

Fig. 2 Rāma after firing the Raadra bow in Mithilā city to win the hand of Sītā.



Fig. 3 Dancers celebrate the marriage.



- Phuong says Face B illustrates the messengers sent by king Janak to inform king Daśaratha about Rāma's victory and to invite him to the wedding ceremony and face C depicts king Daśaratha coming to Mithilā to attend the wedding. At Mithilā, prince Rāma (C 37) appears to greet his father (C 36) and king Janak (C 44) leads his beloved daughter Sītā to salute king Daśaratha (C 42)⁵; Sītā (C 43) bows at the feet of king Daśaratha in greeting and for his blessing of the wedding ceremony, which is signaled by a garland of flowers above her. On face D dancers celebrate the newly-wed couple.⁶

Phuong associated his Rāmāyana reading of the carvings on the base with an inscription found at Trā Kiêu and dated to the 7th century. This mentions the name of Vālmiki (Mus

1928), writer of the classic version of the epic, and Phuong proposed that the pedestal may belong to the same date in the late 7th century. The clothing, jewelry and hair dressing of the personages on the Trā Kiêu pedestal are diverse but cannot be readily related to such details of any other motif of Cham sculpture of the 7th century. The abundance of beading on necklaces, arms, wrists and especially the spherical side hair buns on the Trā Kiêu pedestal are more reminiscent of the motifs on the Cham sculptures from the 10th century and later. (See Mỹ Sơn lintel E4, BTC 2-45.8; fragmentary relief BTC 208-45.5; Dvarapāla bust of Tháp Mẫm BTC 229.9.13).

5 Phuong 2000: personage C, 37 is the hero Yuddhrajit and C, 42 is Rāma.
6 It is interesting to compare the illustration on the Trā Kiêu pedestal with the verses of the *Rāmāyana* (English version, translated by R.C. Dutt, <http://hinduismabout.com/library/weekly/extra/bl-ramayanal.htm>).