one of the jewels of the *cakravartin* or universal ruler, and in the *aśvamedha* ‘horse sacrifice’ of Hindu kings.⁶⁵⁸

In the early medieval period, horse fairs were still clustered in the northwest according to inscriptions of the 9th-12th centuries.⁶⁵⁹ The earliest inscription, at Pṛthudaka (Pehowa), refers to horses brought from Central Asia.⁶⁶⁰ This site marked the western end of the Uttarāpatha northern trade route stretching to Bengal and the Gangetic ports, via major cities en

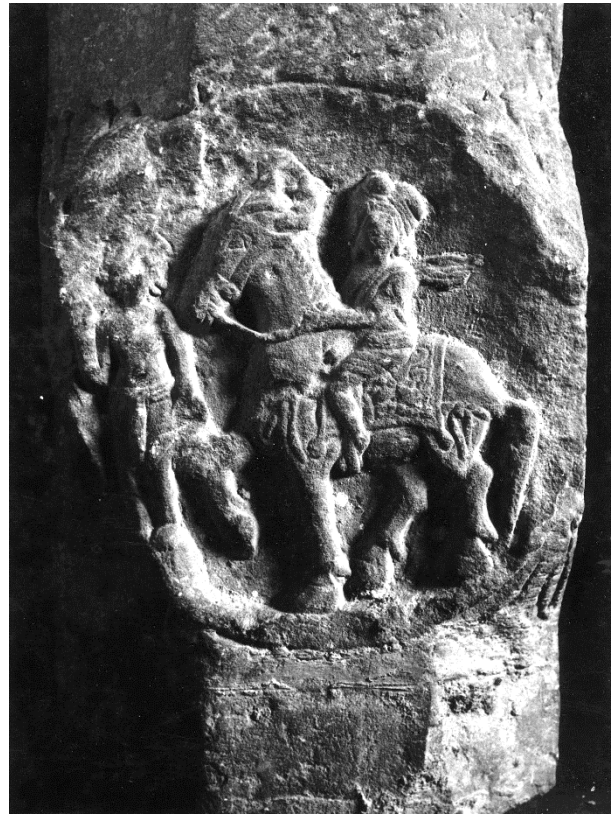


Figure 6.2 Railing upright with medallion containing horse-rider, from Kaṅkāli-Ṭīlā, Mathurā. Photograph: American Institute of Indian Studies, Negative no. 367.69 (Accession no. 49891), reproduced with the permission of the State Museum, Lucknow.

route. It is therefore not surprising to see large horses in early art from Begram, Mathurā and Sāñci (Figure 6.2), the horse’s size being indicated by the rider’s relative size and the position of the seated rider’s legs at or above the level of the horse’s belly.⁶⁶¹ They are noticeably represented larger than the Dian horses. Smaller horses were clearly present in South Asia also because they occur in Maurya period (322-185

⁶⁵⁷ Gupta, 188–89, drawing on the Jain *Uttarādhyāyana Sūtra*.

⁶⁵⁸ Biswas, *Horse in Early Indian Art*, 23–26 & 32; Willis, *Archaeology of Hindu Ritual*, 183–87.

⁶⁵⁹ Gupta, ‘Horse Trade in North India’, 195–97 gives dated inscriptions referring to horse fairs at Pṛthudaka (Pehowa) in northern Haryana state (882-883), four locations in Rajasthan including Āhaḍa (953), Bayānā = Śrīpatha (955), Vusāvaṭa (955) and Bālī (early 12th century), and at Traighāṭaka, mentioned in the Pehowa inscription but the location of which has not been identified.

⁶⁶⁰ Chakravarti, ‘Equestrian Demand and Dealers’, 155–56.

⁶⁶¹ Alexandra van der Geer, *Animals in Stone: Indian Mammals Sculptured Through Time* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2008), 239. Large horses can be seen in the art of Mathurā and Begram in: Quintanilla, *History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura, ca.150 BCE-100 CE*, Figs. 70 & 73; Jean Deloche, *Horses and Riding Equipment in Indian Art* (Madras: Indian Heritage Trust, 1990), Fig. 27b; Jeannine Auboyer, ‘Private Life in Ancient India as Seen from the Ivory Sculptures of Begram’, *Marg* 24, no. 3 (1971): Fig. 8.

BCE) art at Sārnāth and Śuṅga period (c.185-78 BCE) art at Bhārhut.⁶⁶² Smaller horse breeds are still found in India, especially in the Himalayan foothills and parts of the northeast.⁶⁶³

These routes from the northwest to India's eastern coast are important because most Indian trade of horses involving Southeast Asia appears to have been maritime. Shipping may seem unlikely for long-distance horse transportation, but the sources are clear it happened at an

early date. Already in Sangam period literature from South India (c.3rd century BCE – c.3rd century CE), maritime trade of horses is referred to, probably with a Ganges delta origin, but in the context of other trade connections including Southeast Asia.⁶⁶⁴ A c.3rd-century terracotta seal from Chandraketugarh, Bengal, shows a single-masted ship with horse-head symbol (Figure 6.3).⁶⁶⁵ It indicates the cargo transported, like other seals where ears of corn signify cargoes of grain.

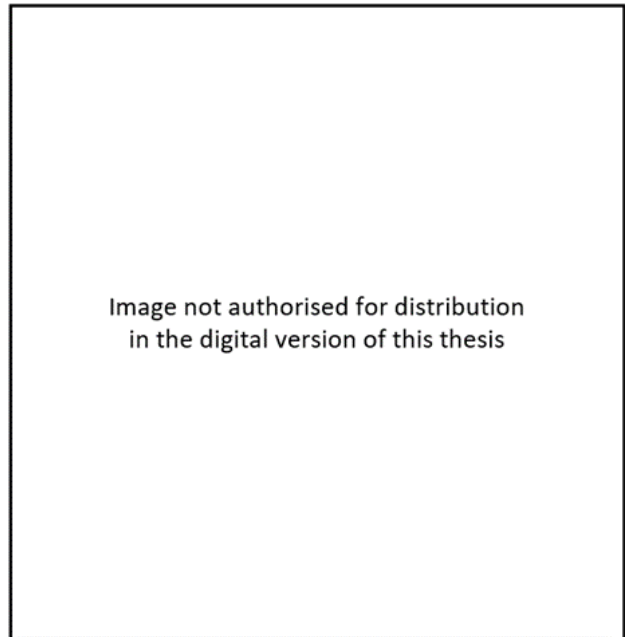


Figure 6.3 Terracotta seal with horse head above masted ship, from Chandraketugarh, Bengal. Reproduced from Sarma, 'Rare Evidences of Maritime Trade on the Bengal Coast', Pl.7.

⁶⁶² van der Geer, *Animals in Stone*, Figs. 302 & 303.

⁶⁶³ van der Geer, 227–29, notes the Manipuri from Assam standing 1.1-1.3 m at the shoulder, and the Spiti, Nanfan and Bhutia in the Himalayan foothills standing at 1.2 m.

⁶⁶⁴ Chakravarti, 'Early Medieval Bengal and the Trade in Horses: A Note', 206–7, quotes from the *Paṭṭiṇappālai* (c.2nd-3rd century CE) that refers to 'war horses that came by sea'. J.V. Chelliah, *Paṭṭupattu: Ten Tamil Idylls* (Colombo: General Publishers, 1946), gives his translation of *Paṭṭiṇappālai* lines 211-224 on p.34; similarly, p.176-77 for the *Maturaikkāñci* lines 331-340 where "Sea captains... from large and distant countries... bring fine horses here and other precious things to barter them for jewels".

⁶⁶⁵ The seal was first recognised to have a horse's head over the boat by Ranabir Chakravarti, 'Maritime Trade in Horses in Early Historical Bengal: A Seal from Chandraketugarh', *Pratna Samiksha* 1 (1992): 155–60. The interpretation is now widely accepted: Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 58; Gautam Sengupta, 'Archaeology of Coastal Bengal', in *Tradition and Archaeology: Early Maritime Contacts in the Indian Ocean*, ed. Himanshu Prabha Ray and Jean-François Salles, 2nd ed. (New Delhi: Manohar, 2012), 122 fn.5. I.K. Sarma, 'Rare Evidences on Maritime Trade on the Bengal Coast of India', in *Recent Advances in Marine Archaeology: Proceedings of the Second Indian Conference of Marine Archaeology of Indian Ocean Countries, January 1990*, ed. S.R. Rao (Dona Paula: Society for Marine Archaeology, National Institute of Oceanography, 1991), Pl.7, provides the best photograph but predates Chakravarti's horse interpretation, but discusses seals with grain ships.

Horses were shipped to Southeast Asia also, from at least the 3rd century.⁶⁶⁶ The contemporary controllers of the Uttarāpatha were the Kuṣāṇas, whose expansive territory covered parts of the northwest into Central Asia – to be understood as including many of the renowned sources of warhorses noted above. The Kuṣāṇas were of Central Asian ancestry, descended from the Yuezhi who had migrated from near the northwest Chinese border to the Bactria area, and are therefore sometimes referred to as ‘Indo-Scythians’ along with the Śaka.⁶⁶⁷ The *Liangshu* records that in c.245, envoys of the Wu Chinese court (222-280) named Kang Tai and Zhu Ying visited Funan in the Mekong Delta, a major entrepôt by this time, and were able to source horses for Wu China.⁶⁶⁸ Warhorses had previously been available from Central Asian groups directly, but the Han Empire had fragmented in the early 3rd century, leaving the Wu kingdom separated from its supply.⁶⁶⁹ The *Liangshu* refers to the use of *po* boats by Indo-Scythian merchants to transport Yuezhi horses from Ko-ying, variously interpreted as located near the Straits of Malacca (Malaysia, Sumatra or Java), southern India or Kalinga, and which represents Funan’s source of horses.⁶⁷⁰ *Po* are recognised to have been Southeast Asian ocean-going craft, probably mainly crewed by Southeast Asians, while the ‘Yuezhi horses’ are understood as the larger warhorse type associated with Central Asia.⁶⁷¹ Another Chinese text, the *Taiping Yulan* (太平御覽) describing 3rd century events, refers to *po* approximately 50 m long and able to carry 600 or more people plus cargo, so they were clearly capacious but no estimates are available for the number of horses that might be transported, bearing in mind the space for feed.⁶⁷² The *Liangshu* also records that, while in Funan, the Wu envoys met

⁶⁶⁶ O.W. Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce: A Study of the Origins of Śrīvijaya* (Ithaca (NY): Cornell University Press, 1967), 59; Ranabir Chakravarti, ‘Overseas Trade in Horses in Early Medieval India: Shipping and Piracy’, in *Prācī-Prabhā: Perspectives in Indology (Essays in Honour of Professor B.N. Mukherjee)*, ed. D.C. Bhattacharyya and Devendra Handa (New Delhi: Harman Publishing House, 1989), 348; Ray, *Winds of Change*, 110; Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 59.

⁶⁶⁷ Liu, ‘Migration and Settlement of the Yuezhi-Kushan’, 265–72.

⁶⁶⁸ Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce*, 59; Chakravarti, ‘Overseas Trade in Horses in Early Medieval India’, 348; Tansen Sen, *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations, 600-1400* (Honolulu: Association for Asian Studies & University of Hawai’i Press, 2003), 162; Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 59.

⁶⁶⁹ Liu, ‘Migration and Settlement of the Yuezhi-Kushan’, 272–76; Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 59.

⁶⁷⁰ Christie, ‘ΚΟΛΑΝΔΙΟΦΩΝΤΑ ΤΑ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΑ’, 347; Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce*, 59–60; Chakravarti, ‘Overseas Trade in Horses in Early Medieval India’, 348; Wade, ‘Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE’, 166.

⁶⁷¹ Christie, ‘ΚΟΛΑΝΔΙΟΦΩΝΤΑ ΤΑ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΑ’, 347–48; Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 59.

⁶⁷² Christie, ‘ΚΟΛΑΝΔΙΟΦΩΝΤΑ ΤΑ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΑ’, 347.

an envoy of the Indian Muruṇḍa king who had recently arrived with a returning Funanese embassy with a gift of four Yuezhi horses. The identity and location of the Muruṇḍa kingdom has vexed scholars for decades as they attempted to rationalise the text's geospatial information and travelogue. However, there is much support for a location in Kuṣāṇa territory, but it is not agreed whether the route used the Ganges or Indus.⁶⁷³

This material supports a reconstruction of Kuṣāṇa merchants trading warhorses obtained from India's own traditional sources, transporting them along the Uttarāpatha to the Gangetic ports or perhaps down the Indus, for maritime transport to Southeast Asia and China. In this framework, horses are historically attested to have been present in the Southeast Asian maritime sphere from the early 3rd century, transported on Southeast Asian boats manned principally by Southeast Asians. Funan appears to have been involved in the maritime horse trade before Kang Tai and Zhu Ying's visit in c.245.⁶⁷⁴ This suggests some Southeast Asian communities were becoming more familiar with the horse by this time, but that it was still an exotic and costly commodity whose import required engagement with foreigners.

References to the maritime transportation of horses continued in later centuries. An approximately late-5th century painting in Ajaṅṭā cave 17 from the legend of Sinhalese founder Siṃhala, shows horses and elephants being transported on boats to Sri Lanka (Figure 6.4).⁶⁷⁵ The craft depicted are inappropriate for the task, but the narrative refers to the transportation of troops and, considering the earlier evidence of a historical nature above, can be understood as relating to similar ideas. Soon after, in c.510, an unnamed South Indian ruler sent an ambassador with a gift of "horses of a fine breed" to the Northern Wei (386-535) court, according to Ma Duanlin's *Wenxian Tongkao*.⁶⁷⁶ A maritime route is not specified but seems likely, because of the Indian ruler's southern location and the northeastern China location of the Northern Wei

⁶⁷³ Ray, *Winds of Change*, 110; Wade, 'Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE', 166–67.

⁶⁷⁴ Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 59.

⁶⁷⁵ Dieter Schlingloff, *Studies in the Ajanta Paintings: Identification and Interpretations* (Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1988), 201. Ray, *Winds of Change*, 38–39; Approximate date based the chronology of Walter M. Spink, *Ajanta: History and Development, Vol.5 Cave by Cave* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2007), 203–30.

⁶⁷⁶ K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *Foreign Notices of South India from Megasthenes to Ma Huan* (Madras: University of Madras, 1939), 83.

territory, contemporary with the continuing difficulties of overland travel until the Sui dynasty (581-618) reunified China. Subsequently, Cosmas Indicopleustes, who travelled to India from the Byzantine Empire in the 6th century, recorded in his *Topographia* (c.550) that Persian horses

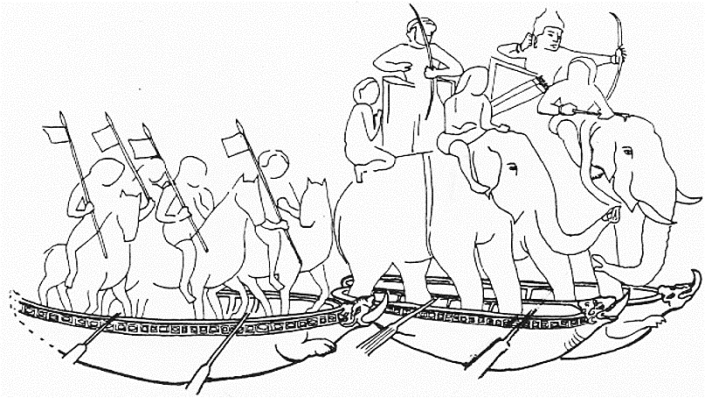


Figure 6.4 Drawing of painted scene showing Simhala's cavalry and elephant troops in boats, from Cave 17, Ajañtā. Reproduced from Schlingloff, *Studies in the Ajanta Paintings*, Fig. 6, with the permission of the author.

were transported by sea to Sri Lanka, where Persian communities had settled.⁶⁷⁷ Substantial numbers of later references to maritime trade of horses to India exist, but postdate the representations in this case study.

It has been suggested that the 6th-century fragmentation of the Gupta Empire in northern India severely impacted patterns of horse trade along the Uttarāpatha, as multiple smaller polities sought horses for cavalries.⁶⁷⁸ Access to supplies of warhorses will have varied and rulers may have been less willing to sell them on, either overseas or into neighbouring territories. These changing patterns of horse trade are important because the Southeast Asian representations, discussed below, are contemporary with Kuṣāṇa and post-Gupta India. The recorded role of 'Indo-Scythian' merchants in the 3rd century was noted, and Kang Tai potentially possessed Sogdian ancestry because the name Kang suggested a relationship with Samarkand.⁶⁷⁹ The traders bringing horses to India will probably have reflected the northwest area's complex ethnic mix, including multiple groups with Indian, Iranian and Greek ancestry,⁶⁸⁰ but there is no evidence they personally engaged in maritime trade. The *Arthaśāstra* records several horse-related roles in early India, including grooms (*aśvapa*), trainers (*aśvadama*), traders (*aśvavanija*) and cavalry (*aśvādhyakṣa*),⁶⁸¹ but there is little

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 91–92; Wade, 'Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE', 167.

⁶⁷⁸ Romila Thapar, *Interpreting Early India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 57.

⁶⁷⁹ Jenny Rose, 'The Sogdians: Prime Movers between Boundaries', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 30, no. 3 (2010): 414 & fn.44; Sen, *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade*, 162.

⁶⁸⁰ D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India*, 2nd ed. (Delhi, Varanasi & Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971), 195–200; Gupta, 'Horse Trade in North India', 191–93.

⁶⁸¹ Chakravarti, 'Equestrian Demand and Dealers', 149–51.

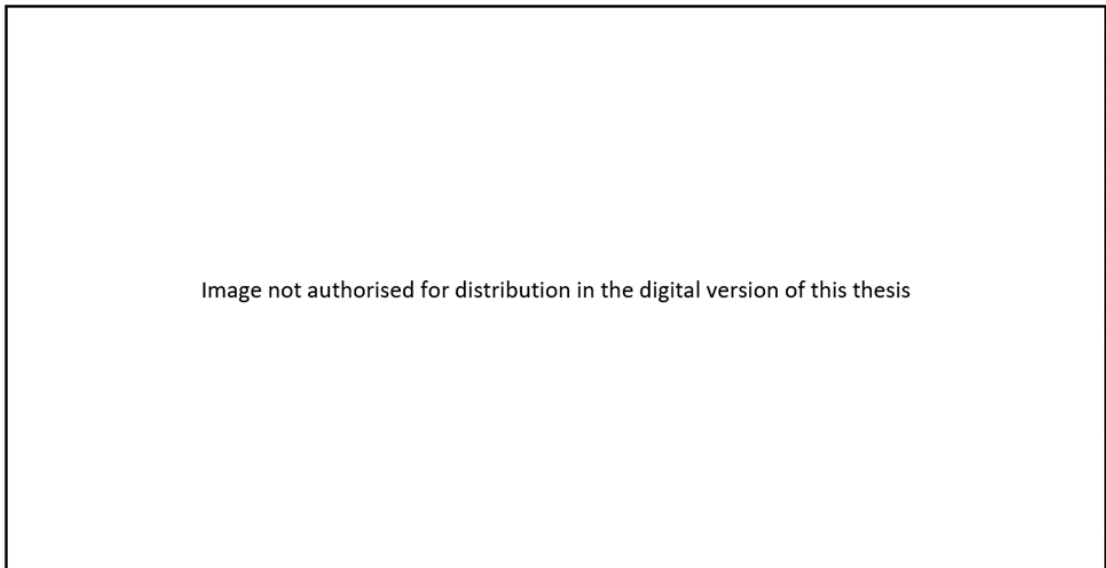


Figure 6.5 Figure interpreted as horse trader or groom on ivory plaque from Begram. Reproduced from Auboyer, 'Private Life in Ancient India as Seen from the Ivory Sculptures of Begram', Fig.6.

information on whether specific ethnic groups were prominent in these roles.⁶⁸² The c.2nd-century Begram ivories include a figure interpreted as a horse groom or trader, wearing a long coat and 'Scythian'-type cap (Figure 6.5).⁶⁸³ Figures wearing trousers, boots and headwear of indeterminate type lead horses by ropes near a stupa in the c.4th-century rock art of Chilas, near Gilgit, and the location on the trade routes between Central Asia and Gandhāra has been noted.⁶⁸⁴ Generally, however, information is scarce.

The role of 'Indo-Scythian' merchants in maritime trade beyond the 3rd century is unclear, but evidence presented in the previous case study shows that people with Kuṣāṇa and Śaka ancestry continued to integrate with Indian society. The identity of the ambassador to the Northern Wei court is not specified beyond coming from southern India. Persians were involved in maritime horse trade to Sri Lanka, and while it remains possible that the settled Persian community were active traders in Southeast Asia as Sinhalese merchants doubtless were, there is no clear evidence for it.⁶⁸⁵ The presence of trade guilds in Peninsular India is recorded epigraphically from

⁶⁸² Recall the prominence of Central Asian grooms as Tang *mingqi* in Section 3.2.6, in an area that also faced difficulties with horse husbandry and care.

⁶⁸³ Auboyer, 'Private Life in Ancient India as Seen from the Ivory Sculptures of Begram', 48 & Fig.6; Sanjyot Mehendale, 'Begram catalog', in *Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World*, ed. Fredrik Hiebert and Pierre Cambon (London: British Museum Press, 2011), 186–87.

⁶⁸⁴ Chakravarti, 'Equestrian Demand and Dealers', 152.

⁶⁸⁵ See Section 7.2.4.

the 8th century, the earliest of which is the Ayyāvoḷe 500 at Aihole who became involved in maritime trade in Southeast Asia,⁶⁸⁶ but there is no reference to their engagement in horse trade in the time frame of this research.⁶⁸⁷

6.3. Zooarchaeological remains of horses in early Southeast Asia

It has been noted by several commentators that zooarchaeological remains of horses in Southeast Asia, especially for this early period, are almost unknown.⁶⁸⁸ The few that have been reported are discussed below, in approximate chronological sequence.

6.3.1. Lemery, Philippines

Horse was identified among the faunal remains excavated at Lemery, in Batangas province, southwestern Luzon, between 1970 and 1981, in two different archaeological contexts.⁶⁸⁹ A vertebra from a disturbed context in the upper part of the excavation was excluded from further analysis by the excavators. However, a cranial fragment and long bone fragments were recovered much deeper, in cultural layer IIC, dated by the excavators to c.8000-4000 BCE. This date was based on the presence of non-geometric obsidian microlith tools in IIC, thermoluminescence dating of potsherds in the IIB/C layer above to c.1850 BCE and c.1450 BCE, and geological opinion on the dating of volcanic events represented stratigraphically.⁶⁹⁰ The assemblage was interpreted by the excavators as a temporary camp where animals, including these apparently wild horses, were butchered for consumption.⁶⁹¹

The dating of layer IIC has drawn criticism for several reasons. Significantly, dog remains were also identified in it,⁶⁹² however studies of the dog's introduction to Southeast Asia suggest earliest dates of c.2200-1500 BCE for Mainland Southeast Asia, possibly c.3000-2500 BCE for Taiwan and c.500 BCE for the Philippines, all postdating

⁶⁸⁶ Abraham, *Two Medieval Merchant Guilds*, 43–45, 127–29 & 139–49.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 169–70.

⁶⁸⁸ Wade, 'Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE', 163; Blench, 'Spread of the Horse into SE Asia', 10.

⁶⁸⁹ Maria Isabel G. Ongpin, 'Lithic and Bone Recoveries from the Obsidian Microlith Cultural Layer', in *A Lemery Archaeological Sequence*, ed. Cecilia Y. Locsin, Maria Isabel G. Ongpin, and Socorro Paz P. Paterno (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2008), 150.

⁶⁹⁰ Cecilia Y. Locsin, Maria Isabel G. Ongpin, and Socorro Paz P. Paterno, eds., *A Lemery Archaeological Sequence* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2008), 40 & 53–57; Ongpin, 'Lithic and Bone Recoveries', 149–50.

⁶⁹¹ Ongpin, 'Lithic and Bone Recoveries', 147 & 150.

⁶⁹² *Ibid.*, 149–50.

the excavators' layer IIC date by some margin.⁶⁹³ The horse is understood to have been domesticated in Central Asia after the IIC date, so its earlier appearance in the Philippines seems very unlikely.⁶⁹⁴ These suggest there are problems with dating rather than the introduction of both horses and dogs to the Philippines significantly before they are known elsewhere in Southeast Asia.⁶⁹⁵ Some have queried if excavation methods caused this discrepancy, but it is also worth noting that thermoluminescence dating has proved problematic for dating Southeast Asian material previously, due to high seasonal fluctuations in humidity.⁶⁹⁶

The identification as horse requires verification also, because no photographs or drawings of the bones were published in the otherwise well-illustrated final report.⁶⁹⁷ Notably, the author of a zooarchaeological survey of non-native fauna from Philippines sites did not view this material despite including horses from other sites and visiting archaeological collections to study them, but the reason for this omission is unclear.⁶⁹⁸ Independent verification of the identification of zooarchaeological material needs to be facilitated when resulting claims are likely to be controversial. As one of the Lemery site excavators themselves noted of the faunal remains generally, "[n]o large pieces of skulls, complete or large fragments of the long bones, or a continuous section of vertebra [sic] were encountered, making identification difficult and even impossible in many cases."⁶⁹⁹

On this basis, until there are further clarifications regarding the identification of horse and the layer IIC dating, the Lemery remains must be excluded from this survey.

⁶⁹³ Antonio Gonzalez et al., 'A 3000 Year Old Dog Burial', *Australian Archaeology* 76 (2013): 13; Philip J. Piper, Fredeliza Z. Campos, and Hsiao-chun Hung, 'A Study of the Animal Bones Recovered from Pits 9 and 10 at the Site of Nagsabaran in Northern Luzon, Philippines', *Hukay* 14 (2009): 82.

⁶⁹⁴ Elenita D.V. Alba, 'Archaeological Evidences of Animals as Trade Goods: A Preliminary Survey', *National Museum Papers* 4, no. 2 (1994): 29.

⁶⁹⁵ *Ibid.*; Piper, Campos, and Hung, 'Animal Bones Recovered from Pits 9 and 10 at the Site of Nagsabaran', 82; Anna L. Pineda, 'Review of: A Lemery Archaeological Sequence, by Cecilia Y. Locsin, Maria Isabel G. Ongpin, and Socorro Paz P. Paterno. 2008. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press', *Hukay* 15 (2010): 81–83.

⁶⁹⁶ Ian C. Glover, 'Connecting Prehistoric and Historic Cultures in Southeast Asia', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 47, no. 3 (2016): 507 & fn.6.

⁶⁹⁷ Locsin, Ongpin, and Paterno, *Lemery Archaeological Sequence*.

⁶⁹⁸ Alba, 'Archaeological Evidences of Animals as Trade Goods', 25.

⁶⁹⁹ Ongpin, 'Lithic and Bone Recoveries', 149.

6.3.2. Novaliches, Philippines

Horse teeth were reportedly found during excavations at Novaliches, western Luzon, by H. Otley Beyer in 1926, and were apparently assigned by him to the early Iron Age c.300-200 BCE.⁷⁰⁰ There are many problems with this material. Beyer's archaeological methodology has been criticised by subsequent archaeologists working on Philippines material, especially because he wrote few site reports and appears to have paid 'collaborators' for finds at sites he was not working at personally.⁷⁰¹ One summary report of this site was produced but it lacks illustrations and the finds are apparently unavailable.⁷⁰² It is perhaps instructive that these horse remains are not referred to in Beyer's own subsequent grand summary of Philippines prehistory and history, or by the excavators at Lemery, or in other relevant summaries of Philippine archaeology.⁷⁰³ The claimed teeth are presumed lost so the identification cannot be verified, which is unfortunate because the Novaliches site was interpreted as an early trading post with distant connections, before its accessibility was impacted by development.⁷⁰⁴ The poor archaeological provenance, recording and publication, lack of illustrations and unavailability of the teeth means they are also excluded from this survey.

6.3.3. Hnaw Kan, Myanmar

The remains of an equid were excavated in 2001 in the S1 burial deposit at Hnaw Kan (နေဝဲကန်), an Iron Age cemetery site of the Samon archaeological culture of Upper

⁷⁰⁰ Judith Paterno, 'The Indigenous Horse', *Filipinas Journal of Science and Culture* 4 (1982): 89. The date is my interpolation for Paterno's 'early Iron Age' based on Beyer's use of c.300-200 BCE for this period in H. Otley Beyer and Jaime C. De Veyra, 'Philippine Saga: A Pictorial History of the Archipelago since Time Began', *The Evening News, Manila*, 1947, 2. I have not seen Beyer's original information and Paterno provides no reference.

⁷⁰¹ William G. Solheim, 'H. Otley Beyer', *Asian Perspectives* 12 (1969): 4–8; Karl L. Hutterer, 'Philippine Archaeology: Status and Prospects', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 18, no. 2 (1987): 238–39.

⁷⁰² Solheim, 'Otley Beyer', 4.

⁷⁰³ Beyer and De Veyra, 'Philippine Saga'. Ongpin, 'Lithic and Bone Recoveries', 150, refers to other pre-Spanish horse finds but not the Novaliches teeth. R.B. Dixon, 'Recent Archæological Discoveries in the Philippines and Their Bearing on the Prehistory of Eastern Asia', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 69, no. 1 (1930): 225–29, was supportive of Beyer's work but, in summarising the Novaliches evidence for long distance connections, does not mention horse remains. William G. Solheim, *The Archaeology of Central Philippines: A Study Chiefly of the Iron Age and Its Relationships* (Manila: National Science Development Board, National Institute of Science and Technology, 1964), discusses Novaliches material culture throughout but no mention of horse teeth is found.

⁷⁰⁴ Solheim, *Archaeology of Central Philippines*, 206.

Myanmar.⁷⁰⁵ The animal was associated with two human burials lying one each on top of and parallel with the animal's forelegs and hindlegs. Unfortunately, bead-hunters had destroyed the northern half of the deposit so that only the incomplete legs of all three grave occupants remained *in situ* at the time of excavation. Nonetheless, the close association and alignment of equid and human remains suggested to the excavators that they were buried at the same time. No direct dating evidence could be retrieved from the wider Hnaw Kan cemetery excavations due to the loss of bone collagen,⁷⁰⁶ but assessments of ceramic typologies and assemblages through comparison with the Ywa Htin (ရွာဝင်း) and Myo Hla (မြို့လှ) sites excavated in 2002–2003, have suggested a “very late Iron Age” date for the site,⁷⁰⁷ though this assessment is not specific to S1. The transition between Samon and Pyu cultures varies between sites, with some communities continuing their existing lifeways while others underwent social changes associated with Pyu urbanism.⁷⁰⁸ This means the Hnaw Kan equid could plausibly date between the later 1st millennium BCE and the early centuries of the 1st millennium CE, based on Iron Age dates of c.500 BCE – c.500 CE⁷⁰⁹ and early Pyu constructions from as early as the 2nd century BCE or as late as the 4th century CE.⁷¹⁰

⁷⁰⁵ Jean-Pierre Pautreau, Pauk Pauk, and Kate Domett, ‘Le cimetière de Hnaw Kan, Malhaing (Mandalay): note préliminaire’, *Aséanie* 8 (2001): 93 & 99; Jean-Pierre Pautreau, Pauk Pauk, and Kate Domett, ‘Le cimetière de Hnaw Kan: premiers jalons d’une chronologie préhistorique’, *Archéologia* 383 (2001): 63, with photograph p.62.

⁷⁰⁶ Pautreau, Pauk Pauk, and Domett, ‘Cimetière de Hnaw Kan: note préliminaire’, 100; Jean-Pierre Pautreau et al., ‘Tombs des âges du bronze et du fer dans le Bassin de la Samon (Bronze and Iron Age burials in the Samon River valley)’, in *Uncovering Southeast Asia’s Past: Selected papers from the 10th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists*, ed. Elisabeth A. Bacus, Ian C. Glover, and Vincent C. Pigott (Singapore: NUS Press, 2006), 135.

⁷⁰⁷ Jean-Pierre Pautreau et al., ‘Sepultures Des Ages Des Metaux Dans La Vallee de La Samon, Myanmar’, in *From Homo Erectus to the Living Traditions: Choice of Papers from the 11th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists, Bougon, 25th-29th September 2006*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau et al. (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2008), 115–16; Jean-Pierre Pautreau, ‘Chronology and General Comments’, in *Excavations in the Samon Valley: Iron Age Burials in Myanmar*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau, Anne-Sophie Coupey, and Aung Aung Kyaw (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2010), 335.

⁷⁰⁸ Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*, 123–24; Pautreau et al., ‘Sepultures Des Ages Des Metaux Dans La Vallee de La Samon’, 116; Elizabeth H. Moore, ‘Cultural Exchange between Myanmar and Yunnan ca. 600 BCE–400 CE’, in *Southern Silk Route: Historical Links to Contemporary Convergences*, ed. Lipi Ghosh and Tansen Sen (New Delhi: Manohar, 2014), 60–64.

⁷⁰⁹ Thomas Oliver Pryce et al., ‘Metallurgical Traditions and Metal Exchange Networks in Late Prehistoric Central Myanmar, c. 1000 BC to c. AD 500’, *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences*, 2016, 2.

⁷¹⁰ This date reflects the earliest date for this transition, from a range of opinions: Janice Stargardt, ‘From the Iron Age to Early Cities at Sri Ksetra and Beikthano, Myanmar’, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 47, no. 3 (2016): 347–50; Jean-Pierre Pautreau, ‘General Comments’, in *Ywa Htin: Iron Age Burials in the Samon Valley, Upper Burma*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2007), 90; Bob Hudson, ‘The Origins of Bagan: The Archaeological Landscape of Upper Burma to AD 1300’ (PhD Thesis, University of Sydney, 2004), 136; Bob Hudson, ‘A Thousand Years before Bagan: Radiocarbon

Nothing can be concluded regarding the origin of the equid at Hnaw Kan on available data. The Samon valley was located at a nexus of routes leading overland to Yunnan, by river to the Andaman Sea using either the Ayeyarwady or Sittaung to connect with maritime exchange networks involving the Bay of Bengal and Thai-Malay Peninsula coast, and there is the possibility of overland travel via Bengal.⁷¹¹ There is evidence for Samon cultural connections with both Yunnan and South Asia by the time frame of the burial, including potentially imported objects and relationships between Samon and Dian bronzeworking traditions.⁷¹² Trade connections involving the southern route to the Andaman Sea are demonstrated by the presence of carnelian beads at Samon sites since the early Iron Age, initially alongside locally-produced beads in a darker-coloured softer stone, but becoming more common in middle and late Iron Age burials, including at Hnaw Kan; whether these originate in South or Southeast Asian workshops, the connection is a southerly one.⁷¹³ Cultural relationships between Upper Myanmar and South Asia are indicated by late Iron Age infant burial practices involving paired recumbent jars comparable to sites in the Deccan,⁷¹⁴ and early Pyu brick wall architecture using Aśokan brick size standards.⁷¹⁵ Data on the horse's size, necessarily

Dates and Myanmar's Ancient Pyu Cities' (Early Myanmar and its Global Connections, Bagan: Bagan Archaeological Museum, Myanmar, 2012) (Revision 3 accessed via Academia.edu); Elizabeth H. Moore, 'Men on Horses and Tea-Eating', *Enchanting Myanmar* 8, no. 2 (2008): 3 (SOAS Research Online PDF version, accessed 23/06/2014 at <https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/18571/>); Moore, 'Cultural Exchange between Myanmar and Yunnan', 60.

⁷¹¹ Pautreau et al., 'Tombes des ages du bronze et du fer dans le Bassin de la Samon', 128 & 136; Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*, 229–32; Pautreau et al., 'Sepultures Des Ages Des Metaux Dans La Vallee de La Samon', 111 & 116; Elizabeth H. Moore, 'Myanmar Bronzes and the Dian Cultures of Yunnan', *Bulletin of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association* 30 (2010): 130–31.

⁷¹² Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*, 93–96 & 103–12; Pautreau et al., 'Sepultures Des Ages Des Metaux Dans La Vallee de La Samon', fn.12; Moore, 'Myanmar Bronzes and the Dian Cultures of Yunnan', *passim*; Moore, 'Cultural Exchange between Myanmar and Yunnan', 45–48 & 63–64.

⁷¹³ Bérénice Bellina, 'Stone Ornaments from Ywa Htin', in *Ywa Htin: Iron Age Burials in the Samon Valley, Upper Burma*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2007), 71–85; Moore, 'Cultural Exchange between Myanmar and Yunnan', 47–48. For the Hnaw Kan carnelian beads, see Pautreau, Pauk Pauk, and Domett, 'Cimetière de Hnaw Kan: note préliminaire', 99–100, with colour photograph in Pautreau, Pauk Pauk, and Domett, 'Cimetière de Hnaw Kan: premiers jalons', 63. See also the discussion of the carnelian bead industry at Khao Sam Kaeo in Chapter 1.

⁷¹⁴ Anne-Sophie Coupey, 'Infant and Child Burials in the Samon Valley, Myanmar', in *From Homo Erectus to the Living Traditions: Choice of Papers from the 11th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists, Bougon, 25th-29th September 2006*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau et al. (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2008), 121–24; Anne-Sophie Coupey, 'Infant Jar Burials in Upper Burma', in *Unearthing Southeast Asia's Past: Selected Papers from the 12th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists, Volume 1*, ed. Marijke J. Klokke and Véronique Degroot (Singapore: NUS Press, 2013), 89–90.

⁷¹⁵ Stargardt, 'From the Iron Age to Early Cities at Sri Ksetra and Beikthano, Myanmar', 350–51. Janice Stargardt, *The Ancient Pyu of Burma Volume 1: Early Pyu Cities in a Man-Made Landscape* (Cambridge & Singapore: PACSEA & Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1990), 311–42, and Moore, *Early*

based only on biometric analyses of the remaining leg bones, have not been published; a smaller horse could originate in either Yunnan or South Asia. Insights on the animal's origin may be possible using strontium and oxygen isotope analysis of the bones, depending on how long the animal had lived in the Samon area; this method might have been more promising if the teeth were available for testing.⁷¹⁶ The rarity of equids in Samon burials potentially suggests a high social status for the associated human occupants, but at this stage may simply reflect the early stage of archaeological research. Independent evidence for a high social status is not retrievable from S1 because any ornaments that had been associated with the heads, trunks, arms and upper portions of the legs of the human burials have been lost along with the skeletal remains.⁷¹⁷ Nonetheless, high social status is associated with horse-riding in Dian and Pyu cultural contexts, and may be relevant to the interpretation of the Hnaw Kan equid in Samon cultural context.⁷¹⁸

6.3.4. Ban Tanot, Thailand

Horse bones were excavated from a stratified context at Ban Tanot (บ้านโตนด) in Non Sung district, Nakhon Ratchasima province, Thailand, and interpreted as Iron Age in date.⁷¹⁹ Neither bones nor context were directly dated, so dating is relative and based on material typology. According to the published report, they were found 110-140 cm below datum in trench 8 at the site, which may relate to layer 2 or 3, but layer 3 (lower)

Landscapes of Myanmar, 19, note early comparators for walled sites and Buddhist architecture are to be found at Taxila, Amarāvati and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.

⁷¹⁶ N.M. Slovak and A. Paytan, 'Applications of Sr Isotopes in Archaeology', in *Handbook of Environmental Isotope Geochemistry*, ed. Mark Baskaran, vol. 1 (Berlin & Heidelberg: Springer, 2011), 743–45 & 759–60.

⁷¹⁷ Pautreau, Pauk Pauk, and Domett, 'Cimetière de Hnaw Kan: note préliminaire', 100, notes that the ornaments at Hnaw Kan (which had survived looting activities) included necklace beads, a cowrie placed in the hands and a bracelet. A similar preference for upper body distribution of ornaments was reported for Ywa Htin, excavated at locations around the neck, wrists, arms and ears, with one possible leg ring; see Jean-Pierre Pautreau, 'The Ornaments', in *Ywa Htin: Iron Age Burials in the Samon Valley, Upper Burma*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2007), 66.

⁷¹⁸ Moore, 'Men on Horses and Tea-Eating', 4, is the only researcher to consider the significance of the equid in the Hnaw Kan cemetery in the complex temporal and cultural context of the Samon and Pyu.

⁷¹⁹ Preecha Kanchanagama, *รายงานการวิจัย การขุดค้นแหล่งโบราณคดียุคโลหะตอนปลาย ใน จังหวัดนครราชสีมา / Archaeological Excavation at the Late Metal Age Sites in Changwat Nakhon Ratchasima* (Bangkok: Department of Archaeology, Silpakorn University, 1994 [2537]), 71. Wade, 'Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE', 163–64, uses the date range c.500 BCE - c.400 CE, following a short report in the *Southeast Asian Archaeology International Newsletter* no.7 (1995). I am grateful to Udomluck Hoontrakul for her assistance with Kanchanagama's report, but any interpretive errors are my own.

is probably meant.⁷²⁰ The interpretation of a broadly Iron Age date for the horse bones is based on layer 2 containing Dvāravatī and Lopburi period ceramic sherds, while layers 3, 4 and 7 contained a similar black burnished ceramic and layer 8 (lowest cultural layer) contained a carnelian bead suggesting an Iron Age deposit.⁷²¹ The bones' location in the uppermost of layers 3-8 perhaps suggests a later Iron Age or early historic date in the early/mid-1st millennium CE, but this is not certain. No illustrations or photographs of the bones were provided with the report, which is regrettable given their significance was recognised by the excavator,⁷²² but a zooarchaeologist was responsible for their identification. It is therefore unclear what kinds of further analyses regarding the animal's origin might be possible.

6.3.5. Khu Bua, Thailand

Horse bones were reported from excavations at the Dvāravatī period (c.6th-11th century) ancient city site of Khu Bua (คูบัว), Ratchaburi province, Thailand. Other zooarchaeological remains of domestic animals found during the same excavation included elephant, cow, buffalo and dog.⁷²³ It has so far not been possible to locate further information on this material.⁷²⁴ At this time, nothing more can be said on the date or origin of the animal.

6.3.6. Zooarchaeological remains: summary

Other horse remains in Southeast Asia, excluding Yunnan, are all considered to date later than the artistic representations of this case study, below. Zooarchaeological material is extremely limited, lacks data for determining geographical origin and is not

⁷²⁰ Kanchanagama, *Late Metal Age Sites in Nakhon Ratchasima*, 71. My inference of layer 3 is derived from Plan 15 (p.148), coupled with the excavator's dating to the Iron Age rather than historic period.

⁷²¹ *Ibid.*, 27–29. Supawan Tanmanee, 'การศึกษาเรื่องม้าในดินแดนประเทศไทยจากหลักฐานทางโบราณคดี (A study of horses in Thailand from archaeological evidence)' (MA Thesis, Silpakorn University, 2009), 99–100, interprets the same report as indicating cultural layer 2 and a transitional prehistoric-Dvāravatī date.

⁷²² *Ibid.*, ๗ & 71.

⁷²³ Phatcharin Sukpramun, 'La ville ancienne de Khu Bua', in *Dvāravatī: Aux Sources du Bouddhisme en Thaïlande*, ed. Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zéphir (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux & Musée Guimet, 2009), 197.

⁷²⁴ Unfortunately, Sukpramun's bibliographic reference is incorrect. I am again grateful to Udomluck Hoontrakul for her great help in following up on this publication, including contacting the lead archaeologist who was able to confirm that bones were recovered and identified as horse. It may be an unpublished internal report.

directly dated, although both Hnaw Kan and Ban Tanot contexts suggest a late Iron Age date. However, it may be possible to derive further information from existing or newly-excavated material. Strontium and oxygen isotope analysis, especially of teeth if available, may prove useful in distinguishing horses from South Asia, Central Asia or Yunnan. Where DNA can be extracted from the bone collagen, not possible with the Hnaw Kan remains, it may be compared to DNA from horses of different breeds. In recent years, efforts to preserve rare horse breeds in South Asia have led to a growing amount of genetic data that may provide useful reference material for such studies in the future.⁷²⁵

6.4. Historical references to horses in early Southeast Asia

A small number of additional documentary sources provide insights into the significance of horses for Southeast Asian communities. It is perhaps not surprising that the horse's roles in Southeast Asia reflected a similar combination of the geopolitical and the ritual seen in Dian, Chinese and Indian societies.

One of the earliest Sanskrit inscriptions in Southeast Asia, K.365 of Devānīka (late 5th century) from Wat Luong Kau, near Wat Phu in southern Laos, mentions the *aśvamedha* sacrifice.⁷²⁶ The context makes it clear that Devānīka, an early ruler of the Khmer, did not actually perform the horse sacrifice, but it suggests an early awareness of the ritual's significance for kingship, and probably therefore of a symbolic value of the horse. Indeed, the inscription also refers to Devānīka's devout establishment of a sacred *tīrtha* named Kurukṣetra at Wat Phu, apparently seeking to ritually connect his landscape with a location in distant India that was of immense significance in the *Mahābhārata*.⁷²⁷ Through the rituals performed, as recorded in the inscription, he claimed the title *mahārājādhirāja*, "king of kings".

⁷²⁵ For example, see: Mamta Chauhan, A.K. Gupta, and S. Dhillon, 'Genetic Characterization of Indian Spiti Horses', *Journal of Genetics* 83, no. 3 (2004): 291–95; A.K. Gupta et al., 'Genetic Diversity and Bottleneck Studies in the Marwari Horse Breed', *Journal of Genetics* 84, no. 3 (2005): 295–301; R. Behl et al., 'Genetic Relationships of Five Indian Horse Breeds Using Microsatellite Markers', *Animal* 1 (2007): 483–88.

⁷²⁶ Coedès, 'Stèle de Vät Luong Käu', 217 & 219. See line XV.

⁷²⁷ Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region*, 226–28.

A cluster of references, discussed in the previous case study,⁷²⁸ indicate a military role for the horse in cavalries was increasingly important from at least the 7th century onwards. Zhenla (pre-Angkorian Cambodia), Tuohan, Dvāravatī and Linyi were all seen to be developing equestrian forces.

In just these few historical references to the role of the horse in early Southeast Asia, it is possible to detect meanings associated with ritual significance, kingship and warfare. Interestingly, China itself is recorded as having supplied horses to polities in Southeast Asia.

6.5. Earliest iconographic representations of horses in Southeast Asia

The earliest artistic representations of horses from Southeast Asian archaeological contexts, excluding Yunnan, are consistently found on high-status objects with distant connections and express the horse's elite associations. They are contemporary with or predate the earliest zooarchaeological and historical evidence for the physical presence of horses. This suggests that, from the beginning, horses were associated with elite ideologies and distant sources, rather than as simply another domestic animal, making them desirable as exotic symbols of status.

The horse is unrepresented in finds of prehistoric unbaked clay animal figurines, an object type known especially from Thailand, which include only cattle, elephants, pigs, dogs, deer and possibly water buffalo.⁷²⁹ A suggested fragmentary Iron Age clay horse figurine was excavated at Ban Samrit (บ้านสัมฤทธิ์), Nakhon Ratchasima, but the report's text and drawing are unclear whether only the rump was recovered, with head, tail and legs possibly reconstructed. If so, the horse identification is problematic, and further supporting information is required.⁷³⁰

⁷²⁸ See Section 5.3.6.

⁷²⁹ These animal figurines have been found in mortuary contexts at Ban Chiang, Ban Na Di and Ban Lum Khao on the Khorat Plateau; cattle figurines have also been found in the Bắc Bộ area of northern Vietnam. See Charles F.W. Higham, 'The Later Prehistory of Mainland Southeast Asia', *Journal of World Prehistory* 3, no. 3 (1989): 258; Bellwood, 'Southeast Asia before History', 119; Higham, *Early Cultures*, 138–40, 143 & 152; Betty Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art* (Trumbull (CT): Weatherhill, 2004), 28–29.

⁷³⁰ Kanchanagama, *Late Metal Age Sites in Nakhon Ratchasima*, 21–22 & 43; see p.170 for the drawing. No photographs are provided. I thank Udomluck Hoontrakul for her assistance with these details, but again errors of interpretation are mine. Tanmanee, 'Horses in Thailand from archaeological evidence', 100, infers the same losses to the figurine.

6.5.1. High-tin bronze bowls from Thailand

Bronze bowls from western and peninsular Thailand bear the earliest known representations of horses in Southeast Asia, excluding Yunnan.⁷³¹ They form part of a large corpus of high-tin content (c.22-28%), thin-walled bronze bowls⁷³² with incised imagery including figures, buildings and animals, many apparently in procession, beneath a characteristic rim pattern of a row of triangles with circles containing a dot.⁷³³ They have come from the Ban Don Ta Phet (บ้านดอนตาเพชร) burial site in Kanchanaburi province and the settlement sites of Khao Sam Kaeo and Khao Chamuk (เขางมุก) in Chumphon province, and examples without imagery from other locations in Thailand and Malaysia. Due to their high tin content, they are brittle and are frequently excavated as fragments.⁷³⁴

The first bowl, excavated at Ban Don Ta Phet, shows the characteristic combination of long neck, mane and erect ears of an equid, processing with animals identified as cow, deer and buffalo (Figure 6.6).⁷³⁵ The horse's rump is visible, but the legs have been lost. Calibrated radiocarbon dates from associated pottery have provided core dates for the site in the 4th century BCE.⁷³⁶ The second bowl with horses, reported to have been retrieved near the edge of the Khao Sam Kaeo site following soil erosion, is

⁷³¹ Bellina and Glover, 'Animal and Cultural Transfers', 389; Ian C. Glover and Anna T.N. Bennett, 'The High-Tin Bronzes of Thailand', in *Scientific Research on Ancient Asian Metallurgy: Proceedings of the Fifth Forbes Symposium at the Freer Gallery of Art*, ed. Paul Jett, Blythe McCarthy, and Janet G. Douglas (London & Washington D.C.: Archetype Publications & Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 2012), 109.

⁷³² Warangkhan Rajpitak and Nigel J. Seeley, 'The Bronze Bowls from Ban Don Ta Phet, Thailand: An Enigma of Prehistoric Metallurgy', *World Archaeology* 11, no. 1 (1979): 27; Glover and Bennett, 'High-Tin Bronzes', 104.

⁷³³ Anna T.N. Bennett and Ian C. Glover, 'Decorated High-Tin Bronze Bowls from Thailand's Prehistory', in *Southeast Asian Archaeology 1990: Proceedings of the Third Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists*, ed. Ian C. Glover (Hull: University of Hull Centre for South-East Asian Studies, 1992), 191–97; Bellina and Glover, 'Animal and Cultural Transfers', 387–90; Ian C. Glover and Bérénice Bellina, 'Ban Don Ta Phet and Khao Sam Kaeo: The Earliest Indian Contacts Re-Assessed', in *Early Interactions between South and Southeast Asia: Reflections on Cross-Cultural Exchange*, ed. Pierre-Yves Manguin, A. Mani, and Geoff Wade (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2011), 35–37; Glover and Bennett, 'High-Tin Bronzes', 106–11.

⁷³⁴ Rajpitak and Seeley, 'Bronze Bowls from Ban Don Ta Phet', 27–28; Ian C. Glover, 'Ban Don Ta Phet and Its Relevance to Problems in the Pre- and Protohistory of Thailand', *Bulletin of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association* 2 (1980): 23; Glover and Bennett, 'High-Tin Bronzes', 104–5.

⁷³⁵ Glover, 'Ban Don Ta Phet and Its Relevance', 23 & 28–29; Bennett and Glover, 'Decorated High-Tin Bronze Bowls', 191–97; Bellina and Glover, 'Animal and Cultural Transfers', 388; Glover and Bennett, 'High-Tin Bronzes', 109–11. Fragments of other bowls have shown an elephant and a horned bovid, probably a sheep or goat.

⁷³⁶ Glover and Bellina, 'Ban Don Ta Phet and Khao Sam Kaeo', 24.

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Figure 6.6 Drawing of Ban Don Ta Phet high-tin bronze bowl B rim fragments 6-10 rearticulated. Estimated dimensions of complete bowl: 22cm (diameter); fragments 6-10 c.31.5 cm (partial circumference at rim). After Bennett & Glover, 'Decorated High-Tin Bronze Bowls', Fig.7.

almost complete and the horses process alongside elephants, deer, geese and griffins (Figure 6.7).⁷³⁷ While the bowl did not come from a controlled archaeological excavation, radiocarbon dates obtained from the wider Khao Sam Kaeo site have shown its main period of occupation and activity to have been from the early-4th to 2nd centuries BCE, consistent with Ban Don Ta Phet.⁷³⁸

Opinions on whether the bowls were local products or imported from South Asia have differed since they were first discovered in the 1970s. Bowls of comparable metallic composition have been excavated in South Asia, at Taxila's Mauryan-period Bhir mound in northwest India, Adichanallur in the Nilgiri Hills of southwest India, Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu and Wari-Bateshwar in Bangladesh, which are approximately contemporary with those in Thailand.⁷³⁹ However, the South Asian examples lack the characteristic figurative designs and there are no known significant sources of tin in South Asia, essential for producing high-tin bronze.⁷⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the artistic compositions have drawn comparisons with South Asian material, stylistically and iconographically.⁷⁴¹ Comparisons have especially been made with the

⁷³⁷ Ian C. Glover and Shahnaj Husne Jahan, 'An Early Northwest Indian Decorated Bronze Bowl from Khao Sam Kaeo', in *Before Siam: Essays in Art and Archaeology*, ed. Nicolas Revire and Stephen A. Murphy (Bangkok: River Books & The Siam Society, 2014), 90–97.

⁷³⁸ Glover and Bellina, 'Ban Don Ta Phet and Khao Sam Kaeo', 24.

⁷³⁹ Rajpitak and Seeley, 'Bronze Bowls from Ban Don Ta Phet', 29; Glover, 'Ban Don Ta Phet and Its Relevance', 23; Higham, *Early Cultures*, 218; Shahnaj Husne Jahan, 'Archaeology of Wari-Bateshwar', *Ancient Asia 2* (2010): 141–42; Glover and Bennett, 'High-Tin Bronzes', 111–13.

⁷⁴⁰ Rajpitak and Seeley, 'Bronze Bowls from Ban Don Ta Phet', 29–30; Bennett and Glover, 'Decorated High-Tin Bronze Bowls', 206.

⁷⁴¹ Bérénice Bellina, 'La formation des réseaux d'échanges reliant l'Asie du Sud et du Sud-Est à travers le matériel archéologique (VI^e siècle av. J.-C.-VI^e siècle ap. J.-C.) - le cas de la Thaïlande et la péninsule Malaise', *Journal of the Siam Society* 86, no. 1–2 (1998): 92; Higham, *Early Cultures*, 218; Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art*, 34; Bellina and Glover, 'Animal and Cultural Transfers', 387–88.

Kulu high-tin bronze *loṭā* from Gondla, Himachal Pradesh, of the c.2nd-1st century BCE, showing animals with riders in procession, including horses and elephants.⁷⁴²

However, the recent find of the bowl with griffins at Khao Sam Kaeo is potentially very significant. The griffin appears quite widely in early Indian art following its initial appearance via Hellenistic art in northwest India, but is absent from early Southeast Asian art.⁷⁴³ The problem of the bowls' production

site is not fully resolved, but support for being a South Asian product increases as a result.⁷⁴⁴ The rim pattern, processing animals, and technological aspects

of the bowls suggest they are all from the same tradition, assuming all production occurred in the same place. Notably, it has also been argued that the techniques of carnelian and agate ornament manufacture at Khao Sam Kaeo indicate the presence of immigrant South Asian specialist craftspeople who personally communicated this knowledge to locals, because ethnoarchaeological models suggest these situations require an extended period of apprenticeship.⁷⁴⁵ This suggests that bowl production involving Peninsular production utilising local tin sources, but using iconography



Figure 6.7 Two views of the high-tin bronze bowl reportedly from Khao Sam Kaeo, Thailand, showing bands of horses (above) and griffins (below). Dimensions: 16 cm x 8.4 cm (diameter x height). Photographs by Paisarn Piemmettawat, reproduced from Glover & Jahan, 'Early Northwest Indian Decorated Bronze Bowl', Figs. 5 & 6a, with the permission of the photographer.

⁷⁴² Glover, 'Ban Don Ta Phet and Its Relevance', 23; Bennett and Glover, 'Decorated High-Tin Bronze Bowls', 205–6; Glover and Bennett, 'High-Tin Bronzes', 113; Glover and Jahan, 'Early Northwest Indian Decorated Bronze Bowl', 93 & 96. This object is in the British Museum, cat. 1880.22.

⁷⁴³ Glover and Jahan, 'Early Northwest Indian Decorated Bronze Bowl', 93–95.

⁷⁴⁴ Higham, *Early Cultures*, 219; Bellina and Glover, 'Animal and Cultural Transfers', 386; Glover and Bellina, 'Ban Don Ta Phet and Khao Sam Kaeo', 36–37; Glover and Jahan, 'Early Northwest Indian Decorated Bronze Bowl', 91.

⁷⁴⁵ Bellina and Silapanth, 'Khao Sam Kaeo and the Upper Thai Peninsula', 389–90.

known to immigrant South Asians, remains possible. This reconstruction would be consistent with the localised distribution of the figurative bowls in Central and Peninsular Thailand, and their association with both settlement and mortuary archaeological contexts. Whichever reconstruction is correct, the site locations are significant for the long-distance connections demonstrated by the bowls' imagery, because Ban Don Ta Phet lies on a trade route between Central Thailand and the Three Pagodas Pass into Myanmar, while Khao Sam Kaeo and Khao Chamuk are associated with a trans-peninsular trade route at the isthmus.⁷⁴⁶ These sites are the earliest in Southeast Asia providing evidence for economic interactions with South Asia alongside local sociocultural change.⁷⁴⁷

The meaning of the imagery on the bowls, and their use in the local contexts has received less discussion. Their excavation from Ban Don Ta Phet burials and the Khao Sam Kaeo settlement presents a complex picture, but one that may be rationalised by South Asian contributions to production at the latter. Nonetheless, it can be inferred that the bowls represent high status objects because of the value of their materials, and the investment of technical skill and artistic labour in their production. If they have an exotic origin, there was likely additional prestige associated with their ownership.⁷⁴⁸ The presence of horses and elephants is suggestive of elite status in an Indic context, and the symbolism of the Hellenistic sphinx as a guardian of treasure has been noted.⁷⁴⁹ It has also been argued that imagery of exotic animals, specifically, may have functioned in elite displays of status and connectedness with long-distance networks,⁷⁵⁰ but whether the horses entered this art through distant production, or iconography conveyed by immigrant craftspeople, it does not imply horses were present in Thailand at this time.

⁷⁴⁶ Rajpitak and Seeley, 'Bronze Bowls from Ban Don Ta Phet', 30; Bennett and Glover, 'Decorated High-Tin Bronze Bowls', 206.

⁷⁴⁷ Glover and Bellina, 'Ban Don Ta Phet and Khao Sam Kaeo', 22.

⁷⁴⁸ Higham, *Early Cultures*, 219; Bellina and Glover, 'Animal and Cultural Transfers', 386–88.

⁷⁴⁹ Glover and Jahan, 'Early Northwest Indian Decorated Bronze Bowl', 93.

⁷⁵⁰ Bellina and Glover, 'Animal and Cultural Transfers', 387–89.

6.5.2. Gold finger rings from Cambodia

Two gold finger rings bearing images of horses from mortuary contexts at Prohear (ព្រៃសារ), Prey Veng province, Cambodia, were retrieved as part of rescue excavation efforts following the looting of the site (Figure 6.8).⁷⁵¹ One shows a horse-rider holding an uncertain object in an upraised hand and moving left to right, while the other is of a horse only, moving right to left. The horse's posture with the foreleg furthest from the viewer raised is clear on the

first example but possibly also occurs on the second. The first ring was from burial 18, associated with Phase II which was radiocarbon dated using associated charcoal and bone samples to c.150 BCE – c.100 CE.⁷⁵² The second ring is typologically associated with the

same archaeological phase at the site.⁷⁵³ Archaeometallurgical analysis of the horse-rider ring using LA-ICP-MS suggests a non-Southeast Asian source for its

gold, with a palladium-platinum ratio and silver composition distinct from other sampled materials.⁷⁵⁴ The composition is comparable to gold objects found at sites in coastal northern Bali where other excavated materials, including a Kharoṣṭhī-inscribed ceramic sherd, suggest involvement in the maritime trade network linking to South Asia.⁷⁵⁵ Stylistically, the horse-rider ring has been compared to examples from Saka-



Figure 6.8 Two gold finger rings with horse imagery from Prohear, Cambodia. Upper left image not to scale. Photographs: (upper left) reproduced from Reinecke et al, *First Golden Civilization of Cambodia*, Fig.25, with the permission of Andreas Reinecke; (lower left, and right) reproduced from Reinecke et al, *First Golden Age of Cambodia*, Fig.68, with the permission of Andreas Reinecke (lower left) and Seng Sonetra (right).

⁷⁵¹ Andreas Reinecke, Laychour Vin, and Sonetra Seng, *The First Golden Age of Cambodia: Excavation at Prohear* (Bonn: Andreas Reinecke, 2009), 85–87.

⁷⁵² *Ibid.*, 85 & 99–102. A direct date for burial 18 is not in the available literature.

⁷⁵³ *Ibid.* The second ring was retrieved after having been sold.

⁷⁵⁴ Sandra Schlosser et al., 'Early Cambodian Gold and Silver from Prohear: Composition, Trace Elements and Gilding', *Journal of Archaeological Science* 39 (2012): 2881 & 2886; Andreas Reinecke, 'Prohear, Kambodscha: Eine Benchmark für das frühe Goldhandwerk in Südostasien', *e-Forschungsberichte des Deutschen Archäologischen Institut* 2014, no. 1 (2014): 76.

⁷⁵⁵ Calo et al., 'Sembiran and Pacung', 391–93.

Parthian strata at Taxila in northwest India, which is contemporary with Prohear Phase II, and to material from Bactria and West Asia.⁷⁵⁶ The postural iconography with one raised foreleg compares with examples from contemporary Mediterranean and West Asian material, including the intaglio discussed next, considered to be of Roman origin.⁷⁵⁷

Mortuary practices suggest many of the Prohear Phase II inhumations represent a social elite culturally connected with southern China or northern Vietnam, and bioarchaeological analysis has identified that at least some of them were immigrants. High status grave goods were found including gold, silver and semi-precious stone jewellery, a bronze 'bowl' and bell considered imports from the north, along with many bronze drums and the practice of placing the deceased's head inside the drum – a practice that has only non-local parallels, in southern China, and bronze drums are understood as elite material culture in late prehistoric Southeast Asia.⁷⁵⁸ The importance of the horse in southern China is of course relevant also.⁷⁵⁹ This archaeological phase saw a shift in burial orientation, something understood to relate to a change in belief system.⁷⁶⁰ Based on these observed cultural changes, the excavators suggested that people had migrated from the north and integrated with the local population in southern Cambodia, perhaps escaping contemporary geopolitical conflict due to Han Chinese expansionism.⁷⁶¹ Immigration of some individuals has been confirmed through strontium and oxygen isotope analysis of teeth, but a precise origin has not yet been determined, and burial 18 was not part of this bioarchaeological investigation.⁷⁶² Nonetheless, the context for the horse imagery has been very clearly shown to be high status objects from an elite cemetery, where cultural connections with southern China or northern Vietnam are evident and some of the population had immigrated. The horse-rider ring has archaeometallurgical and

⁷⁵⁶ Reinecke, Vin, and Seng, *First Golden Age of Cambodia*, 87; Schlosser et al., 'Early Cambodian Gold and Silver from Prohear', 2878; Calo et al., 'Sembiran and Pacung', 392–93.

⁷⁵⁷ Borell, Bellina, and Boonyarit, 'Contacts between the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula and the Mediterranean World', 103 & fns. 8 & 9.

⁷⁵⁸ Reinecke, Vin, and Seng, *First Golden Age of Cambodia*, 46–47, 70, 97–98 & 139–68.

⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 168.

⁷⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 39–41 & 139–45; Simone Kraus et al., 'The Bioanthropology of the Early Iron Age Site of Prohear (Cambodia)', *Zeitschrift Für Archäologie Außereuropäischer Kulturen* 4 (2012): 107–9.

⁷⁶¹ Reinecke, Vin, and Seng, *First Golden Age of Cambodia*, 166–67.

⁷⁶² Kraus et al., 'Bioanthropology of the Early Iron Age Site of Prohear', 121, have shown 7 non-local individuals in a sample size of 21.

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Figure 6.9 Sardonyx intaglio from Bang Kluai Nok, Thailand (left), and impression (right). Dimensions not available. Reproduced from Borell, Bellina, and Boonyarit, 'Contacts between the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula and the Mediterranean World', Figs.7a-b.

stylistic connections with distant locations including Saka-Parthian period northwestern India.

6.5.3. Sardonyx intaglio from Thailand

A sardonyx intaglio excavated near Phu Khao Thong, Peninsular Thailand, shows another horse-rider (Figure 6.9).⁷⁶³ The iconography is comparable to the first ring from Prohear with the foreleg furthest from the viewer raised, and the intaglio's likely original context set into a ring reinforces the comparison. While the intaglio's horse-rider is carved moving right to left, the impression it leaves when pressed into a pliable surface, as with a seal, means the horse-rider may also be understood as moving left to right.

Consideration of the manner of the carving of the horse's tail and the modelling of its body have drawn comparisons with Roman cutting techniques of the late-1st century

⁷⁶³ Chaisuwan Boonyarit, 'Early Contacts between India and the Andaman Coast in Thailand from the Second Century BCE to Eleventh Century CE', in *Early Interactions between South and Southeast Asia: Reflections on Cross-Cultural Exchange*, ed. Pierre-Yves Manguin, A. Mani, and Geoff Wade (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2011), 89 & 92; Borell, Bellina, and Boonyarit, 'Contacts between the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula and the Mediterranean World', 103. The authors also record a small carnelian intaglio showing 'a galloping animal', also excavated at Phu Khao Thong. This is probably the intaglio reproduced by Tanmanee, 'Horses in Thailand from archaeological evidence', 52; unfortunately, the image quality is not sufficient to confirm her horse identification, especially as the head looks short and the posture seems iconographically unusual. Another carnelian intaglio published by Sheila E. Hoey Middleton, *Intaglios, Cameos, Rings and Related Objects from Burma and Java*, BAR International Series 1405 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2005), 72, presumably found near Pyay, Myanmar, shows an animal that has been identified as possibly a recumbent horse. It has not been included in this study because it does not have an archaeological provenance, and no date is suggested.

BCE to early-1st century CE.⁷⁶⁴ Iconographically, a horse with rider and one raised foreleg is known in Roman art and related traditions in West and Central Asia.⁷⁶⁵ The intaglio's archaeological context is known to have been a significant port area on the western side of the Thai-Malay Peninsula, where merchants travelling across the Bay of Bengal could connect with trans-peninsular portage routes to the Gulf of Thailand.⁷⁶⁶ Other material excavated in the Phu Khao Thong area exemplifies the site's nature, including Roman material such as intaglios with identifiable mythological figures, a cameo and glass, and Indian material including ceramic sherds with Brāhmī script, rouletted ware sherds, and beads with Indic symbols, and gold and bronze imitations of Roman coins used as pendants.⁷⁶⁷ There is also evidence of a local bead-manufacturing industry. Current interpretations suggest that, at this date, there were unlikely to be merchants of Mediterranean origin here, but rather that the Roman material originated with Indo-Roman trade, now well-established archaeologically for southern Indian ports at this date.⁷⁶⁸ Instead, it has been suggested that objects of this kind may have been dropped by their Indian owners while on trade voyages, or perhaps utilised in a gift-giving context with local elites on the Thai-Malay Peninsula. The sardonyx intaglio may therefore either be a lost item that was never used by a Southeast Asian person, or featured as an exotic prestige item in a local context of elite display of their connectedness with long-distance networks. The large number of intaglios of Mediterranean-type design from the area are perhaps more suggestive of the latter. There is little doubt that the sardonyx intaglio is of distant origin in its excavated context, so that it should be understood as a further example of horse imagery associated with a distant location and high status.

⁷⁶⁴ Borell, Bellina, and Boonyarit, 'Contacts between the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula and the Mediterranean World', 103.

⁷⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 113 fns. 7 & 8, cite Roman comparators of late-1st century BCE to 1st century CE dates, and a contemporary Persian example, at this date Parthian.

⁷⁶⁶ Paul Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese: Studies in the Historical Geography of the Malay Peninsula before A.D. 1500* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1961), xxvi–xxvii; Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 37–38; Boonyarit, 'Early Contacts between India and the Andaman Coast', 105–9. However, note the differing opinion of Michel Jacq-Hergoualc'h, *The Malay Peninsula: Crossroads of the Maritime Silk Road (100 BC-1300 AD)*, trans. Victoria Hobson (Leiden, Boston & Köln: Brill, 2002), 35–37 & 44–45, on the actual use of these routes.

⁷⁶⁷ Boonyarit, 'Early Contacts between India and the Andaman Coast', 85–95; Borell, Bellina, and Boonyarit, 'Contacts between the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula and the Mediterranean World', 98–110.

⁷⁶⁸ Borell, Bellina, and Boonyarit, 'Contacts between the Upper Thai-Malay Peninsula and the Mediterranean World', 112. On trade contacts between the Roman Empire and southern Indian ports, mediated by people of multiple ethnicities, see Ray, *Winds of Change*, 64–86.

6.5.4. Bronze pull toy from Myanmar

A cast bronze horse, 14.5 cm high and mounted on a bronze four-wheeled oval base, was inspected by archaeologists on two separate occasions in c.2003 before entering a private collection, and its authenticity appears to have been accepted (Figure 6.10).⁷⁶⁹ With wheels able to turn on axles and a loop fixed to the front presumably for attaching a cord, which appears to be part of the original production, the object has reasonably been interpreted as a pull toy.⁷⁷⁰

It is said to have been found at the Iron Age Samon cemetery site at Myauk Mee Kon (မြောက်မီးကုန်း), a cultural association determined

by archaeologists from materials looted at the site.⁷⁷¹ Initial comparisons of this material with that from controlled excavations suggested a late Iron Age context for the pull toy, although no object comparators are known from other Samon sites.⁷⁷² Subsequent identification and interviewing of the ‘discoverers’ of the pull toy has enabled a more informed consideration of its original context.⁷⁷³ It had apparently come from a burial context and been deposited over the pelvis of the deceased, having been first deconstructed because one wheel was located near the knees. Reportedly found in the same burial were three iron spearheads, a bronze vessel with figurative

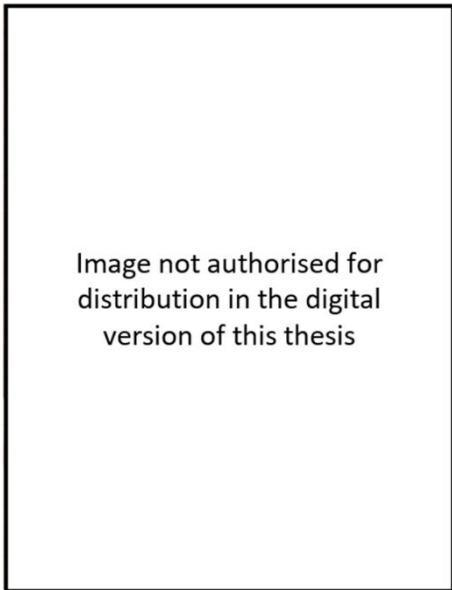


Figure 6.10 Bronze pull toy horse said to be from Myauk Mee Kon. Reproduced from Coupey, ‘Myauk Mee Gon horse’, Fig.134.

⁷⁶⁹ Descriptions are provided by Hudson, ‘The Origins of Bagan’, 85, Anne-Sophie Coupey, ‘The Myauk Mee Gon Horse’, in *Ywa Htin: Iron Age Burials in the Samon Valley, Upper Burma*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2007), 60, and Jean-Pierre Pautreau, ‘Copper-Based Alloy Artefacts’, in *Ywa Htin: Iron Age Burials in the Samon Valley, Upper Burma*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2007), 59–61. See Coupey’s description for metrical information and multiple views of the object. It is included in the present study on the basis of the serious treatment given by these scholars despite the issues surrounding its provenance, and also in Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*, 110 & 237.

⁷⁷⁰ Hudson, ‘The Origins of Bagan’, 85.

⁷⁷¹ Hudson, 88; Pautreau, ‘Copper-Based Alloy Artefacts’, 61; Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*, 110–11. See also Section 6.3.3.

⁷⁷² Pautreau, ‘Copper-Based Alloy Artefacts’, 59–61.

⁷⁷³ Jean-Pierre Pautreau, ‘The Grave with the Wheeled Bronze Horse from Myauk Mee Gon’, in *Excavations in the Samon Valley: Iron Age Burials in Myanmar*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau, Anne-Sophie Coupey, and Aung Aung Kyaw (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2010), 288.

features recalling an apparently Roman *oenochoe* retrieved from nearby Pyawbwe (ပျော်ဘွယ်), and large numbers of carnelian and glass beads including 83 carnelian beads whose description recalled a bead design found at Śrī Kṣetra. A very late Iron Age or early historic period date, contemporary with early Pyu culture elsewhere, was therefore suggested.⁷⁷⁴ This conclusion was supported by the identification of further material originally from Myauk Mee Kon, including gold beads bearing symbols found on Pyu coins.⁷⁷⁵ A date range of c.200 BCE – c.500 CE would perhaps conservatively accommodate these features and the differing dates for early Pyu culture.⁷⁷⁶ Other material reported from Myauk Mee Kon has long-distance affinities or is suggestive of a high social status, including carnelian and gold beads, bronze socketed axes, and bronze gourd-shaped mouth organs comparable to *sheng* from Yunnan and China.⁷⁷⁷ This provides some context, albeit limited, for understanding the pull toy as potentially having come from a c.200 BCE - c.500 CE high status cultural context connected with long-distance networks. Indeed, Myauk Mee Kon's location near Beinnaka (ဘိန္နက), a settlement site with both Samon and Pyu cultural phases, is near a trade route between the Samon valley and Yunnan.⁷⁷⁸

One scholar suggested, before the description of the burial context was obtained, that the pull toy was an import from Yunnan or even China, or perhaps 'inspired by' material encountered through this connection, dating to the end-3rd century BCE – early-3rd century CE.⁷⁷⁹ This interpretation was perhaps influenced by known

⁷⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 287–88.

⁷⁷⁵ Jean-Pierre Pautreau, 'Gold and Silver', in *Excavations in the Samon Valley: Iron Age Burials in Myanmar*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau, Anne-Sophie Coupey, and Aung Aung Kyaw (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2010), 306.

⁷⁷⁶ See the discussion in Section 6.3.3.

⁷⁷⁷ Hudson, 'The Origins of Bagan', 88; Pautreau, 'Copper-Based Alloy Artefacts', 61; Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*, 110–11.

⁷⁷⁸ Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*, 110 & 123.

⁷⁷⁹ Hudson, 'The Origins of Bagan', 85, 95 & 260; Bob Hudson, 'A Pyu Homeland in the Samon Valley: A New Theory of the Origins of Myanmar's Early Urban System', in *Myanmar Historical Commission Conference Proceedings, 12-14 January 2005*, vol. 2 (Yangon: Universities Historical Research Centre, 2005), 63; Bob Hudson, 'Thoughts on Some Chronological Markers of Myanmar Archaeology in the Pre-Urban Period', *Yangon University Archaeology Journal*, 2005, 2–3. Wade, 'Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE', 165, notes Hudson's unclear distinction between Yunnan and China, inappropriate for Hudson's suggested date for the object. Wade also notes that Chinese texts record the continued acquisition of Yunnan horses by the Wu kingdom of post-Han China (222-280 CE), alongside continued bronzeworking in the Yunnan area, and suggests Hudson's date should be extended to the later 3rd century CE if his interpretation of a Yunnan connection for the bronze horse pull toy is correct.

relationships between Samon and Dian bronzeworking traditions, and the availability of horses in Yunnan and China. However, the stylistic comparison to Qin period terracotta horses in the famous burial deposit of Qin Shihuangdi does not articulate what is stylistically similar, and would not logically support the Han period date ultimately proposed.⁷⁸⁰ The Myauk Mee Kon and Qin horses are very different object types, produced at different scales in different materials and only the former has a base. The Qin comparators are military animals, being saddled cavalry horses and chariot horses shown without harnesses, with tails braided or clubbed to avoid entanglement in the wheels,⁷⁸¹ all features absent in the bronze horse. However, they share the static posture standing on all four hooves, facing directly forward with lowered tail. The bodily proportions of the Myauk Mee Kon horse, in the absence of a rider, certainly support the suggestion of a smaller animal than the Central Asian warhorse,⁷⁸² but small horse breeds were noted as present in South Asia as well as Yunnan. Similarity of body proportions between the Myauk Mee Kon and Qin horses cannot be considered a stylistic feature if both are understood as naturalistic representations of smaller horses. There therefore appears to be little that specifically connects these horses.

More satisfactory comparators are apparent in South Asian material. Wheeled animals are well-represented from early historic archaeological contexts in three basic designs, two of which are clearly identifiable as pull toys with cord attachment.⁷⁸³ Four-wheeled terracotta animals, including horses, with the axles passing through holes in the lower ends of the limbs, are known from especially Mauryan but also Kuṣāṇa period contexts (Figure 6.11).⁷⁸⁴ A copper wheeled leopard of this design was

⁷⁸⁰ Hudson compares to the Qin terracotta military horses shown in Wen Fong, ed., *The Great Bronze Age of China: An Exhibition from the People's Republic of China* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art & Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1980), 342–43 & 346–47.

⁷⁸¹ Stanley J. Olsen, 'The Horse in Ancient China and Its Cultural Influence in Some Other Areas', *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia* 140, no. 2 (1988): 177.

⁷⁸² Coupey, 'Myauk Mee Gon Horse', 60; Pautreau, 'Copper-Based Alloy Artefacts', 61.

⁷⁸³ C. Margabandhu, *Archaeology of the Satavahana Kshatrapa Times* (Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1985), 264–65, and A. Ghosh, ed., *An Encyclopedia of Indian Archaeology, Volume 1: Subjects* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1989), 180, list lion, tiger, leopard, elephant, rhinoceros, camel, horse, fox, humped bull, cow, buffalo, ram, goat, monkey, dog, tortoise, *nāga*, fish, crocodile, peacock, parrot, dove, cock, owl, pigeon and possibly duck.

⁷⁸⁴ Four terracotta wheeled horses of this design were excavated from Mauryan period contexts including Taxila's Bhir mound, at the Purana Qila in New Delhi, and Bulandibagh at the site of Pāṭaliputra (Patna, Bihar), with a fifth of the Kuṣāṇa period from the Sirkap site at Taxila. See John Marshall, *Taxila: An Illustrated Account of the Archaeological Excavations* (Delhi, Patna & Varanasi: Motilal Banarsidass,

excavated at Nagda (Ujjain district, Madhya Pradesh) with suggested date of c.4th-3rd century BCE.⁷⁸⁵ These objects overlap in date with a push toy design seemingly more common in Bengal and Bihar, where a handle inserted into the back of two-wheeled animals reduced to head

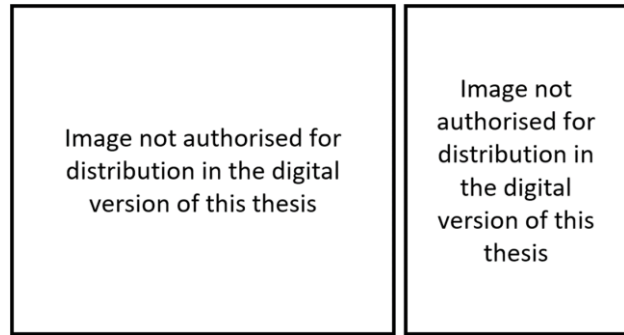


Figure 6.11 Wheeled horse toys from Taxila, Mauryan period (left), and Chandraketugarh, c.1st century BCE (right). Photographs: (left) reproduced from Marshall, *Taxila*, Vol.3 Pl.134 no.62; (right) reproduced from Bhattacharya, 'Terracotta of Bengal', p.62.

and forequarters, again including horses (Figure 6.11).⁷⁸⁶ A third design had the animal stood on a wheeled base with a loop at the front for cord attachment, as seen in three reliefs from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa and Amarāvātī in Andhra Pradesh (Figure 6.12), which have been dated to the 3rd century CE. These wheeled horses and elephants are recognisable as toys because two of the reliefs are Buddhist narrative scenes from identified stories that prominently feature children, and the third is held by a playful dwarf whose companions are dancing.⁷⁸⁷ In each case the horse has a static posture standing on all four hooves, facing directly forward with lowered tail, as with the

1951 (reprint 1975)), Vol.2 p.453 & Vol.3 Pl.134; M.N. Deshpande, ed., *Indian Archaeology 1970-71: A Review* (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1974), front cover & 8; Vimala Begley, 'The Ganga-Yamuna Basin in the First Millennium B.C.', *Expedition* 9, no. 1 (1966): 43.

⁷⁸⁵ A. Ghosh, ed., *Indian Archaeology 1955-56: A Review* (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1956), 11-19; Ghosh, *Encyclopedia of Indian Archaeology*, Vol. 1, 180.

⁷⁸⁶ Two terracotta wheeled horses of this design and of Śuṅga or Kuṣāṇa period date, have been recovered from sites in West Bengal including Chandraketugarh. See Asok K. Bhattacharya, 'Terracotta of Bengal: Shunga and Kushana', in *Indian Terracotta Sculpture: The Early Period*, ed. Pratapaditya Pal (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2002), 62, and Anwitta Dutta, 'The Cultural Significance of Early Historic Terracotta Art of West Bengal: An Ethnoarchaeological Approach' (PhD Thesis, Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute, 2013), 108 and figs. 4.18 & 7.8 (reproduced from Gautam Sengupta et al., *Eloquent Earth: Early Terracottas in the State Archaeological Museum, West Bengal*, 2007).

⁷⁸⁷ For interpretations as horse pull toys and identifications of narratives as 'Rāhula presented to his father, the Buddha' and the 'gift of dirt' from the *Aśokāvadāna*, see: Longhurst, *Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, 37-39 and Pls. IXc & XXXVb; C. Sivaramamurti, 'Amaravati Sculptures in the Madras Government Museum', *Bulletin of the Madras Government Museum* 4 (1956): 143 and Pl.V fig.31; C. Sivaramamurti, 'The Amaravati Mode of Sculpture', *Bulletin of the Madras Government Museum*, 1976, 10-11 and Pl.XXXIII; K. Krishna Murthy, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍā: A Cultural Study* (Delhi: Concept Publishing, 1977), 221 and fig.XIV – 8; J.E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, 'What Was the Purpose of the Terracotta Animal Figurines Discovered at Kondapur?', in *Kusumāñjali: New Interpretation of Indian Art & Culture*, ed. M.S. Nagaraja Rao, vol. 2 (Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1987), 369 and Pl.2; Monika Zin, 'Non-Buddhist Narrative Scenes at Nagarjunakonda', in *Changing Forms and Cultural Identity: Religious and Secular Iconographies: Papers from the 20th Conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art Held in Vienna from 4th to 9th July 2010*, ed. Deborah Klimburg-Salter and Linda Lojda, South Asian Archaeology and Art 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 80.



Figure 6.12 Representations of pull toy horses in reliefs from Amarāvātī (upper left) and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (upper right and lower left), c.3rd century CE. Photographs: (upper left) detail from railing pillar, British Museum, 1880,0709.11 © Trustees of the British Museum, licenced under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/); (upper right) detail from pillar, reproduced from Longhurst, *Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Pl.IXc, image is in the public domain, but for a photograph where the detail of the horse's hanging tail is clearer see Zin, 'Non-Buddhist Narrative Scenes', Fig.1; (middle right) detail of railing pillar, upper left, by Author; (lower left and lower right) reproduced from Longhurst, *Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Pl.XXXVb, image is in the public domain.

Myauk Mee Kon horse. The pull cord is visible in two cases. Each appears to be mounted on a rectangular base, rather than oval. There is no indication of the material, which may be terracotta, wood or metal.⁷⁸⁸ To my knowledge, no archaeological examples of such horse pull toys have been reported in South Asia,⁷⁸⁹ but an elephant

⁷⁸⁸ As noted by van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, 'Terracotta Animal Figurines Discovered at Kondapur', 369. Krishna Murthy, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍā*, 221, presumes the material to be wood or clay.

⁷⁸⁹ The comparison by Pautreau, 'Copper-Based Alloy Artefacts', 61, with the bronze elephant, rhinoceros and buffalo on bronze wheeled platforms (no horses), found at Daimabad (Ahmadnagar, Maharashtra) is extremely interesting but, as he recognises, not only do these objects lack

pull toy of this third design, 17 cm high and cast bronze, has been published.⁷⁹⁰ It has unclear provenance but an iconographic and stylistic assessment suggested it was from Śātavāhana India c.2nd-3rd century CE, a dating partly relying on a comparison to the same reliefs at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa and Amarāvātī. Significantly, these sites provide important comparators for the earliest Pyu brick architecture, including settlement walls and *stūpas*,⁷⁹¹ and the Roman period *oenochoe* from Pyawbwe suggests bronze objects reached the Samon through both Indian Ocean and Yunnan connections.⁷⁹²

This comparison does not conclusively demonstrate a South Asian origin for the Myauk Mee Kon pull toy as an imported object, especially in the absence of a physical comparator in bronze, and because the object itself is unavailable for archaeometallurgical analyses. It does, however, highlight that a non-local comparator for the combination of object type, design construction and horse postural iconography can be identified in an area known to be culturally connected with Upper Myanmar during a similar time frame. That it was a high-status object in its Samon context is likely from its unusual character, possibly imported or based on a non-local design, the quantity of bronze used in its production, and the presence of other high-status objects retrieved from the Myauk Mee Kon site and apparently from the same burial. Local production cannot be excluded, and the Hnaw Kan excavation confirms that equids were present in the Samon valley around this time.

archaeological context but also their date is greatly contested. Archaeological evidence suggests that the Daimabad site was abandoned c.1000 BCE, but metallurgical analyses highlight an unusual composition for the bronze, which in some views is more characteristic of the historical period, while others suggest aspects of the hoard are stylistically closer to Harappan material. For opinions on the conflicting evidence, see M.K. Dhavalikar, 'Daimabad Bonzes', in *Harappan Civilization: A Contemporary Perspective*, ed. Gregory L. Possehl (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1982), 362–66, Pramod Chandra, *The Sculpture of India 3000 B.C.-1300 A.D.* (Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1985), 46, and D.P. Agrawal, 'Prehistoric Copper Technology in India: A Review', in *Metallurgy in India: A Retrospective*, ed. P. Ramachandra Rao and N.G. Goswami (New Delhi: India International Publisher, 2001), 154–55. Pautreau's connection with Daimabad is additionally interesting because Coupey, 'Infant and Child Burials in the Samon Valley', 121, compares Samon infant jar burial practices to those in the vicinity of Daimabad (again, Coupey, 'Infant Jar Burials in Upper Burma', 89).

⁷⁹⁰ Douglas Barrett, 'An Early Indian Toy', *Oriental Art* 4, no. 3 (1958): 118–19.

⁷⁹¹ See Section 6.3.3.

⁷⁹² Jean-Pierre Pautreau, 'Basketwork and Metal Vases', in *Ywa Htin: Iron Age Burials in the Samon Valley, Upper Burma*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2007), 50; Emma Rambault, 'Notes Concerning a Few Copper-Base Alloy Objects from the Samon Valley', in *Excavations in the Samon Valley: Iron Age Burials in Myanmar*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau, Anne-Sophie Coupey, and Aung Aung Kyaw (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2010), 295.

6.5.5. Ivory comb from Thailand

An ivory comb from the ancient city site of Chansen (จันเสน), Nakhon Sawan province, Thailand, shows two horses on one side (Figure 6.13). They are both stallions of small stocky type, moving right to left. A row of eight motifs above them is widely interpreted as auspicious symbols following South Asian tradition, the *aṣṭamaṅgala*.⁷⁹³ The symbols are variously identified as (in sequence) *cakra* (sun or wheel) or lotus, *pūrṇaḡhaṭa* (vase of abundance), cornucopia or honeycomb, *śrīvatsa*, *cattrā* (parasol), *śaṅkha* (conch), *cauri* (flywhisk) and moon. The precise list of *aṣṭamaṅgala* varied, but were

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Figure 6.13 Drawing of ivory comb from Chansen, Thailand. Dimensions: 11 cm x 7 cm (length x height). Reproduced from Bronson & Dales, 'Preliminary Report', Fig.7.

associated with elevated social and ritual status, such as that of the *mahā-puruṣa*.⁷⁹⁴ On the other side is a *haṁsa* whose plumage merges with foliate forms. One interpretation suggested a unifying symbolism of kingship, with the heavenly *haṁsa*, the *śrīvatsa* referring to the king's power, the royal *cattrā* and *cauri* emblems, solar and lunar ancestral kingship lineages, and the horse referring to the royal *aśvamedha* ceremony.⁷⁹⁵ The *aśvamedha* centred around a single horse, which problematises the

⁷⁹³ Jean Boisselier, *Thai Painting*, trans. Janet Seligman (Tokyo, New York & San Francisco: Kodansha International, 1976), 19; Piriya Krairiksh, *Art Styles in Thailand: A Selection from National Provincial Museums* (Bangkok: Fine Arts Department, 1977), 53; Bellina, 'Formation des réseaux d'échanges', 95; Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art*, 37–38; Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, 34–35; Bellina and Glover, 'Animal and Cultural Transfers', 389–90; Krairiksh, *Roots of Thai Art*, 42–44. The excavators originally proposed a specifically Buddhist interpretation of the symbols, see Bennet Bronson and George F. Dales, 'Excavations at Chansen, 1968-1969', *Silpakorn Journal* 14, no. 1 (2513 1970): 41–58, Bennet Bronson and George F. Dales, 'Excavations at Chansen, Thailand, 1968 and 1969: A Preliminary Report', *Asian Perspectives* 15 (1972): 28–30, Bennet Bronson, 'Excavations at Chansen and the Cultural Chronology of Protohistoric Central Thailand' (PhD Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1976), 27 & 678.

⁷⁹⁴ A.L. Srivastava, 'The Śrīvatsa Symbol in Indian Art', *East and West* 29, no. 1–4 (1979): 37–38.

⁷⁹⁵ Krairiksh, *Roots of Thai Art*, 42–44.

last part of the interpretation, but horses were associated with kingship, heroism and power in Indic tradition.⁷⁹⁶

The comb was excavated from a Phase II archaeological context and radiocarbon dated using stratified charcoal, yielding a date range of c.200-c.600 CE.⁷⁹⁷ Opinion seems to favour Amarāvati as the closest comparator for the imagery's stylistic features.⁷⁹⁸ The literature records a small number of ivory, bone and horn combs from Andhra Pradesh sites of the Śātavāhana period (c.1st century BCE – 2nd century CE), but these mostly lack carved designs, except for one from Dhulikatta with *mithuna* couples, recognised as symbolically auspicious, and one from Kondapur with floral motifs, seated couple and elephant.⁷⁹⁹ Slightly more numerous are eight ivory combs from Sirkap near Taxila in northwest India from the c.1st century BCE – c.1st century CE, Dalverzin Tepe in Uzbekistan and another in Kabul Museum; this area includes Begram, where large quantities of carved ivory were discovered. Six of these combs bear auspicious imagery like the Chansen comb including foliate designs, *mithuna* (perhaps Śrī), ducks, *śaṅkha*, *simha*, elephant, and a design interpreted as either an altar, a building façade or the *vaijayantī* (banner symbolising victory).⁸⁰⁰ Interpretations vary regarding whether the Chansen comb represents a local product with Indic imagery and style or an import from South Asia, but the latter appears to have received more support.⁸⁰¹ It is possible

⁷⁹⁶ Biswas, *Horse in Early Indian Art*, 23–25 & 32; Deloche, *Horses and Riding Equipment in Indian Art*, 7 & fn.4.

⁷⁹⁷ Uncalibrated dates were originally published by Bronson and Dales, 'Preliminary Report', 25–31, and Bronson, 'Excavations at Chansen', 641–45. Calibrated dates, used here, have since been published by Andrew Barram and Ian C. Glover, 'Re-Thinking Dvaravati', in *From Homo Erectus to the Living Traditions: Choice of Papers from the 11th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists, Bougon, 25th-29th September 2006*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pautreau et al. (Chiang Mai: Siam Ratana, 2008), 180–81.

⁷⁹⁸ Bronson and Dales, 'Excavations at Chansen, 1968-1969', 43; Bronson, 'Excavations at Chansen', 26–27; Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art*, 38; Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, 35.

⁷⁹⁹ Ghosh, *Encyclopedia of Indian Archaeology, Vol. 1*, 344–46; B. Subrahmanyam and E. Siva Negi Reddy, 'Combs in Proto and Early Historic Andhra: A Study', in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 51st Session, Calcutta University, Calcutta, 1990*, ed. T.K. Venkatasubramanian (Delhi: Indian History Congress, 1990), 822–27; Moti Chandra, 'Ancient Indian Ivories', *Prince of Wales Museum Bulletin* 6 (1959 1957): 21, seems to refer to the object from Kondapur but does not identify it as a comb.

⁸⁰⁰ Chandra, 'Ancient Indian Ivories', 16–19; Ghosh, *Encyclopedia of Indian Archaeology, Vol. 1*, 344–46; Subrahmanyam and Reddy, 'Combs in Proto and Early Historic Andhra', 824; Bellina, 'Formation des réseaux d'échanges', 95–97.

⁸⁰¹ Bronson and Dales, 'Preliminary Report', 28; Krairiksh, *Art Styles in Thailand*, 53; Bennet Bronson, 'The Late Prehistory and Early History of Central Thailand with Special Reference to Chansen', in *Early South East Asia: Essays in Archaeology, History, and Historical Geography*, ed. R.B. Smith and William Watson (New York & Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1979), 331; Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art*, 38; Bellina and Glover, 'Animal and Cultural Transfers', 390.

that recent advances in the multi-isotopic analysis of elephant ivory provide a route to resolving this issue.⁸⁰² Nonetheless, the horse imagery on the Chansen comb can clearly be understood in the context of auspiciousness and a high-status object with long-distance connections and probably origin.

6.5.6. Earliest iconographic representations of horses in Southeast Asia: conclusions

These seven early representations of horses in Southeast Asia, excluding Yunnan, were shown to have been produced either outside Southeast Asia, or at sites with independent evidence for the presence of non-local people from areas where the horse was known.⁸⁰³ Therefore, these representations need not imply the presence of the horse in Southeast Asia at the time of their production. In each case, the object had a long-distance connection, and was associated with high social status. Ian Glover and Bérénice Bellina argued that the iconography of exotic animals on objects used in early Southeast Asia, contributed to local expressivity of both elite status and the prestige associated with being seen to participate in long-distance exchange networks.⁸⁰⁴ It seems likely that the associations between the horse, exoticness, prestige and elite status were already formulating through these early centuries, perhaps enhanced by the presence of some who had personally seen horses.⁸⁰⁵ The earliest imports of the horse, whenever this occurred, were therefore probably

⁸⁰² N.J. van der Merwe et al., 'Source-Area Determination of Elephant Ivory by Isotopic Analysis', *Nature* 346, no. 6286 (1990): 744–46; M.J. Rijkelijkhuizen, L.M. Kootker, and G.R. Davies, 'Multi-Isotope Analysis of Elephant Ivory Artefacts from Amsterdam: A Preliminary Provenance Study', *World Archaeology* 47, no. 3 (2015): 504–24; Ashley N. Coutu et al., 'Mapping the Elephants of the 19th Century East African Ivory Trade with a Multi-Isotope Approach', *PLoS ONE* 11, no. 10 (2016): e0163606.

⁸⁰³ Two other objects from this time frame are excluded. A ceramic sherd carved in the shape of a horse head was apparently recovered from Novaliches on Luzon and dated to c.300 CE according to Beyer and De Veyra, 'Philippine Saga', 35 & 110, but given the reported issues with Beyer's methods and the uncertainty of the object's location (see Section 6.3.2) this assertion cannot be assessed. Hudson, 'A Thousand Years before Bagan', 3 & Fig.7, interprets winged animals on a funerary urn from Beikthano site BTO-32 as horses. I agree with Thein Lwin, 'Beikthano: Summary of 2009–2010 Archaeological Excavations', trans. Elizabeth H. Moore and Htwe Htwe Win, Nalanda–Sriwijaya Centre Archaeology Unit Archaeology Report Series (Singapore: Yusof Ishak Institute, Nalanda–Sriwijaya Centre, ISEAS, 2016), 18–19, 50 & 59, that these are birds as on other early Pyu urns, but the roughly-modelled angular necks give the impression of long heads on shorter necks.

⁸⁰⁴ Bellina and Glover, 'Animal and Cultural Transfers', 387–90. However, the authors interpreted the Ban Don Ta Phet bowl B horse to indicate the animal had by then been imported. This may still prove to be so, but the subsequent discovery of the Khao Sam Kaeo bowl with griffins permits alternative interpretations.

⁸⁰⁵ As better zooarchaeological data become available, the precise time frames involved will become clearer.

already charged with its desirability and helped to drive an eagerness to engage long-distance traders to acquire them.

6.6. Iconographic representations of ‘foreigners’ with horses in early Southeast Asia

Having considered the earliest representations of horses in Southeast Asia, this section considers the earliest examples where foreign-dressed figures appear with them on locally-produced objects. Local production forms part of the interpretive framework in Section 3.4 for recognising local representations of ‘foreigners’. From this period, locally-produced iconographic representations of horses are increasingly common.⁸⁰⁶ There are associated ritual, military or narrative aspects to the imagery, and both large and smaller horses are represented.

6.6.1. Bronze drum from Sangeang, Indonesia

A Đông Sơn-type bronze drum from Sangeang in the Lesser Sundas, Indonesia, was collected with others in 1937 at the site of ancient graves where they were still used

⁸⁰⁶ Those evincing iconographic appropriation or a theriomorphic or fantastical character are not discussed. These include a series of terracotta plaques from the 6th-7th century Pyu structures of Ma Thi Kya Kon and Kin Mon Gyon at Śrī Kṣetra, showing fantastical animals with equid body, erect mane and toed feet, with sword-wielding riders; if real horses contributed to this imagery the relative size of the riders suggests a smaller horse breed; for these see: G.H. Luce, *Phases of Pre-Pagán Burma: Languages and History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), Pl. 41; Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*, 193–94; Galloway, ‘Sri Ksetra Museum Collection Inventory’, 280, 314–16 & 452–84. Galloway, *ibid.*, 273, shows a large terracotta relief of a horse inside an architectural fragment from the Khin Ba mound, but there are presently no suggested iconographic contexts, and no indications of the animal’s size. Jacq-Hergoualc’h, *Malay Peninsula*, 228 & Fig. 94, discusses a c.7th-century bronze presentation bowl or censer, possibly from Malaysia, with a Buddhist narrative scene with horse-riders, but it was possibly imported from South Asia. Lê Thị Liên, ‘Hindu Deities in Southern Vietnam’, 419 & 423, shows two Hindu deities with horses on gold foil foundation deposits from Cát Tiên in southern Vietnam, dated to the 4th-8th century, but these relate to Hindu iconography from South Asia. A c.6th-century pre-Angkorian icon of horse-headed Kalkin was found at Kuk Trap, see: Nadine Dalsheimer, *Les collections du Musée national de Phnom Penh: l’art du Cambodge ancien* (Paris: Magellan & Cie & École française d’Extrême-Orient, 2001), 51–52; Guy, *Lost Kingdoms*, 149–51. Another unprovenanced example c.7th-8th century is shown in: Robert L. Brown, ‘An Aesthetic Encounter: Khmer Art from Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam’, *Orientalism* 42, no. 3 (2011): 53. Two examples with little provenance information are shown in Michel Tranet, *Sambaur-Prei-Kuk: Monuments d’Içanavarma I (615-628)*, vol. 1 (1995-1996) (Phnom Penh: Travail d’Inventaire Finance par la Fondation Toyota, 1997), 413, along with a horse head of which the details are unclear. Tanmanee, ‘Horses in Thailand from archaeological evidence’, 53–56 & 120–22, suggests horse-riders on c.7th-8th century (?) clay seals from Chansen, Nakhon Pathom and U Thong show iconographic appropriation from Indo-Greek coins with the Dioscuri, but the iconography is more varied than this as well as being almost a millennium apart. She also discusses (58-62 & 123-124) horses in Dvāravatī terracottas, stuccos and clay objects that either represent Buddhist narratives or lack iconographic context.

locally in rain-making rituals. It was recorded as being named Makalamau.⁸⁰⁷ Its long history of use adds to the possibility of having travelled from its place of production, and archaeometallurgical analysis would give information only on the ore or recycled bronze used in its production, not the site of production. However, this object type is known only in Southeast Asia, so its imagery can be understood as having been produced inside the region.

Much of Makalamau's imagery is comparable to other Đông Sơn-type bronze drums, with a central 'sun' or 'star' on the tympanum surrounded by rows of feather-headed warriors and flying birds, and more warriors on boats around the upper part of the mantle.⁸⁰⁸ Such drums were produced in the c.7th century BCE – c.3rd century CE, but Makalamau has been dated stylistically to the 2nd-3rd century CE.⁸⁰⁹ However, figures inside two of the four houses on the tympanum, and shown with horses placed around the lower mantle with elephants, have drawn attention due to their unusual dress. Two close studies of these figures have been published, by Robert Heine-Geldern and A.J. Bernet Kempers.⁸¹⁰ Heine-Geldern worked from two photographs and a description supplied by the museum's curator,⁸¹¹ which made interpretation challenging due to the unevenness of the bronze's surface producing visual artefacts in the photographs. Bernet Kempers viewed the object directly and was able to adjust his viewing angle to accommodate this. Nonetheless, their interpretations are quite

⁸⁰⁷ Robert Heine-Geldern, 'The Drum Named Makalamau', in *India Antiqua* (Leiden: Brill, 1947), 167. The description as 'Đông Sơn-type' recognises the drum's typological attributes without assuming place of production, since evidence suggests some production outside northern Vietnam; see Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums*, 5-8, for an overview of the many classification systems for bronze drums, including that of Heger, in which Makalamau is classified as Heger type I.

⁸⁰⁸ Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums*, 9–10.

⁸⁰⁹ Heine-Geldern, 'Makalamau', 174 & 178-79; Bellwood, 'Southeast Asia before History', 121–23; Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums*, 122-24. Calo also notes possible evidence for 4th-century CE production of this drum type.

⁸¹⁰ Heine-Geldern, 'Makalamau', 167–78; A.J. Bernet Kempers, *The Kettledrums of Southeast Asia: A Bronze Age World and Its Aftermath*, Modern Quarternary Research in Southeast Asia 10 (Rotterdam & Brookfield (VT): A.A. Balkema, 1988), 127–37 & 164–67.

⁸¹¹ Heine-Geldern, 'Makalamau', 167, where he says only two small sections had been illustrated so far (the two photographs published with the article), but that these were supplemented by a detailed description. His source was A.N.J. van der Hoop, *Catalogus der Praehistorische Verzameling* (Bandoeng: A.C. Nix & Co., 1941), 213–17 and Figs.62 & 63.

similar, and a summary of the relevant figures and their iconographic contexts follows.⁸¹²

The visual differentiation of the apparently foreign figures from other figures in the drum's iconography was noted by both scholars, despite the artistic technique producing little more than silhouettes. The figures inside the two houses can be understood as wearing long-sleeved, below-the-knee garments and headwear, and possibly pointed beards, while other figures outside the house appear to be naked or wearing a loincloth with hair possibly tied up in a bun (Figure 6.14). The clothed figures are interpreted as Chinese

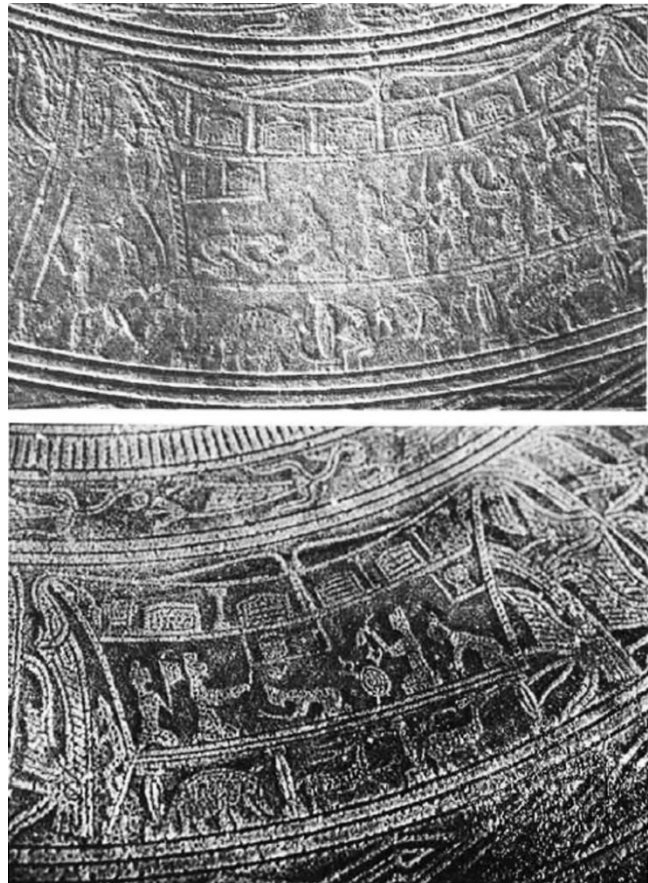


Figure 6.14 Houses with occupants represented on the tympanum of Makalamau bronze drum. Photographs reproduced from Bernet Kempers, *Kettledrums of Southeast Asia*, Pl. 4.02e-f, with the permission of A.A. Balkema Publishers; permission conveyed through Copyright Clearance Center, Inc.

through comparison to Han Chinese representations of Chinese dress, and one figure in each house is posed in a bow comparable to a *kau tau*, consistent with their apparent Chinese identity. The houses are recognised as of a Southeast Asian piled design with external steps and saddle-shaped roof, animals underneath and objects in compartments inside the house. There are clearly several visual indications of difference and geographical association here.

The figures with the horses (Figure 6.15) were interpreted as Kuṣāṇa warriors by Heine-Geldern, an interpretation followed by other commentators since,⁸¹³ including

⁸¹² The following section summarises the similar interpretations of Heine-Geldern, 167–78, and Bernet Kempers, *Kettledrums of Southeast Asia*, 127–37 & 164–67, without footnoting every detail.

⁸¹³ Henri Deydier, 'Notes sur un tambour de bronze conservé au Musée de Batavia', *Bulletin de la Société des Études Indochinoises* 24, no. 3 (1949): 53–56; Ray, *Winds of Change*, 38 & 110; Bellwood, 'Southeast Asia before History', 123; R.A. Donkin, *Between East and West: The Moluccas and the Traffic in Spices up to the Arrival of Europeans* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2003), 144–46; Wade,



Figure 6.15 Representation of horse and warriors from mantle of Makalamau bronze drum. Reproduced from Bernet Kempers, *Kettledrums of Southeast Asia*, Pl. 4.02n, with the permission of A.A. Balkema Publishers; permission conveyed through Copyright Clearance Center, Inc.

Bernet Kempers's ultimate conclusion.⁸¹⁴ However, on this issue, Heine-Geldern's interpretation was potentially impacted by working from photographs and possibly influenced by the *Liangshu* account of the Wu envoys Kang Tai and Zhu Ying meeting a Muruṇḍa envoy in Funan while seeking horses in c.245, which account he discusses. He saw differently-dressed figures to those in the house he had a photograph of, wearing tight-sleeved, knee-length coats that flared below the belt, and high boots or leggings/trousers, which recalled the profile and stance of South Asian portrait figures of Kuṣāṇa rulers. Their headwear was interpreted as either a 'Scythian cap' or mitre (rider) and helmet with plume tubes but no plumes (standing). Heine-Geldern's photograph is less clear for the single standing figure in the house, so their flared profile is less distinct (Figure 6.16), and in the other house, which Heine-Geldern could not view, is at least one figure with identical headwear to the horse-rider (Figure 6.14).⁸¹⁵ Furthermore, Chinese comparators are available for all these features. It is

'Horse in Southeast Asia Prior to 1500 CE', 165. Others, such as Miksic and Goh, *Ancient Southeast Asia*, 109, see both Chinese and Kuṣāṇa as possible identities, or possibly Śātavāhana.

⁸¹⁴ Bernet Kempers, *Kettledrums of Southeast Asia*, 167.

⁸¹⁵ Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums*, 121–22, notes the similarity between the dress of the figures in the house and accompanying the horses.

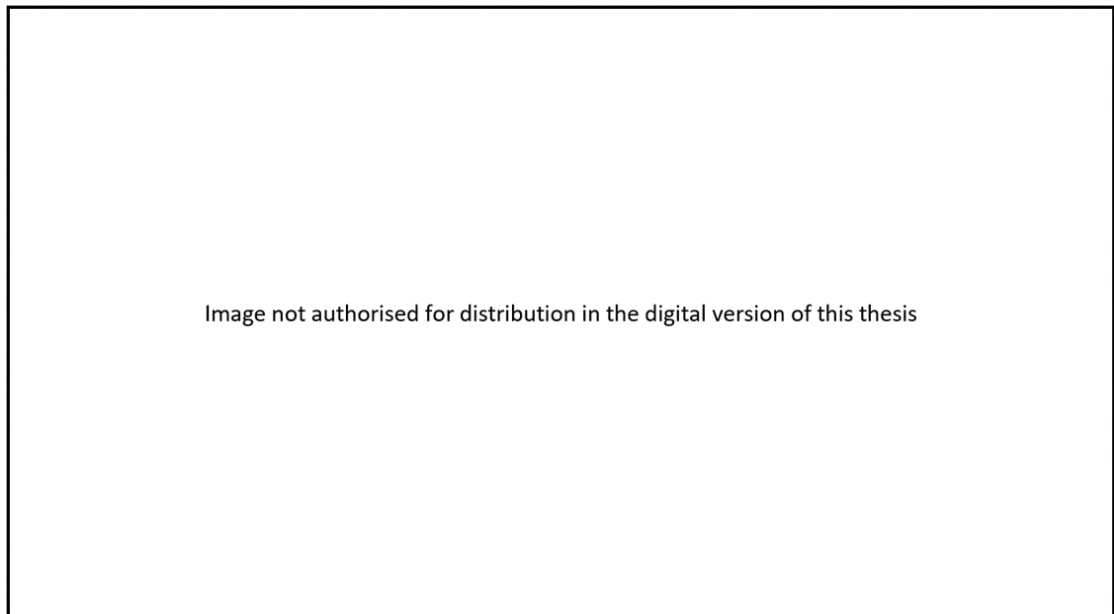


Figure 6.16 Representation of one of two houses on the tympanum of Makalamau bronze drum. Compare Bernet Kempers Pl. 402e in my Figure 6.14 (upper). Reproduced from van der Hoop, *Catalogus der Praehistorische Verzameling*, Fig.62.

well established historically that the Han Chinese military had adopted aspects of dress from the nomadic equestrian groups they characterised as ‘barbarian’, something known to Heine-Geldern too.⁸¹⁶ A similar profile is seen already with the terracotta soldiers in the tomb of Qin Shihuangdi (d.210 BCE) with knee-length robe under lamellar armour, and continues with Han and Jin period (3rd-4th century CE) *mingqi* representing soldiers, increasingly with trousers.⁸¹⁷ The headwear with raised rear portion is seen with some Han period horse-rider figures, as are flat-topped caps without this detail (Figures 6.17).⁸¹⁸ The standing soldier may wear a peaked metal helmet or protective leather headwear, both of which are known for contemporary soldiers.⁸¹⁹ The long object in the standing soldier’s proper left hand was interpreted as a lance with pennant by Heine-Geldern, in line with his Kuṣāṇa identification,⁸²⁰ but it should be understood instead as a halberd-type polearm, probably the Chinese *ji* (Figure 6.18).⁸²¹ The blade component is well-represented archaeologically in China,

⁸¹⁶ Liu, ‘Migration and Settlement of the Yuezhi-Kushan’, 285–87; Heine-Geldern, ‘Makalamau’, 172.

⁸¹⁷ Albert E. Dien, ‘A Study of Early Chinese Armor’, *Artibus Asiae* 43, no. 1–2 (1981): 7–20.

⁸¹⁸ See Donald B. Wagner, *Iron and Steel in Ancient China* (Leiden, New York & Köln: Brill, 1996), Fig. 4.36, and Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums*, Fig. 2.62. A wooden horse-rider figure apparently excavated at Yandai Mountain, Yizheng, Jiangsu province, also has this headwear.

⁸¹⁹ Dien, ‘Early Chinese Armor’, 18–19.

⁸²⁰ Heine-Geldern, ‘Makalamau’, 170.

⁸²¹ Bernet Kempers, *Kettledrums of Southeast Asia*, 166, suggested the possible interpretation of halberd, but this did not change his conclusion as to their identity.



Image not authorised for distribution
in the digital version of this thesis

Figure 6.17 Han period representations of horse-riders, from Xilin, Guangxi province (left) and Leitai, Gansu province (right). Photographs: (left) reproduced from Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums*, Fig.2.62, with the permission of the author; (right) reproduced from Wagner, *Iron and Steel in Ancient China*, Fig. 4.36.

and is seen in Chinese representations of its own military personnel including cavalry (Figure 6.17).⁸²² It seems more likely that, rather than relating to Kuṣāṇa horse-traders, the unusual Makalamau imagery relates to Chinese military presence in Southeast Asia.⁸²³

From a methodological perspective, it is notable that the interpretations of Heine-Geldern and Bernet Kempers both overtly refer to the differentiation of apparently local and foreign figures by their dress, rather than simply a direct interpretation of the latter. The profiles formed by lower garments, sleeves and headwear visually and semiotically differentiate them, despite being silhouettes. The weapon held indicated a geographical association. The representation of an unfamiliar custom, the *kau tau*, can be considered an example of how perceived cultural difference can form part of represented identity. However, the figures are represented in a Southeast Asian location, as indicated by the Southeast Asian type house, which has been reconfirmed by other commentators.⁸²⁴

⁸²² Wagner, *Iron and Steel in Ancient China*, 182–91.

⁸²³ Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums*, 122. The Kuṣāṇa horse-trader interpretation is followed by those agreeing with Heine-Geldern's identification as Kuṣāṇa; see footnote 813.

⁸²⁴ Roxana Waterson, *The Living House: An Anthropology of Architecture in South-East Asia* (Singapore, Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 18–19; Per Sørensen, 'Kettledrums of Heger Type I: Some Observations', in *Southeast Asian Archaeology 1986: Proceedings of the First Conference of the*

Heine-Geldern and Bernet Kempers both mention the idea of the artist's unfamiliarity with the horse as explaining its unnaturalistic size, feathery tail and beak-like muzzle, although inadequate artistic skill is also suggested.⁸²⁵ This can be contextualised against earlier discussions of unfamiliarity and conceptual foreignness, given the drum's early date when horses were less commonly seen in Southeast Asia. The

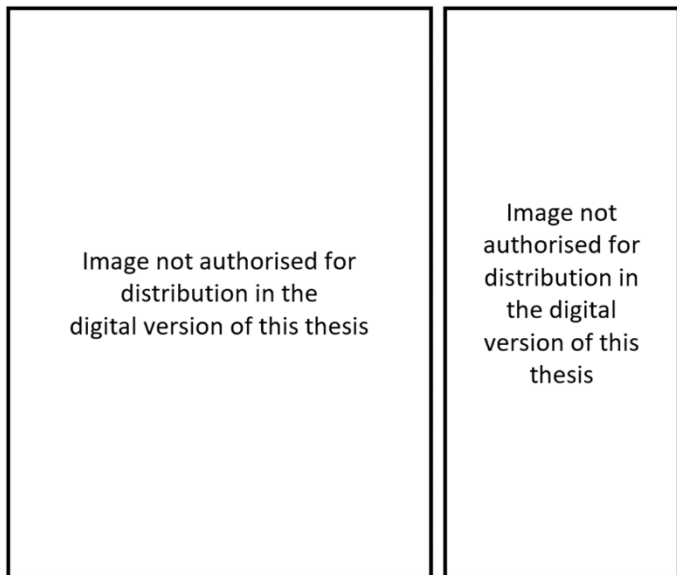


Figure 6.18 Left: wooden figure of guard with halberd, excavated at tomb no.167, Fenghuangshan, Hubei province; Han period. Right: iron halberd-heads, excavated at grave M44, Xiadu, Hebei province; 3rd century BCE. Reproduced from Wagner, *Iron and Steel in Ancient China*, Figs.4.23 and 4.37.

horse's tail is unusual even among ungulates (hoofed mammals) because long hair is distributed along its entire length, so it may have seemed strangely feather-like. There is clearly some stylisation in shape of the neck and head too. Any exaggeration of the animal's size would be explicable due to unfamiliarity – however, the position of the rider's feet at the level of the belly is consistent with representations of Central Asian warhorses. These animals were acquired overland by Han China for their military,⁸²⁶ and their subsequent acquisition through maritime networks was the motivation behind Kang Tai and Zhu Ying's mission to Funan. These provide potential historical frameworks, based on documentary evidence, for understanding the co-presence of Central Asian warhorses and Chinese military figures in a Southeast Asian context – the context being a Đông Sơn-type bronze drum, and the Southeast Asian location represented in the house.

The Southeast Asian location of Makalamau's production, and perhaps some geographical context for the figures, is not known, but studies of typological clusters of drums based on aspects of form, chronology and technology, offer a route for

Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe, ed. Ian C. Glover and Emily Glover, BAR International Series 561 (Oxford: BAR, 1990), 197.

⁸²⁵ Heine-Geldern, 'Makalamau', 170; Bernet Kempers, *Kettledrums of Southeast Asia*, 165.

⁸²⁶ Creel, 'Role of the Horse in Chinese History', 659–65.

investigating this.⁸²⁷ Such research suggests Makalamau is part of a cluster linking eastern Indonesia with northern Vietnam; another of the Indonesian drums in the same cluster has a Chinese inscription apparently incorporated at the time of casting, potentially indicating its manufacture in northern Vietnam.⁸²⁸ Studies of the house architecture have suggested there are some Indonesian features but also that there are other drums found in mainland contexts with a similar house type.⁸²⁹ The extensive connectedness of the long-distance exchange networks makes the research challenging.

The association of the horse with high status objects seen in the previous section appears with Makalamau also. Bronze drums are recognised to have been objects monopolised by Southeast Asian elites, whether appearing as a burial deposit or used ritually during life.⁸³⁰ The horses may have a multivalent symbolic significance because they are clearly associated with foreignness and have a military character, several being saddled and with soldiers, but they are also integrated with the elephants around the lower mantle, which are not caparisoned like war animals.

6.6.2. Terracotta plaques, Kyontu, Myanmar

A series of terracotta plaques recovered from Kyontu (ကျုံတူ), near Bago, Lower Myanmar, show a range of subjects including horse-riders in combat, musicians with dancers, lions and elephants trampling human figures, or bulls seemingly in a family unit.⁸³¹ Their original architectural context embedded at intervals in a brick wall is reconstructed from an archive photograph of two plaques *in situ* in an excavated section, the structure having apparently been a stupa.⁸³² Their meanings are not

⁸²⁷ Calo, *Trails of Bronze Drums*, 10–30 & 107–26.

⁸²⁸ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁸²⁹ Waterson, *The Living House*, 18; Sørensen, 'Kettledrums', 197.

⁸³⁰ Bellwood, 'Southeast Asia before History', 122–23.

⁸³¹ Luce, *Phases of Pre-Pagán Burma*, Pls. 77–81; Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*, 194–98; Donald M. Stadtner, *Sacred Sites of Burma: Myth and Folklore in an Evolving Spiritual Realm* (Bangkok: River Books, 2011), 153; Donald M. Stadtner, 'Roundel with Figures', in *Buddhist Art of Myanmar*, ed. Sylvia Fraser-Lu and Donald M. Stadtner (New York & New Haven: Asia Society & Yale University Press, 2015), 110–11. During fieldwork in November 2015, this material was stored at the National Museum of Myanmar in Naypyitaw, Bago Archaeological Museum, Shwemawdaw Pagoda Museum in Bago, and Kyontu Pagoda.

⁸³² Luce, *Phases of Pre-Pagán Burma*, Pl.77; Stadtner, 'Roundel', 110.



Figure 6.19 Terracotta plaques from Kyontu, near Bago, Lower Myanmar; dimensions: c.55 cm (height & width). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgments to Kyontu Pagoda and National Museum of Myanmar, Naypyitaw.

entirely clear, but it is suggested the imagery may contain secular subject matter.⁸³³ Their dating is also not yet clear, but estimations based on stylistic affinities with South Asian material, and typological considerations of other material culture from the same area, suggest dates in the 5th-8th century CE.⁸³⁴ It is on this basis that those with horses (Figure 6.19) are included here.

The horses are large, based on the horse-riders' feet being at the level of the horses' bellies. They therefore appear to have a Central Asian association. Sufficient detail survives on a plaque in Kyontu Pagoda that bridle components are identifiable, namely the noseband, cheek pieces, headband, headpiece, throatlatch and reins, plus a less common feature in the face strap between noseband and headband (Figure 6.20).⁸³⁵ There is a panache or tied-up forelock between the ears, a strap with bells around the neck, a rounded saddle with grips secured in position by a breast strap, breeching and girth strap, but stirrups are noticeably absent. These details provide some confidence

⁸³³ Stadtner, 'Roundel', 110.

⁸³⁴ Moore, *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*, 194–98; Stadtner, 'Roundel', 110.

⁸³⁵ See Deloche, *Horses and Riding Equipment in Indian Art*, Figs. 4c & 10c-f for face straps.



Figure 6.20 Details of horse gear on terracotta plaque from Kyontu. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgment to Kyontu Pagoda.

in the art's naturalism and tend to support the plaques' early date based on parallels with representations at Sāñcī, Amarāvātī and Ajañṭā.

There is nothing about the figures to necessarily suggest a non-Southeast Asian origin, but of great importance is the implied presence of warhorses in early Myanmar. The vicinity of Kyontu is reachable by boat from the Gulf of Martaban. The plaques show clear compositional structuring in representing the defeat of an enemy Other, who is differentiated in appearance (Figure 6.21). The victorious Self with hair in tight curls and bunched at the sides, possibly wears protective clothing on the upper body and uses the sword. They are contrasted with the trampled Other with loose, long hair and straps across the back, and using the bow. Warriors have been knocked from their horses, but the structuring of superior Self and downtrodden Other is clearly conveyed.

The importance of these plaques for the present case study is the military role of the horse and its relationship with imagery of superior status. It seems to mirror the 7th-century geopolitical significance of the horse through its role in the cavalry in Zhenla and the Tuohan and Dvāravatī requests for horses from Tang China.⁸³⁶



Figure 6.21 Details of combatants differentiated by dress and weapons. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgment to Kyontu Pagoda.

6.6.3. Pre-Angkorian *torāṇa*, Cambodia and Thailand

These objects were discussed in greater detail in Section 5.3 but are noted again here to bring them into the context of representations of horses in early Southeast Asia. The horse-riders were interpreted as Maruts associated with Indra but to also possess metaphorical connotations relating to the military and kingship, consistent with the military and elite status aspects of horses on Makalamau and the Kyontu plaques. Occasional horse-riders were noted to be dressed in foreign clothing, raising the interpretive question of whether this reflected the presence of some foreigners in pre-Angkorian society, active in horse-related roles due to the necessary importation of these military animals, or whether iconographic or conceptual associations between horses and this type of dress in South Asia led to its application to Maruts in the novel pre-Angkorian iconographic composition. Other objects discussed in Section 6.6 provide additional material for consideration alongside this aspect of the *torāṇa* arch iconography.

A range of horse sizes appear to be represented (Figure 6.22), which is of uncertain significance, but the extreme differences may suggest varying supply of different

⁸³⁶ See Section 5.3.6.



Figure 6.22 Horses on pre-Angkorian Indra-Maruts *torāṇa* arches; clockwise from upper left: unprovenanced, in Kompong Thom Provincial Museum (ñ.72); Prasat Trapeang Roleak, Sambor Prei Kuk (ñ.3320); Prasat Phnom Thom, Kompong Cham; Wat Sopheas, Kompong Cham; N7, Sambor Prei Kuk, in Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Area (423); S7, Sambor Prei Kuk, in Guimet Museum (MG 18853). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Kompong Thom Provincial Museum, the Sambor Prei Kuk Conservation Project, and Guimet Museum, Paris.

breeds of horses. There are interpretive issues for judging horse size because of the rider's position with raised knees and the horse dynamically emerging from the *torāṇa*'s matrix, and sometimes damage to the object.

6.6.4. Early Dvāravatī ceramic sherd from Chansen, Thailand

A ceramic sherd excavated at Chansen shows a horse-rider wearing a cap comparable to those worn by the pre-Angkorian Maruts discussed in the previous chapter (Figures 6.23-6.24).⁸³⁷ The distinctive inclined-forward profile of this cap is semiotically contrasted with the bun behind the head of the elephant-rider. The horse is clearly

⁸³⁷ This object has appeared previously in Tanmanee, 'Horses in Thailand from archaeological evidence', 56 & 120–21, but the foreignness of the rider's dress does not appear to have been noted. It is on display at the Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Lopburi, Thailand. No accession number had been assigned at the time of fieldwork in 2015-2016.



Figure 6.23 Horse-rider on stamped ceramic sherd from Chansen, Thailand. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Lopburi.

large, shown by the rider's foot against the horse's flank, and is reconfirmed by its long neck and head which also tend to characterise larger breeds. This suggests an animal from Central Asia. Reins, and possibly part of the bridle across the cheek, are discernible. Beyond this, the small scale of the representation presumably limited the possibility of further details.

The sherd has not been directly dated but is typologically of the early Dvāravatī period c.7th century. Stamped ceramics were produced during two periods in Thailand, with a post-Dvāravatī resurgence at the Ban Bang Pun kilns in the c.14th-16th century.⁸³⁸ That this sherd is of the earlier period is suggested by its recovery at Chansen, an ancient city with its origins in late prehistory and prominence in the early Dvāravatī period, and by the presence of red and white horizontal bands at what would have been the base of the vessel's neck. This feature is not uncommon with earlier Dvāravatī

⁸³⁸ Charuek Wilaikaeo, *แหล่งเตาเผาบ้านบางปูน: โครงการ โบราณคดีประเทศไทย ฟายวิชาการ กองโบราณคดี [The Ban Bang Pun Kilns Site: An Archaeological Survey by the Archaeology Division of Thailand]* (Bangkok: Fine Arts Department, 1988).



Figure 6.24 Stamped ceramic sherd from Chansen, Thailand, showing painted horizontal bands at base of vessel neck. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Lopburi.

pottery, as with other material from Chansen and other Dvāravatī sites.⁸³⁹ Several other examples of sherds with horse-riders and elephants from stratified contexts in Chansen excavations have been published.⁸⁴⁰

As well as horses and elephants, stamped ceramic designs include lions, birds normally interpreted as swans,⁸⁴¹ figures understood to be dancers and warriors, and scroll or

⁸³⁹ Bronson and Dales, 'Preliminary Report', 37; Phasook Indrawooth, 'Ceramics from Protohistoric Sites in Central Thailand', *SPAFA Digest* 2, no. 2 (1981): 33; Phasook Indrawooth, *ดรรชนีภาชนะดินเผาสมัยทวารวดี / Index Pottery of Dvāravatī Period* (Bangkok: Department of Archaeology, Silpakorn University, 1985), 52 & Pl.13 & Fig. 27.

⁸⁴⁰ Bronson and Dales, 'Excavations at Chansen, 1968-1969', Figs. 14a-b; Bronson and Dales, 'Preliminary Report', Pl. III; Bronson, 'Excavations at Chansen', 436; Indrawooth, 'Ceramics from Protohistoric Sites in Central Thailand', 36; Indrawooth, *Index Pottery*, Pl.11 & Figs. 7, 24 & 26.

⁸⁴¹ These appear iconographically distinct to *haṃsa*.

floral designs as seen in Dvāravatī monumental contexts. Stamped designs were used on globular jars, based on the few finds complete enough to reconstruct the shape, rather than a *kendi*-type spouted vessel.⁸⁴² While a Pyu stamped ceramic tradition of auspicious symbols on burial urns was known in early Myanmar,⁸⁴³ stamped ceramics are generally considered to have been inspired by South Asian precursors.⁸⁴⁴ The function of the stamped pots in Dvāravatī culture remains unclear. The selection of motifs including horse-riders, elephants, lions and warriors would seem to suggest an elite or royal iconographic theme, but this remains to be confirmed.

6.7. Significance of the horse in early Southeast Asia

While evidence for understanding the horse's significance in early Southeast Asia is by no means extensive and, so far, lacks sufficient informative zooarchaeological material, it presents a fairly consistent picture. At an early date, possibly before the horse had been imported, its special nature may have been formulating in some Southeast Asian communities, perhaps through its appearance on imported objects or knowledge gained via long-distance interpersonal contacts. Its rarity and exoticness, resulting from its discontinuous geographical distribution in Asia, lent it a desirability comparable to other symbols of prestige and status. The horse should be understood as costly to import and costly to sustain, and probably in need of regular replenishment, so it would have functioned well in the conspicuous display of wealth and consumption. Perhaps, like the Đông Sơn-style bronze drum, the horse became a prestigious manifestation of connectedness with the widening world of late prehistory. The sight, noise and smell associated with a huge *po* arriving with horses, accompanied by people in unfamiliar dress speaking an unknown language, can only have attracted attention which conferred further status on the shipment's elite recipient. The associations between the 'foreigner', the horse and local elite status are articulated in this mental image. Even if many of the warhorses arriving in early Southeast Asia were transhipped to China, the importance that China placed on the

⁸⁴² Indrawooth, 'Ceramics from Protohistoric Sites in Central Thailand', 35–36.

⁸⁴³ Guy, *Lost Kingdoms*, 78.

⁸⁴⁴ Indrawooth, *Index Pottery*, 52–53; Bellina and Glover, 'Archaeology of Early Contact', 80–82.

horse and the huge cost it expended in acquiring them, can hardly have gone unnoticed – by the Southeast Asian *po* crews, if no-one else.

Mary Helms suggested that remote distance could take on cosmological dimensions, so that arriving foreigners may become associated with the supramundane.⁸⁴⁵ Whether this played a part in perceptions of long-distance visitors and horses in early Southeast Asia is unclear. What insights can be gained from this collection of material, suggest that the horse's ritual associations were perhaps largely informed by those in the lands the horse was imported from; already in the 5th century Devānīka could appeal to the ritual significance of the *aśvamedha* in articulating his elite status, and in the 7th century they transported divine beings in the art of Īśānapura.

However, the horse was also recognised for its practical role in warfare. Warhorses were being imported to Southeast Asia by the first half of the 3rd century and are represented in the 5th-8th century art of Myanmar, Thailand and probably Cambodia. Makalamau shows warhorses associated with the Chinese military in a Southeast Asian locale. The capped horse-riders in Zhenla and Dvāravatī visual culture of the 7th century may reflect an association between a foreign identity and a horse-related role – such as traders, trainers, grooms or equestrian warriors, but proposing an identity would not be methodologically appropriate without documentary evidence. Several possible identities were encountered in this case study, including the Kuṣāṇa and Śaka integrating into South Asian society, possibly Saka integrated with the Dian, and perhaps Persians settled in Sri Lanka embarking on long-distance trade voyages across the Bay of Bengal. In the previous case study, I presented evidence connecting Īśānapura with the Early Cālukya Deccan in the early 7th century, so an investigation of early guild formation in this region may be productive, a century or two prior to their epigraphic appearance in the 9th century.

Against this symbolic framework of exoticness, prestige, and the ritual and geopolitical aspects of statecraft, the multivalent desirability of the horse should not be underestimated. It may have played a more significant role in state formation in Southeast Asia than has hitherto been acknowledged.

⁸⁴⁵ See Section 2.4.

7. Case study 3: Figures from Dvāravatī monuments

This third case study considers a group of representations from several sites associated with Dvāravatī culture, centred on Central Thailand where the Chao Phraya river joined the Gulf of Thailand. It differs from the case studies presented in the last two chapters in several ways. The figures were produced at a larger scale with significant details of their appearance surviving, although the precise details of their architectural and iconographic contexts remain unclear. Nonetheless, together they present a corpus about which much can be said. These figures have received much more comment than any of the other suggested representations discussed in this thesis, and unsurprisingly many different opinions concerning their identity and significance have been given.

7.1. Dvāravatī culture

Dvāravatī culture is especially associated in the literature with Central and Northeast Thailand during the c.6th-11th centuries (Figure 7.1). The name is known in Chinese historical sources as *To-lo-po-ti*, first encountered in the 7th-century, and from silver ‘coins’ bearing the Sanskrit inscription *śrīdvāravatīśvarapūṇya*, referring to an apparent ruler of Dvāravatī.⁸⁴⁶ Its visual culture is predominantly Buddhist in character, but Brahmanical deities are well-represented. There is a corresponding architectural emphasis on the *stūpa*, known as *chedi* in Thailand and usually brick-built, and monumental art including stone Buddha images, stone Wheels of the Law on pillars (*dharmacakrastambha*), and a mix of figural and vegetal sculpture in terracotta or stucco applied to the *stūpa* surface.⁸⁴⁷ Material culture also includes mould-formed clay Buddhist votive tablets, several ceramic types including one stamped with figural and symbolic forms, semiprecious stone beads, split-ring metal ear ornaments, saddle querns with cylindrical rollers, and silver coins with auspicious

⁸⁴⁶ Indrawooth, ‘Archaeology of the Early Buddhist Kingdoms of Thailand’, 128–29; Brown, *Dvāravatī Wheels of the Law*, xxi–xxv.

⁸⁴⁷ Santi Leksukhum, ‘Les *chedi* de Dvāravatī’, in *Dvāravatī: Aux Sources du Bouddhisme en Thaïlande*, ed. Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zéphir (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux & Musée Guimet, 2009), 128–35; Valérie Zaleski, ‘Les décors de stuc et de terre cuite: témoins de la cosmologie bouddhique?’, in *Dvāravatī: Aux Sources du Bouddhisme en Thaïlande*, ed. Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zéphir (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux & Musée Guimet, 2009), 168–79; Stephen A. Murphy, ‘The Case for Proto-Dvāravatī: A Review of the Art Historical and Archaeological Evidence’, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 47, no. 3 (2016): 374–79.

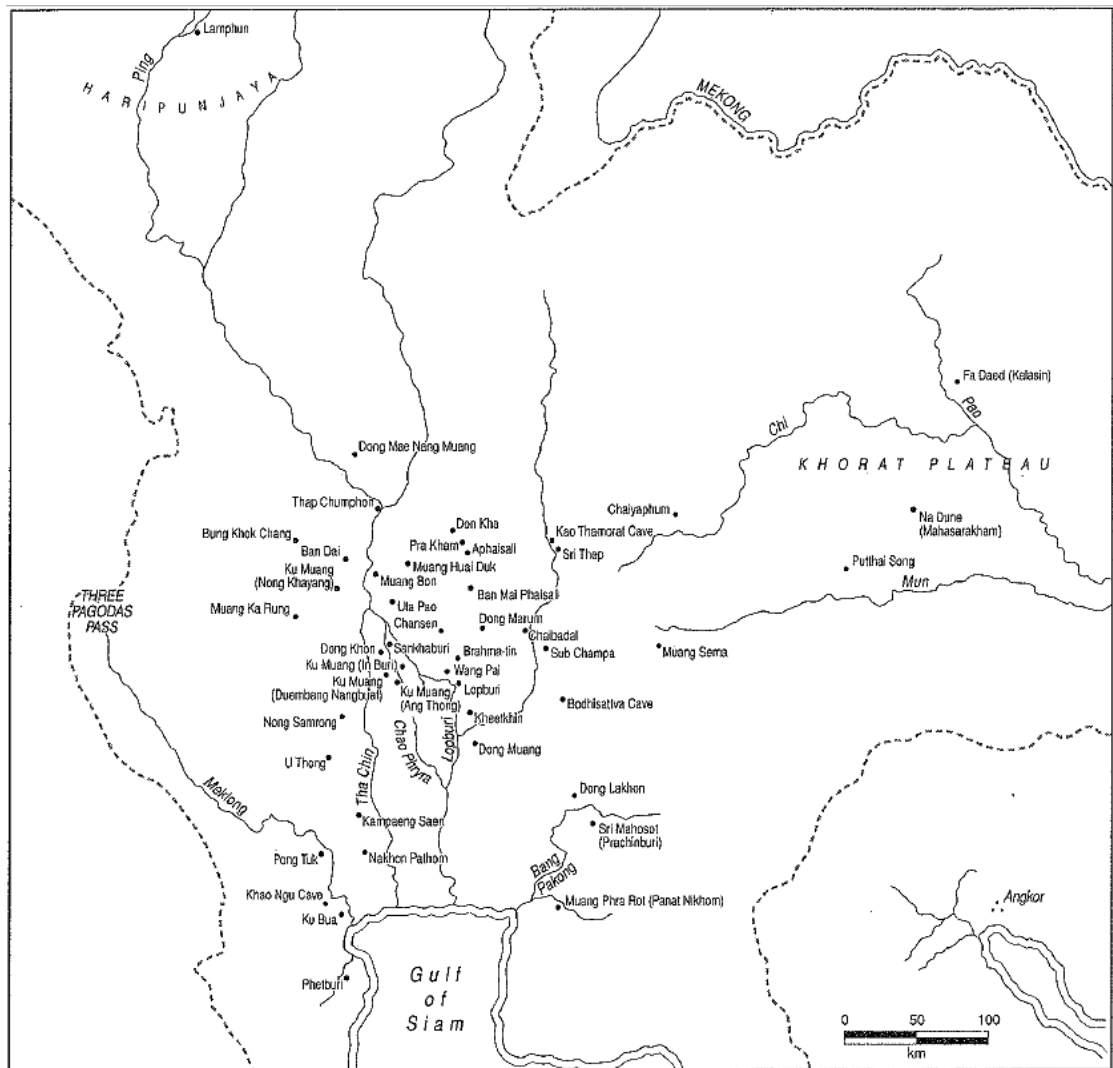


Figure 7.1 Map of main sites in Dvāravatī cultural area of Central and Northeast Thailand. Reproduced from Indrawooth, 'Archaeology of the Early Buddhist Kingdoms of Thailand', Fig.6.7, with the permission of Informa UK Limited through PLSclear.

symbols, among other items.⁸⁴⁸ Despite the wealth of archaeological material, the study of Dvāravatī presents certain issues when reconstructing sociocultural context, especially regarding chronology and the geopolitical landscape.

A recent review of Dvāravatī chronology by Stephen Murphy, developing earlier arguments by Andrew Barram and Ian Glover, highlights the issues with developing a chronological framework for the art of the early historic period.⁸⁴⁹ The earliest references to Dvāravatī in external sources appear to correspond in date with the earliest art historical inferences for the main body of Dvāravatī art based on stylistic

⁸⁴⁸ Indrawooth, 'Archaeology of the Early Buddhist Kingdoms of Thailand', 133–35; Barram and Glover, 'Re-Thinking Dvaravati', 176–78.

⁸⁴⁹ Murphy, 'The Case for Proto-Dvāravatī'; Barram and Glover, 'Re-Thinking Dvaravati'.

comparisons with dated art in South Asia, but none is epigraphically dated to confirm a stylistic framework on internal evidence.⁸⁵⁰ We are left with the impression of a rather sudden appearance of Dvāravatī art in the later 6th century, and an apparent gap of c.200 years with very little art compared to other regional cultures.⁸⁵¹ A transitional ‘Proto-Dvāravatī’ period, c.4th-5th century, has been proposed which allows for local stylistic and iconographic development, but which is poorly represented archaeologically, perhaps because much art was produced in perishable materials, as seen in the contemporary Óc Eo culture’s production of Buddha images in wood.⁸⁵² This solution affirms the c.6th-11th century dating of most surviving Dvāravatī art, although we still do not possess a precise relative dating framework within this.

As with other early historic cultures in Southeast Asia, reconstructing the contemporary geopolitical framework to understand the relationships between the landscape’s walled or moated archaeological settlements has proven difficult. Initial reconstructions saw Dvāravatī as a unified kingdom where the many settlements represented cities or towns with the largest as its capital.⁸⁵³ The epigraphic record is relatively small and not able to contribute much on this issue, but the unified kingdom reconstruction was reconsidered following revisions to our understanding of geopolitical frameworks in contemporary Southeast Asian societies, for example Funan and Zhenla.⁸⁵⁴ Archaeological studies of relative settlement sizes have suggested that geopolitical centralisation of the Dvāravatī settlements is unlikely in the earlier centuries, but possibly established by the c.9th century. Further archaeological analyses of the phasing of boundary constructions may better define

⁸⁵⁰ Murphy, ‘The Case for Proto-Dvāravatī’, 368–71 & 378–79; Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, 54.

⁸⁵¹ Barram and Glover, ‘Re-Thinking Dvaravati’, 175–81; Murphy, ‘The Case for Proto-Dvāravatī’, 367–69 & 392.

⁸⁵² Murphy, ‘The Case for Proto-Dvāravatī’, 390–92. Several wooden Buddha images from the Mekong Delta area are published in Lê Thị Liên, *Nghệ thuật Phật giáo và Hindu giáo ở Đồng bằng sông Cửu Long trước thế kỉ X [Buddhist and Hindu Art in the Cuu Long River Delta prior to 10th century A.D.]* (Hà Nội: Nhà xuất bản Thế giới, 2006), 33–34 & 42–48.

⁸⁵³ H.G. Quaritch Wales, *Dvāravatī: The Earliest Kingdom of Siam (6th to 11th Century A.D.)* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1969).

⁸⁵⁴ Brown, *Dvāravatī Wheels of the Law*, 7–13; Claude Jacques, ‘Dvāravatī, un royaume sans histoire’, in *Dvāravatī: Aux Sources du Bouddhisme en Thaïlande*, ed. Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zéphir (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux & Musée Guimet, 2009), 27–29.

such changes in the hierarchisation of settlements, but relatively few sites have been archaeologically investigated so far.⁸⁵⁵

The population of the Dvāravatī centres is widely believed to have been multi-ethnic but dominated by Mon ethnicity, perhaps as the social elite.⁸⁵⁶ The immigration of Tai speakers from what is today southern China and northern Vietnam into Central and Northeast Thailand, has been reconstructed by linguists as having been a series of migration events probably beginning in the early 1st millennium CE but continuing into the 2nd millennium, thereby contributing to ethnic diversity in the Dvāravatī cultural area.⁸⁵⁷

7.2. Terracotta and stucco figural sculpture from monuments

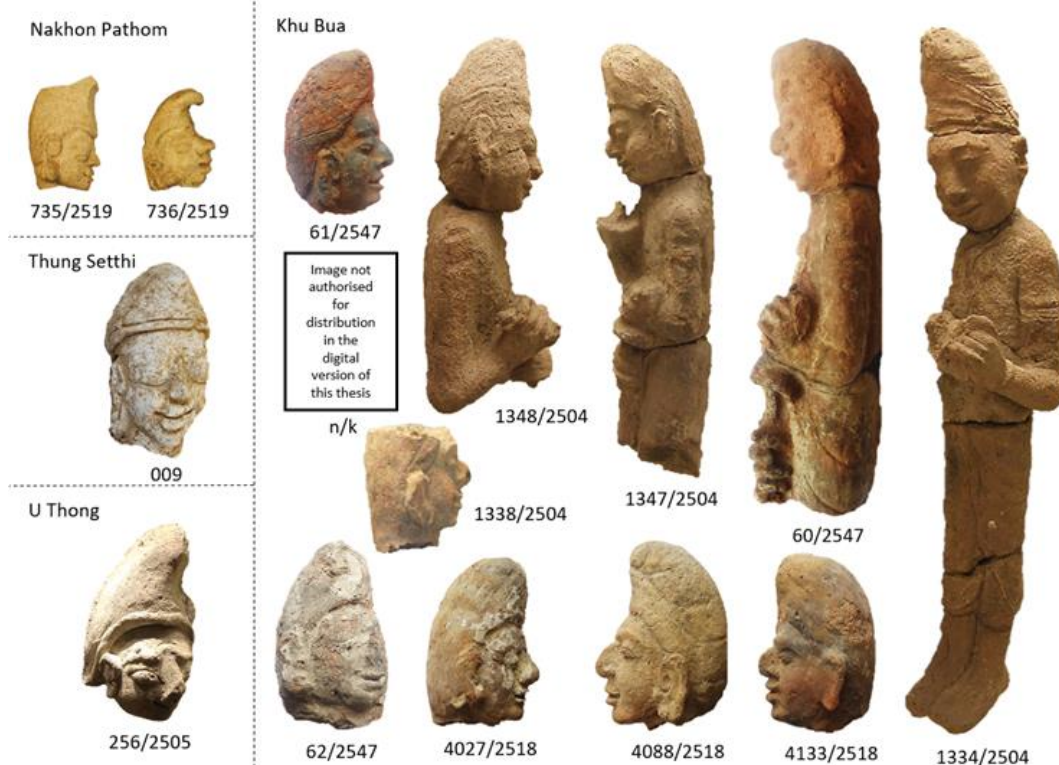
A small corpus of terracotta and stucco figures, widely identified as representing ‘foreigners’, has been recovered from excavations at several Dvāravatī monuments since the 1960s. A total of 13 such figures from four Dvāravatī sites are curated at six of Thailand’s National Museums, while a further three figures have been published but were not traceable during fieldwork (Figure 7.2; Table 7.1).⁸⁵⁸ Additionally, two ‘feet’-like objects are thought to have once belonged to figures of this type. The great majority of this corpus, including all those that are not presently traceable, are recorded to have come from Khu Bua (คูบัว) including at least monuments 40 and 41. Two figures came from Phra Prathon Chedi in Nakhon Pathom (นครปฐม), and single figures from each of monument 5 at U Thong (อุททอง) and the Thung Setthi (ทุ่งเศรษฐี) *chedi*. This group of figures forms the focus of this case study.

⁸⁵⁵ Karen M. Mudar, ‘How Many Dvaravati Kingdoms? Locational Analysis of First Millennium A.D. Moated Settlements in Central Thailand’, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 18 (1999): 8–26; Chureekamol Onsuwan Eyre, ‘Social Variation and Dynamics in Metal Age and Protohistoric Central Thailand: A Regional Perspective’, *Asian Perspectives* 49, no. 1 (2010): 8–26; Murphy, ‘The Case for Proto-Dvāravatī’, 382–84.

⁸⁵⁶ Indrawooth, ‘Archaeology of the Early Buddhist Kingdoms of Thailand’, 135–36.

⁸⁵⁷ Chris Baker, ‘From Yue to Tai’, *Journal of the Siam Society* 90, no. 1–2 (2002): 2–9 & 17–19.

⁸⁵⁸ Phayung Wongnoi, *ลายศิลป์ดินเผาเมืองคูบัว: รายงานผลการศึกษาโครงการศึกษาประวัติศาสตร์ดินเผาแบบทวารวดีที่เมืองคูบัว [Patterns in the Terracotta Art from Khu Bua: Results of a Study of Terracotta Sculptural Forms from the Dvaravati City of Khu Bua]* (Bangkok & Ratchaburi: Office of Archaeology and the National Museum, Fine Arts Department, 2002 [2545]), 57 (original version) & 65 (second issue), lists a further 8 figures without illustrations that are possibly currently in the Fine Arts Department’s storage facilities; these have not been studied by the present author.



Reference no.	Dvāravatī site	Monument	Present location ^a	Source for information detail of original location
1334/2504	Khu Bua	40	Bangkok	Bangkok display; Krairiksh (2012) p.87
1347/2504	Khu Bua	40	Bangkok	Bangkok display; Krairiksh (2012) p.87
1348/2504	Khu Bua	40	Bangkok	Bangkok display
60/2547 (previously 323/2504)	Khu Bua	41	Ratchaburi	Ratchaburi staff
61/2547 (previously 99/04)	Khu Bua	40	Ratchaburi	Ratchaburi staff
62/2547 (previously 1337/2504)	Khu Bua	?	Ratchaburi	Ratchaburi staff
4088/2518 (previously 1397/2504)	Khu Bua	?	Lopburi	Lopburi staff; Khunsong (2015a) p.208
4133/2518 (previously 1339/2504)	Khu Bua	?	Lopburi	Lopburi staff; Khunsong (2015a) p.208
4027/2518 (previously 1396/2504)	Khu Bua	?	Lopburi	Lopburi staff; Khunsong (2015a) p.208
1338/2504	Khu Bua	?	Lopburi?	Khunsong (2015a) p.208
-	Khu Bua	?	?	Lyons (1965) p.53
1347/2504 ^b	Khu Bua	?	?	Wongnoi (2002) p.65
4132/2518 ^c	Khu Bua	?	Lopburi	Lopburi staff
4133/2518 ^c	Khu Bua	?	Lopburi	Lopburi staff
009	Thung Setthi	Thung Setthi	Phra Nakhon Khiri	FAD (2000) p.144
736/2519	Nakhon Pathom	Phra Prathon Chedi	Nakhon Pathom	Khunsong (2014) p.303; Khunsong (2015a) p.207
735/2519	Nakhon Pathom	Phra Prathon Chedi	Nakhon Pathom	Khunsong (2014) p.303; Khunsong (2015a) p.207
256/2505	U Thong	5 ^d	U Thong	Khunsong (2015b) p.276

Figure 7.2 & Table 7.1 Corpus of terracotta and stucco sculptures suggested to represent 'foreigners'. Wongnoi, *Terracotta Art from Khu Bua*, p.65, also lists 1335/2504, 1336/2504, 1340/2504, 1395/2504, 1398/2504, KB.007, KB.95-KB.98 and KB.164-KB.165 as all from Khu Bua (no illustrations are published). Photographs: 1338/2504 reproduced from Khunsong, *Dvāravatī: A Major Entrepot*, Fig.69, with the permission of the author; 'n/k', Khu Bua, reproduced from Lyons, 'Traders of Khu Bua', Fig.2; all other photographs by the Author, with acknowledgements to the Bangkok National Museum, Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum, Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Ratchaburi National Museum, Somdet Phra Narai National Museum and U Thong National Museum.

^a At the time of fieldwork 2015-2016. Museums: Bangkok (Bangkok National Museum), Ratchaburi (Ratchaburi National Museum), Lopburi (Somdet Phra Narai National Museum), Phra Nakhon Khiri (Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum), Nakhon Pathom (Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum), U Thong (U Thong National Museum)

^b This inventory number, provided by Wongnoi, *Terracotta Art from Khu Bua*, p.65, duplicates the inventory number of one of the figures in Bangkok. This may simply be a typographical error, but no other information sources for this object are currently available to check this.

^c These two are the 'feet'-like objects. Wongnoi, *Terracotta Art from Khu Bua*, p.65, lists two feet objects but the list does not correlate a description with the inventory numbers, and none of Wongnoi's inventory numbers match those listed here for the feet. Historical inventory number changes may explain this discrepancy.

^d Baptiste & Zéphir, *Dvāravatī: Aux Sources du Bouddhisme*, p.184, record this figure as being from monument 2. Discussion while at the U Thong National Museum provided no further insight on this discrepancy. However, Khunsong, *Ancient City of U Thong*, pp.274-76, is a work collating archival records of archaeological excavations at U Thong, prepared for Silpakorn University in collaboration with U Thong National Museum, so stands to be the more reliable source.

Before considering the issues surrounding their apparent foreignness, what is known of the figures' original contexts and dating will be outlined. It will be seen, however, that despite the difficulties presented by these issues, important conclusions can still be drawn concerning the figures' identity, foreignness and iconographic role, because of the formal details that survive, and the application of the methodology discussed earlier.

7.2.1. Monumental contexts of the figures

None of the figures under study were recovered *in situ*, still physically attached to the monument, so their original architectural location, iconographic context and spatial

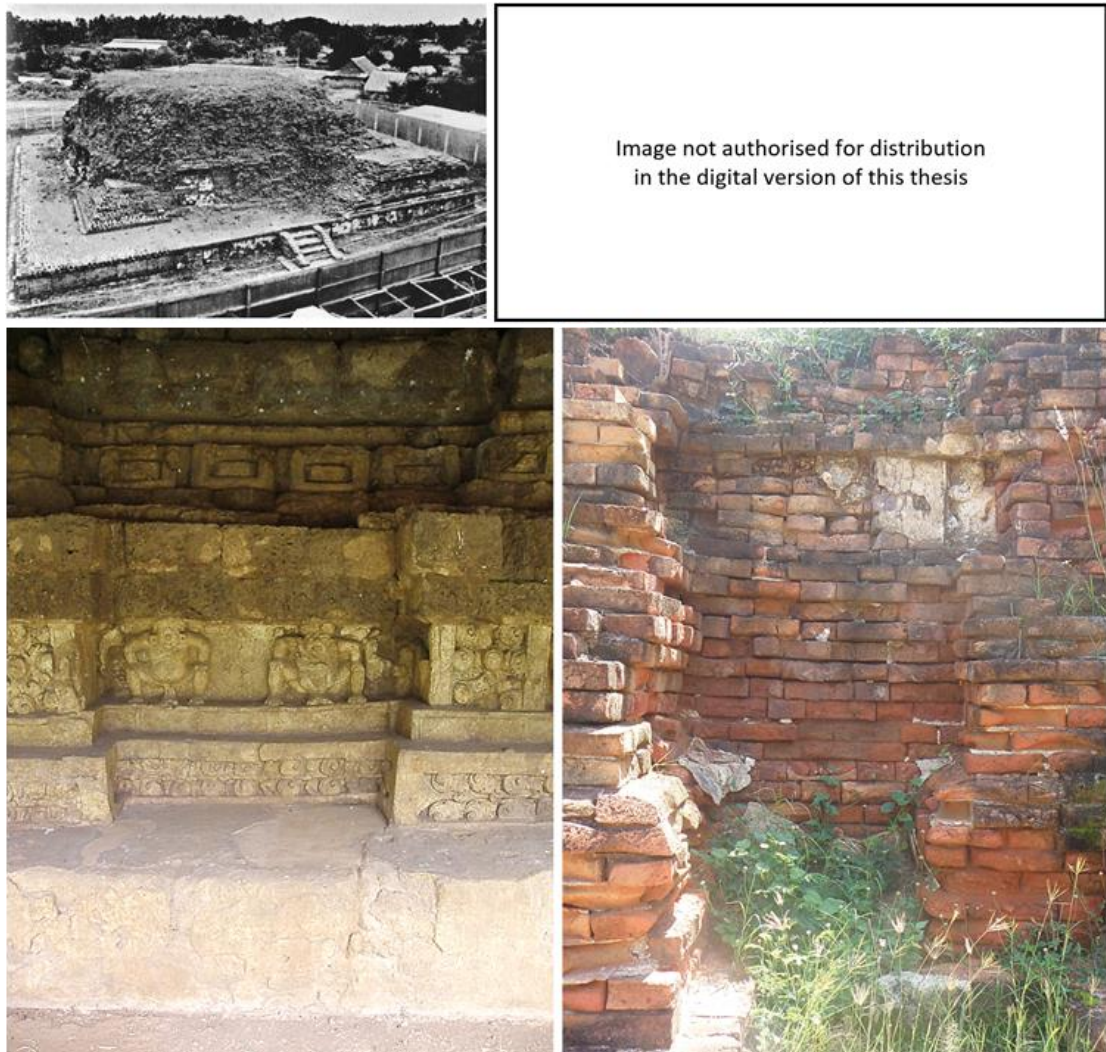


Figure 7.3 Stucco figural sculpture on *chedi* platform sides and superstructure base. Top: narrative and iconic panels on the side of the Chula Pathon Chedi platform, Nakhon Pathom; photographs reproduced from (left) Krairiksh, *Buddhist Folk Tales*, Fig.1, with the permission of the author, (right) Phra Pathon Chedi National Museum display board. Bottom left: *guhyaka* and 'decorative' designs on the superstructure base of Khao Khlang Nai Chedi, Si Thep; photograph: Author. Bottom right: one, possibly two, fragmentary *guhyaka* on the superstructure base of the Thung Setthi *chedi*; photograph: Author.



Figure 7.4 Stucco *guhyaka* at the Thung Setthi *chedi*, located according to a recess formed in the underlying brick surface by projecting features on four sides, being one of the base's projections, a raised interstice separating it from another recess, and ledges above and below (compare Figure 7.3 bottom right). Photograph: Author.

relationships with other figures cannot be simply observed. However, some generalities of the placement of figural sculpture on Dvāravatī monuments can be determined from archaeological remains.

Most Dvāravatī terracotta and stucco figural sculpture is found in association with brick *chedi* and is readily understood as having once been attached to the structure because it is flat on the back where it was fixed to a flat surface such as a wall. It is known to have been applied to the vertical sides of the platform and the superstructure base because remains are found *in situ* in both locations (Figure 7.3), and it is presumed to have been applied to higher parts of the superstructure also.⁸⁵⁹ Squatting dwarfs, which should probably be identified as *guhyaka*,⁸⁶⁰ have been found on the superstructure base distributed according to recesses in the brickwork (Figure 7.4), posed as if supporting the weight of the monument above (or what it

⁸⁵⁹ Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, 76–81; Zaleski, 'Les décors de stuc et de terre cuite', 169 & 175; Valérie Zaleski, 'Stucco and Terracotta Reliefs from Dvāravatī: A Clue to the Indian Sources of This Mōn State', in *South-East Asia: Studies in Art, Cultural Heritage and Artistic Relations with Europe*, ed. Izabela Kopania (Warsaw & Toruń: Polish Institute of World Art Studies & Tako Publishing House, 2012), 33–34.

⁸⁶⁰ Zaleski, 'Stucco and Terracotta Reliefs from Dvāravatī', 36–39.



Figure 7.5 Buddha images *in situ* on the superstructure sides of Chula Pathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom, during excavation Photograph: École française d'Extrême-Orient, Fonds Thaïlande ref. EFEO_THA24023_1.

represented) on their shoulders. Excavations at the Chula Pathon Chedi revealed a series of narrative scenes from *Jātaka* tales around its platform sides along with protective figures including stairway lions, each located within a brick-formed recess (Figure 7.3).⁸⁶¹ A section of the superstructure revealed Buddha images within brick-formed niches (Figure 7.5). Foliate and jewelled designs, architectural motifs, and moulded stucco covering brickwork are also found *in situ*, enhancing the brick surface (Figure 7.6).⁸⁶²

These examples show that sculptural features were applied to the *chedi* according to a series of recesses and niches produced in the underlying brick surface. Fragmentary sculptural remains in museums sometimes have straight edges that indicate their original association with an architectural recess or niche (Figure 7.7).⁸⁶³ This technique for planning and organising the quantity and distribution of applied sculpture in brick monuments is recognised to be related to similar practices in earlier and

⁸⁶¹ Piriya Krairiksh, *Buddhist Folk Tales Depicted at Chula Pathon Cedi* (Krung Thēp: Prachandra Printing Press, 1974).

⁸⁶² Pierre Dupont, *The Archaeology of the Mons of Dvāravatī*, trans. Joyanto K. Sen, 2 vols (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 2006).

⁸⁶³ This was recognised by Dupont, 1:57–58, explaining various flat-headed figures excavated at Chula Pathon Chedi. A very clear example from Khu Bua, with a significant proportion of its orthogonal background frame surviving, is shown in Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zéphir, eds., *Dvāravatī: Aux Sources du Bouddhisme en Thaïlande* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux & Musée Guimet, 2009), 203, no.94.

contemporaneous South Asia, where terracotta and stucco sculpture was extensively used on both Buddhist and Hindu monuments.⁸⁶⁴ The production of recesses and niches in the brick monument as it was constructed clearly has a bearing on the size of the sculpture then located there, since larger spaces would be needed for larger sculpture.

Such recesses and niches are common on *chedi* remains that have lost their surface sculpture (Figure 7.8) and give some sense of what was potentially once present, although we cannot be certain that all recesses and niches were used. Socioeconomic and cultural



Figure 7.6 Architectural stucco enhancing the mouldings of the superstructure base, and producing baluster and foliate designs, at the recently-excavated Dhammasala *chedi*, Nakhon Pathom. Photograph: Author.

factors will have influenced the completion of architectural constructions, just as destructive processes have influenced our appreciation of the extent and distribution of sculpture. On an incompletely preserved monument, the surviving recesses and niches represent an unknown proportion of the possible locations of sculpture. We can now consider the specific monuments associated with the figures under study, but it will be seen that, because the details of their archaeological context and recovery vary, no generalisations will be possible across the corpus regarding their original architectural contexts.

⁸⁶⁴ Zaleski, 'Stucco and Terracotta Reliefs from Dvāravatī', 30–31, provides an excellent survey of sites demonstrating the use of architectural stucco and terracotta sculpture in South Asia, dating to the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta periods. She also notes the few other early Southeast Asian sites evidencing this practice. To my knowledge, there are no terracotta sculptural remains from Dvāravatī sites where the straight edges of a frame survive, like those seen at, for example, the Gupta period Bhītargāon temple in Uttar Pradesh, or the Pyu sculpture retrieved from the Khin Ba mound in Śrī Kṣetra, Myanmar (see especially Zaheer, *The Temple of Bhītargāon*, and Galloway, 'Sri Ksetra Museum Collection Inventory').



Figure 7.7 Stucco figural sculpture with straight edge features indicating a relationship with an architectural recess. Sculptures from Phra Prathon Chedi and Khu Bua *chedi* 44. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to Phra Pathon Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom, and Bangkok National Museum, Bangkok.



Figure 7.8 Recesses in the brick surfaces of Khu Bua *chedi* 8 (top) and U Thong *chedi* 2 (bottom), after excavation and restoration. Note the recesses are visible on the superstructure base and platform sides, respectively. Photographs: Author.



Figure 7.9 Terracotta sculptures from Khu Bua, approximately to scale (largest figure c.80 cm tall). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Ratchaburi National Museum, Somdet Phra Narai National Museum and Bangkok National Museum; except: the two heads at middle left, reproduced from Khunsong, *Dvaravati: A Major Entrepot*, Fig.69, with the permission of the author, and Lyons, 'Traders of Ku Bua', Fig.2.

7.2.1.1. Khu Bua *chedi* 40 and 41

Several of the figures from Khu Bua (Figure 7.9) were recovered during excavations at monument 40 in 1961, contemporary with excavations conducted at seven of Khu Bua's mounds, which revealed *chedi* including numbers 1, 10, 39 and 44.⁸⁶⁵ The material from *chedi* 40 caused something of a sensation at the time because of the large quantity of terracotta sculpture recovered, considered to be of high quality.⁸⁶⁶ Currently four 'foreigner' figures can be associated with the *chedi* 40 deposit (Table

⁸⁶⁵ Fine Arts Department, *สมุดนำชมโบราณวัตถุสถานสมัยทวารวดี ตำบลคูบัว จังหวัดราชบุรี / Guide to Antiquities found at Koo Bua, Ratburi* (Bangkok: Fine Arts Department, 1961).

⁸⁶⁶ Silpa Bhirasri, 'Archaeological Excavations at Koo Bua (Ratburi)', in *สมุดนำชมโบราณวัตถุสถานสมัยทวารวดี ตำบลคูบัว จังหวัดราชบุรี / Guide to Antiquities Found at Koo Bua, Ratburi*, ed. Fine Arts Department (Bangkok: Fine Arts Department, 1961), 100; Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 60–61.

7.1). There is some uncertainty regarding the interpretation of the deposit's archaeological context because, while earlier publications within 20 years of the excavation regarded the sculpture as having been gathered together before burial,⁸⁶⁷ a retrospective 1992 publication makes no mention of this idea and instead records the sculptures as having been excavated on all sides of the *chedi*.⁸⁶⁸ Due to the quantity of sculpture, some have suggested it may have originated at more than one *chedi*, perhaps number 39 located approximately 100 m to the north.⁸⁶⁹ The inclusion of stucco pieces among the terracottas further suggested that more than one monument or architectural phase was represented. One terracotta figure is recorded to have come from *chedi* 41, located approximately 250 m northeast of *chedi* 40. Other figures are known to have come from Khu Bua, but their monumental associations are not presently known.⁸⁷⁰ Most of the figural sculpture in this study came from Khu Bua,⁸⁷¹ although much of it cannot currently be confidently associated with a specific monument. *Chedi* 40 and 41 are therefore the only known archaeological contexts for these figures, both being located outside the moat to the southeast (Figure 7.10),

⁸⁶⁷ Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 62; Jean Boisselier, *The Heritage of Thai Sculpture* (Bangkok: Asia Books, 1975), 85.

⁸⁶⁸ Somsak Rattanakun, *โบราณคดีเมืองคูบัว [The Archaeology of Khu Bua]* (Bangkok: Krom Sinlapākḥon, 1992 [2535]), 33.

⁸⁶⁹ Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 54 & 62; Boisselier, *Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, 85. This suggestion should be considered in the context of the uncertainty that remains concerning the elevation and full height of *Dvāravatī chedi*, something discussed in section 7.4.1.5.

⁸⁷⁰ The four listed in Table 7.1 that are known from museum records to have come from monument 40 have all referred to the year 2504 BE in their inventory numbers, which is equivalent to 1961 CE and contemporary with the first excavations. It will be noted that, including historical inventory numbers, which change with movement between museum collections and re-cataloguing exercises, a total of 10 or 11 figures known to have come from Khu Bua were assigned museum inventory numbers in 1961 (depending on the resolution regarding Table 7.1 note b). If Wongnoi's list (see Table 7.1 notes) proves accurate, a further five figures might be added to this total. It is possible that many came from the same archaeological deposit noted in the literature to have yielded so many terracotta sculptures, but this cannot currently be verified. Figure 60/2547 (323/2504) is recorded as having come separately from *chedi* 41. The previous inventory numbers for the figures in Lopburi appear in some publications that have published the figures in the past, and I thank Chudamas Supan-Klang, then at the Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, for our discussion of the numbering system. The previous inventory numbers for the figures in Ratchaburi were noted by the present author while inspecting the backs of the figures.

⁸⁷¹ Wongnoi, *Terracotta Art from Khu Bua*, 65, lists 24 objects in this category as coming from Khu Bua, nine as heads attached to bodies, four separate heads, nine separate bodies and two feet. Applying the archaeological methodology for minimum number of individuals, this can be interpreted as at least 13, possibly 18, individual figures, depending on the completeness of the body portions involved. Most of the figures in Table 7.1 are represented in Wongnoi's list, but it is not clear if the single head published by Elizabeth Lyons, 'The Traders of Ku Bua', *Archives for the Chinese Art Society of America* 19 (1965): Fig.2, is included in Wongnoi's list.

despite 23 of the 44 archaeological mounds presumed to indicate *chedi* at Khu Bua having been excavated by 2009.⁸⁷²

The poor archaeological survival of *chedi* 40 and 41 means reconstructions of sculptural distributions based on considerations of the size of brick recesses, the sculpture's size and its iconography, are not objectively possible.⁸⁷³ Today, *chedi* 40 is a low mound, once more overgrown with vegetation (Figure 7.11) and is located on private land.⁸⁷⁴ Occasional unsculpted

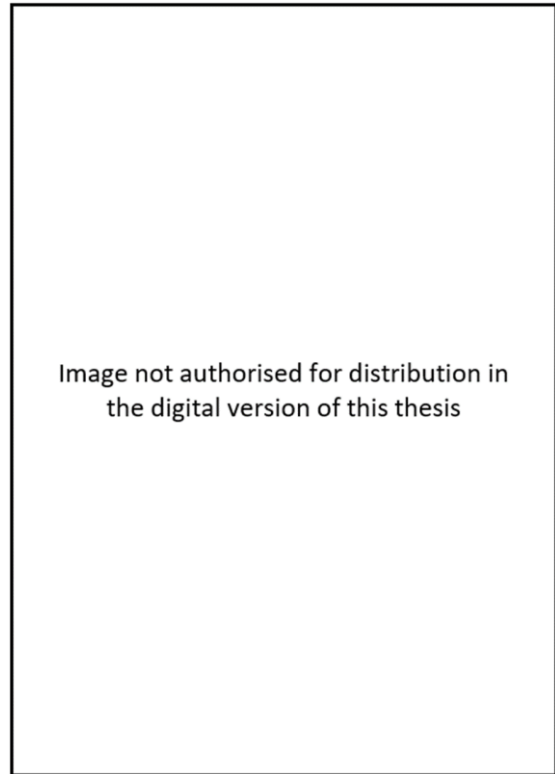


Figure 7.10 Plan of Khu Bua site. Reproduced from Indrawooth, 'Un antique royaume urbanisé', Fig.5.

stucco fragments up to 8 cm long and a scatter of fragmentary bricks can be seen under the vegetation, but structural features are not visible above ground.⁸⁷⁵ Archival photographs and drawings of the excavated *chedi* 40 (Figure 7.11) show a 9.80 m square platform supporting the superstructure's base which has three projections on each side, a ground plan seen elsewhere at Khu Bua at different scales.⁸⁷⁶ The archival documents show that the architectural surface did not survive above the lowest portion of the superstructure base, because brick core can be seen above them. The superstructure was a very low mound above the remains of the base at the time of its excavation, with a combined height of platform and surviving base reaching 2.60 m only.⁸⁷⁷ No details of the sides of the platform can

⁸⁷² Sukpramun, 'Khu Bua', 193.

⁸⁷³ A similar conclusion was reached by Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 62, and Boisselier, *Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, 85.

⁸⁷⁴ Coordinates 13.474538° N 99.838577° E = 13°28'28.3"N 99°50'18.9"E.

⁸⁷⁵ I am very grateful to Preeyanuch Jumprom and her colleagues at the Ratchaburi Fine Arts Department Office for allowing me to accompany them on a survey of the status of some of Khu Bua's monuments, including a rare visit to the site of *chedi* 40. It was also very kind of the land-owner to grant access.

⁸⁷⁶ Fine Arts Department, *Antiquities found at Koo Bua*, frontispiece & 2.

⁸⁷⁷ Drawings of *chedi* 40 are published in *ibid.* and Rattanakun, *Archaeology of Khu Bua*, 79, but they differ. The FAD drawing is to scale for the measurements given and approximates the *chedi*'s shape seen in the archival photographs, but Rattanakun's drawing is not proportionally correct. However,



Figure 7.11 Khu Bua *chedi* 40. Top: *chedi* 40 today; photographs: Author. Bottom: *chedi* 40 at the time of its excavation in 1961, with the three projections of the *chedi* superstructure base clearly visible; photographs: reproduced from Rattanakun, *Archaeology of Khu Bua*, Figs. 17 & 18.

be ascertained, but the drawings suggest there was no organisation of these surfaces into the rectilinear recesses seen on other *chedi*. Therefore, very little of the architectural elevation survived at the time of excavation, meaning the original height of the *chedi* and the spatial organisation of its architectural surface are not known beyond its subdivision into three projections per side at the level of the base. *Chedi* 41 appears to have been disturbed before archaeological recording was possible, so that little can be said other than that its square ground plan had an approximate length of 6 m and approximate surviving height of 1 m at the time of excavation in 1961.⁸⁷⁸

The status of the archaeological survival of *chedi* 40 and 41, along with interpretive difficulties concerning the *chedi* 40 deposit, of course severely impacts the reconstruction of an iconographic programme that might give meaningful context to the figures identified as ‘foreigners’.⁸⁷⁹ There is currently insufficient evidence for a reliable comparison of architectural and sculptural measurements, but if all available

Rattanakun’s text (p.33) provides the same measurements found in the FAD drawing, so this is an error in his drawing only.

⁸⁷⁸ Rattanakun, 29.

⁸⁷⁹ This was also the conclusion of Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 62, and Boisselier, *Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, 85.

data had been accurate, the platform would be reconstructed as approximately 0.5-0.6 m high and the figures as varying within the range 0.7-0.85 m high when complete, meaning the figures would not have fitted on the platform sides but been somewhere on the superstructure – however, there are of course several assumptions that make this conclusion uncertain.⁸⁸⁰ Nonetheless, it is useful to consider the potential future value of using measurements of architecture and sculpture in a methodological approach to the reconstruction of iconographic programmes for Dvāravatī *chedi* that can perhaps at least rule out certain architectural positions.

7.2.1.2. Thung Setthi *chedi*

The Thung Setthi *chedi* (Figure 7.12) was excavated and restored in 1996-1998 and the archaeological deposit containing many stucco sculptures, including the figure under study here (Figure 7.13), was clearly interpretable as representing the structure's natural collapse. The excavation has been published,⁸⁸¹ but the find-spot of this figure is not specified, although most stucco artefacts were retrieved near the *chedi* base.⁸⁸² The figural head shows a break at the neck where a body would attach (Figure 7.14) suggesting a body was originally present, although we cannot be certain whether this was a standing figure as at Khu Bua. Based on the size of the head only, the figure would be approximately 0.9-1.1 m tall if posed standing.⁸⁸³ The Thung Setthi *chedi* is larger than Khu Bua 40 and 41, with a 25 m square platform 1 m high. The Fine Arts

⁸⁸⁰ The FAD elevation drawing was noted to be more reliable than Rattanakun's. Nonetheless, there are several problems accepting the precision of a platform height of 0.5-0.6 m. Firstly, the drawing was reproduced at a relatively small size, so reading this level of detail is much less reliable. Secondly, the second excavation at Chula Pathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom, in 1968 revealed the *Jātaka* panels in the brick recesses of the platform wall which had been missed by Dupont in the first excavation of 1940, because excavations did not proceed to the required depth. We would need to be certain that the full height of the Khu Bua *chedi* 40 platform was exposed in 1961. To derive estimates of the original heights of the three incomplete figures possessing bodies (1347/2504, 1348/2504, 60/2547), the single complete figure (1334/2504), with known height of 0.85 m, was used as a proportional gauge for visually aligning bodily landmarks between figures. This of course produces only estimates and assumes the figures were produced with similar proportions, but some tolerance was built into the measurements derived, giving the 0.70 m at the lower end of the range. 1347/2504 appears to have been slightly shorter than the others. I note in this context Wongnoi's estimate of 0.85 m for the figures (*Terracotta Art from Khu Bua*, 65).

⁸⁸¹ Fine Arts Department, *ทุ่งเศรษฐี: โบราณสถานทวารวดีชายฝั่งทะเลเพชรบุรี [Thung Setthi: A Dvaravati Archaeological Site in Coastal Phetchaburi]* (Ratchaburi: Office of Archaeology and the National Museum, Fine Arts Department, 2000). Site reports have not been accessed at this stage.

⁸⁸² *Ibid.*, 72.

⁸⁸³ Estimations of a figure's original height necessarily become more approximate when there is no body.



Figure 7.12 Figure 7.12 The Thung Setthi *chedi* after excavation and restoration. The three projections of the superstructure base per side are visible, as are the partially-restored recesses on the platform sides. Photographs: Author.

Department has restored the platform's brick recesses to a height of 0.53 m, and they appear to have been originally separated by stucco pilasters.⁸⁸⁴ The superstructure's base possesses three projections on each side with mouldings effected in the brick, as at Khu Bua *chedi* 40. Stucco is found on the mouldings in places, and further architectural fragments including pilaster-like features were retrieved during excavation.⁸⁸⁵ Above the mouldings are some recesses in the brick for sculpture, including one *guhyaka* with surface damage, and probably a partial second *guhyaka*, still *in situ*, apparently bearing the weight of the structure on their heads rather than

⁸⁸⁴ Fine Arts Department, *Thung Setthi*, 98–99.

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 96.

their shoulders (Figures 7.3 and 7.4). Above this level of the base, the superstructure is represented by brick core only. Features of the ground plan comparable to *stūpas* in western and northwestern India suggest a possibly circular-plan *aṇḍa* on the square base with lower portion subdivided by pilasters.⁸⁸⁶ However, with incomplete information on the figure's find-spot, and uncertainty over its original posture, there are still limitations to reconstructing its original iconographic context, although there is better information here than for other sites.



Figure 7.13 Stucco sculpture from Thung Setthi. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum, Phetchaburi.



Figure 7.14 Figural head from Thung Setthi *chedi*, showing the uneven break at the neck, and (right) also the flat back of the figure on the left side of the photograph (figure's face to right). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum, Phetchaburi.

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 99–101.

7.2.1.3. Phra Prathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom

Two stucco figural heads are recorded as having come from Phra Prathon Chedi (Figure 7.15).⁸⁸⁷ This *chedi* is very large, considered a *mahāstūpa*, having a square platform 38 m each side supporting three superimposed terraces, the uppermost of which has been modified by the 19th century platform for the present *prang* built on top (Figure 7.16).⁸⁸⁸ This structure stood at the approximate centre of Nakhon Pathom in the Dvāravatī period (Figure 7.17).

Following its excavation and restoration in 2005-2007,⁸⁸⁹ large numbers of recesses and niches can now be seen in the organisation of the brick surface on all four sides.

Fragments of stucco remain *in situ* in places, not figural but lining some of the recesses, and are possibly contemporary



Figure 7.15 Stucco sculptures from Phra Prathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom.

with the figural heads under study here.⁸⁹⁰ Both heads are flat on the back, suggesting attachment to a surface (Figure 7.18), but no details of their find-spots are available.⁸⁹¹

No precise information on where they were found around the *chedi* is available, and the large number of recesses on such a large monument (Figure 7.19) means there seems little chance of narrowing down the options for their original architectural

⁸⁸⁷ Saranya Suriyarattanakon and Krisada Pinsri, *พิพิธภัณฑ์สถานแห่งชาติ พระปฐมเจดีย์ / Phrapathom Chedi National Museum*, 2nd ed. (Bangkok: Fine Arts Department, 2005 [2548]), 21; Saritphong Khunsong, *ทวารวดี: ประตูการค้าบนเส้นทางสายไหมทางทะเล [Dvaravati: A Major Entrepot on the Maritime Silk Road]* (Bangkok: Silpakorn University Press, 2015 [2558]), 207.

⁸⁸⁸ Usa Nguanphienphak, 'Fouilles récentes au Phra Pathom Chedi', in *Dvāravatī: Aux Sources du Bouddhisme en Thaïlande*, ed. Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zéphir (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux & Musée Guimet, 2009), 145–47.

⁸⁸⁹ Nguanphienphak, 145–46.

⁸⁹⁰ Nguanphienphak, 146, notes that archaeological data suggest the monument was abandoned at the start of the 2nd millennium CE until its reoccupation possibly beginning in the 14th-15th century. The main Ayutthaya period modification of the monument is the earliest phase of the platform and *prang* on its summit. It is generally held that the brick terraces date from the Dvāravatī period.

⁸⁹¹ The figures' museum inventory numbers suggest they entered the collection in 1976, in advance of the 2005-2007 excavations, so they may have been chance finds.



Figure 7.16 Phra Prathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom, with Ayutthaya and Bangkok period modifications on top. Photograph: Author.

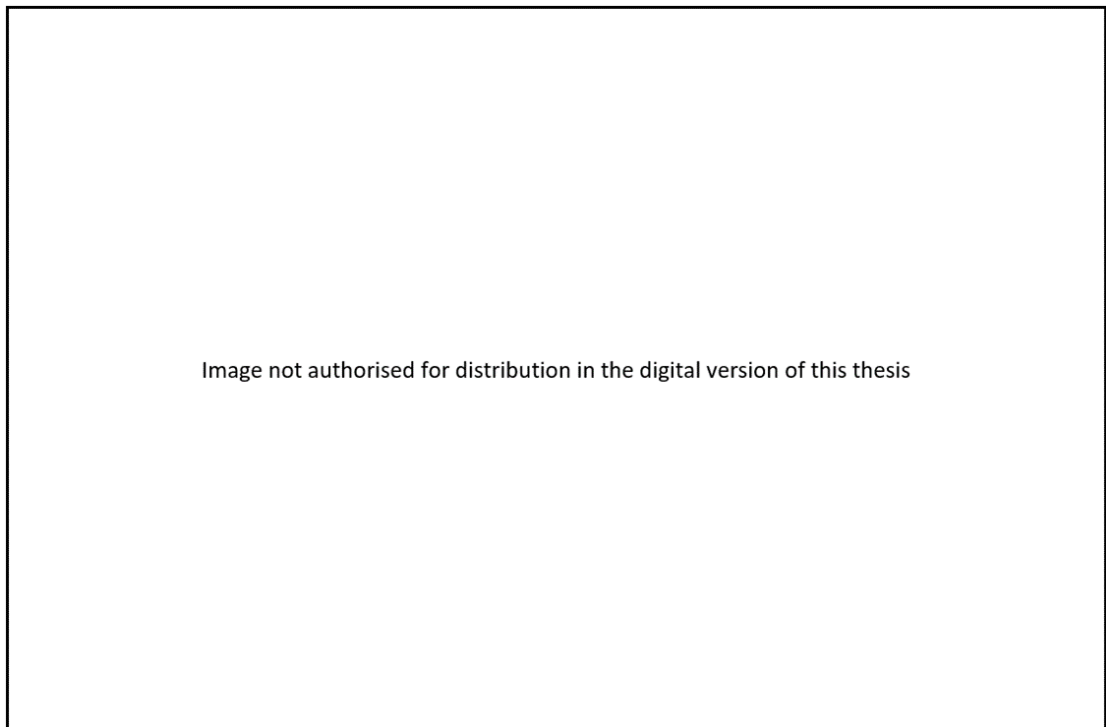


Figure 7.17 Plan of Nakhon Pathom. Reproduced from Indrawoath, 'Un antique royaume urbanisé', Fig.4.



Figure 7.18 Stucco figural heads 735/2519 and 736/2519, originally from Phra Prathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom, showing their flat backs. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom.



Figure 7.19 The three terrace walls at Phra Prathon Chedi, showing the multiple recesses per terrace. Photograph: Author.



Figure 7.20 Stucco figural heads 735/2519 and 736/2519, showing the uneven breaks at the level of the neck. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom.

location objectively. Both figural heads show breaks under the head at the location they would join a neck (Figure 7.20), suggesting that they once possessed bodies although, again, we cannot know how much of the bodies were modelled or their posture. Had the figures been modelled with full bodies and standing, they can be estimated as having measured in the range 45-55 cm, smaller than at Khu Bua and Thung Setthi. In this scenario they would probably have been best accommodated by the recesses on the wall of the first terrace as viewed from the level of the platform, keeping in mind that little is known of the uppermost portion of the structure.⁸⁹² A reconstruction on this basis would of course be highly conjectural, but it seems possible that a more systematic study of the entire corpus of sculpture retrieved from Phra Prathon Chedi, integrating find-spots, figural and architectural measurements, and iconography, may begin to reveal patterns that say something about the original organisation of sculpture. At this juncture, however, nothing can be determined objectively concerning the original architectural location of these figures.

⁸⁹² The recesses of the lowest wall, viewable from the platform, have heights 45.5 cm (top), 18 cm (middle) and 80 cm (bottom). Those of the next terrace up have heights 17 cm (top), 19 cm (upper middle), 42 cm (lower middle), 15 cm (bottom). Many niches and recesses of the uppermost level exceed 1 m in height, giving scope for the accommodation of larger sculpture, but there are also smaller recesses. The original appearance of the uppermost portion of this *chedi* is of course unknown but may have offered further locations for sculpture. All measurements taken by the author during fieldwork, selecting recesses that appeared representative of their rows.

7.2.1.4. Monument 5, U Thong

The U Thong figural head (Figure 7.21) was found at monument 5.⁸⁹³ There are remains of several *chedi* at U Thong with a range of ground plans but monument 5, located in the south of the ancient city near the moat (Figure 7.22), had a rectangular ground plan measuring 5 m x 28 m and was interpreted as a *vihara*, an assembly hall containing a Buddha image.⁸⁹⁴ The structure will have been constructed of materials that have not survived archaeologically, so very little can be said concerning its original architectural elevation to offer insights into the stucco figural head's relationship with it. The main sculptural finds from monument 5 were a series of terracotta images of seated Buddhas that studies suggest were mould-formed,⁸⁹⁵ so the individually-modelled stucco head had undergone a very different production process, and again the relationship between the two is unclear.

The stucco head itself shows damage in the location under the head where a neck would join, which may indicate a break point with a body, but this is less clear than with the preceding examples. Of note, at the back of the headwear, just above the level of its border, is a projecting piece of stucco of fairly uniform thickness that probably represents part of the background stucco matrix from which the sculpture emerged (Figure 7.23). This suggests, like the flat area on the back, that this figure was indeed fixed to a flat surface and was therefore probably architectural like the preceding examples known to have come from *chedi*. Based on the dimensions of the head, if the complete figure had been a standing full figure as at Khu Bua, it may have been of comparable size.

⁸⁹³ Arunsak Kingmani, 'โบราณวัตถุชิ้นสำคัญของ เมืองอุททอง [Antiquities from the ancient city of U Thong]', in *โบราณคดีเมืองอุททอง [Archaeology of U Thong]* (Suphanburi: Office of Archaeology and the National Museum 2, 2002 [2545]), 88.

⁸⁹⁴ Phatharaphong Kaongoen, 'พัฒนาการของเมืองอุททอง หลังพุทธศตวรรษที่ ๑๒ [U Thong: development after the 12th century]', in *โบราณคดีเมืองอุททอง [Archaeology of U Thong]* (Suphanburi: Office of Archaeology and the National Museum 2, 2002 [2545]), 34–35. A photograph and ground plan sketch are included in this article, but they add little to the understanding of this figure's context so are not reproduced here.

⁸⁹⁵ Kaongoen, 35; Kingmani, 'Antiquities from U Thong', 91; Zaleski, 'Les décors de stuc et de terre cuite', 170–72.



Figure 7.21 Stucco sculpture from U Thong. Photograph: Author, acknowledgement to U Thong National Museum, U Thong.

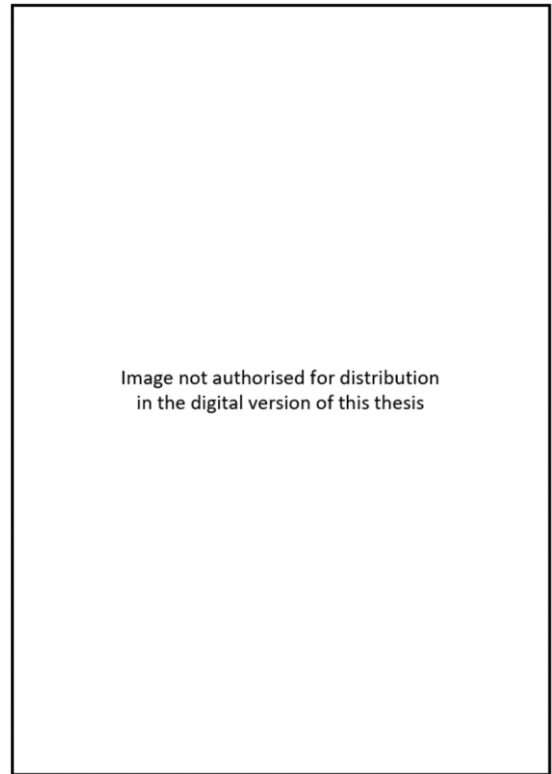


Figure 7.22 Plan of U Thong. Reproduced from Indrawooth, 'Un antique royaume urbanisé', Fig.4.



Figure 7.23 Stucco figural head 256/2505, showing a projecting remnant of the stucco matrix on the wall side of the head (left), and the flat back of the figure (right). Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the U Thong National Museum (left); U Thong National Museum (right).



7.2.1.5. Monument reconstructions

None of the figures were found *in situ*, and each monument's remains present problems for recreating their original contexts, while several figures are themselves incomplete and their original form uncertain. Those from Khu Bua, Thung Setthi and Phra Prathon Chedi came from *chedi* contexts, and all have flat backs indicating they were fixed to architectural surfaces. At Khu Bua and Thung Setthi the superstructure's architectural surface does not survive above the base, so little can be said with any certainty about their original context in a sculptural programme, although suggestions have been made for the latter.⁸⁹⁶ The U Thong figure was excavated at the site of a *vihara*, for which we have no indication of the form of the superstructure. There is no reason to suppose the figure was not fixed to this structure but, on the available evidence, we also cannot rule out that it had been brought to the site from somewhere else.

As well as not being able to reconstruct the original elevations of the specific structures the figures came from, comparison with other Dvāravatī architectural remains does not clarify matters. All Dvāravatī *chedi* have lost most of the superstructure above the base, and great formal variety is evident in what remains. *Chedi* show a range of ground plans, including square, circular, octagonal and equilateral cruciform, typically with access stairways on several sides. Additionally, a small number of structures have a rectangular ground plan and steps on one side only and were possibly large platforms for monastic structures alongside ritual monuments.⁸⁹⁷ Given the variability in ground plan, we should anticipate some variability in elevation.

Additional data for reconstructing Dvāravatī *chedi* elevations has been drawn from South Asian standing monuments considered to share features,⁸⁹⁸ and from various

⁸⁹⁶ Fine Arts Department, *Thung Setthi*, 99–101.

⁸⁹⁷ Anuvit Charernsupkul, 'The Designs of Religious Monuments of the Dvaravati, Khmer, and Peninsular Region/Chaiya Schools in Thailand', trans. Den Wasiksiri, *Najua* 10 (1990 [2533]): 59–64; Santi Leksukhum, 'Les *chedi* de Dvāravatī', in *Dvaravati: Aux Sources du Bouddhisme en Thaïlande*, ed. Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zéphir (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux & Musée Guimet, 2009), 129–33.

⁸⁹⁸ Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 120–22 suggested the 'Puduvēli Gopuram' in Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, Tamil Nadu, provided a good comparator. However, Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art*, 65–67, disputes this, instead suggesting the corner towers of *stūpa* 3 at Nālandā, Bihar, provide a better reference point. Gosling also suggests (p.63), as had Dupont (pp.39–44), that the Wat Phra Men *chedi* in Nakhon Pathom probably derived its cruciform ground plan from monuments such as the *caitya* at Pāhārpur in Bengal. Fine Arts Department, *Thung Setthi*, 99–101, compares the Thung Setthi ground plan to examples in Gujarat, Sindh, Gandhāra and Andhra Pradesh. Zaleski, 'Stucco and Terracotta Reliefs from Dvāravatī', 33, has also compared what

architectural representations from Dvāravatī contexts. The latter include ‘votive’ *stūpas* with bell-shaped domes, reliquaries, reliefs of vertically-extended *stūpa*-like forms on *sema* stones and silver plaques, representations of *stūpas* on votive tablets, a painted *chedi* brick from U Thong, and fragmentary tower-like terracotta objects.⁸⁹⁹ Together these suggest a variety of *chedi* elevations, including either a bell-shaped or globose dome above one or more storeys or terraces, and topped with a *cattravali*-derived pinnacle that was conical in profile (Figure 7.24).⁹⁰⁰ This range of interpretations regarding *chedi* elevations only adds to the uncertainty around the organisation of the architectural surface.

Taking an iconographic approach instead, it has been noted that the Chula Pathon Chedi and the *chedi* at Wat Kukut in Lamphun, the earliest in Thailand with surviving superstructure, apparently share the arrangement of multiple Buddhas around the superstructure, although Kukut is later by as much as four or five centuries.⁹⁰¹ Such an iconographic scheme may have formed the primary visual component organising the sculptural surface above the base on other *chedi*, but this is not certain. An iconographic arrangement locating multiple Buddha images on the superstructure above a base with *guhyaka* and supramundane figures, may express a cosmological idea,⁹⁰² but it is unclear how widespread such an organisation might have been despite the apparent ubiquity of *guhyaka* on *chedi*.⁹⁰³ Often, the only indication of spatial distribution at these higher levels is the redented horizontal cross-sections of the surviving lowest brick courses, giving the three projections per side commonly encountered at Khu Bua, for instance. Moreover, several different Buddhist traditions

remains of the organisation of the iconographic programme to Gandhāran structures at Haḍḍa in Afghanistan.

⁸⁹⁹ Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 119; Charernsupkul, ‘Designs of Religious Monuments’, 59–63; M.L. Pattaratorn Chirapavati, ‘The Cult of Votive Tablets in Thailand (Sixth to Thirteenth Centuries)’ (PhD Thesis, Cornell University, 1994), 330; Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art*, 60–67; Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, 101–3; Leksukhum, ‘Les *chedi* de Dvāravatī’, 133–35.

⁹⁰⁰ Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 24 & 118–22; Charernsupkul, ‘Designs of Religious Monuments’, 59–64; Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art*, 60–67; Leksukhum, ‘Les *chedi* de Dvāravatī’, 129–35.

⁹⁰¹ Dupont, *Archaeology of the Mons of Dvāravatī Vol.1*, 1:65–71; Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 119 & 122.

⁹⁰² Zaleski, ‘Les décors de stuc et de terre cuite’, 175–77; Zaleski, ‘Stucco and Terracotta Reliefs from Dvāravatī’, 39. Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, 79, makes the interesting observation that the Dvāravatī period relief installed behind the main Buddha image at Wat Suthat Thepwararam, Bangkok, employs a *chedi* base-like frieze of *guhyaka* and lions to separate the heaven- and earth-located portions of the Śrāvastī Miracles narrative represented.

⁹⁰³ Zaleski, ‘Les décors de stuc et de terre cuite’, 169 & 172–73; Zaleski, ‘Stucco and Terracotta Reliefs from Dvāravatī’, 36–39.

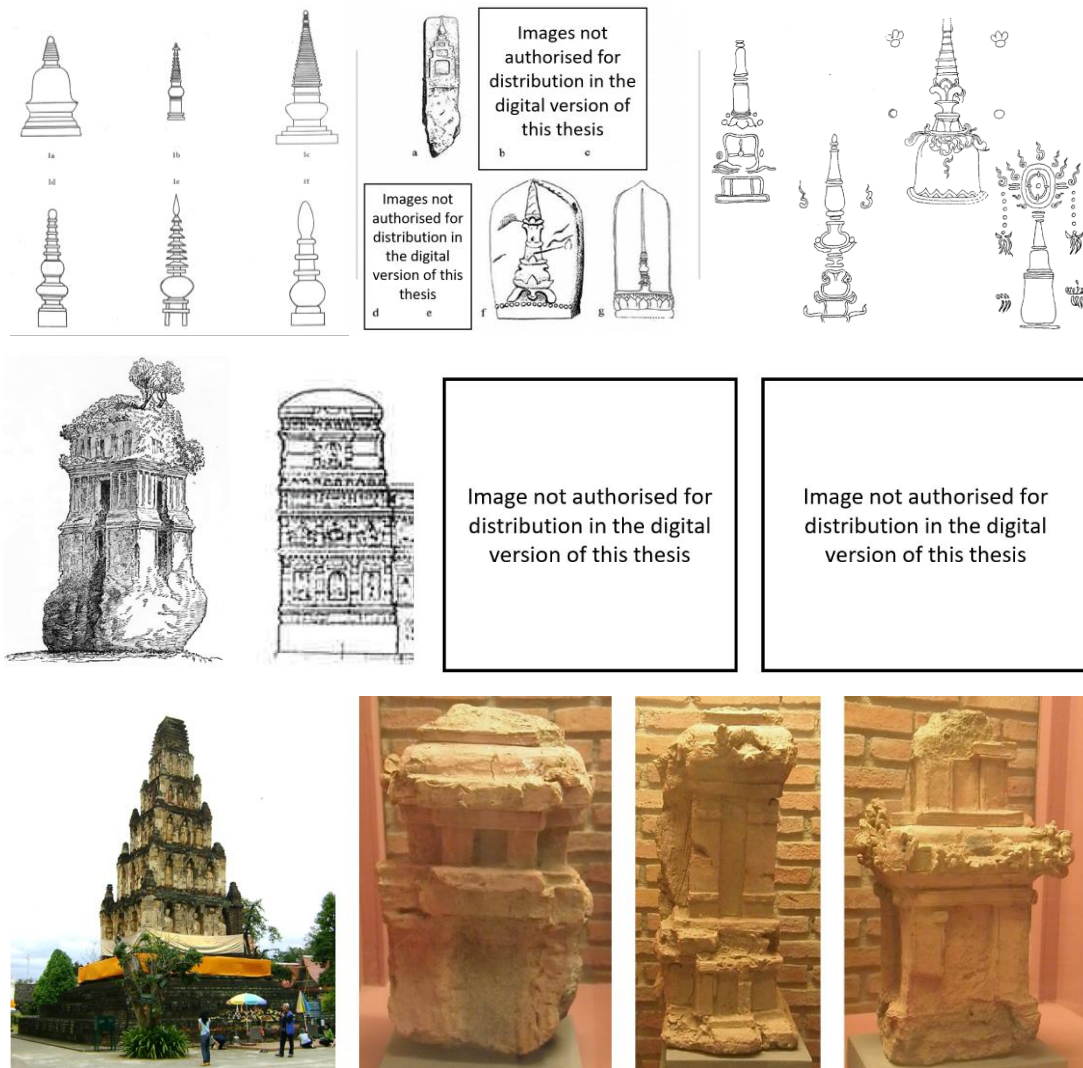


Figure 7.24 Range of suggested reconstructions and comparators for Dvāravatī *stūpa* elevations. Row 1 (left to right): stone 'models' and bas-reliefs of Dvāravatī *stūpas* in Bangkok National Museum; *kumbha stūpas* c. 7th-9th century, from boundary stones (*sema*) in Central (b) and Northeast Thailand (a, g) and Phnom Kulen, northern Cambodia (f), from bronze reliquary (d) and silver plaque (e) from Northeast Thailand, and a terracotta *kumbha* from Central Thailand (c) (see Woodward's figure caption for details); *stūpas* on repoussé silver plaques from Kantarawichai, Northeast Thailand, c. 8th-11th century (right example repeating (e) of Woodward's figure). Row 2 (left to right): 'Puduveli Gopuram', or 'Chinese Pagoda', at Nāgapaṭṭinam, Tamil Nadu; *stūpa*/temple no.3, Nālandā, Bihar, c. 6th century; reconstruction models of Dvāravatī *chedis* 9 and 13 at U Thong. Row 3 (left to right): Ku Kut *chedi* at Wat Chama Thewi, Lamphun, 12th century with later modifications; Dvāravatī terracotta representations of architecture, c. 7th-8th century. Images: Row 1 (left to right): Griswold, 'Architecture and Sculpture of Siam', Fig.1, reproduced under fair use principles with knowledge, but not formal permission, of Indiana University Press; Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, Fig.17, (g) reproduced with permission of the author, (f) with permission of Bruno Dagens, (a) out of copyright image originally from Lunet de Lajonquière, *Inventaire descriptif des monuments du Cambodge*. Vol. 2, EFEO, 1907; Diskul, 'Development of Dvāravatī sculpture', Fig.3, reproduced with permission of Oxford Publishing Limited through PLSclear. Row 2 (left to right): Yule, *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, Vol.2, 336, out of copyright image; Page, 'Excavations at Nalanda', Pl.XLII, out of copyright image; Wales, *Dvāravatī*, Pl.13. Row 3 (left to right): Ku Kut *chedi* courtesy Udomluck Hoontrakul; photographs of terracottas by Author, with acknowledgement to Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom.

are understood to have been represented in the Dvāravatī area, which informed iconographic content.⁹⁰⁴ Potentially this also affected the organisation of the architectural surface for specific iconographic programmes.

The available sources therefore suggest there was likely some variability in architectural elevation, as with the variable ground plan, so that individual monuments cannot be sufficiently characterised to help recreate the locations of the figures. A range of iconic and narrative sculptural art was produced for Dvāravatī *chedi*, including Buddha images, sometimes bodhisattvas, beings of a supernatural and protective nature, as well as human and divine beings in narrative compositions. The ‘foreigner’ figures are iconographically unusual, which exacerbates the difficulty in reconstructing their original locations and meaning because there is no comparable material *in situ*.

7.2.2. Original appearance of the figures

It was noted that figures were produced in terracotta and stucco at different sites, and that there is evidence for both the association of figural sculpture with recesses prepared in the brick structure and for the application of stucco to the surface of the monument itself. The stucco figures are naturally whitish in colour, but the terracotta figures also show evidence of a thin whitish coating, suggesting a limewash or plaster surface layer (Figure 7.25). Sculpted details on the terracotta figures will therefore have contributed to the final appearance, because these are not obscured by the limewash or thin plaster.

The whitish surface provided by both stucco and coated terracotta was amenable for the application of colour. There is very little comment in the literature concerning polychromy in Dvāravatī art,⁹⁰⁵ but there is clear evidence for the application of pigment to Dvāravatī material, although it remains possible that the pigment is not contemporary with the sculpture’s original production. Some of the mould-produced Buddha images from U Thong monument 5 show his robe was coloured red, although

⁹⁰⁴ Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art*, 76–82; Krairiksh, *Roots of Thai Art*, 46–91.

⁹⁰⁵ Krairiksh, *Roots of Thai Art*, 84, considers the Khu Bua terracottas to have been plastered and painted. Dupont, *Archaeology of the Mons of Dvāravatī Vol. 1*, 1:29, suspects paint was used at Wat Phra Men *chedi*, Nakhon Pathom. Fine Arts Department, *Thung Setthi*, 97–98, report stucco with patterns in pigment found *in situ* at Thung Setthi.



Figure 7.25 Plaster or limewash surface layer on the terracotta figures from Khu Bua. Top: 62/2547 and 4027/2518. Bottom: 60/2547 and 1347/2504. Further small quantities are visible elsewhere on 60/2547 and 1347/2504, and on other Khu Bua figures. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Ratchaburi National Museum, Somdet Phra Narai National Museum and Bangkok National Museum.

in this instance the pigment appears to have been applied directly to the terracotta rather than receiving a lighter base colour first.⁹⁰⁶ At least two figures from the Khu Bua *chedi* 40 deposit appear to show the use of pigment to produce painted details on the plaster or limewash layer, rather than directly on the terracotta (Figure 7.26). Reddish pigments were used to produce lines that emphasise facial features and details of dress including bodily ornament. These may indicate a relatively restricted palette, as noted at Sambor Prei Kuk, which is approximately contemporary.⁹⁰⁷ To my knowledge, the materials used have not been chemically analysed. Nevertheless, this permits a general appreciation of the likely appearance of the figures at completed monuments, incorporated into the polychrome iconographic programme of a

⁹⁰⁶ See an example in Baptiste and Zépher, *Dvāravatī*, 184–85, no.82. Another example with red pigment is on display at the Bangkok National Museum (no inventory number visible).

⁹⁰⁷ See Section 5.4.2.



Figure 7.26 Pigment applied to the plaster or limewash surface layer on two terracotta figures from Khu Bua *chedi* 40, enhancing features of the face and dress. Inventory numbers not visible, but on display at the Bangkok National Museum. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Bangkok National Museum.

sculptural architectural surface, spatially organised according to regular recesses in the underlying brick structure.

The likelihood that polychromy was used to produce details of the finished artistic surface of figures, including facial features and dress, is very significant for appreciating the potential scope for figural differentiation. The ability to distinguish or identify figures is important for the functioning of iconography but is particularly relevant for discussions involving frameworks of otherness. In considering the

evidence for visual differencing in Dvāravatī art, we should therefore bear in mind that additional aspects of the finished sculpture, now lost, may have contributed to their visual otherness when complete and *in situ*.

7.2.3. Dating

The issues associated with Dvāravatī chronology more generally were discussed above, but it is worth highlighting that dates assigned to the ‘foreigner’ figures are primarily based on the stylistic analysis of other figures from the same archaeological deposit for which there are independently datable comparators. For Khu Bua *chedi* 40, these include the figures identified as bodhisattvas and *dvārapāla*, which are considered stylistically and iconographically comparable to c.6th-century post-Gupta figural art from the western Deccan caves.⁹⁰⁸ Consequently, Khu Bua’s ‘foreigner’ figures are commonly dated to the 7th or possibly 8th century, early in the Dvāravatī period. The use of thermoluminescence dating of the terracotta does not appear to have been attempted, although there are difficulties associated with this technique in Southeast Asia.⁹⁰⁹ Breakage points show evidence of burning in the core in some cases, suggesting the use of high temperatures during production (Figure 7.27).⁹¹⁰ The Nakhon Pathom, U Thong and Thung Setthi figures are sometimes assigned similar dates, but often later into the 8th century, partly on stylistic grounds but also following an art historical generalisation that Dvāravatī use of stucco for sculpture post-dated the use of terracotta.⁹¹¹ However, generalising across multiple politico-cultural centres is problematic. Since these figures were produced in stucco, thermoluminescence dating cannot be used, but if compositional analysis of the stucco were to reveal an organic ingredient it may be possible to develop an approach to dating using this. Currently, only dates from stylistic analysis are available, and these have tended to date the Khu Bua figures to the 7th century and the others to the 7th-8th century.

⁹⁰⁸ Bhirasri, ‘Excavations at Koo Bua’, 102–3; Pisit Charoenwongsa and M.C. Subhadradis Diskul, *Thaïlande*, trans. Lotte Stratil-Sauer, *Archaeologia Mundi* (München: Nagel Publishers, 1978), 108; Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, 66; Zaleski, ‘Stucco and Terracotta Reliefs from Dvāravatī’, 35–36.

⁹⁰⁹ See Section 6.3.1.

⁹¹⁰ Sampling from concealed locations in the breakage areas or on the backs of figures should not adversely affect their aesthetic value for museum display or their significance in cultural heritage terms.

⁹¹¹ Zaleski, ‘Stucco and Terracotta Reliefs from Dvāravatī’, 31–32.



Figure 7.27 Terracotta head 61/2547, viewing the breakage point at the neck from below, and showing burning of the clay in its core. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgements to the Ratchaburi National Museum.

7.2.4. Interpretations of identity

Due to uncertainties around the original architectural contexts of the figures and consequently their iconographic contexts and roles, and the inherent imprecision and subjectivity of stylistic dating, we are presently largely dependent on the formal characteristics of the figures themselves for interpretive insights. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that, despite the many comments on the foreignness of the figures, very few interpretations move beyond asserting a particular foreign identity and assuming a social role as foreign merchants. A review of this literature provides another opportunity to consider the methodological framework discussed in Chapter 3, and highlights some of the problems that arise from uncritical and subjective statements of identity based primarily on the figures' appearance.

Most commentators have drawn on a combination of the figures' facial features and aspects of dress to reach their conclusion concerning identity, with some prioritising dress. These will be considered in more detail below, but it is worth noting at this stage the repeated references to prominent nose, prominent eyes, tall pointed headwear, sleeved upper garment, trouser-like lower garment, and boots on one of the Khu Bua figures. However, the identities suggested have varied considerably, with some prioritising a geographical origin and others an ethnic identity or 'racial' category, and

they show a broad scale of specificity of the identified group. These have included having a Middle Eastern origin⁹¹² including ‘Semitic’⁹¹³ and Arab⁹¹⁴ identities, Persian,⁹¹⁵ Central Asian,⁹¹⁶ ‘Turanian’,⁹¹⁷ Sogdian,⁹¹⁸ Indo-Scythian⁹¹⁹ including

⁹¹² Srisuchat, ‘Merchants, Merchandise, Markets’, 245; Somsak Rattanakun (1997 [2540]) and Phanombootra Chandrajoti (2007 [2550]) in Sanguanwong, ‘Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear’, 6–8; Krairiksh, *Roots of Thai Art*, 86–87.

⁹¹³ Lyons, ‘Traders of Ku Bua’, 52–52 & 56; Boisselier, *Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, 85–86; Anuvit Charernsupkul, ‘ภาพรูปบุคคลบนแผ่นอิฐแบบทวารวดี ณ เจดีย์จุลปะโทน นครปฐม: กับความสำคัญทางประวัติศาสตร์และโบราณคดีเอเชียอาคเนย์ [Image of a person on a brick from the Chedi Chula Pathon at Nakhon Pathom: its significance for the history and archaeology of Southeast Asia]’, *Silpakorn Journal* 27, no. 1 (1983 [2526]): 55; Anuvit Charernsupkul, ‘ภาพรูปบุคคลบนแผ่นอิฐแบบทวารวดี ณ เจดีย์จุลปะโทน นครปฐม: กับความสำคัญทางประวัติศาสตร์และโบราณคดีเอเชียอาคเนย์ [Image of a person on a brick from the Chedi Chula Pathon at Nakhon Pathom: its significance for the history and archaeology of Southeast Asia]’, *Art & Culture Magazine* 6, no. 5 (1985 [2528]): 33; Robert L. Brown and Anna M. MacDonnell, ‘The Pong Tuk Lamp: A Reconsideration’, *Journal of the Siam Society* 77, no. 2 (1989): 15; Charles F.W. Higham, *The Bronze Age of Southeast Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 336; Higham, *Early Cultures*, 258; Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art*, 78; Charles F.W. Higham, *Encyclopedia of Ancient Asian Civilizations* (New York: Facts on File, 2004), 187; Charles F.W. Higham, *Early Mainland Southeast Asia: From First Humans to Angkor* (Bangkok: River Books, 2014), 309. I add Lyons to this group as this identity seems to form the thrust of her discussion, finishing by inviting her reader to decide themselves from among the groups represented in the Tang *mingqi*. Others listed here refer to her work for a ‘Semitic’ identification. This was also the identity referred to in the Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Lopburi, and Ratchaburi National Museum display boards during fieldwork.

⁹¹⁴ Roger Lescot, ‘Les relations entre l’Iran et le Siam’, in *Iran (Les Sept Climats)* (Paris: Publications Orientalistes de France, 1972), 45; Khemchat Thepchai (1999 [2542]) and Sakchai Saising (2000 [2543]) in Sanguanwong, ‘Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear’, 7; Fine Arts Department, *Thung Setthi*, 75, suggest the Thung Setthi figure wears an Islamic *kopiah* as often interpreted for the Chula Pathon Chedi brick (Appendix 1 section 1.6), and suggest an Arabic identity on this basis.

⁹¹⁵ Lescot, ‘Les relations entre l’Iran et le Siam’, 45; Charernsupkul, ‘Image of a person on a brick (1983)’, 55; Matinee Jirawattana (1983 [2526]) and Anusorn Koonprakij (1986 [2529]) in Sanguanwong, ‘Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear’, 6; Amara Srisuchat, ‘ชาวต่างชาติในศิลปกรรมไทย / Foreigners in Thai Art’, *Silpakorn Journal* 33, no. 1 (1989 [2532]): 40–41; Michel Tranet, *Sambaur-Prei-Kuk: Monuments d’Içanavarma I (615-628) et Ses Environs*, vol. 3 (1998-1999) (Phnom Penh: Travail d’Inventaire Finance par la Fondation Toyota, 1999), 299; Nils C. Ritter, ‘Vom Euphrat zum Mekong: Maritime Kontakte zwischen Vorder- und Südostasien in vorislamischer Zeit’, *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin* 141 (2009): 158–62; Nils C. Ritter, ‘Perser am Mekong: die maritimen Fernhandelskontakte der Sasaniden’, *Antike Welt* 42, no. 2 (2011): 76; Suniti Chuthamas, ‘Archaeological Evidence of the Abbasid Maritime Trade in Thailand (750-1258 A.D./132-656 A.H.): Analytical Study’ (MA Thesis, University of Jordan, 2017), 79-80, 137 & 241. This identity was also given in the Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom, and Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Lopburi, display boards viewed during fieldwork.

⁹¹⁶ Tharaphong Srisuchat (1990 [2533]) in Sanguanwong, ‘Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear’, 6; Chuthamas, ‘Archaeological Evidence of the Abbasid Maritime Trade in Thailand’, 79-80, 137 & 241.

⁹¹⁷ Sanguanwong, 46, 50–51 & 71–74.

⁹¹⁸ Grenet, ‘Marchands sogdiens’, 68–73; Claude Guillot, ‘La Perse et le monde malais: échanges commerciaux et intellectuels’, *Archipel* 68 (2004): 165; Zaleski, ‘Les décors de stuc et de terre cuite’, 173; Sukpramun, ‘Khu Bua’, 196; Zaleski, ‘Stucco and Terracotta Reliefs from Dvāravātī’, 36; Stephen A. Murphy, ‘Ports of Call in Ninth-Century Southeast Asia: The Route of the Tang Shipwreck’, in *The Tang Shipwreck: Art and Exchange in the 9th Century*, ed. Alan Chong and Stephen A. Murphy (Singapore: Asian Civilisations Museum, 2017), 240–42.

⁹¹⁹ Charoenwongsa and Diskul, *Thailande*, 108; Rattanakun, *Archaeology of Khu Bua*, 101; Phasook Indrawooth, *ทวารวดี การศึกษาเชิงวิเคราะห์จากหลักฐานทางโบราณคดี / Dvāravātī: A Critical Study based on*

Kuṣāṇa⁹²⁰ and Śaka-Kṣatrapa⁹²¹ specifically, and finally the less specific categories of 'Middle Eastern / Central Asian'⁹²² and, simply, 'foreign'.⁹²³ Evidently, and as noted in the methodological discussion, the methods and cognitive processes involved in identifying a figure in ancient art are highly subjective without additional forms of evidence. The use of less specific identity categories inherently acknowledges these interpretive constraints, but also accommodates other possibilities, including the representation of people from multiple different identity groups or a wide geography, or the representation of an ascriptive identity group that incorporates several different identities named in external historical sources.⁹²⁴ Nonetheless, Persian and 'Semitic' have been particularly popular interpretations for the figures.

Archaeological Evidence (Bangkok: Silpakorn University, 1999), 265; Sanguanwong, 'Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear', 46, 49, 52–54 & 71–74. I have added identifications as 'Scythian' to this group where context suggests descendants of Scythians in India are intended. Chuthamas, 'Archaeological Evidence of the Abbasid Maritime Trade in Thailand', 79-80, 137 & 241, specifically proposes descendants of Scythians in Central and Western Asia.

⁹²⁰ Charernsupkul, 'Image of a person on a brick (1985)', 33.

⁹²¹ Indrawooth, 'Archaeology of the Early Buddhist Kingdoms of Thailand', 130; Phasook Indrawooth, 'Un antique royaume urbanisé de Thaïlande', in *Dvāravatī: Aux Sources du Bouddhisme en Thaïlande*, ed. Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zéphir (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux & Musée Guimet, 2009), 37.

⁹²² Mano Kliphong (2001 [2544]) and Wannapa Ampawan (2010 [2533]) in Sanguanwong, 'Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear', 7–8; Saritphong Khunsong, "'รัฐทวารวดี" กับการค้า ตามเส้นทางสายไหมทางทะเล ["Dvaravati state" trade on the maritime Silk Route]', in *การแลกเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรม บนเส้นทางทางการค้าทางทะเล: บทความจากการสัมมนาวิชาการ วันที่ 8-9 พฤษภาคม 2557 ณ โรงแรมวินเซอร์ สวีทส์ กรุงเทพฯ [Symposium on Cultural Exchange on Maritime Trade Routes: Papers from an Academic Seminar 8-9 May 2014 at the Windsor Suites Hotel, Bangkok]* (Bangkok: National Discovery Museum Institute, 2014), 302–3; Khunsong, *Dvaravati: A Major Entrepot*, 207.

⁹²³ Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 59; Chirapravati, 'The Cult of Votive Tablets in Thailand', 340; Emmanuel Guillon, *The Mons: A Civilization of Southeast Asia*, trans. James V. Di Crocco (Bangkok: Siam Society, 1999), 86; Wongnoi, *Terracotta Art from Khu Bua*, 65; Kingmani, 'Antiquities from U Thong', 88; Marut Wongsiri (2006 [2549]) in Sanguanwong, 'Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear', 8; Barram and Glover, 'Re-Thinking Dvaravati', 176; Zaleski, 'Les décors de stuc et de terre cuite', 173; Saritphong Khunsong, 'ภาพวิถีชีวิต (อันพรัมว) ของชาวทวารวดี ที่เมืองนครปฐมโบราณ [Views of the way of life (vague and fragmentary) of the Dvaravati population in the ancient city of Nakhon Pathom]', *Muang Boran* 38, no. 4 (2012 [2555]): 79–80; John Guy, 'Brick Depicting West Asian Merchant Wearing Kupeeyok Hat', in *Lost Kingdoms: Hindu-Buddhist Sculpture of Early Southeast Asia*, ed. John Guy (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014), 40.

⁹²⁴ Rattanakun, *Archaeology of Khu Bua*, 33, referred to one of the excavated 'foreigner' figures as *แขก (khaek)*. Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), 5, and Charles Keyes, 'Muslim "Others" in Buddhist Thailand', *Thammasat Review* 13, no. 1 (2009 2008): 26–27, note that this term is used today to refer pejoratively, even derogatorily, to people perceived as non-Thai foreigners with a West Asian or South Asian ancestry, including Muslims in southern Thailand, being an ascriptive identity group based on both phenotypic and cultural difference, including in dress and religion. However, Keyes, 26, and A.V.N. Diller, 'Islam and Southern Thai Ethnic Reference', *South East Asian Review* 13, no. 1–2 (1988): 153–54, note that it originated as a more neutral term for 'foreigner', with senses including 'guest' and 'visitor', apparently from Proto-Tai. In this case, it may have little bearing on the identity of the Dvāravatī figures produced in a primarily Mon cultural context.

Interpretation of the figures' identities has very rarely occurred outside the context of a specific historical reconstruction or argument, that is, interpreting their identity has rarely been approached as an art historical problem in its own right, as the purpose and focus of their study.⁹²⁵ The existence of a separate motivation behind the interpretation of identity has potentially contributed to the range of interpretations noted above. This is because the figures are marshalled as support for arguments concerning specific long-distance connections and trade, while the specific suggested identity remains unsatisfactorily demonstrated. This is not to suggest interpretations as part of a historical argument are inherently wrong, but identity has frequently been dealt with quite superficially as a result. If the identity were subsequently shown to have been misinterpreted, the associated argument would be weakened. Since such a wide range of identities has been suggested, we should suppose that at least some of the associated arguments are potentially flawed.

There are also problems with the nature of some of the evidence used in formulating arguments for suggested identities. In some cases, comparators used for details of dress are not contemporaneous, even if accounting for the imprecise dating methodologies presently available for the Dvāravatī figures. For example, aspects of the figures' dress have been compared with Kuṣāṇa sculpture of the 1st-3rd century, and to material from Ming period China (1368-1644), but this is methodologically inappropriate if encounters with foreigners are thought to lie behind the image's production.⁹²⁶ Additionally, there are difficulties demonstrating the physical presence of people of specific foreign identities in the vicinity of the Dvāravatī cultural centres in the time frame of the figures' production. For example, Persians are historically attested to have settled in Sri Lanka by the 6th century, and to have been present in the southern Chinese port cities by the late-7th century, but the extent of their exploration away from the main maritime routes between the Strait of Malacca and the Chinese coast remains unclear until the intensity of trade increased around the

⁹²⁵ This can be claimed for Sanguanwong's study.

⁹²⁶ Sanguanwong, 'Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear', 46–49 & 54, compares Khu Bua and U Thong figures to several Kuṣāṇa ones. Lyons, 'Traders of Ku Bua', 52, compares the Khu Bua figures to a Ming period figure and figures in a 5th-6th century mosaic in Ravenna, as evidence that forms of dress had changed very little in between.

end of the 8th century.⁹²⁷ It is from this time onward that Middle Eastern ceramic and glass, including from Persia, are archaeologically represented in Dvāravatī and Thai peninsular sites, although the ethnicities of the traders remain unclear.⁹²⁸ The earliest historical reference to Persians in the Gulf of Thailand area is possibly a Chinese text, the *Manshu* (蠻書), dating to the 860s.⁹²⁹ There are other indications of traders with foreign ethnicities in the area earlier than this, but none are unequivocally Persian.⁹³⁰

⁹²⁷ See G.R. Tibbetts, 'Early Muslim Traders in South-East Asia', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 30, no. 1 (1957): 6–7, and Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce*, 74–75, for Cosmas Indicopleustes's record of a Persian colony on Sri Lanka in the 520s. See Tibbetts again (pp.26–28) on a 695 CE Chinese edict on provisioning foreign embassies for their return trips, which are primarily from countries on the Indian Ocean and South China Sea coasts, which he reasonably interprets to indicate arrival by a maritime route; Paul Pelliot, 'Deux itinéraires de Chine en Inde à la fin du VIII^e siècle', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 4 (1904): 334, provides a translation of the text which includes Persia in this list. Tibbetts also collates the Chinese historical sources for Persian colonies in the southern Chinese port cities, attested from the early 8th century.

⁹²⁸ Bennet Bronson, 'Chinese and Middle Eastern Trade in Southern Thailand during the 9th Century', in *Ancient Trades and Cultural Contacts in Southeast Asia*, ed. Amara Srisuchat (Bangkok: Office of the National Culture Commission, 1996), 181–89; Ian C. Glover, 'West Asian Sassanian-Islamic Ceramics in the Indian Ocean, South, Southeast and East Asia', *Man and Environment* 27, no. 1 (2002): 170; Pimchanok Pongkasetkan, 'Ship's Cargo beyond the Sea: New Evidence from Dong Mae Nang Muang, Nakorn Sawan Province, Central Thailand', in *2011 Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Underwater Cultural Heritage Proceedings* (Museum of Underwater Archaeology, 2011); Wannasarn Noonsuk, *Tambralinga and Nakhon Si Thammarat: Early Kingdoms on the Isthmus of Southeast Asia* (Nakhon Si Thammarat: Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat University, 2013), 198–200; Khunsong, *Dvaravati: A Major Entrepot*, 167–74 & 199–202.

⁹²⁹ Grenet, 'Marchands sogdiens', 70. See Pelliot, 'Deux itinéraires de Chine en Inde', 287, n.2, for the reference to Persians in the Gulf of Thailand, and 132 n.5 for the text's date. There has been a long discussion about the identity/identities of the *Po-se* in Chinese sources on trade products arriving from Southeast Asia, but Grenet and Pelliot consider the people mentioned in the *Manshu* to actually be Persians in this case.

⁹³⁰ For example, the early historic polity named Dunsun in Chinese sources, located on the Thai-Malay Peninsula, was recorded as having a multicultural population that included 500 families of *hu* by the 3rd century. This ascriptive name was cautiously interpreted as "Persians" by Kenneth R. Hall, 'The "Indianization" of Funan: An Economic History of Southeast Asia's First State', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 13, no. 1 (1982): 95, drawing on the scholarship of Paul Wheatley, 'Satyānṛta in Suvarṇadvīpa: From Reciprocity to Redistribution in Ancient Southeast Asia', in *Ancient Civilization and Trade*, ed. Jeremy A. Sabloff and C.C. Lamberg-Karlovsky (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 243, who himself had offered the more cautious "Persian and/or Sogdian". Brian Colless, 'Persian Merchants and Missionaries in Medieval Malaya', *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 42, no. 2 (1969): 13, also suggests these *hu* should be understood as "a Persian colony or trading settlement on the Malay Peninsula", apparently ignoring the complexity that his translation referred to them as "*Hu* from India". Colless drew attention to Edward H. Schafer, 'Iranian Merchants in T'ang Dynasty Tales', in *Semitic and Oriental Studies: A Volume Presented to William Popper*, ed. Walter J. Fischel (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951), 409, who had noted that "[w]hatever may have been the ethnic extraction of these *hu* in pre-T'ang times [...] in the T'ang era they were mainly Iranians, that is to say, Persians, Sogdians, and natives of Western Turkestan", suggesting that the Chinese application of the ascriptive ethnic label had possibly changed over time. For his part, Manguin, 'Archaeology of Early Maritime Polities', 297, identifies them as merchants from Central Asia, understood as comprising Sogdia and Bactria. Clearly, 'Persian' is just one of several contested interpretations of the foreign identity of the *hu* residing on the Peninsula in the centuries before the Dvāravatī *chedi* were constructed.

Equally, the occasional finds of early Persian manufacture such as Sasanian coins,⁹³¹ do not necessarily indicate the presence of Persians because the objects have an intrinsic trade or exchange value and might plausibly have reached Southeast Asia through down-the-line trade involving merchants of other ethnicities. A specific identity cannot be conclusively demonstrated if clear and, ideally, independent evidence is lacking for people of that ethnicity being present in the area at the time of the figures' production.

Particularly notable is the lack of consideration of the possible role of othering in the figures' production. The identity of the artists is usually and reasonably assumed to be Mon, but this is not actually certain. As noted earlier, craftspeople represent one of the social roles of people known to have travelled between polities elsewhere in ancient Asia, although this is not specifically attested for the Dvāravatī area. Nonetheless, there is no discussion of whether the prominent noses and prominent eyes of the figures might relate to emphases, distortions and exaggerations associated with othering by artists with a different cultural background, akin to the “deep eyes and high noses” of Tang *mingqi* representing China's western Others, which has an ideological basis.⁹³² Such features in the Dvāravatī figures sometimes appear to be treated as if they are naturalistic depictions of observed phenotypic traits. This has led to some commentators identifying them on this basis in highly subjective assessments that draw on pre-existing stereotypes current in the commentator's own cultural context. For example, they were described by one European scholar as having “markedly Semitic facial features”,⁹³³ referring to a ‘racial’ stereotype regarding especially nasal profile, which became commonplace in Europe from the 19th century and unfortunately persists in some parts of modern society.⁹³⁴ Recognising the operation and formal expression of stereotypy can be useful in understanding

⁹³¹ Anan Vattananikorn, ‘เหรียญกษาปณ์เปอร์เซีย พบที่แหล่งโบราณคดีขะรังปัตตานี [Persian coins found at the archaeological site of Yarang, Pattani]’, *Muang Boran* 17, no. 3 (2534 1991): 122–24; Jacq-Hergoual'h, *Malay Peninsula*, 191; Ritter, ‘Vom Euphrat zum Mekong’, 162–64. These Sasanian coins from Yarang on the Gulf of Thailand coast of the Thai-Malay Peninsula do not have clear archaeological provenance because they were chance finds, so we cannot be certain of the time frame of their archaeological deposition.

⁹³² See section 3.2.3.

⁹³³ Boisselier, *Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, 85. Several of the others noted above seem to be using the term ‘Semitic’ in a cultural sense.

⁹³⁴ Sander L. Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (New York & London: Routledge, 1991), 179–81.

represented identities, as with the Tang *mingqi*, but it needs to remain relevant to the cultural context being studied and be based on contemporaneous documentary sources rather than the commentator's own cultural reference points.

By comparing to other figures in Dvāravatī art and focussing attention on what the artists themselves felt was important to represent, reference to one's own cultural stereotypes and assumptions can be minimised, but such comparisons are rarely made in any depth in the literature.⁹³⁵ It is possible that such a comparison was felt to be implied by the author or differences considered to be self-evident, but not engaging with represented difference forestalls any attempt to approach the figures from the cultural context of their production, to begin the hermeneutic circle. Difference and similarity constitute crucial aspects of formal and iconographic typing in the production of images, facilitating the communication of meaning to viewers from the same cultural context. Where documentary sources exist to assist interpretation, visual differences and similarities may also provide insights on the perception and compositional role of Others represented, as was outlined earlier.⁹³⁶ A comparative approach therefore helps to avoid direct interpretation of aspects of appearance, which ignores the possible roles of processes such as othering and population change since the image's production.⁹³⁷ The population of the Dvāravatī area is understood to have been different to today, so comparison should be with contemporaneous representations from the same Dvāravatī cultural context, rather than with material from subsequent Thai art or the modern population. We can consider some of this Dvāravatī material next.

Dress in Dvāravatī culture has not been extensively researched, and contemporary epigraphic sources add little because they are primarily concerned with Buddhist ritual.⁹³⁸ The *Tongdian* (通典), a late-8th century Chinese text, describes aspects of Dvāravatī culture from a Chinese perspective, but mentions only the dress of the ruler during daily audience, who wears “a robe with the colour of morning glory, wears a

⁹³⁵ Several commentators note that these figures are visually different to other figures in Dvāravatī art, but more in-depth discussions comparing the Dvāravatī and foreign-dressed figures are given by Ritter, ‘Vom Euphrat zum Mekong’, 159–62, and Sanguanwong, ‘Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear’, 44–45.

⁹³⁶ See Section 3.2.

⁹³⁷ See Section 3.3.

⁹³⁸ Khunsong, ‘Views of the way of life of the Dvaravati population’, 78.



Figure 7.28 Stucco figures representing human types from Nakhon Pathom. Left and middle: Phra Prathon Chedi. Right: Chula Pathon Chedi. Photographs: Author; with acknowledgements to the Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum, Nakhon Pathom.

gold crown on his head, has gold rings in his ears, has a gold chest ornament hanging down from the neck, and on his feet has leather shoes decorated with precious stones”.⁹³⁹ No comment is made on the appearance of the rest of society, so for this we are reliant on iconographic and archaeological material.⁹⁴⁰ In the sculptural material retrieved from *chedi* sites are many human figures alongside the Buddhas, bodhisattvas and spiritual beings that can usually be distinguished on an iconographic basis. The human figures may come from narrative scenes, such as the *Jātaka* panels from Chula Pathon Chedi, or perhaps individual devotee figures holding floral offerings (Figure 7.28). The textile components of dress are usually limited to the lower body, as a length of material tied around the waist and usually covering the thighs, with a portion falling between the legs, and sometimes draped across the shoulder, leaving chests, lower legs and feet bare.⁹⁴¹ Some female figures wear a long lower garment. There is a wide range of bodily ornament including necklaces, collars, pectorals, ear ornaments, armllets and bracelets. The use of headwear is rare,⁹⁴² and instead a range of hairstyles is seen with some figures wearing diadems, presumably related to their status. The appearance of these figures is generally and reasonably taken to represent

⁹³⁹ Tatsuro Yamamoto, ‘East Asian Historical Sources for Dvāravatī Studies’, in *Proceedings of the Seventh IAHA Conference, 22-26 August 1977, Bangkok*, vol. 2 (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 1979), 1139.

⁹⁴⁰ Khunsong, ‘Views of the way of life of the Dvaravati population’, 78.

⁹⁴¹ Dupont, *Archaeology of the Mons of Dvāravatī Vol.1*, 1:57–58.

⁹⁴² See Appendix 1 section 1.6 for figural heads from Nakhon Pathom interpreted as wearing turbans.



Figure 7.29 Stucco figures combining apparently local-type dress with split-ring earrings. Left and middle: Chula Pathon Chedi, Nakhon Pathom. Right: unspecified site, Khu Bua. Photographs: Author; with acknowledgements to the Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum and Ratchaburi National Museum.

the local population for several reasons. They are numerous in the sculpture, far more numerous than those widely identified as ‘foreigners’.⁹⁴³ Also, while many figures are fragmentary, occasional examples are sufficiently preserved to show the co-presence of the simple wrapped dress with ear ornaments that are demonstrably of a local type (Figure 7.29). Many steatite moulds for jewellery have been found at Dvāravatī sites that show carved designs for split-ring ear ornaments which are both numerous archaeologically and similar to those represented iconographically (Figure 7.30).⁹⁴⁴ While similar moulds and ear ornaments are known from other early historic Southeast Asian sites, notably sites in the Mekong Delta associated with ‘Funan’,⁹⁴⁵ they were clearly produced and used in Dvāravatī contexts also. Textile components of dress have not survived archaeologically, having been made of organic materials

⁹⁴³ Khunsong, ‘Views of the way of life of the Dvaravati population’, 79; Khunsong, ‘“Dvaravati state” trade on the maritime Silk Route’, 303; Khunsong, *Dvaravati: A Major Entrepot*, 207.

⁹⁴⁴ Richter, *The Jewelry of Southeast Asia*, 62 & 88–89, includes another example of a representation of a figure wearing both the wrapped lower garment and split-ring earrings common with Dvāravatī dress. Examples of archaeological finds of split-ring earrings and moulds used to manufacture them from Dvāravatī contexts, include those shown in Bronson, ‘Excavations at Chansen’, 38–39 & 43 & 46, Indrawooth, *Dvāravati: A Critical Study*, 269 & 275, and Usa Nguanphienphak, Manatsak Rak’u, and Suthep Sutthiphongkiat, *โบราณวัตถุในพิพิธภัณฑสถานแห่งชาติ พระปฐมเจดีย์ [Antiquities in the Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum]* (Bangkok: Fine Arts Department, 2005), 208–12.

⁹⁴⁵ Malleret, *L’Archéologie*, Vol.2, 2:287–92 & 308–15, and Plates XCVII-XCIX & CIV; Lê Thị Liên, ‘Metal Ornaments and Traces of Their Manufacturing in Oc Eo Culture (Southern Vietnam)’, in *Bujang Valley and Early Civilisations in Southeast Asia*, ed. Stephen Chia and Barbara Watson Andaya (Kuala Lumpur: Department of National Heritage, Ministry of Information, Communications and Culture, 2011), 305–10, 320 & 322.



Figure 7.30 Moulds for split-ring earring production and split-ring earrings from Dvāravatī culture archaeological contexts, from four museum collections in Thailand. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Bangkok National Museum, Ratchaburi National Museum, and Chansen Museum.

that have degraded. It is against this group of representations that those identified as ‘foreigners’ should be compared.

One of the most striking features of the ‘foreigner’ figures is their headwear, as noted by the commentators referenced at the start of this section. This emphasis on the headwear no doubt partly reflects the more frequent presence of isolated heads lacking bodies in the archaeological material curated by Thailand’s National Museums. However, the presence of breaks at the locations of necks was repeatedly noted above as indicating that bodies were indeed once attached. Given the widespread representation of hair or diadems for the representations of Dvāravatī figures, the very presence of headwear is particularly distinctive, as it would no doubt have been in life. The presence of headwear is a unifying characteristic for the figures, and suggests it likely signified their difference.

The headwear shares certain characteristics that suggest they may represent people from related backgrounds, perhaps a single community, but there is some variation. All the headwear has a profile that is elevated above the level of the head it covers, and inclines forward, tapering to a peak that is anteriorly positioned above the face. The peak is damaged on three of the stucco figures, but a comparable trajectory for



Figure 7.31 Heads of stucco figures from Thung Setthi, U Thong and Nakhon Pathom, showing locations of loss of stucco from the peaks of the headwear. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum, U Thong National Museum and Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum.

its profile can be surmised from what remains (Figure 7.31). Posteriorly, it extends to the nape. On two of the larger Khu Bua figures where more detail was modelled,⁹⁴⁶ the front area immediately above the forehead shows a feature extending upward towards the peak and backward over the ear, that should probably be understood as either the headwear's lower portion turned up or having an additional section attached (Figure 7.32). Emerging from behind this are a series of lines, incised or plastically modelled, that extend part-way back across the sides of the headwear, which doubtless represent folds in the headwear's textile where it gathers. On a third figure from Khu Bua the textile appears to gather at the front without the overlying feature. The lines continue onto the lower back portion of the headwear, although interpretation is hindered by damage or less clear detail. The stucco figures show some differences. The figures from Thung Setthi, Nakhon Pathom and U Thong present a generally smoother surface to the headwear, but two bear the detail of a discrete rim on the lower edge, while on the more detailed of the Nakhon Pathom figures this line

⁹⁴⁶ In general, the slightly larger of the Khu Bua terracotta figures appear to have been modelled with greater application of surface detail than the slightly smaller examples. However, it seems likely that the details visible on the larger figures are relevant for the interpretation of the smaller figures also. It should be remembered that some details were probably painted onto the final sculptural surface, as discussed above.



Figure 7.32 Heads of terracotta figures from Khu Bua with detailed modelling of headwear. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Bangkok National Museum and Ratchaburi National Museum.

is discontinuous and may indicate textile folds (Figure 7.33).⁹⁴⁷ The modelling of folds and a peak that inclines forward are suggestive of a flexible material for the headwear, and this has been the conclusion of others. They have been interpreted as both caps and a textile wrapped around the head, but I am inclined to interpret them as flexible caps because the lines that have been interpreted elsewhere as indicating wrapping on some Khu Bua examples, do not extend around the head but rather become more distinct where the textile gathers at the front.⁹⁴⁸ Nonetheless, there is some variation in the form of the cap represented between Khu Bua and the other sites, but whether this is related to a difference of sculptural material or chronology is unclear.

The upper and lower garments will be considered next. The upper garment of the four figures with this detail preserved,⁹⁴⁹ all from Khu Bua, has been widely recognised as

⁹⁴⁷ An alternative interpretation for this detail is of hair emerging from underneath the headwear, as appears to be the case for 4088/2518, the first head in Figure 7.32.

⁹⁴⁸ Most commentators interpret the headwear as caps, and I disagree with the textile wrap interpretation for some figures, given by Sanguanwong, 'Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear', 46–49, due to the interpretation of form given in my main text. The possible exception is 61/2547, the third head in Figure 7.23. I also disagree with her comparison (p.50-51) of the headwear of one of the Nakhon Pathom figures (735/2519) with that of a foreign horse-rider in the murals of Ajanṭā cave 16, which Alkazi, *Ancient Indian Costume*, 176, interpreted as a 'Turanian Tartar'. The Nakhon Pathom figure's headwear is damaged both on top and in the peak, which artifactually gives the impression of a flatter upper edge and squarish peak.

⁹⁴⁹ The photograph provided by Wongnoi, *Terracotta Art from Khu Bua*, 65, of a fifth figure with remains of the body section is not sufficiently clear to see any details of the dress, and was not located during fieldwork.



Figure 7.33 Heads of stucco figures with smooth headwear and rim features, from Thung Setthi, Nakhon Pathom (2) and U Thong. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgements to the Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum, Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum and U Thong National Museum.

a sleeved garment, variously termed a blouse, shirt, tunic, jacket and long coat.⁹⁵⁰ Of the four, only one permits a view of the upper front detail, being obscured by other features or damaged on the others, but here can be seen lines in the terracotta suggestive of one side of the front of the garment pulled across the other, in the manner of a front-opening garment (Figure 7.34). Opinions differ over whether this is a short-sleeved garment with bracelets, or a long-sleeved garment with both bracelets and armllets. A short-sleeved interpretation is certainly plausible because of the different ways in which the upper and lower features are modelled, on the two examples where these details are slightly clearer. The lower feature has the appearance of a bracelet because its modelled volume is rounded and above the level of the forearm either side, while the upper feature is flatter and modelled by subtracting volume from either side, suggesting a different feature like a band or cuff is represented (Figure 7.35). The garment covering the lower body has been variously interpreted as clothing that covers the legs separately, including trousers and

⁹⁵⁰ Lyons, 'Traders of Ku Bua', 52, identified the upper garment as either a blouse or long coat, and Brown and MacDonnell, 'The Pong Tuk Lamp', 15, agree with the interpretation of a blouse. Similar conclusions were reached by Sanguanwong, 'Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear', 52, who identified a long-sleeved shirt, and Krairiksh, *Roots of Thai Art*, 86–87, who suggested they wear jackets. Boisselier, *Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, 85, instead saw a long tunic, and Ritter, 'Vom Euphrat zum Mekong', 159–61, agrees it is tunic-like but not necessarily long. Only Grenet, 'Marchands sogdiens', 70, disputes the interpretation of a sleeved garment, suggesting that the features on the upper arms should be interpreted as armllets rather than indicating sleeves. Notably, Grenet was working from photographs (p.79 n.23) rather than personal inspection of the figures, which instead seems to have been the case for several of the other commentators noted here.



Figure 7.34 Front detail of upper body of figure 1334/2504 from Khu Bua. Photograph: Author, with acknowledgement to Bangkok National Museum.



Figure 7.35 Arm details of terracotta figures 1334/2504 and 60/2547 from Khu Bua. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Bangkok National Museum and Ratchaburi National Museum.

breeches, or as clothing that wraps around the legs, like a skirt or sarong.⁹⁵¹ That there is textile over the legs even on the figures with incomplete legs, is indicated by lines across the thighs that, on the more complete examples, form V-shapes indicating the looseness or bagginess of this garment sagging under its own weight (Figure 7.36). In this detail it bears comparison with figures in wrapped lower garments from Dvāravatī art, confirming the representation of a loose garment, but it does not possess the tie of a wrapped garment falling between the legs either front or back. There is separation of at least the lower part of the legs at the front on the complete figure, but it is not possible to determine if fabric covers the shins below the loose textile or if they are exposed, because the final artistic surface has not survived. As such, this formulation might represent a wrapped lower garment with concealed tie or baggy trousers. If the undulating line across the front of the full figure's legs does not indicate the edges of a wrapped garment, it is conceivably continuous with the lines on the front of the upper body and they would together indicate a coat. These various uncertainties highlight the subjectivities involved when interpreting figures where the final artistic surface has been lost, but there is near consensus that a sleeved upper garment is indicated. By comparison, Dvāravatī use of textiles for clothing was seen to be limited to draped and wrapped lengths of textile around the waist and sometimes shoulder, leaving much of the body exposed.

Regarding footwear, the single full-length figure from Khu Bua wears boots, which has been noted several times by commentators (Figure 7.37).⁹⁵² Most, if not all, other figures in Dvāravatī art are shown barefoot w clear modelling of the toes if produced

⁹⁵¹ Lyons, 'Traders of Ku Bua', 52, suggested breeches, which are usually understood as reaching to just below the knee. Brown and MacDonnell, 'The Pong Tuk Lamp', 15, consider them pants, suggesting a garment the full length of the legs, and Ritter, 'Vom Euphrat zum Mekong', 159, agrees they are trousers, suggesting they should be interpreted as wide and multi-folded. His wider argument was for a Persian identity for the figures, so this description can be understood as referring to the baggy, ruched trousers of a type seen in Parthian and Sasanian figural art. Grenet, 'Marchands sogdiens', 70, interpreted the lower garment as a sarong, and Sanguanwong, 'Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear', 52, considered it skirt-like.

⁹⁵² Lyons, 'Traders of Ku Bua', 52; Boisselier, *Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, 85; Brown and MacDonnell, 'The Pong Tuk Lamp', 15; Guillon, *The Mons*, 86; Ritter, 'Vom Euphrat zum Mekong', 159; Sukpramun, 'Khu Bua', 196; Sanguanwong, 'Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear', 52; Krairiksh, *Roots of Thai Art*, 86–87; Khunsong, "'Dvaravati state" trade on the maritime Silk Route', 303; Khunsong, *Dvaravati: A Major Entrepot*, 207. Grenet, 'Marchands sogdiens', 70, again differs from other interpretations, suggesting the figure is represented barefoot, which complements his sarong interpretation for the lower garment.



Figure 7.36 Lower body of three figures from Khu Bua. Top: 1334/2504. Bottom: 1347/2504 and 60/2547. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Bangkok National Museum and Ratchaburi National Museum.



Figure 7.37 Boots from Khu Bua. Left: from figure 1334/2504. Top middle: object 4133/2518. Right and bottom middle: object 4132/2518. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Bangkok National Museum and Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, except top middle: Somdet Phra Narai National Museum.

at a sufficiently large scale, but despite its large size this figure has no such detail modelled.⁹⁵³ The boots extend from the lowest extent of the lower garment just described, so can be considered calf-length.⁹⁵⁴ Two other boot-like objects exist, lacking the body to which they are believed to be attached, and it is notable that these have been added to the published counts of ‘foreigner’ representations as this reinforces the perception that boots signified foreignness in Dvāravatī art.⁹⁵⁵ However, while one of these objects appears to be consistent with the representation of boots on the full-length Khu Bua figure,⁹⁵⁶ the other is not (Figure 7.37). The first appears to have been produced in profile like the known figure, but the other shows a flat surface at the ‘heels’ so that they would project outward at right angles from a wall. All known Khu Bua representations of ‘foreigners’ are shown in profile, a characteristic that will be discussed shortly, but these ‘boots’ require a figure posed frontally or contorted.

⁹⁵³ The gem-encrusted leather shoes of the Dvāravatī ruler referred to in the *Tongdian* are noted, but do not appear to be represented among the surviving sculptures.

⁹⁵⁴ Ritter, ‘Vom Euphrat zum Mekong’, 159, and Sanguanwong, ‘Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear’, 52, suggest high or knee-length boots are worn, but judging against the height of the figure at the waist, they come only half-way up the shins.

⁹⁵⁵ These objects are recorded as boots on the museum’s register database and display board, and Wongnoi, *Terracotta Art from Khu Bua*, 65, suggests unaffiliated boots can be included with this material.

⁹⁵⁶ This object has only been viewed by the author as a single image in the Somdet Phra Narai National Museum database, rather than in person. It is positioned in the photograph to be viewed from the side, like the full-length Khu Bua figure. As far as can be determined, it is consistent with a boot interpretation.

Yet, if the object does not represent a pair of booted feet, its identification remains unclear.

Bodily ornament also differs. Bracelets and possibly simple armlets were noted above, though the latter is considered a less likely interpretation. Not all the foreign-dressed figures possess ear ornaments, but those that do wear ear ornaments of a similar form to each other which, allowing for the roughness of some of the modelling, have a cylindrical form, peg-like with a larger head at the front, and are worn through the earlobe, lying approximately

horizontally (Figure 7.38). These differ to forms seen more commonly in Dvāravatī art, including split-ring (Figure 7.30), discoid and spiral forms. The significant role of ear ornaments in expressing social and ethnic identities in the context of Indic dress, and in figural differentiation in Dvāravatī iconography has been recognised.⁹⁵⁷ This supports an interpretation that this potentially non-local form is semiotically significant.



Figure 7.38 Ear ornaments. Top: Khu Bua figures 4088/2518, 4027/2518 and 61/2547. Bottom: Khu Bua figure 60/2547 and Nakhon Pathom figures 735/2519 and 736/2519. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Somdet Phra Narai National Museum, Ratchaburi National Museum and Phra Pathom Chedi National Museum.

The dress of the ‘foreigner’ figures differs from Dvāravatī dress in many ways, based purely on an interpretation of modelled form, though it should be noted that insights on dress below the neck were derived from just a subset of figures, all from Khu Bua. They wear headwear of textile with a distinctively tall and forward-inclined tapering profile, some apparently having the lower edges turned up or another element attached around its base. There is a front-opening, sleeved upper garment and a lower

⁹⁵⁷ For discussions of the significance of ear ornaments in Indic contexts, see Woodford Schmidt, ‘Aristocratic Devotees in Early Buddhist Art’, 35–36, and Waltraud Ganguly, *Earring: Ornamental Identity and Beauty in India* (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 2007), 9–11. The contribution of ear ornaments to differentiation of figural types in Dvāravatī art has been noted by Zaleski, ‘Les décors de stuc et de terre cuite’, 172, and Sanguanwong, ‘Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear’, 52.

garment that covers most if not all of the legs, and calf-length boots. By contrast, the Dvāravatī people wore no headwear except sometimes diadems, wore draped and wrapped items of dress that leave much of the body exposed, and went barefoot. Bodily ornament differs, especially in the ear ornaments. The use of items of clothing produced by stitching pieces of fabric together, seen with at least the sleeved upper garment, if not also the lower garment, is significant because it represents an entirely different vestimentary system to that commonly used in the Dvāravatī centres, and indicates their origins in separate cultural traditions. The distinction between vestimentary systems based on stitched versus draped or wrapped clothing has been highlighted elsewhere, notably in discussions of the early interactions between Central Asian and South Asian cultures, or between Iranian and Arabic cultures.⁹⁵⁸ Caps and boots are also commonly associated with groups with a historical Central Asian affiliation, having derived in the cooler climate of the Steppe.⁹⁵⁹ These comparisons highlight differences that are also suggestive to us today of distance, indicating a non-local association.

In the context of foreign dress, the facial differences may be reinforcing foreignness. However, rather than assume the features are naturalistic, we must also approach these comparatively. All that can be objectively concluded from comparisons to other Dvāravatī figures is that the nose and eyes are often, but not always, represented as more pronounced compared to figures in local dress (such as those in Figures 7.28–7.29). The ‘foreigner’ figures themselves vary in how pronounced the features are (compare the heads in Figures 7.32 and 7.33). Comparators for the nasal shape that has received comment⁹⁶⁰ can be found in Tang *mingqi* representing foreigners from

⁹⁵⁸ Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics and Coiffure*, 22, 51 & 88–89; van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, ‘Foreign Elements in Indian Culture’, 75–76; Charlotte Jirousek, ‘Clothing’, in *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*, ed. Richard C. Martin, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan Reference USA & Thomson Gale, 2004), 149–50; Yedida K. Stillman, Norman A. Stillman, and T. Majda, ‘Libās’, ed. P. Bearman et al., *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), § iii. Iran, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0581.

⁹⁵⁹ Liu, ‘Migration and Settlement of the Yuezhi-Kushan’, 288; Frantz Grenet, ‘The Nomadic Element in the Kushan Empire (1st–3rd Century AD)’, *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies* 3 (2012): 12; Some consider there to be a further connection between horse-riding and the wearing of boots; on this, see Liu (*op. cit.*) and van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, ‘Foreign Elements in Indian Culture’, 75–76. Either way, the association of boots is distant to the Dvāravatī area.

⁹⁶⁰ It seems to be the Khu Bua figures that receive the most comment. Descriptions of the nasal form as ‘hooked’ are given in Ritter, ‘Vom Euphrat zum Mekong’, 162, and Sukpramun, ‘Khu Bua’, 196, in the context of discussions incorporating a comparative approach and recognising the potential for characterisation.



Figure 7.39 Portrait-like heads in South Asian art. Left: unfired clay head of an ascetic, Gandhāra, 4th century CE; 14.2 x 9.0 x 13.3 cm max. (height x width x depth); Ashmolean Museum, EA1993.22. Image © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. Middle: coin of Kṣatrapa ruler Jivadāman, western India, early-2nd century CE. Photograph courtesy Panjak Tandon; this coin was published in Tandon, 'The Western Kshatrapa Dāmazāda', Fig.6. Right: coin of Śātavāhana king Vāsiṣṭiputra Sātakarni, peninsular India, mid-2nd century CE. Photograph by Uploadalt, [Vashishtiputra Sri Satakarni](#), Wikimedia Commons, licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#); similar coins are published in Sarma, *Coinage of the Satavahana Empire*, Pls. XVI-XVIII.

the western regions, in Gandhāran art, and on Kṣatrapa and Śātavāhana coinage (Figure 7.39),⁹⁶¹ demonstrating that specific identities based on such comparisons are highly subjective. The purpose of this comparison is not to argue for a different specific identity for the Dvāravatī representations, but instead to demonstrate a more general point – that a conceptual framework which assumes an objective naturalism of images and uses an understanding of phenotype that disregards inherent natural variation and the effects of population change, is so problematic as to be of little value. The observed differences are better understood in combination with foreign dress, and we should keep in mind that there may be meanings relating to characterisation of which we remain unaware.

The combination of tall, forward-inclined, pointed caps, stitched upper and lower garments, and boots, were noted earlier to have a wide geographical distribution in Central Asia, Western Asia and parts of South Asia following centuries of migration and

⁹⁶¹ This combination of comparative material includes a mix of likely auto-stereotypes, including 'portrait' coins, and hetero-stereotypes. The characterological component of represented appearance in Tang *mingqi* was discussed in section 3.2.3. The Kṣatrapa 'portraits' on their coins have been suggested to be rather similar, indicating they may not actually be portraiture, but, given the quantity produced with repeated iconography, these representations of rulers must have been officially sanctioned for issue on the coins and it has been suggested they may show idealised facial features (John M. Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans* [Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967], 17). The heads of rulers on Śātavāhana coins may actually be portraiture, according to Mala Dutta, *A Study of the Śātavāhana Coinage* (New Delhi: Harman Publishing House, 1990), 55-6 & 217, and Pal, *Indian Sculpture Vol.1*, 72 & 102-4.

cultural exchange.⁹⁶² This large geographical distribution approximates that of the various suggestions for the Dvāravatī ‘foreigners’, but we can develop a deeper understanding by considering additional aspects of the methodology outlined in Chapter 3 – the objects they hold, the actions they perform and their role as represented in the art.

Most contributions to the literature have not commented on the objects held by the four Khu Bua figures with surviving bodies. Published photographs tend to be from the same perpendicular viewpoint and lacking detail photographs, no doubt hampering their assessment. The objects are modelled close to the body, presumably to ensure they remained unbroken as wall-mounted terracotta. Subsequent sculptural damage and the unusual foreshortening of the arm nearest the viewer add to the complexity of interpretation. Nonetheless, they can be identified as bells and either a lampstand or incense burner (Figures 7.40), which have been separately suggested previously.⁹⁶³ The bells are gripped around the shoulder, and two of the three surviving show the clapper emerging from the mouth. The third may never have had a clapper because no internal breakage scar is evident, but a lump of terracotta emerging on one side of the bell’s lip may represent a clapper or separate striker. Terracotta emerging from the upper part of the grip may represent a fixture with which the bell could be hung. The lampstand or incense burner is formed of a long, thin line of terracotta representing the shaft, terminating in a cup-shaped feature with a vertical projection, that may be either the lampstand’s drip tray and central supporting spike, or the

⁹⁶² See Sections 3.2.5 and 5.3.6.

⁹⁶³ Charoenwongsa and Diskul, *Thaïlande*, 108, noted the Khu Bua figures were “each carrying a lamp”. Grenet, ‘Marchands sogdiens’, 70, agreed with this interpretation, adding that they seemed to be carrying purses also, but wondered if one figure might instead be carrying a bell; his footnote explains that this figure was not published in the article because the photograph was too blurry. Wongnoi, *Terracotta Art from Khu Bua*, 65, suggests instead that the objects resemble weapons or flowers, but I have not encountered elsewhere the holding of flowers so that the florescence emerges from beneath the little finger of a grasping hand, rather than from above the thumb. Finally, Sanguanwong, ‘Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear’, 55, suggests they hold bells and a mace/sceptre; a stylistic comparator is offered for the latter in the *gadā* mace of a Kuṣāṇa period Viṣṇu found at Mathurā and published by Rosenfield, *Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, 194 & fig.45. My own studies indicate that a bell can be identified for three of the four figures, this being likely lost from the fourth based on comparing what remains to the other figures, and probably also the figure published by Wongnoi (p.65) but not inspected by me. A lamp, or lampstand, or possibly an incense burner since the two can overlap in general form, only survives on one figure. However, a fragmentary terracotta object from Khu Bua published by Wongnoi (p.52) and understandably identified as a lotus pod in isolation, may represent another. I would like to thank Christian Luczanits for helpful discussions of these objects.



Figure 7.40 Bells and lamps or incense burners held by Khu Bua figures 1347/2504, 1348/2504 and 60/2547. Photographs: Author, with acknowledgement to Bangkok National Museum and Ratchaburi National Museum.

incense burner's tray with a small flame or wisp of smoke. Either way, given the Buddhist iconographic context, these can be understood as Buddhist ritual objects. They therefore help to characterise the figures further, for their heads are also bowed in a reverential posture.⁹⁶⁴ The Khu Bua 'foreigners' have clearly been represented in the role of Buddhist devotees bearing ritual offerings (*dāna*) as part of Buddhist worship (*pūjā*).

An interpretation as Buddhist devotees was previously suggested by Frantz Grenet, connected with their identification as Sogdians.⁹⁶⁵ As early as 1969, within a decade of their excavation, a compositional reconstruction was published with three of the Khu Bua figures focussing their devotion on a central image of the Buddha (Figure 7.41).⁹⁶⁶ The origin of this reconstruction is unclear because

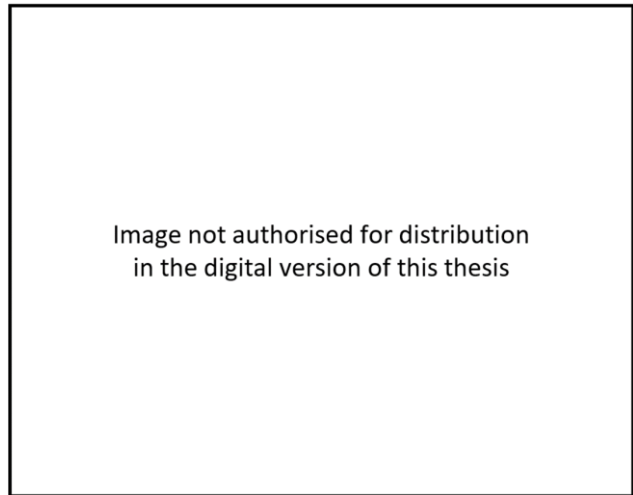


Figure 7.41 Early reconstruction of relationship between Khu Bua figures and a Buddha figure, appearing in H.G. Quaritch Wales's *Dvāravatī: The Earliest Kingdom of Siam (6th to 11th century A.D.)* (1969).

the figures were recorded as having been excavated without any indication of their inter-relationship.⁹⁶⁷ Nonetheless, 'Semitic' or Persian identifications were prioritised in the literature before and after Grenet's contribution, and his interpretation has not moved far beyond the French-language literature.⁹⁶⁸ Others have sought to explain the presence of reverentially-posed 'Semitic' or Persian 'foreigners' in Dvāravatī Buddhist art by suggesting they flank a lost deity figure,⁹⁶⁹ or that they may be giving

⁹⁶⁴ All four figures show breaks between the body and head, the same vulnerable location that has resulted in most figures in the corpus surviving as heads only. I have only been able to view 60/2547 from the back, but in each case, there are no obvious errors in the way they have been rearticulated. It therefore seems likely that the posture with bowed heads is original.

⁹⁶⁵ Grenet, 'Marchands sogdiens'. Boisselier, *Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, 85, also suggested in a passing comment that they were worshippers but does not appear to have followed up on this. Despite their identification of lamps, Charoenwongsa and Diskul, *Thaïlande*, 108, did not suggest it represented a Buddhist ritual act.

⁹⁶⁶ Wales, *Dvāravatī*, Plate 34B.

⁹⁶⁷ Wales, 54 & 62; Boisselier, *Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, 85; Rattanakun, *Archaeology of Khu Bua*, 33.

⁹⁶⁸ See my footnote 918.

⁹⁶⁹ Lyons, 'Traders of Ku Bua', 52.

to a Buddhist community without necessarily performing Buddhist worship.⁹⁷⁰ Their perceived identity influenced whether they could also be Buddhist. However, we can reinforce Grenet’s interpretation of Buddhist devotees now the objects they hold have been better characterised.

Elsewhere in Dvāravatī art, Buddhist offerings are typically flowers (Figure 7.28) so the bells and lampstands or incense burners are unusual and distinctive, just as the foreign-dressed devotees that carry them are unusual and distinctive in this cultural context. Following the methodology outlined earlier, the objects may signify something of the figures’ difference. Since the Khu Bua *chedi* 40 deposit contained figures identified as bodhisattvas, the original structure is understood as relating to Mahāyāna Buddhism.⁹⁷¹ It is therefore significant that the offerings carried by the foreign-dressed devotees are consistent with Mahāyāna practices, as discussed below – the Khu Bua figures appear to represent ‘foreign’ Mahāyāna Buddhist devotees.

Offerings of bells and lampstands or incense burners are indicated by scriptural, epigraphic, historical and iconographic sources on Mahāyāna Buddhism, although some practices are also relevant to other Buddhist traditions. The Mahāyāna *sūtra* contain several references to the meritorious nature of offering bells, lamps and incense, amongst other offerings, as part of the worship of a *stūpa*, *sūtra* manuscript or Buddha image, which embodied the Buddha’s presence.⁹⁷² For example, according to the *Dānapāramitā-sūtra*, of probably the 5th-6th century, “By giving lamps, I will get vision [...] By giving a bell, I will become aware of former lives”, referring to the enhanced perception of the cyclical nature of existence and the workings of *karma*.⁹⁷³ The *Karmavibhaṅga-sūtra*, known from at least the 4th century, also lists these

⁹⁷⁰ Brown and MacDonnell, ‘The Pong Tuk Lamp’, 15 & 19 n.45.

⁹⁷¹ Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 60–61; Krairiksh, *Roots of Thai Art*, 84–86.

⁹⁷² A similar group of offerings, including incense, bells and lamps, is referred to in the *Aṣṭasahasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* for Mahāyāna *sūtra* worship, and the *Avalokita-sūtra* for Mahāyāna *stūpa* worship (Edward Conze, ed., *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines & Its Verse Summary* [San Francisco (CA): Four Seasons Foundation, 1973], 131–32; Gregory Schopen, ‘Three Studies in Non-Tantric Buddhist Cult Forms’ [MA Thesis, McMaster University, 1975], 86; Jason M. McCombs, ‘Mahāyāna and the Gift: Theories and Practices’ [PhD Thesis, University of California, 2014], 21 & 24). Bells and incense are among the appropriate offerings named in the *Pradaśiṅṅā-sūtra* for the worship of a *stūpa* and Buddha image (H.W. Bailey, ‘The *Pradaśiṅṅā-Sūtra* of Chang Tsiang-Kuin’, in *Buddhist Studies in Honour of I.B. Horner*, ed. L. Cousins, A. Kunst, and K.R. Norman [Dordrecht & Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1974], 16–17).

⁹⁷³ McCombs, ‘Mahāyāna and the Gift’, 109–11, 147–48, 178 & 382–83.

meritorious gifts, saying, “Ten are the advantages (for him) who fastens a bell to a *stūpa*... [and] who brings a lamp to a *stūpa*”.⁹⁷⁴ The practice of donating or funding the provision of bells, lamps and incense is evidenced by a series of 5th-6th century inscriptions from sites in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal, and an early 7th century inscription from Arakan in northwest Myanmar, all of which are demonstrably Mahāyāna in character.⁹⁷⁵ The Chinese Buddhist monk Xuanzang, while travelling through northern India in the mid-7th century, noted bells hanging from the Mahāyāna bodhisattva shrines at the Tiladhāka monastery in Magadha.⁹⁷⁶ Iconographic evidence shows that hanging bells from Buddhist monuments was also known in the northwest, as with four reliefs from Butkara in the Swāt area of northwest Pakistan showing bodhisattva shrines with bells hanging from their double eaves (Figure 7.42).⁹⁷⁷ Also in northern Pakistan, a series of rock art panels at Chilas Bridge, Thalpan, Shatial and Hodar on the ancient trade routes passing through Gilgit, and estimated to date to the 4th century, depict a number of *stūpas* with bells suspended from the *cattravali* (Figure 7.43).⁹⁷⁸ Early Mahāyāna *sūtra* refer to otherworldly *stūpas* covered with bells and presented with incense and lamps,⁹⁷⁹ but there is no reason to suppose bells were not hung from real *stūpas* also. Indeed, the practice may have travelled with Mahāyāna along the Silk Road, for already in the mid-6th century at the Northern Wei (386-535) capital of Luoyang in central China, the pagodas at the Yongningsi (永寧寺) and Yaoguangsi (瑤光寺) were hung with many

⁹⁷⁴ Mauro Maggi, *The Khotanese Karmavibhaṅga* (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1995), 19–20, 62–63 & 79.

⁹⁷⁵ Gregory Schopen, *Bones, Stones and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1997), 260–63, 271 & 284 n.50, gives details of inscriptions recording four land grants funding lamps and incense for Mahāyāna communities in Kuda (Maharashtra), Valabhī (Gujarat) and Gunaighar (Bengal), and inscriptions recording gifts of lamps in Mahāyāna contexts at Sārnāth (Bihar) and Kauśāmbī (Uttar Pradesh). McCombs, ‘Mahāyāna and the Gift’, 352, gives details of the gift of a bell recorded in the 7th century Mahāyāna inscription in Arakan.

⁹⁷⁶ Li, *Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions*, 207.

⁹⁷⁷ Domenico Faccenna, *Sculptures from the Sacred Area of Butkara I (Swat, W. Pakistan)*, vol. 2 (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1962), 83–84 & Plates CCCXXVI–CCCXXVII.

⁹⁷⁸ Jason Neelis, ‘La Vieille Route Reconsidered: Alternative Paths for Early Transmission of Buddhism beyond the Borderlands of South Asia’, *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 16 (2002): 152–54.

⁹⁷⁹ The *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* describes such *stūpas* as decorated with many flags and jewelled bells and presented with flowers, incense and lamps, this text originating before the 5th century CE as it was translated into Chinese in 406 CE by Kumārajīva (Reginald A. Ray, *Buddhist Saints in India: A Study in Buddhist Values and Orientations* [New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994], 327–28; Tsugunari Kubo and Akira Yuyama, eds., *The Lotus Sutra*, 2nd ed., Taishō Volume 9 [Berkeley (CA): Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1996], 11, 167, 169, 240 & 242).

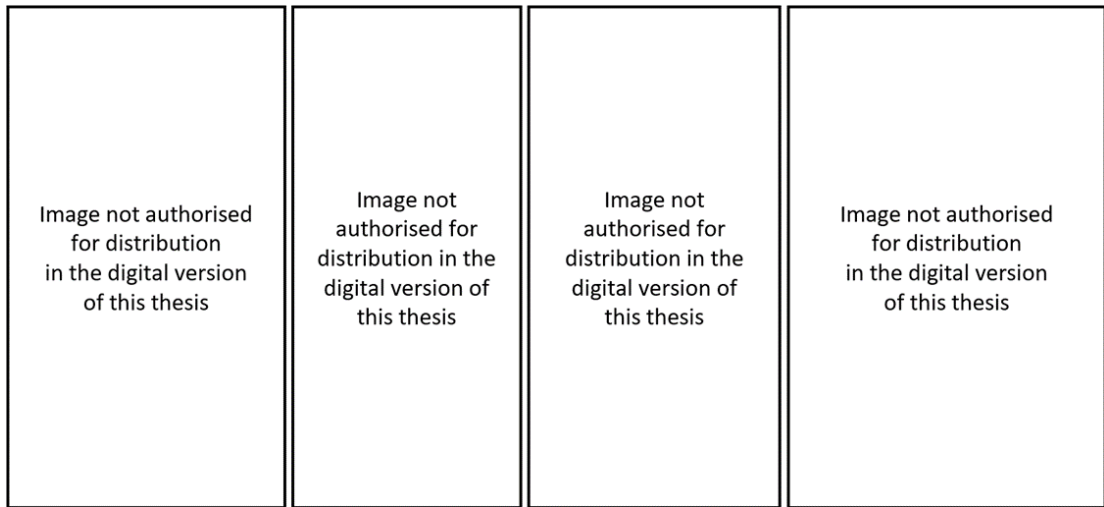


Figure 7.42 Reliefs depicting bodhisattva shrines with pendant bells from Butkara, Swāt, Pakistan. Reproduced from Faccenna, *Sculptures from the Sacred Area of Butkara I*, Plates CCCXXVI-CCCXXVII.

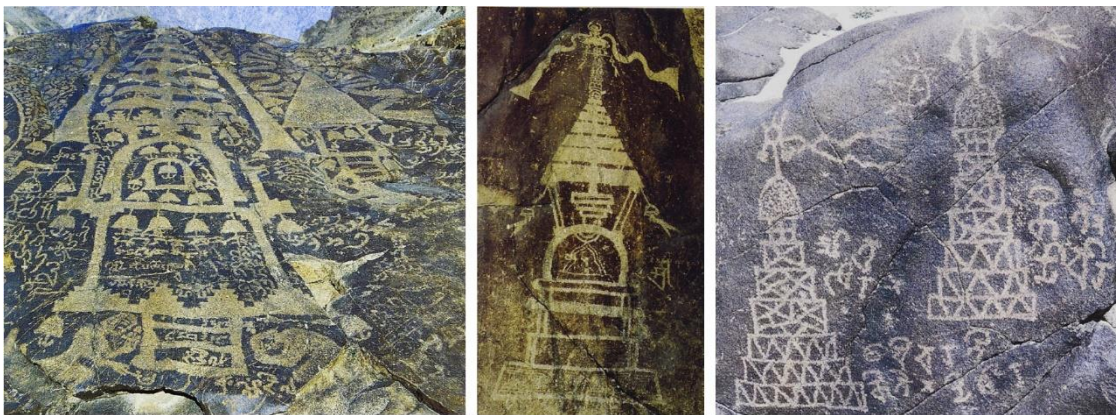


Figure 7.43 Rock art showing Buddhist *stūpas* with pendant bells, from sites in northern Pakistan. Left: rock 34, Shatial; middle: rock 39, Thalpan; right: rock 6, Hodar. Reproduced from (left) Fussman & König, *Die Felsbildstation Shatial*, Taf. Vb, Bandini-König, *Die Felsbildstation Shatial I*, Taf. VIc & Bandini-König, *Die Felsbildstation Hodar*, Taf. Ia, each licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).

golden bells according to the *Luoyang qielan ji* (洛陽伽藍記).⁹⁸⁰ Iconographic representations of Buddhist devotions in Gandhāran art show devotees offering incense burners and lamps, and performing *pradakṣiṇā* circumambulation with lamps, while elsewhere we see devotions performed at lamps and incense burners, the latter hung with bells.⁹⁸¹ It is not clear if the Gandhāran representations are associated with Mahāyāna Buddhism because acts of *dāna* and *pūjā* originate before the development of the Mahāyāna tradition.⁹⁸² Archaeological evidence of the material culture associated with these devotions are also apparent in the northwest, including a large bronze incense burner of Gandhāran style, and terracotta lamps found inserted into the wall of a *stūpa* at Haḍḍa in Afghanistan.⁹⁸³ Together these sources cover a large area of northern, western and northwestern India, into Central Asia, but there appears to be little connection with southern India.⁹⁸⁴

The geographical distribution of evidence for bells, lamps and incense burners in Buddhist ritual predating the Khu Bua figures, of which a significant proportion is clearly associated with Mahāyāna practice, overlaps the main geographical distribution of people with cultural connections to Central Asia, where the figures'

⁹⁸⁰ The installation of bells at these two pagodas in Luoyang is detailed in Tak Pui Sze, 'Stūpas in Medieval China: Symbols of the Buddha, Sacred Buildings, or Tombs?' (PhD Thesis, University of British Columbia, 2012), 86–88 & 137. Suggested reconstructions of the Yongningsi pagoda with bells hanging from the eaves of each storey are shown in Figures 2.1 & 2.2, also in Xinian Fu et al., *Chinese Architecture*, ed. and trans. Nancy S. Steinhardt (New Haven & Beijing: Yale University Press & New World Press, 2002) Figure 3.21.

⁹⁸¹ A devotee is shown offering a lamp and another performs *pradakṣiṇā* while holding a lamp in two reliefs from Swāt, dated stylistically to the c.1st and 1st–2nd century CE (Woodford Schmidt, 'Aristocratic Devotees in Early Buddhist Art', 28, 32 & 38–40). On the base of late-2nd/early-3rd century Gandhāran bronze Buddha image found in China, one of the donor figures is represented offering a lamp (Roderick Whitfield, 'Early Buddha Images from Hebei', *Artibus Asiae* 65, no. 1 [2005]: 87–89 & 92). Figures on the bases of three 2nd–3rd century Gandhāran schist Buddha images are shown in attitudes of devotion around, in one case, a lamp, and in two cases, a large incense burner from which bells can be seen hanging (Elizabeth Rosen Stone, 'A Buddhist Incense Burner from Gandhara', *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 39 [2004]: 91–92).

⁹⁸² André Bareau, 'La construction et le culte des stūpa d'après les *Vinayapiṭaka*', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 50, no. 2 (1962): 235–46; Ray, *Buddhist Saints in India*, 331–52; Schopen, *Bones, Stones and Buddhist Monks*, 86–98.

⁹⁸³ Rosen Stone, 'Buddhist Incense Burner from Gandhara'; J. Barthoux, *Les Fouilles de Haḍḍa, I. Stupas et Sites* (Paris: Les Éditions d'Art et Histoire, 1933), 61.

⁹⁸⁴ While today there is a broad split into 'northern' Mahāyāna and 'southern' Theravāda Buddhism, with their general characterisation as more and less ritualistic, in the past there was greater complexity in the overlapping geographical distributions of multiple early Buddhist schools, some of which are no longer practised, and wider inclusion of ritual. It has been useful to consider what is known of the distribution pattern for Buddhist ritual involving bells, lamps and incense burners, including its demonstrably Mahāyāna component.

vestimentary system had originated centuries earlier. In South Asia, this distribution approximates the combined former territories of the Śaka and Kuṣāṇa where their descendants integrated with local populations, exemplifying the processes of migration, population change and sociocultural change. There is extensive evidence for Kuṣāṇa Buddhists in the areas of Gandhāra in the northwest and Mathurā in the north, and epigraphic evidence for Śaka Buddhist devotees in the Deccan.⁹⁸⁵ Buddhist communities developed in Central Asia before the 7th century among the Sogdians, Khotanese Saka, Kuchean and others, as Buddhism spread along the trade routes toward China,⁹⁸⁶ exemplifying processes involving individual long-distance travel and cultural change. Sogdian inscriptions occur alongside Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī inscriptions at the Gilgit rock art sites showing *stūpas* with bells,⁹⁸⁷ while Khotanese Buddhists could read, in translation, the teachings of the Mahāyāna *Karmavibhaṅga-sūtra* on the karmic rewards of giving lamps and fastening bells to *stūpas*.⁹⁸⁸ The landscape of this large region of South and Central Asia was crossed by interconnected long-distance trade routes where migrants and travellers passed or settled, and this derived a region with multiple ancestries and ethnicities by the 7th century. Grenet insightfully identified Sogdian Buddhists in the Khu Bua figures, but given the region's ethnic complexity, there would seem to be insufficient evidence to identify any single group, because none can be conclusively demonstrated to have been present in the Dvāravatī area in the 7th-8th century.⁹⁸⁹

Having made a strong connection with the Mahāyāna Buddhist communities of South and Central Asia, combining inferences from the figures' dress and objects held, it is important to confirm that comparators for the items of dress can be identified in this area for the appropriate time frame. This is available in the region itself and in Tang *mingqi*.

⁹⁸⁵ See Section 5.5.

⁹⁸⁶ Tansen Sen, 'The Spread of Buddhism', in *The Cambridge World History, Volume 5: Expanding Webs of Exchange and Conflict, 500 CE–1500 CE*, ed. Benjamin Z. Kedar and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 451–53.

⁹⁸⁷ Neelis, 'La Vieille Route Reconsidered', 151–55.

⁹⁸⁸ Maggi, *Khotanese Karmavibhaṅga*, 20–21.

⁹⁸⁹ Grenet, 'Marchands sogdiens', seeks to present evidence for Sogdian involvement in the maritime trade routes between India and China, but the small amount of evidence available does not indicate this clearly and none relates to the Gulf of Thailand area.

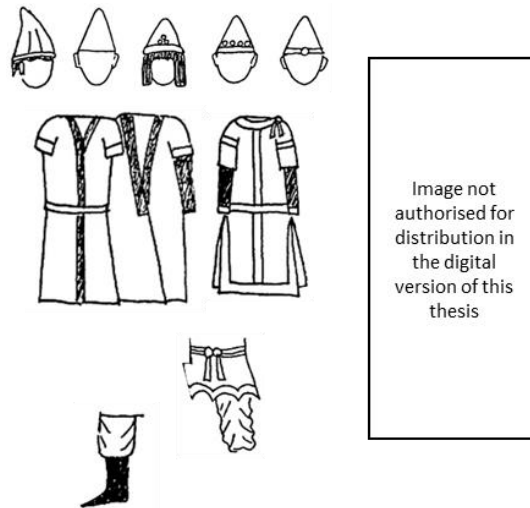


Figure 7.44 Elements of dress interpreted from 5th-8th century CE Sogdian terracotta figures and mural art. Left: details reproduced from Yatsenko, 'Late Sogdian Costume', Pls. 1 & 2, with the permission of the author. Right: reproduced from Lo Muzio, 'Unpublished terracotta figurines', Fig.2.

Central Asian sources on local dress of the 7th-8th century are primarily represented by mural painting and terracotta figurines. Several murals are known but all are damaged, while the figurines' small size also affects the interpretability of some details. Nonetheless, these materials have received dedicated study and detailed syntheses have been published.⁹⁹⁰ Among the approximately contemporary representations can be found some correlates for the features of dress identified in the Dvāravatī figures (Figure 7.44). Tall caps that taper to a point and

fall forwards, backwards or to one side, are not uncommon in this material, and they are known to be related to soft caps from earlier periods in the same region. Most appear not to be turned up at the bottom, but some possess features along the base. Front-opening sleeved upper garments are common, and we find represented both long-sleeved garments with upper arm bands, and short-sleeved garments with cuffs. Several examples of baggy and ruched trousers are seen, although tighter-fitting trousers are more common. Boots are common and calf-length examples are seen. Identities have been suggested for the figures based on their provenance, although they are not directly labelled.

Contemporary South Asian sources on related forms of dress are primarily textual, with a small amount of visual evidence. Dress derived from the Central Asian stitched vestimentary system is more frequently encountered in the visual culture of earlier centuries for the north, northwest and west of South Asia, contemporary with Kuṣāṇa

⁹⁹⁰ Fiona J. Kidd, 'Costume of the Samarkand Region of Sogdiana between the 2nd/1st Century B.C.E. and the 4th Century C.E.', *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 17 (2003): 35–69; Fiona J. Kidd, 'The Samarkand Region of Sogdiana: Figurines, Costume and Identity, 2nd-1st Century BCE-8th Century CE' (PhD Thesis, University of Sydney, 2004); Sergey A. Yatsenko, 'The Late Sogdian Costume (the 5th-8th Cc. AD)', in *Ērān Ud Anērān: Studies Presented to Boris Il'ič Maršak on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, ed. Matteo Compareti, Paola Raffetta, and Gianroberto Scarcia (Venezia: Libreria Editrice Cafoscarina, 2006), 647–80.

and Śaka rule until the 4th century. This included conical felt caps with dropped peak, front-opening coats and shirts, baggy trousers sometimes referred to as *salwar* like the loose trousers of modern Pakistan, and boots including calf-length.⁹⁹¹ However, this type of dress became less common in Gupta period visual representations in northern India, but sewn clothing appears to have retained an association with elite status. Tunics and *salwar* were worn by Gupta elites, but the king is the most visible wearer of jackets, trousers and boots, on his coinage.⁹⁹² The murals in western Deccan Buddhist cave sites, especially Ajañṭā, suggest a continued familiarity with items of dress related to the Central Asian stitched vestimentary system, since figures in conical caps, front-opening sleeved upper garments with bands across the upper arms, trousers or boots are well represented. They are often identified as foreigners but we should probably recognise the presence of multicultural communities in nearby urban centres, including the descendants of earlier settled migrants with geographically distant origins.⁹⁹³ The dating of Ajañṭā's art has been extensively debated from the 4th-7th century, but my purpose is not to argue its precise contemporaneity with the Dvāravatī figures, only that related forms of dress are present in a cultural context that has been linked stylistically with the Khu Bua *chedi* 40 sculptures.⁹⁹⁴ It also appears that trousers and front-opening sleeved upper garments were not uncommon in the court of Harṣavardhana (r. c.606-647) in the north and northwest, according to his court poet Bāṇabhaṭṭa.⁹⁹⁵ There are therefore good reasons to include these areas of north, northwest and western India in the geographical area of interest for comparative dress.

The Tang *mingqi* of interest here were of course physiognomically characterised as hetero-stereotypes of foreigners but may still provide useful information on dress.⁹⁹⁶ Dates in the 7th-8th centuries are indicated by inscriptions giving the date of the tomb context, by thermoluminescence dating, or by stylistic comparison to independently

⁹⁹¹ Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics and Coiffure*, 38–40; van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, 'Foreign Elements in Indian Culture', 75–76; Galina A. Pugachenkova, 'New Terracottas from North Bactria', *East and West* 42, no. 1 (1992): 16.

⁹⁹² Sachchidanand Sahay, *Indian Costume, Coiffure and Ornament* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1975), 18–21; Alkazi, *Ancient Indian Costume*, 145–46.

⁹⁹³ Dhavalikar, 'Foreigners in the Ajanta Paintings'; Alkazi, *Ancient Indian Costume*, 145–46.

⁹⁹⁴ See also Section 5.5.

⁹⁹⁵ Sahay, *Indian Costume, Coiffure and Ornament*, 25–27.

⁹⁹⁶ See Sections 3.2.3 and 3.2.4.



Figure 7.45 Tang *mingqi* representing foreigners from China's 'Western Regions'. Left: 'Standing, bearded, foreign groom wearing boots, pointed hat, and tiger-skin trousers', height 43 cm, 7th century (stylistic date supported by thermoluminescence result); Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Gift of Anthony M. Solomon, 2003.210 © President and Fellows of Harvard College; information supplemented from Bower, *From Court to Caravan*, 147-48. Middle left: 'Western Asiatic groom', height 33 cm, first half of 8th century (stylistic date for use of *sancai* production technique); Morse Collection of Ancient Chinese Art; reproduced from Bower, 'Tomb ceramics', 74. Middle right: 'Foreign groom' from Astana tomb no. 206 of Zhang Xiong (d. 633) and Lay Qu (d. 689), 7th century (from death dates of tomb occupants recorded in inscription); Gansu Provincial Museum, Lanzhou; photograph courtesy Daniel C. Waugh, with information supplemented from Pei, 'Silk Road and economy of Gaochang', 50. Right: 'Foreigner' excavated in Zhengzhou, Henan province, height 52 cm, c.730 (date relating to tomb closure); Henan Museum; reproduced from Rastelli, *Court of the Emperors*, 172 (cat. 58).

dated figures, and those with more reliable dates and archaeological provenance have been prioritised. Among this subset of contemporary representations (Figure 7.45)⁹⁹⁷ can be found direct correlates for several features of dress identified in the Dvāravatī figures, although no single figure possesses them all. Tall pointed caps with turned-up portions show folds indicating they were made of a soft textile that let the cap fall forwards or backwards, sometimes falling very close to the upturned portion at the front. Caps are seen that have a similar profile but lack the turned-up base. Front-opening sleeved upper garments are not uncommon, though these are mostly knee-

⁹⁹⁷ Virginia L. Bower, 'Tomb Ceramics: The Spirit of the Living', in *Spirit and Ritual: The Morse Collection of Ancient Chinese Art*, by Robert L. Thorp and Virginia L. Bower (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982), 74–75; Virginia L. Bower, *From Court to Caravan: Chinese Tomb Sculptures from the Collection of Anthony M. Solomon* (Cambridge, New Haven & London: Harvard University Art Museums & Yale University Press, 2002), 52–53 & 126; Sabrina Rastelli, 'Two Foreigners', in *China at the Court of the Emperors: Unknown Masterpieces from Han Tradition to Tang Elegance (25-907)*, ed. Sabrina Rastelli (Florence & Milan: Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi & Skira, 2008), 285–89; Chengguo Pei, 'The Silk Road and the Economy of Gaochang: Evidence on the Circulation of Silver Coins', *The Silk Road* 15 (2017): Fig. 9.

length coats, perhaps reflecting the more commonly worn apparel in the cooler climate of the Silk Road terminus of Chang'an. Nonetheless, some figures wear a jacket type that reveals baggy trousers, sometimes painted with a curvilinear pattern suggesting the textile is sagging under its own weight. More commonly the trousers are tighter-fitting. Boots are commonly knee-length, but those figures with the baggy trousers give no indication of the height of the boot shaft, if their footwear is boots. None of these figures is labelled with an ethnic identity, but there is consensus that these figures represent people associated with the western regions from the Chinese perspective.

Combining the evidence from Central Asian, northwest South Asian and Chinese material shows that the repertoire of dress represented on the Dvāravatī figures plausibly relates to dress worn in contemporary Central Asia and northern and western South Asia. Tall, pointed soft caps with peaks that fall forward, both turned-up at the base and not, front-opening and sleeved upper garments with cuffs, baggy trousers falling loose over the legs,⁹⁹⁸ and calf-length boots, are all seen. This confirms that the combination of dress and role as Mahāyāna Buddhist devotees represented in the Dvāravatī 'foreigner' figures can be associated with this extended region in the time frame of their production, but a more precise identity is not indicated by the evidence considered here.

7.3. Iconographic connections with northwest South Asia and Central Asia

Demonstrating a connection to a geographical area where Buddhist art was produced means that iconographic transmission must be considered as a potential mechanism for the appearance of these figures in Dvāravatī art, rather than assume that they could only arise through local interactions with foreigners. This possibility presents

⁹⁹⁸ If Grenet, 'Marchands sogdiens', 70, and Sanguanwong, 'Sculptures of foreigners wearing tall headgear', 52, are correct that this is a wrapped garment, the adoption of a looser lower garment of South or Southeast Asian origin, remains possible. Lyons, 'Traders of Ku Bua', 52, also commented on the impracticality of aspects of this dress in Thailand's climate. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, 'Foreign Elements in Indian Culture', 75–76, notes that the Kuṣāṇa period sculpture suggests adaptation to the Indian climate through adopting components of local dress or not wearing, for example, caps, boots or trousers. Such changes may, of course, also reflect cultural change.

challenges for investigation because, as shown earlier, there are significant impediments to reconstructing the figures' iconographic context and arrangement.

An unknown *Jātaka* narrative composition has been suggested, and while incorporation of local stories into *Jātakas* is known to have occurred, no iconographic comparator has been suggested.⁹⁹⁹ An alternative for the Khu Bua figures is that they reverentially flanked a Buddha image.¹⁰⁰⁰ There is a certain logic

behind this reconstruction because all known Khu Bua 'foreigner' figures appear in profile, and where details survive, their heads are bowed while offering their ritual gift. Of the surviving figures, seven are oriented to the right and five to the left. This repeated posture and its apparent duplication on at least two *chedi*, numbers 40 and 41, is suggestive of an iconographic form. If this is the case, there are no obvious comparators elsewhere in Dvāravatī art, apart from a small corpus of c.9th-10th century clay tablets from Northeast Thailand showing two figures in profile offering gifts to a central Buddha (Figure 7.46).¹⁰⁰¹ However, a comparable iconographic composition in Gandhāran art shows paired figures flanking the Buddha while turned inwards and offering ritual gifts, and it does occur as a repeating iconic motif on a *stūpa* base and with devotees dressed in Central Asian-derived dress (Figure 7.47).¹⁰⁰² None are known to me perfectly in profile or with capped figures and known

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Figure 7.46 Terracotta plaque from Muang Champasi, Mahasarakham province. Reproduced from Skilling, 'Buddhist sealings', Fig.19.8.

⁹⁹⁹ Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 59.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Wales, *Ibid.*, Pl.34B, shows such a reconstruction but does not seem to discuss it. Lyons, 'Traders of Ku Bua', 52, suggests they flank a deity, because the figures are not recognised as Buddhist devotees. Wongnoi, *Terracotta Art from Khu Bua*, 65, suggests the figures face each other but does not suggest a central sacred figure.

¹⁰⁰¹ Peter Skilling, 'Buddhist Sealings in Thailand and Southeast Asia: Iconography, Function, and Ritual Context', in *Interpreting Southeast Asia's Past: Monument, Image and Text: Selected Papers from the 10th International Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists*, ed. Elisabeth A. Bacus, Ian C. Glover, and Peter D. Sharrock, vol. 2 (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008), 253, 257 & Fig.19.8; Baptiste and Zéphir, *Dvāravatī*, 114; Peter Skilling, 'Des images moulées au service de l'idéologie du mérite', in *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁰⁰² Examples are known from Taxila and Haḍḍa; see: Barthoux, *Les Fouilles de Haḍḍa I*, Fig.116; Marshall, *Taxila*, Pl.58b.



Figure 7.47 Buddha flanked by two devotees in Central Asian-type dress, from *stūpa* J1 at Taxila and *stūpa* K45 at Haḍḍa. Reproduced from Marshall, *Taxila*, Vol.3 Pl.58b; Barthoux, *Fouilles de Haḍḍa*, Vol.1 Fig.116.

examples predate the Khu Bua figures by several centuries.¹⁰⁰³ This comparison does not clearly demonstrate iconographic transmission because the Khu Bua composition is only a reconstruction, but the purpose of presenting this comparison is to highlight the possibility that other mechanisms may explain the figures' presence at Khu Bua. It would not be safe to assume, on the basis of present evidence, that the fragmentary figures from Thung Setthi, Nakhon Pathom or U Thong necessarily formed compositions similar to Khu Bua, where iconographic and cultic reference points are more retrievable.

There are other indications of artistic connections with the northwest Indian area and Central Asia contemporary with the production of the Khu Bua figures. Two figures from Khu Bua and Thung Setthi possess a distinctive hairstyle with centrally radiating curls that is also found in the Buddhist art of 6th-8th century Pandrethan (Kashmir), Kizil, Tumshuq and Shorchuq (Xinjiang) and earlier in Gandhāra (Figure 7.48).¹⁰⁰⁴ This

¹⁰⁰³ It is possibly such a comparison that Boisselier, *Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, 85, had in mind when he wrote that the Khu Bua *chedi* 40 corpus 'curiously evoke[s], in their diversity if not their dating and style, the Buddhist art traditions of northwestern India and Afghanistan (Hadda)'.

¹⁰⁰⁴ See Herbert Härtel and Marianne Yaldiz, *Along the Ancient Silk Routes: Central Asian Art from the West Berlin State Museums* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982), 72, 108–9 & 130–37, for 10 examples from Kizil, Tumshuq and Shorchuq. See John Siudmak, *The Hindu-Buddhist Sculpture of Ancient Kashmir and Its Influences*, Handbook of Oriental Studies 28 (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2013), Pls.83, 84 & 97, for 3 comparable examples from Pandrethan. See Juhjung Rhi, 'Images, relics, and jewels: the assimilation of images in the Buddhist relic cult of Gandhāra - or vice versa', *Artibus Asiae* 65, no. 2 (2005): Fig.23, and Juhjung Rhi, 'Identifying Several Visual Types in Gandhāran Buddha Images', *Archives of Asian Art* 58 (2008): Figs. 12, 14, 18, 20 & 22, for Gandhāran examples.



Figure 7.48 Radiating curls hairstyle in Buddhist art from Dvāravatī, northwestern South Asian and Central Asian contexts; (upper and lower left) Thung Setthi and Khu Bua, Thailand, c.7th-8th century; (upper middle and right) Kizil, 6th-7th century; (lower middle) Gandhāra, 2nd-3rd century; (lower right) Pandrethan, 7th century. Photographs: (upper and lower left) Author, with acknowledgements to Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum and Ratchaburi National Museum; (upper middle and right) MIK III 8200 and MIK III 7918, photographs courtesy Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz; (lower middle) reproduced from Rhi, 'Images, relics, and jewels', Fig.23, with the permission of the author; (lower right) reproduced from Siudmak, *The Hindu-Buddhist Sculpture of Ancient Kashmir*, Pl.83, with the permission of the author.

is found with different Buddhist figures and also Śaivite material so appears to be a stylistic feature. It has also been suggested that the technological practice of applying terracotta or stucco sculpture to Dvāravatī *chedi* connects the area with north and northwest Indian technological traditions for producing iconographic programmes on religious monuments.¹⁰⁰⁵ The ground plan of the Thung Setthi *chedi* has been compared to 1st-4th century *stūpas* at Taxila (Gandhāra), continued in the 4th-6th century *stūpas* at Devnimori (Gujarat) and Mirpur Khas (Sindh).¹⁰⁰⁶ Stylistic similarities between the Khu Bua *chedi* 40 *bodhisattva* figures and Ajaṅṭā have been suggested,

¹⁰⁰⁵ Zaleski, 'Stucco and Terracotta Reliefs from Dvāravatī', 30–39.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Fine Arts Department, *Thung Setthi*, 100–101.

as noted earlier, so the multicultural society of the western Deccan area and its relationship with the northwest and Central Asia, as discussed for the Aihole *dvārapāla*,¹⁰⁰⁷ may also be involved in transmitting knowledge of stylistic and iconographic features in the northwest. Personal long-distance travel between the western Deccan area and the northwest may have given individuals knowledge of formal features in the wider region, and may provide a social mechanism for the presence of aspects of both at Khu Bua and Thung Setthi.

7.4. 'Foreigners' on Dvāravatī monuments

There are therefore at least two possible mechanisms for the presence of these foreign-dressed figures in Dvāravatī art. They may indicate the physical presence of the people represented, as is commonly presumed, or they entered the art through iconographic appropriation from art in, potentially, northwestern South Asia. The general preference for the first interpretation has perhaps developed because the iconographic context is not clear, but if the suggested reconstruction presented above is correct, the second mechanism should be investigated further.

This case study has made progress in recovering more about the identity of the Khu Bua figures by recognising their iconographic role as Mahāyāna Buddhist devotees, and it is argued that people from contemporary Persia, West Asia and the Mediterranean area become unlikely candidates as a result. The combination of religious affiliation and represented vestimentary system suggests an association with the areas of western, northern and northwestern India, and Central Asia, but it is not possible to narrow this down further on internal evidence. This is challenging because of the incomplete survival of the representations and their context, and because of so few historical references to Dvāravatī cultural connections to distant places. Archaeological exotica from what became the Dvāravatī area indicate involvement in the maritime trade networks since late prehistory, for example the high-tin bronze bowls at Ban Don Ta Phet show a connection with Khao Sam Kaeo in the c.4th-3rd century BCE.¹⁰⁰⁸ A 3rd-century Roman coin from U Thong, a Byzantine lamp from Phong Tuk (ตำบลพงตึก), and the ivory comb from Chansen suggest this connectedness

¹⁰⁰⁷ See Section 5.5.

¹⁰⁰⁸ See Section 6.5.1.

persisted into the early historic period in advance of the better archaeologically-represented 9th-century growth in trade connecting Tang China with 'Abbāsīd Persia (750-1258).¹⁰⁰⁹ However, these do not identify specific intercultural contacts because the objects have inherent trade or exchange value. The present Bay of Bangkok area was a floodplain during the Dvāravatī period and unsuitable for establishing cities, so the major Dvāravatī centres were located on the slightly elevated areas surrounding the floodplain, to which ships could sail upriver.¹⁰¹⁰ The representations in this case study were therefore found at port cities.

However, now the Khu Bua figures are recognised as Mahāyāna Buddhist devotees, interpretations can look beyond an identity as foreign merchants, although the two are not mutually-exclusive. They may inform discussions of the spread of the Mahāyāna tradition in Southeast Asia, which was becoming especially prominent further south on the Thai-Malay Peninsula, but for reasons of space it is not possible to explore this much further here. Although Mahāyāna Buddhism became widely patronised on the Peninsula following the emergence of Śrīvijaya in the later 7th century, earlier *bodhisattva* sculptures are known.¹⁰¹¹ Additionally, a small group of c.6th-century Buddhist steles in the Kedah area have been associated with Mādhyamika sect of the Mahāyāna tradition, the most well-known being that of Buddhagupta the 'great sea captain' (*mahānāvika*).¹⁰¹² The pre-Śrīvijaya or Śrīvijaya context is potentially significant because of its relationship with major long-distance

¹⁰⁰⁹ Guy, 'Catalogue', 32–33; Brown and MacDonnell, 'The Pong Tuk Lamp', 9–17; Indrawooth, 'Archaeology of the Early Buddhist Kingdoms of Thailand', 122–25; Khunsong, *Dvaravati: A Major Entrepot*, 129–236; Bronson, 'Chinese and Middle Eastern Trade', 181–97. See also Section 6.5.5 on the Chansen comb. A brick from Chula Pathon Chedi with another representation widely considered to represent a foreigner, but outside the focus of this case study, probably finds its historical context in the later phase of long-distance connections. See Appendix 1 section 1.6. Similarly, the recent discovery of the Phanom Surin shipwreck inland from the coastline of the Bay of Bangkok will be important for understanding long-distance trade in this period.

¹⁰¹⁰ Trongjai Hutangkura, 'Reconsidering the Palaeo-Shoreline in the Lower Central Plain of Thailand', in *Before Siam: Essays in Art and Archaeology*, ed. Nicolas Revire and Stephen A. Murphy (Bangkok: River Books & The Siam Society, 2014), 61–64.

¹⁰¹¹ Nandana Chutiwongs, 'Southeast Asian Buddhist Sculptures from the Seventh to the Ninth Centuries', in *Buddha of the Future: An Early Maitreya from Thailand*, by Nandana Chutiwongs and Denise Patry Leidy (New York & Singapore: Asia Society Galleries & Sun Tree Publishing, 1994), 48–49; Woodward, *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, 81–88; Hall, *History of Early Southeast Asia*, 114–20; Pierre-Yves Manguin, 'Early Coastal States of Southeast Asia: Funan and Śrīvijaya', in *Lost Kingdoms: Hindu-Buddhist Sculpture of Early Southeast Asia*, ed. John Guy (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014), 114–15.

¹⁰¹² Guy, 'Catalogue', 74–75.

networks connecting India to China, providing a route for iconographic transmission and travelling Buddhists.¹⁰¹³ Grenet raised the possibility of a Sogdian colony in the Gulf of Thailand.¹⁰¹⁴ Additionally, the 3rd-century polity called Dunsun, probably located somewhere on the Peninsular isthmus south of where Khu Bua would later develop, should be noted; it was described in the 6th-century *Taiping Yulan* (太平御覽), which drew on an earlier source, as having a population that included “five hundred families of *hu* from India, two [possibly Buddhist] *fo-t’u*, and more than a thousand Indian brahmans”.¹⁰¹⁵ *Hu* was a Chinese ascriptive label referring to various Central Asian groups,¹⁰¹⁶ but that they are described as from India, and because the text suggests local intermarriage, it is possible that descendants of Central Asians and Indians were living on the Peninsula contemporary with the Khu Bua figures’ production. Cultural integration may include changes to dress traditions, so a *sarong*-type lower garment is additionally plausible, but they may also have maintained connections with ancestral families, including economic connections. The Khu Bua figures may therefore relate to people or iconographies reaching the Dvāravatī area via the growing Peninsular Mahāyānist network.

¹⁰¹³ The presence of the *Karmavibhaṅga-sūtra* reliefs on the ‘hidden base’ of Borobudur are of interest for their depiction of offerings of a bell, incense and lamps in reliefs O-131 and O-154 to O-156; see Jan Fontein, *The Law of Cause and Effect in Ancient Java*, Verhandelingen Afdeling Letterkunde / Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Nieuwe Reeks 140 (Amsterdam & New York: North-Holland, 1989), 58–60 & 66–67.

¹⁰¹⁴ Grenet, ‘Marchands sogdiens’, 73. Others have suggested foreign communities at Khu Bua itself, perhaps even involved in artistic production: Wales, *Dvāravatī*, 62–63; Lyons, ‘Traders of Ku Bua’, 55; Sukpramun, ‘Khu Bua’, 194. Given the anonymity of the artists of the Khu Bua *chedi* 40 deposit, interpretations need to remain able to accommodate the possibility of foreign artists. In such a situation, questions of the Self and Other in representations that differ to forms more common locally become relevant. Nonetheless, it is still possible to study the contextual representation of difference and distance without asserting specific perceptions of foreignness. The location of *chedi* 40 outside the city moat is noted, but the locating of religious monuments outside physical settlement boundaries is known at other early historic sites in Southeast Asia.

¹⁰¹⁵ Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese*, 17; Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce*, 44–48; Geoff Wade, ‘Beyond the Southern Borders: Southeast Asia in Chinese Texts to the Ninth Century’, in *Lost Kingdoms: Hindu-Buddhist Sculpture of Early Southeast Asia*, ed. John Guy (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014), 28.

¹⁰¹⁶ See my footnote 930.

8. Methodological discussion and conclusions

This study began by considering the changing scholarly perspectives on the role of foreigners in early Southeast Asia that tracked the increasing postcolonial engagement with local sources of information – from colonisers and civilisers to merchants and ritual specialists. I suggested that the study of locally-produced representations identified as foreigners may, appropriately interpreted, contribute further local perspectives to better reconstruct Southeast Asia's past. The interpretation of these representations had barely begun but I felt this could benefit from the sophistication and insights of analyses developed with ancient material elsewhere.

By surveying published studies of the visual representation of foreigners in ancient Greek, Egyptian and Chinese art, contexts where the perception of foreignness is corroborated in documentary sources, a framework has been developed that highlights similarities between the visual strategies of different ancient artists when representing the 'foreigner'. Such representation is recognised to be an inherently discursive process constructing an inherently subjective identity, but one that is reified in the mind of the percipient. It is the cognitive reification of the 'foreigner' as a self-evident conceptual category that facilitated its visual representation in art, and it is the differencing and signification of distance, intentional or unintentional, that facilitates its recognition by the modern viewer.

Features of the framework appear to be reflected in early Southeast Asian material too, affording some confidence in its interpretive value. For instance, the combination of represented differences in physical appearance and dress, seen with the terracotta and stucco figures from *Dvāravatī chedi*, and visual references to geographical distance, seen with the Central Asia-affiliated vestimentary system and Makalamau's *ji halberd*. The latter also provided an example of represented difference in custom with the *kau-tau*, and one of several examples apparently associating foreigners with horses, hinting at possible societal roles. The Kyontu terracotta plaques showed compositional structuring in their representation of the relationship between groups differentiated by their dress. The unreliability of direct interpretation of identity by the modern viewer was demonstrated with the *Dvāravatī* figures especially and is theorised to reflect a combination of needing to approach the representation from the

perspective of its producer, changes or damage to the representation since production, and population changes in the area since production. The relevance of population change was encountered when considering the Funanese and Cham, and Mon and Thai. It was also relevant for understanding Śaka as Indian by the 7th century, and the likely cultural integration of the *hu* in Dunsun, because neither ethnic identity nor foreignness are fixed. Retrieving as much information as possible about the contemporary context – cultural, societal, production, iconographic – helps with thinking about changes to the art and the population. It was suggested that lack of iconographic context for the Khu Bua figures had contributed to assumptions of a merchant role on the basis of their apparent foreignness – methodologically, in the absence of documentary evidence for a foreign group’s presence in local society, we cannot really interpret the presence of the ‘foreigner’ in art to indicate their presence in the local society if the iconographic context is not known.

Additional challenges are faced in early Southeast Asian contexts. The availability of contextual documentary sources is generally lower than for the Greek, Egyptian and Chinese material, which makes interpretation of identity difficult, keeping in mind that identity is ascribed by the producer of the representation. Rather than see the difficulty of deriving precise identities as a failure of the methodological framework, I would argue that the recognition of interpretive limits is a strength because it reduces the role of opinion in historical reconstruction. Besides, less precise forms of identity can still be interpretively useful, and the purpose and outcome of such studies can extend beyond the recovery of a specific foreign identity. Additionally, it may be possible to argue for the existence of long-distance connections when only minimal documentary evidence is available, as with the art historical analyses connecting Early Cālukya and Sambor Prei Kuk forms.

A second issue is not normally knowing the identity of the artist, which would be more relevant to understanding personal perceptions of the ‘foreigner’. It is still possible to recover some meaning regarding a perspective on foreignness as, even when foreign artists are employed in iconographic production, there is likely some negotiation with the patron and others in the production context, in producing art consumed by local audiences.

A significant component of the interpretive framework's adaptation for the Southeast Asian context is the appropriation and localisation of iconographic forms originating outside the region. Comparisons with related forms in South or East Asia need to be considered to rule out the incorporation of foreign-dressed figures in Southeast Asian art as part of iconographic appropriation, hence my emphasis with the Sambor Prei Kuk material on apparent iconographic innovation, an issue also explored with the Dvāravatī *chedi* figures. However, even when iconographic appropriation can be excluded, we need to remain aware that additional sociocultural knowledge can be transmitted through individual long-distance travel and interpersonal interaction, as with suggestions that associations between 'northern' dress and horse-related roles or guards already existed in South Asian societies, even though the specific iconographic forms appeared to be novel for Sambor Prei Kuk. Equally, there is potentially scope for the recombination of iconographic forms as part of the processes behind iconographic innovation, as discussed with the S2 *gavākṣa* heads.

Through the application of this interpretive framework to material in three case studies, some progress has been made in what I hope are useful contributions to issues that remain important in the study of early Southeast Asia.

With Sambor Prei Kuk, it was possible to show that the figures often seen as foreigners can be interpreted in ways that are entirely consistent with other sources of information, including local epigraphy, Chinese texts, and art historical analyses of iconographic and stylistic relationships with South Asian material. Alternative mechanisms for their appearance can be proposed, as either representations inspired by the real presence of such people in society, or in the complex processes and cultural interactions behind iconographic innovation. Also, by recognising that ethnic identities change over time, especially in the context of migration and intercultural interaction, Śaka can be understood as progressively integrating with an Indian society that is itself changing in the early 1st millennium. Therefore, references to Śaka in Sambor Prei Kuk's epigraphy can be understood to refer to an Indian identity in 7th-century Tśānapura, consistent with other indications of a close connection with the Early Cālukyan Deccan. The possibility of a specific intercultural relationship may provide further material for theorising the processes of localisation.

The study of the earliest presence of horses in Southeast Asia showed that the earliest locally-produced representations of horses are sometimes associated with foreign-dressed figures, which is consistent with early historical references to horse trade and what is presently known from the dating of zooarchaeological material. That these data point to the early centuries CE places them in the context of early globalisation of the maritime trade networks and, given the significance of the horse in ideological and geopolitical articulations of power, it should be considered alongside other physical and symbolic expressions of elite engagement with global culture.

The Dvāravatī figures presented a real test of the interpretive framework because of the paucity of historical information concerning long-distance intercultural connections and the lack of iconographic context. However, the framework highlighted the representation of difference and distance, and necessitated the interpretation of the objects the Khu Bua figures hold, something which was only rarely referred to by other researchers and has consequently not been incorporated into reconstructions of identity. Bells and lamps or incense burners cannot be considered foreign in contemporary Dvāravatī culture, but their uncommon iconographic representation and cultic context led to a re-evaluation of represented societal role. As a result, the Khu Bua figures now occupy a differently-emphasised position in regional networks as representations of Mahāyāna Buddhist devotees. Whether these are to be explained through the presence of such people at Khu Bua or through iconographic appropriation remains to be determined, but this research opens up new directions for understanding the spread of this Buddhist tradition in Southeast Asia.

Such analyses can therefore make productive contributions to our understanding of early historic Southeast Asia, but documentary sources remain key to considering the social realities of represented societal roles, as was possible for Greek, Egyptian and Chinese material. Southeast Asian engagement with South and East Asian cultural forms therefore presents one of bigger challenges in interpreting representations of apparent foreigners in localised Southeast Asian artistic contexts, because to see the 'foreigner' in the art of early Southeast Asia we need to be able to see their journey.

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