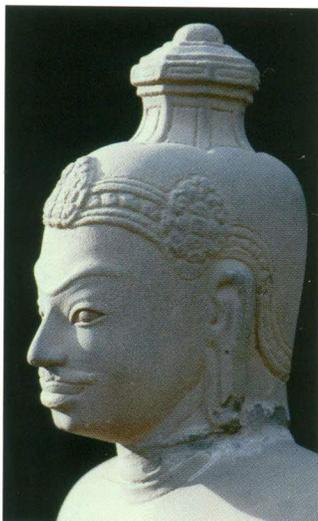


## 65. *Apsara* cornice stone

Đa Nghi, Quảng Trị  
11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries  
Sandstone: H. 55 cm;  
W. 25 cm; D. 25 cm  
BTC 61-32.4



**Fig. 1** The 8<sup>th</sup> century Viṣṇu statue found at Đa Nghi, now lost. (Courtesy Photographic Archives, Musée national des arts asiatiques-Guimet, Paris)

This rather large architectural corner-piece is one of eight *apsaras* found at Đa Nghi (Parmentier 1909: 526; 1919: 76-7; 1922: Pl. XV), which were presumably set into the cornice of a high brick temple along with *garuḍa* figures. Her *kirītamukūṭa* is in three layers adorned with large petals above a diadem of flowers. The devout and charming face has large lozenge eyes, a high nose and full mouth. The earrings are heavy with threaded rings falling to her shoulders; two hair lines appear at the temples; the folded hands hold a lotus bud to her chest before a double layered necklace without ornament.

The sculpture is an unfinished work but the style is readily attributable to the 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries when large scale stone corner-pieces like this *apsaras* first entered Cham building technique from the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Similar stone cornice components with long and heavy tenons were found at Trà Kiệu and Po Nagar/Nha Trang sites (Boisselier 1963: fig.120; Phạm Hữu Mỹ 1994: 35-6, figs. 22, 24). Stone cornices can also be seen at Chiên Đàn temple group, built in 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century, and on the other 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>

century brick temples in Vijaya such as Dương Long, Hưng Thạnh, Cảnh Tiên. Đa Nghi and the other temples from this period reflected building techniques probably brought from Cōla India and from the neighbour kingdoms in Angkor and Java (Baptiste 2010: 170-7; Trần Kỳ Phương 2009: 177-9).

Đa Nghi was an important religious site that was enlarged over some centuries. Valuable sculptural works found there include a 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century architectural *pūrṇaghāṭa* ornament (cat. 3) and a distinguished 107 cm high 8<sup>th</sup> century Viṣṇu statue (Fig. 1) that was preserved in the collection of Đà Nẵng Museum of Cham Sculpture until the head and body were lost during the wartime in the late 1960s (Parmentier 1919: 24-5; 1922: Pl. XXVI; Stern 1942: 74, Pl. 53/a; Boisselier 1963: 55-7, fig. 22).

Đa Nghi was among the complex of Cham religious sites clustered around the flourishing port of Vyvar at the estuary of the Thạch Hãn river in Cửa Việt. Other prominent artworks found there include the bas-relief of polo players. (cat. 48)