

the Śiva of Yang Mum, and with him the other pieces in a style of which he is the most beautiful representative, belongs to a current of influence or exchange between the Khmer kingdom, Siam and Champa at this period.

This Śiva is very close to that in the musée Guimet and the sculpture of Drang Lai: the same general proportions, same physiognomy, same kind of dress with long, embroidered even bejewelled forward folds, which are more finely worked here. Certainly the floral motifs of the costume and jewelry vary from one piece to another, but within a framework of remarkable overall unity. The comma motif characteristic of Tháp Mâm appears again in the centre fold of the garment – which may be a belt or an element of tissue folded forward – , in the upper register of the diadem and in the side scroll on the backslab. A degree of abstraction has led the sculptor to show part of a single foot, in a clumsy manner. The power of the image resides essentially in the strong stylisation and sharp lines of the face. In

conformity with the stylistic and iconographic clichés of the period, the Śiva of Yang Mum has a drooping moustache and pointed beard; his braced eyebrows join under the third eye in the brow which is carved vertically, following the distinct form of the two natural eyes: upper eyelid a semi-circle and the lower straight.

The strong stylisation of the Yang Mum style without doubt led Cham statuary along the road towards total abstraction. In fact, after this there is only a bust or even a head against the backslab, in the style of Po Rome, from the early 16th century.⁴ At the end of the evolution of Cham statuary, it is in certain graphic symbols that artists gave life to stone in funerary stelae (*kut*), which often represent apotheosized sovereigns.⁵ These late pieces are evidently very difficult to date with precision: the earliest probably, according to Boisselier, go back to the 16th century, and the latest to the 19th or early 20th century.

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4 Boisselier 1963 (10, pp. 384-91, fig. 240, in particular.

5 Ibidem, pp.391-4, fig. 245 and 246.