

The magnificent brick wall of Đờng Dương, embellished with pilasters and protecting the most sacred space of the great temple, was punctuated on the interior of the enclosure by seven small sanctuaries rigorously disposed at the cardinal and inter-cardinal points, except in the east where at the centre they gave way to a vast entry pavilion (*gopura*). During the excavation of Henri Parmentier and Charles Carpeaux in the autumn of 1902, two almost identical deities were unearthed in these structures. At the centre of the cella, still in place on a brick platform, they occupied respectively the small western sanctuary (uncovered on 24 October 1902), in the central axis of the temple, and the northwest sanctuary (on 28 October). Carpeaux photographed both *in situ*<sup>1</sup> before the archaeologists left the site towards the end of the 1920s. The one from the small western sanctuary has been conserved since the 1930s in the Rietberg Museum in Zurich; the second, from the northwest pavilion has been in the collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art since 1935.<sup>2</sup>

To these two objects, others were soon to be associated. The fragments of one were discovered near the southern tower and the others near the northwest tower.<sup>3</sup> Part of one was eventually found in the collection of the baron Von der Heydt in the Rietberg Museum<sup>4</sup> (head and bust), while the rest of the piece (legs and pedestal) were sent to the Cham Museum of Đà Nẵng. The fragments of the second image – the one under consideration here – were sent to the Cham Museum and re-assembled; this sculpture is surely the most beautiful of the whole series of these seated male deities.

The small square base on which the divinity sits, looks like a reduced and simplified version of the great pedestals found in the principal sanctuaries of the temple. Here too are the moulded pilasters alternating with sculpted motifs like suspended textiles in which magnificent foliage scrolls disgorged by the grimacing face of a *kirtimukha* ('face of glory' in leonine form). Fused with the pedestal, the deity is seated in a position slightly different from that of the Bodhisattvas. He is in the position of ease (*sukhāsana*), the body erect, the hands forward, the face fixed attentively on the horizon. With upper body naked, he is dressed in a short loin cloth decorated with floral and geometric motifs, while the centre fold under

the belt falls in a scroll. The jewelry is limited to earrings (*kunḍala*) of a particular kind, with a large open flower inserted into the distended lobe. These are usually worn by secondary deities like the small gods that emerge from the mouths of *makaras*. The 'helmet' formed by a diadem and hair cover (*kirītamukūṭa*) has a familiar aspect except for a large stylised flower appearing behind. This decorative element, as far as one can say, is also inherited from the Indian tradition (called *śīras cakra*).

This small figure, attentive and determined, holds an indistinct object in his hand like a short dagger or large bevelled blade, an attribute that does not serve to identify the image. Indeed the iconography of these figures from the small sanctuaries is unknown to us. If all the structures contained such a figure there would have been seven, all from their position in the architecture seemingly guardians. May we align them with the inscription of Đờng Dương in which we learn that the sovereign who founded the temple is 'protected by Mercury (Saumya), Mars (Aṅgāra), Jupiter (Bṛhaspati), the Moon (Indu), the Sun (Dinakṛt), Venus (Kāvya), Saturn (Arkaja)'<sup>5</sup> These seven planets, which one would have liked to associate with the seven small sanctuaries of the first enclosure, are also part of the Nine Influencers (*navagraha*), the deities presiding over destinies who are of great importance in Indian sanctuaries because of their role in cosmology.<sup>6</sup> For that we must add the demon of the eclipses (Rāhu) and the comets (Ketu). These last, who are not mentioned in the inscription, could have been placed in the two small chapels – the same size as the small sanctuaries – set at the inner walls of the entrance pavilion (*gopura*) of the first enclosure. It is the case that, with the two supplementary monuments, there are now nine sanctuaries surrounding the principal monuments, which one is tempted to relate to the 'Influencers'. This hypothesis is however thin, and further, the four figures recovered are hardly distinguished from each other, with the exception of the *ūrṇā* which is set in the brows of three of them, and not on this one.

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1 MAFV 2005, photos 84 and 116 (Rietberg Museum); photo 82 (Cleveland Museum of Art).

2 The Edward Whittmore collection inv. 1935.147.

3 Parmentier 1909 (1), p. 462.

4 No. RHJ 404. See Boisselier 1963 (2), fig. 4. The lower eastern section has recently been on display in the extension of the Cham Museum of Đà Nẵng.

5 Finot 1904 (2).

6 One meets them in Southeast Asia, notably in Cambodia, in a slightly different form. See Jessup and Zéphir 1997, no 58, pp. 240-1. In Champa, we know them in one representation in the Museum of Vietnamese History in Hồ Chí Minh city. HCMV 1994 and Boisselier 1963 (1).