



Fig. 16 Dancers, Trà Kiệu, 10th century, Museum of History, Hồ Chí Minh. (Photo: Grace Chiao-Hui Tu)



Fig. 17 Dancers carved on the stone sarcophagus of General Sima Jinlong.



Fig. 18 Cave 217, Mogao grottoes, Dunhuang.



Fig. 20 Cizhou-type ware, 12th-13th centuries, excavated from Sumatera, Museum Nasional Jakarta. (Photo: Grace Chiao-Hui Tu)

Buddhist caves, such as the wall paintings on cave 148 and cave 217 in Mogao grottoes (Fig. 18).⁴⁸ This type of dance long enjoyed popularity, as under the Five Dynasties (907-79 CE) (Fig. 19) and is comparable with the Cham dancers of the 10th century Trà Kiệu stone sculptures.⁴⁹

Tháp Mãm style and reemerged Sinitic transfers

Sinitic transfers to Cham art reemerged from the 11th century, at the time of expanding maritime trade, and are noticeable in the Tháp Mãm style. During the rise of the Đại Việt (1054-1400 CE) and Lý dynasty (1009-1225 CE), between China and the Champa territory, Sinitic influence may have continued via direct tribute and trade activities with the Song dynasty (960-1279 CE), or indirectly from the Sino-Việt style filtered down to the Chams from the north.

Expanding further on the Mỹ Sơn A1 style S-shape foliate ornamentation, the Tháp Mãm style introduces a much denser design, composed of cloud patterns within the tendrils, as seen on a lintel found in Hà Trung, Quảng Trị province and dated to the 11th-12th centuries.



Fig. 19 Dancer and Musician carvings, Five Dynasties – Shanghai Museum.

A similar cloud pattern, with comma-shaped strokes, also adorns a square pedestal from the same place (Cat. 75: BTC 228-22.43). This so-called 'fiery-cloud' pattern⁵⁰ also drew Stern's attention, who suggested a Sino-Việt or Chinese influence.⁵¹ The cloud, on which immortals ride above the earth, became a favourite motif of the Chinese cult of immortality.⁵² It not only adorned religious architecture, but also the background of ceramics such as the Song dynasty Cizhou-type ware found in Bangka, Sumatera (Fig. 20). The wavy, seaweed-like tendrils issuing from the