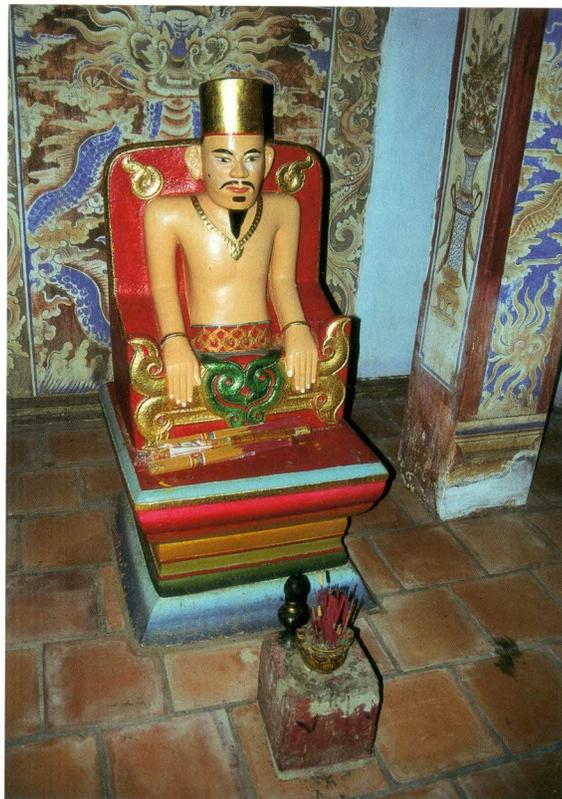


Champa and the Philippines had died with the rise of direct Chinese shipping in the twelfth century, but revived in the fifteenth century with the Ming emperors' ban on private trade. Once again Cham ships are mentioned in the Philippine ports.⁶⁵ Western writers also mention Cham maritime skill at the end of the sixteenth century (see epigraph) and Western sources provide information about Cham religion, pointing to both Hindu and Islamic practice. One sixteenth-century Western source mentions the Hindu rituals followed by the king, but by the end of the century, a large number of Cham had apparently converted to Islam.⁶⁶

The appearance of *kut*, with a seeming increase in emphasis on ancestor worship, may indicate changes in the religion, or, equally likely, may suggest the dual purpose of Hindu and Buddhist images to the Cham people during the earlier period, in representing both gods and the deceased (fig. 16). Ancestor worship may have been more closely linked to the establishment of temples and the significance of their imagery than we have given credence.⁶⁷ This is suggested by the fact that temples, Hindu in appearance, continued to be built until the sixteenth or seventeenth century in the Panduranga region, by which time the stele form of the *kut* was well established. Po Rome (fig. 14) was the last of the brick towers. Its main image is a stele with the upper torso of an eight-armed figure believed to represent King Po Rome. The last Cham inscription dates to the fifteenth century, and while it indicates the culmination of the Hindu-Buddhist period in Champa, it does not mean the end of the Cham. Rather, it comes at a time when radical changes were happening in their culture, a shift to Islam, and a fracturing of the social structure with the Dai Viet press to the south.

FIG. 16

Po Klaung Mohnai, reigned until 1627, Binh Thuan province.



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