

28. Bhīma?

Khuông Mỹ, Quảng Nam

10th century

Sandstone: H. 133 cm;

W. 63 cm; D. 34 cm

BTC 280-9.6



Fig. 1 *Bhīma* statue.

The only known Cham sculpture of the great Pāṇḍava warrior Bhīma was discovered at the triple sanctuary temple of Khuông Mỹ. The statue was described as a *dvārapāla* in Parmentier's classical works (1909: 261; 1919: 27). He said that when the statue was discovered its missing head had been replaced by Vietnamese villagers. The statue was transferred to Đà Nẵng (Le Jardin de Tourane) in 1892-93 and

displayed outdoors at the entrance to the museum. The work has hitherto attracted little research.

This powerful, heavy-set standing figure is identifiable as Bhīma by his long fingernails (*pañcanaka*), which are associated with superhuman strength. Bhīma's strength derived from being the spiritual son of the wind god Vāyu. In the *Mahābhārata* epic he is credited with killing 100 members of the rival Kaurava