

is preserved on site.⁹ A second over life-size standing Śiva was recovered at Mý Són temple CI (Cat. II, BTC 26-3.3). The silver and stone heads are closely aligned stylistically and may be assigned to the eighth century. In his *Inventaire descriptif des monuments çams de l'Annam* (1909-18), Henri Parmentier published his line drawing of a stone *ekhamukhaliṅga*, a Śiva *liṅga* adorned with the face of Śiva, he recorded at Cù Hoan, *Thià Thiên-Huế* province and another depicted in a tympanum relief in which Brahmā and Viṣṇu honor Śiva manifest in his sublime form.¹⁰ Boisselier (1963) published a stone *ekhamukhaliṅga* with integrated lustration basin at Trà Lièn.¹¹ These remained the only stone examples to be recorded in Cham territories until the unearthing at Mý Són, in 2012, of a sandstone *ekhamukhaliṅga*, 1.46 cm in height. The scarcity of stone *liṅga* with the manifesting face of Śiva at Cham temple sites may, arguably, be explained by a prevalence of precisely this form in precious metals, as heralded in donative inscriptions that appear from the mid-7th century.

In the wider setting of 7th century mainland Southeast Asia, the Śrī Harśavarman copper plate inscription (K.964), found at the moated city of U Thong, in Suphanburi province, central Thailand, is particularly illuminating. The text, written in Sanskrit, takes care to establish the ruler Harśavarman's royal descent and legitimate succession as the grandson of 'Śrī Īśānavarman', almost certainly identifiable as Īśānavarman I of Zhenla (active ca. 627-37 CE). In so doing he is honouring his Khmer lineage.¹² He celebrates the *liṅga* under whose authority he rules, and sends a *kośa* as a gift to his grandfather for honouring Śiva at Īśānapura. The donation was evidently portable (*calaliṅgam*) and was celebrated we are told with poetry, song and dance.¹³ Here then, in mid-7th century mainland Southeast Asia, is evidence of a state gift in the form of a precious *kośa*, travelling a considerable distance, from subordinate polity to overlord as a form of a tributary gift imbued with a heightened religious importance.

That Harśavarman declares himself Khmer and directly descended from the premier architect of Sambor Pre Kuk, Īśānavarman places U Thong firmly in the greater Zhenla domain at this time. The excavation of a laterite platform belonging to an early Śaiva shrine at Khok Chang Din, on the banks of a stream flowing into the principal temple tank at the ancient city of U Thong, yielded one

of the earliest stone *ekhamukhaliṅga* in the region (Fig. 6).¹⁴ It can be assigned to the late 6th-7th century. The parallels with the recently discovered *ekhamukhaliṅga* at Mý Són are striking. (Part I 4. 'Rethinking Cham arts' Fig. 7 p. 40) There too was found the earliest record of *liṅga puja*, recorded in the inscription stele (see Cat. 7) of King Prakaśadharman in 687 CE (609 Śaka) at Mý Són temple B6 which celebrates the installation of both a *kośa* and a *mukūṭa* (crown) for the *liṅgas* under worship as Īśāneśvara and Bhadreśvara, both epithets for Śiva.¹⁵

While no precious metal *liṅgakośa* has been found in mainland Southeast Asia outside Cham territories, the discovery in 2014 of four miniature gold *liṅga* buried in a sacred deposit below the floor of a cave in Nakhon Śrī Thammarat province, peninsular Thailand, signals an important new find.¹⁶ These were likely amulet *liṅgas* worn by Śaiva ascetics, probably Pāśupatas, and ritually buried along with their ashes to mark their *mokṣa*, their spiritual union with Śiva. (See 5. 'Pāśupata sect in Ancient Cambodia and Champa' in this volume). They may be assigned to the 6th-7th centuries. Their ritual burial, in round silver boxes set within fired brick and limestone caskets and surrounded by bricks, suggests a funerary rite in which four Śaiva ascetics are celebrated as having attained union with Śiva in death, a message which is echoed in the Vihear Thom *triśūla* stele inscription.¹⁷ The parallels with temple and image consecration deposits, auspicious offerings to mark a new beginning, are striking.¹⁸

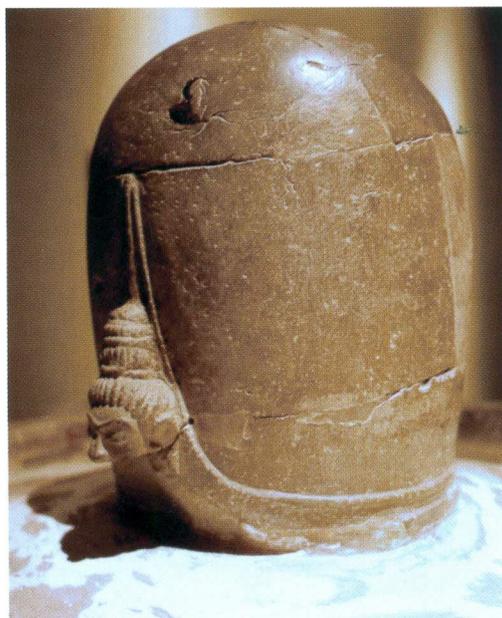


Fig. 83. — Mý Són A'4.
Tête du Śiva.
Hauteur : 0 m. 25 environ.

Fig. 5 Head of Śiva, recovered at Mý Són temple A4 in 1903, now untraced, belonging to the standing Śiva still on site. Line drawing by Henri Parmentier (1909).

Fig. 6 *Ekhamukhaliṅga* and lustration basin, from Śaiva laterite platform shrine at Khok Chang Din, U Thong. U Thong National Museum, Suphanburi Province, Thailand.