

Two Hindu goddesses are associated with a goose: Sarasvati (who is alternately shown with a peacock), and Brahmani, consort to Brahma, whose vehicle is a goose. One goddess who is occasionally identifiable in Cham art is Durga.



Yang Po Nagara, the most renowned Cham goddess.

68. FEMALE FIGURE

Chanh Lo, Quang Ngai Province, 11th century
Stone, H: 99 cm × W: 90 cm × D: 35 cm
Da Nang Museum of Cham Sculpture, 21.4

Although many of the Cham temples are dedicated to Shiva, female imagery is ubiquitous, adorning tympanum as well as the exterior bases of the temples (fig. 2, p. 180). The temple of Po Nagar in Nha Trang was dedicated early on to the most renowned Cham goddess, Yang Po Nagara, whose original identity remains uncertain, as her attributes do not fit any known iconographical description of either a Hindu or Buddhist figure (fig. 2). Like the *linga* that Bhadravarman dedicated, Yang Po Nagara served as a palladium of the Cham people. Cham rituals today invoke her as the goddess of the country, who created trees, forests, and rice paddies, and who taught the Cham to cultivate.

Like that famous icon and many of the goddesses found in Cham art, this dancing female remains unidentified. She holds no attribute, and no known Hindu or Buddhist goddess is associated with two geese.³⁸ The findspot offers no help in her identification either. The ruined site of Chanh Lo, where the tympanum was discovered along with a good deal of other sculpture, was a complex that included three octagonal temples. The

main shrine was dedicated to Shiva. One might assume that this tympanum would have been placed over the door or a mock door of one of the subsidiary shrines.

Chanh Lo sculpture is notable for the simplification of forms, and a supple, easy movement in the figures. This goddess's outthrust hip and raised foot would send anyone toppling, but the centered upper torso and the raised wing of the goose on her right seem to add to her buoyancy.

LITERATURE

Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zephir, eds., *Trésors d'art du Vietnam: la sculpture du Champa v-xv siècles*, 2005; Parmentier 1909; Parmentier 1919; Boisselier, *La Statuaire du Champa: recherches sur les cultes et l'iconographie*, 1963; Albert Le Bonheur, "The Art of Champa," 1997; Emmanuel Guillon, *Hindu-Buddhist Art of Vietnam: Treasures from Champa*, 2001.