



Two monumental door guardians watched over the sanctuary of Tháp Mâm.¹ Such figures were traditionally carved in the round in Champa, at least from the Đông Dương period (final quarter of the 9th century). Usually of great size, they attest to the sculptors' extraordinary mastery of figural work in three dimensions. The guardians sometimes hold dynamic positions, twirling their arms in the air, or more soberly stand in a position swaying with more or less emphasis. This bust is among the more sober group. Two statues of the same type, perhaps originating from a monument situated south of the citadel of Chà Bàn, are today found in the pagoda of Nhạn Sơn Tự of Nhạn Tháp (Bình Định), that should not be confused with the sanctuary-tower of Nhạn Tháp in Phú Yên.² These statues, well conserved as well as much restored, give a good impression of the original appearance of the guardians of Tháp Mâm.

In the context of the highly decorative style of Tháp Mâm, the sculptor has captured the essence of the warrior while limiting the representation to minimal ornamental details. Pieces of jewelry are thus few and soberly treated; one notes the absence of a torso belt. The low profile diadem is tied behind the head under the large, low chignon, typical of hairdos from the middle of the 10th century. The necklace of alternated small loops of pearls and

pendants corresponds with that of the angrier of the two, who is more richly adorned than his acolyte. The torso of the second excavated *dvārapāla* bears a necklace much more sober: a simple chain of links with two rows of small pearls. The remainder of the jewelry, as is the norm with such figures, is composed of *nāga* (earrings, brahmanical cord). The costume, very short judging by the fragments in the Đà Nẵng reserve collection, was decorated with tassel motifs and held at the waist with a rich belt with pendants. The accentuated neck tendons convey the aggressive character of the guardian in a way that had just been incorporated into the schematisations of the Tháp Mâm style. The face with thick and heavy features is softened by the elegant curved lines of the abundant eyebrows, the moustache and the beard, all typical traits of a figure with this role in a monument.

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1 Apart from the present bust, several fragments of the Tháp Mâm *dvārapālas* are preserved in Đà Nẵng Cham Museum: the inscribed base of one of the two (or more?) door-guardians (n° 71 in the present publication, BTC 433, p. 241); a right hand holding the handle of a dagger; a hand holding some sort of circular shield; a fragmentary torso (Boisselier 1963 (1), fig. 175); a left foot; the front part of a right foot; several fragments of one or two pelvis. Moreover, the 1934 excavations also yielded several other fragments that apparently did not find their way to Đà Nẵng: a leg fragment ornamented with a small *nāga*; a right arm; etc... No doubt that some of these loose fragments would have completed the magnificent and powerful bust under consideration here.

2 Parmentier 1909 (1), p. 199 and pp. 210-211. These sculptures are illustrated in Boisselier 1963 (1), fig. 176 a and b.