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THE FORMS AND BELIEFS THAT EXIST IN SANDSTONE CARVING OF
PEOPLE IN VAT PHOU, CHAMPASAK PROVINCE, LAO PDR.

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ABSTRACT

The research on the choreography from the sandstone carvings of people at Vat Phou, Champasak province, Lao PDR., was aimed at 1) studying the forms and the beliefs that exist in the sandstone carvings of people at Vat Phou, Champasak province, Lao PDR. and 2) creating the choreography from the sandstone carvings of people at Vat Phou, Champasak province, Lao PDR. This paper will only focus on objective 1. This is qualitative research based on the study of the documents and field surveys. The research methods and the tools in collecting the data are as follows. The target group for the study can be categorized into two groups: 1) The target group that consists of the sandstone carvings of people in the main sanctuary of Hong Nang and Hong Thao that are found in the lintel, gable, and the decorated pillars on the door frames and the pillars and 2) The target group of people, which consists of key informants, casual informants, and general informants. Surveys and observations were used in acquiring the field data from Vat Phou. Structured interviews were used on the general informants. Non-structured interviews were used with the key informants. Group discussions were used with the casual informants. The Cultural Diffusion Theory and the Semiology theory were used, as well as the triangulation method to verify the data. The result shows that 1) the sitting postures were most found on the lintel 2) the beliefs received the influence from Brahmanism-Hinduism, which can be further categorized into four groups 1) sandstone carvings influenced by Shaivism 2) sandstone carvings influenced by Vaishnavism 3) sandstone carvings influenced by the secondary tier gods, and 4) sandstone carvings influenced by the servants of the gods (the servasnt group). The carvings are connected to the Shiva dance from the Book of Natya Shastra that talks about the twenty postures of Indian dance and dramas.

INTRODUCTION

In the past, it was believed that buildings built with strong materials, such as sandstones or bricks, were the kind of architecture that was only built for the gods or important prophets (Kingmanee, 2012). Such as the Khmer prasadas that were mostly built from the belief in Hinduism. The way to observe which sect the religious sites were influenced after can be done by observing the statues that were installed into those religious sites. The prasadas that were built with the influence of Hinduism can be categorized into two sects: “Shaivism,” which worships Shiva, and “Vaishnavism,” which worships Vishnu (Saisingha, 2004). The general characteristics of the Khmer prasadas were the fact that they were built to be the residing places for the gods, using the statues installed inside as symbols, such as the statues of Lingam or the gods themselves, along with the patterns decorating the temple overall. The patterns were mostly the stories of the gods, Ramayana, the kings, important rituals, or the mystical animals. The locations in which the patterns were found were on the lintels, the gables, the colonnette, and the pillars. The patterns consist of several different patterns that include 1) decorative patterns, 2) patterns of people or gods, 3) patterns of animals that are the mode of transportation for the gods, and 4) patterns of floras (Tongphan, 2016) which is inline with Charoon Komutratananon (1997) who stated that most of the carved patterns are about the Gods, Ramayana, the kings, the livelihood, important ceremonies, or the mythical animals. This is similar to the Puranas which stated that there are 330,000,000 gods. Shiva is a greatly respected and important god. Until the Vedic period when new beliefs emerged such as Buddhism, as well as 2 important epics, Ramayana and Maha Parata. As for these patterns, apart from the magnificent beauty, these patterns are believed to have sacred beings inside of them, who can bring peacefulness to the people, which is similar to the beliefs found in the sandstone carvings of people at Vat Phou, Champasak province, Lao PDR.

Vat Phou is situated in Champasak province, Lao PDR. According to the history of Vat Phou by Henri Marshall, a French historian, the temple was built during the reign of King Taravarman towards the end of the 14th century (around the year 390-400) in honor of Shiva under the name Tara (the destroyer) and Phutesavara (King of the Spirits). Vat Phou temple was built on the foot of a big mountain on the west of the Mekong River, south of Champasak city, and 42 kilometers from Pakse. The mountain on which Vat Phou was built is mostly called by the Lao people, Phu Klao, which means respected over one's head. The front of Vat Phou faces the east. The layout follows the layout of Khmer Prasadas, which can be compared to Peah Vihear temple with similar long walls (Sooksawas & Antonyson, 2015). From the information found on sandstone tablets at That village, around 30 kilometers on the west of Champasak city, written in Sanskrit, the tablets' content is praises towards Shiva. The academics believe that the tablets were built during the 12th century, during King Suryavarman II's reign. Apart from this, there are other tablets around the Champasak area that also mention historical evidence from the 12th century. From the historical pieces of evidence, the academics assumed that the school of the builders and the architecture that still remain at Vat Phou were all from the 11th and 12th centuries. In conclusion, this Prasada was built on the sacred ground since the Sri Kodtrabong reign of the Funan Kingdom and had been

renovated several times (Phra Mek Kantasilo (Sithonh), 2017). This is why instead of calling the site Lingum following the inscription on the tablet, the site was called Vat Phou once it was rediscovered, which shows the discontinuity of the history of settlement in the area. This site would have been deserted at one point in which the Buddha Image was installed within the main sanctuary after the rediscovery. The word “Phou” was from the fact that this is a religious site on the mountain. Champasak used to be a well-known region during the Khmer empire. It is the land within the Lan Xang Kingdom with ancient cultures that are still intact in comparison to many different regions. This goes in line with Saengsuliwong (2009) who stated that before the transition between Jenla and the Khmer Empire, there were many cultural legacies. From the estimation, the three buildings, which consist of the main sanctuary, Hong Thao, and Hong Nang. The door frames are in an octagonal shape. There are lintels and gables above the door with patterns that reflect the Brahmanism-Hinduism belief (French, 2015).

Currently, the two buildings are called “Hong” because the word “Hong” is a word used for calling buildings. Hong Thao means the sacrificial building for men, or the resident for Shiva or Parvati, on the right side of the main sanctuary towards the north. Hong Nang means the sacrificial building for women, which is on the main sanctuary’s left side towards the south (Saengprachan, 2019). The interior of the building is beautiful and interesting; there are different decorations, such as the gables, lintels, the colonnette, and the pillars, which contain beautiful carvings of the gods, the animals, and floras. However, there have been no studies on the carvings of people within Vat Phou. No research studies the relationship between the carvings of people and choreography, which is considered a very crucial study. These carvings of people consist of people in various interesting poses, such as standing, sitting, flying, and fighting. These poses reflect different emotions, such as peacefulness and cruelty. Therefore, the study of the carvings of people are the works of art that can be used to create the choreography due to the physical appearances that can be clearly seen. At the same time, there is also no presentation of the history of Vat Phou through performances, music, and magnificent costumes. Therefore, the forms and beliefs reflected by Vat Phou’s sandstone carvings are an important direction in designing the choreography, as well as the magnificent costumes that can reflect the emotions. Similarly, Boonchuay Srisawat (2014) stated that consuming beautiful works of art contribute to a good mental health since people have artistic needs, such as the choreographic dance performances through the mixed-method and the elements in the performances, the choreography, the costumes, the rhythm of the music, as well as the appropriateness of the venues and the opportunities for the performances, which led to the connection and relationship. The arts of choreography that were created by human deeply affect the audience in each era. These works are considered an important culture that reflects the prosperities of the mind, reflecting the local wisdom, thoughts, beliefs, and the livelihood of the people in each and every era (Bunchua, K. (1993) Phanthawee, K. (2009).

Because of this importance, the researcher is interested in studying the forms and beliefs that exist in the sandstone carvings of people at Vat Phou, Champasak province, Lao PDR. The research consists of the research in

document and field studies by analyzing data using concepts and theories. The theories used within this research are the concepts of movement, the Cultural Diffusion Theory, the theory of Semiology, and verifying the data using the triangulation method.

The process of analyzing the sandstone carvings of people in Champasak province, Lao PDR.

From the field study and surveys, it was found that the three buildings consist of the following sandstone carvings on the gables, lintels, colonnette, and the pillars.

Buildings	Components	People	Animals	Floras
Main Sanctuary	Gable	3	2	6
	Lintel	12	5	8
	Colonettes	2	-	1
	Pillars	5	-	1
Total		22	7	16
Hong Nang	Gable	6	6	1
	Lintel	8	1	4
	Colonettes	1	-	1
	Pillars	-	-	1
Total		15	7	7
Hong Thao	Gable	7	3	3
	Lintel	9	1	3
	Colonettes	1	-	1
	Pillars	-	-	-
Total		17	4	7
All Total		54	18	30

Source: Yuwadee Ponsiri (2020)

From the table, it can be concluded that there are three types of sandstone carvings in the following order:

Number one: 54 sandstone carvings of people (found the most)

Number two: 30 sandstone carvings of floras

Number three: 18 sandstone carvings of animals

The research only focuses on the sandstone carvings of people found at Vat Phou within the main sanctuary, Hong Thao, and Hong Nang, on the gables, lintels, colonettes, and pillars since the sandstone carvings of people can be used as the directions in creating the choreographies. The data was analyzed to find out the forms of the sandstone carvings through the different poses found, which consists of the following poses: sitting, standing, fighting, flying, as well as the costumes and the head ornaments that are found in those locations.

Study Results

1) The forms of the poses and the costumes of the sandstone carvings in Vat Phou, Champasak province, Lao PDR from the three buildings can be concluded as follows:

2)

1.1. Main Sanctuary

1.1.1 Sitting: mostly found on the lintels

1.1.2 Standing: found on the pillars

1.1.3 Fighting: Found on the gables.

1.2. Hong Nang

1.2.1. Sitting: mostly found on the colonnettes and the lintels

1.3. Hong Thao

1.3.1. Sitting: mostly found on the gables, the colonnettes, and the lintels.

The researcher assumes that the carvings are mostly found on the gables and the lintels since they are important locations.

2) As for the beliefs, the sandstone carvings of people within the three buildings can be categorized into four following groups:

2.1 There are three sandstone carvings that are influenced by Shavinism, which are Shiva holding beads, Yoga Dakhinamurt, and Shiva and Parvati on a Nandhi.

2.2 There are five sandstone carvings influenced by Vaishnavism, which are the gable depicting Rama and Lakshmana fighting with a giant, The churning of the Ocean of Milk, Krishna defeating Nagaa, Vishnu Garudavahana, and Krishna killing Kamsa.

2.3 There are three sandstone carvings influenced by the secondary gods (Indra), which are Indra on an elephant, Indra on Kirtimukha holding a staff, and Indra sitting on Kirtimukha without any weapon.

2.4 There are three sandstone carvings of people who serve the gods, which are Apsara, Door Guardian, and hermits. Therefore, it can be said that the forms and the beliefs from the sandstone carvings of people within the three buildings bring out clearer stories and reflect the power or important incidents to be seen.

From the location of the carvings and the amount found, most of the carvings are of a person either sitting or standing. After analyzing result from categorizing the carvings according to the Brahmanism-Hinduism belief of the three buildings according to the Book of Natya Shastra, it was found that the carvings are in line with the postures within the book, consist of interesting stories, and can be developed into dance postures using the structure from the Bharata Muni version of the Book of Natya Shastra. The postures can be analyzed according to the following principle of movements:

- Part 1: The position of the head and the body
- Part 2: Location of the fingers and the hands
- Part 3: Locations of the arms and the legs
- Part 4: Parts that can be adapted to the choreography according to the following illustration.

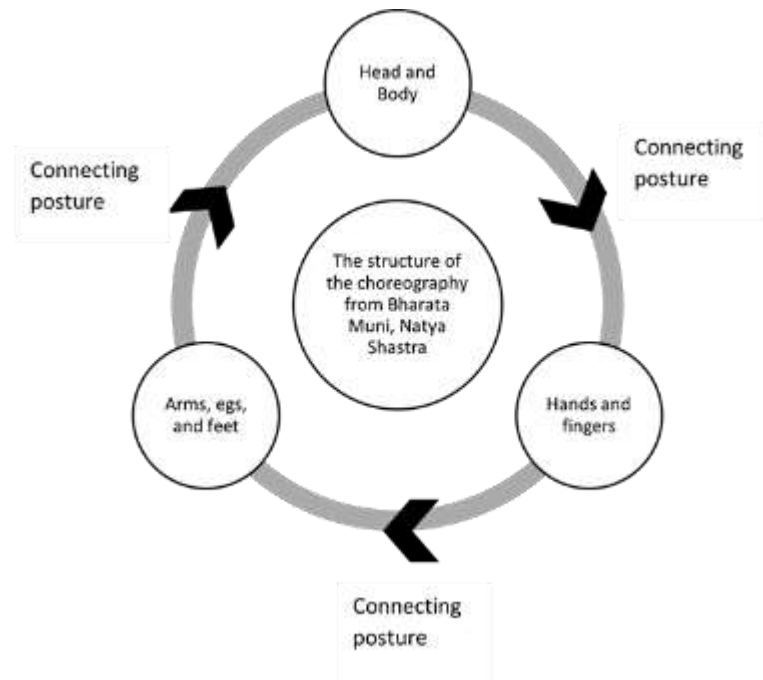





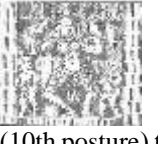

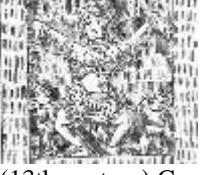





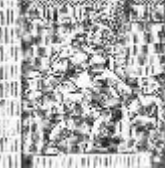


















Figure 1 The structure of the choreography from Bharata Muni, Natya Shastra Yuwadee Ponsiri (2020)









DISCUSSION



From the study of the sandstone carvings of people, it was found that there are 108 Karana influenced by Shivanism and 20 postures.

No.	Results from the Analysis of the sandstone Carvings of People at Vat Phou, Champasak, Lao PDR		
	Sandstone Carvings of people at Vat Phou	Shiva Dance Postures	Explanation
1	 <p>Apsara</p>	 <p>(5th posture) Finger nails at the same level</p>	Head: straight up. Similar postures of right hand along the body in a standing posture.
2	 <p>Hermit</p>	 <p>(6th posture) Clasp hands</p>	Head: Straight. Similar posture of hands clasping together at the chest level.
3	 <p>Flying Giant</p>	 <p>(10th posture) tip toeing on one foot</p>	Head: Slightly tilted. Similar posture of raising both hands above the head.
4	 <p>Krishna</p>	 <p>(13th posture) Crossed hands at the chest level</p>	Head: Tilted on the opposite side. Similar posture of raising the hands towards the side of the body at the shoulder level.
5			The heads are somewhat different. Hands appear on both of the pictures seem to be similar. Left hand bending towards the body.

6	<p>Shiva on the altar</p>  <p>Krishna</p>	<p>(22nd posture) Half-Crossed legs</p>  <p>(31st posture) Spinning the body</p>	<p>Both heads tilt to the opposite sides. Both share some similarity in the positions of the legs. The right legs are bent, while the toes of the right legs touch the left ankles while the left leg is slightly bent.</p>
7	 <p>Vishnu riding on a Garuda catching nagas.</p>	 <p>(43rd posture) Arms akimbo</p>	<p>The heads are different. Yet, both pictures share some similarity in that the arms were bent around the same level, while the knees are also bent at the same level.</p>
8	 <p>Krishna killing Praya Kong</p>	 <p>(57th posture) 'Saidan' posture</p>	<p>Heads: The heads tilt a little to the right. Similarities shared by both postures are bended knees and slightly tiptoeing.</p>
9	 <p>Vishnu with the posture called 'Guramavata'</p>	 <p>(59th posture) Faces turned to the sides</p>	<p>It appears that the head part of the carving in Vat Phou could not be found. Yet, they shared similarities of the bent legs with the toe touched at the left ankles, while both knees are slightly bent.</p>
10	 <p>Indra riding on Erawan Elephant</p>	 <p>(61st posture) Twisting the body</p>	<p>The heads are upright. The shared similarities are the right legs which are pulled up where knees are at the chest level, while the left leg is placed on the floor horizontally.</p>

11	 <p>Krishna killing 'Praya Kong'</p>	 <p>(66th posture) Sun across the sky</p>	<p>The head points downward. The shared similarities are the backs which bend like a bridge.</p>
12	 <p>Apsara</p>	 <p>(67 posture) Spinning around</p>	<p>Heads tilt to the opposite side. Yet, there are some shared similarities--right hand, which is raised straight up above the head level, and left hand, which is casually placed vertically along the side of the body.</p>
13	 <p>Krishna conquering over Naga Kaliya</p>	 <p>(70th posture) The Jumping Garuda</p>	<p>The head tilts to the opposite side. Yet shared similarities are both arms are lifted and spread wide open at shoulder level.</p>
14	 <p>Carving: Scene of the Churning of the Milk Ocean</p>	 <p>(73rd posture) Leg spreading</p>	<p>The head part was missing from the carving at Vat Phou. Yet, shared similarities are the legs of which knees are slightly bent and spread out.</p>
15	 <p>Krishna killing Praya Kong</p>	 <p>(75th posture) Arching arms</p>	<p>There is no similarity in the head part. Yet, the postures that share some similarities are the arms lifted and spread out, arching at shoulder level.</p>

16	 Trimurati	 (79th posture) Stepping forward	The head parts are upright. Shared similarities are the standing posture with both legs spread to the side, while wrists set vertically with the palms turning outward.
17	 Shiva on the altar above Kirtimukha	 (85th posture) Hip revealing posture	The heads are upright. Shared similarities include hands that are placed in front around the belly level, while the legs are crossed with the left ankle over the right ankle.
18	 Indara riding on Erawan Elephant	 (86th posture) Slipping or falling	The heads are upright. Share similarity is in the right hands, which are raised above the head level.
19	 Rama, the soldiers, and Sita	 (94th posture) Childbearing Posture	The heads face in the same direction. Shared similarities include one hand being raised above the head, while the other hand placed casually along the side of the body with one leg stepping forward.

20	 <p data-bbox="421 379 499 403">Hermit</p>	 <p data-bbox="913 360 1294 414">(97th posture) The Proud Goat Posture</p>	<p data-bbox="1507 196 2040 288">Heads face in the same direction. Similar posture is in the hands that are stretched out as if to receive some objects.</p>
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Source : Yuwadee Ponsiri (2020)

From the table, it was found that apart from postures of man sandstone carving, clothing that appeared on the sandstone/ statue is also significant. The kinds of clothing found can be divided into two types of clothing: 1) male clothing and 2) female goddesses' clothing. Details are as follows.

1. Male clothing: The top of a male statue is usually bare, while the bottom is covered with a loincloth (sompot), which seems to be influenced by Khmer arts (minimal sompot). It is speculated from the appearance that the clothing resembles loin cloth (Tiew) and Sompot Chong Kben. Such clothing first appeared since ancient India. It can also be found in Khmer arts during the 'Koh Ker' era on sculptures of fairies or angels and on man sculptures created in the Angkor Wat era. Such findings are also similar to what was discovered at Vat Phou on the sandstone, showcasing Indara riding on an Erawan elephant, as shown in the figure below.



Figure 2: Clothing of Indara riding on Erawan elephant, Vat Phou: The clothing found on Indara is called Sompot Chong Kben. Yuwadee Ponsiri (2020)

The head part ornamentations include the crown decorating the head, headdress covering the hair tied into a bun on the head, resembling the ‘U’ shape. Another ornament which is similar to a necklace of beads or rosary, encircling the headdress’s rim between the headdress and hair. The headdress is considered an ornament for gods in the form of a priest; for example, Shiva was a hermit or an ascetic. By using the headdress, based on Khmer art found in the era of Angkor Wat, the hair is usually tied into a cylinder or ‘U’ shape, which is typically smaller than the size of the head.



Figure 3: Specific characteristics of Shiva’s head at Vat Phou and ornaments of Indara Yuwadee Ponsiri (2020)



Figure 4: Characteristics of hairstyle and clothing of the guardians of the gate Yuwadee Ponsiri (2020)

1.2. Clothing of the goddesses: Characteristics of apparel for the goddesses are in its clothing ornament. The brim of the sarong would be pulled out in the form of semicircle right under the belly button. Such is a unique character of Khmer art during the era of Koh Ker, or around the latter half of the 15th Buddhist century. From the way the apparel and hairstyle appeared on the statue, it was speculated that the sandstone was made around 1600 - 1650 B.E. The characteristics found on the apparels were consistent with the arts made in the Khleang era and the beginning of Baphuon era. The sculpture was wearing a

long skirt with pleats. In front of the belly are the skirt's brims around the waist with a pleat in front and a fish-tail-like on the lower brim of the pleat. An example of apparels in which brims are pulled out in the form of the semicircle in front of the belly can be found in the sculpture of Uma-Mehesha, who was sitting on Nandi without any servant in the surrounding, as can be seen in the figure below.



Figure 5: Parvati at Vat Phou Temple complex and a goddess situated at the National Museum of Cambodia
Yuwadee Ponsiri (2020)

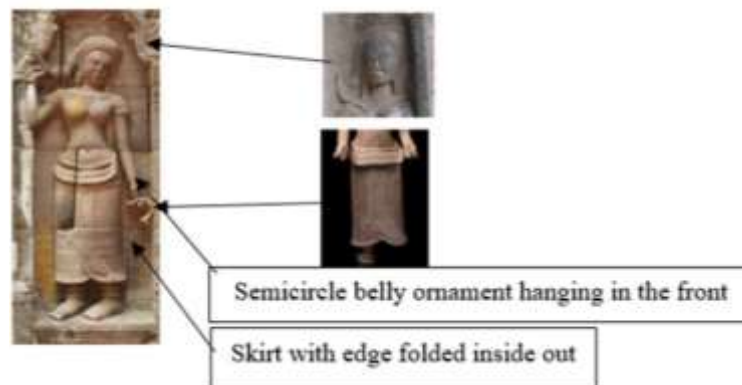


Figure 6: Headdresses of Apsara
Yuwadee Ponsiri (2020)

Sarongs or skirts found on the sculpture are pleated sarongs. In front of the sarong is folded with double folds when worn. This kind of sarong wearing is similar to one of the arts called 'Bakheng;' however, the mentioned sarong's brim was adorned with patterns. The pleat or pleated sarongs are clothes that appeared in the arts during the Angkor era, right before the Angkor Wat era. As for women figure appeared in some of the arts, they are often depicted as Apsara, depending on how different each piece of art was created. The roles of the women figures on the sculptures can be speculated by some of the outside appearances. For example, the female guardians of the gate often appear in a dramatic or serious gesture with weapons in their hands, while Apsara's countenance may express senses of delicacy and gentleness without a weapon in her hands.

In light of the headdresses, the top of the tip of the headdresses is like a triangle, while the second row is adorned with the pattern of Hollow Stalk flowers.

Therefore, it is presumed that the women figure may be of noble or Apsara, destined to serve and worship Indra, the first tier god, the holiest god, since Hollow stalk flower is considered sacred. The flowers would be embroidered on the headdresses--one on the left, one in the middle, and one on the right. Under the pattern of Hollow Stalk flower being embroidered to the headdress is 'Kra Bang na' or theatrical forehead ornament. The forehead ornament is of Khmer art. Its curves represent delicacy or gentleness and beauty. The symbolic meaning of such delicacy is one's being humble before the gods he/she worships. Therefore, it can be concluded that Apsara is the female figure wearing headdresses that derived from the arts during the Angkor Wat era. The headdresses compose of head ornament, neck ornament (Krong Pra Sor), upper arm ornament (Pahurad), bracelet (Kor Pra Korn), belt with tassels (Radpra Ong), and anklets (Kor Pra Batt).

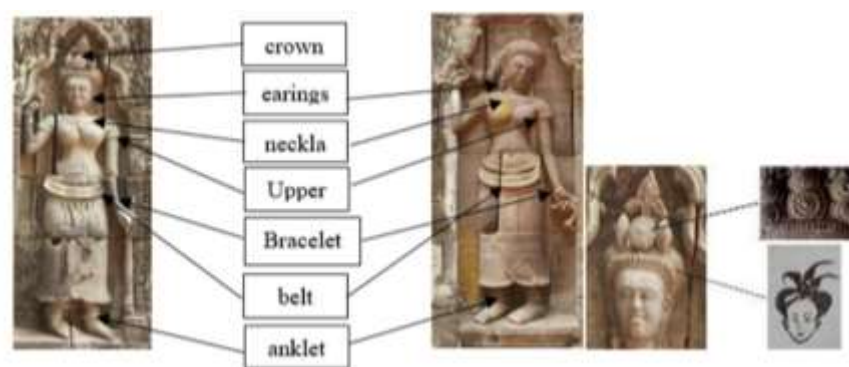


Figure 7: Headdresses of Apsara, Vat Phou, Champasak, Lao PDR
Yuwadee Ponsiri (2020)

From the study of sandstone carving of people, the gestures, expressions, and the clothing of the sculptures indicate that they are related to Indian and Khmer arts. Other gods which are widely respected--Indra, Parvati, Apsara, the guardians of the gates--all point to the same conclusion. Apart from the carving, which showcases artistic beauty and implies beliefs about the gods, it also gives us some hints that Brahmin's belief has always been adjusting itself. The reason is that most of its teachings are in the form of literature which requires interpretation by people from different eras. And because religion is a way of life--a relationship between humans and goddesses, the bond is unbreakable. Yet, it changes over time, either because of the changed context, eras, or influence by the humans who have a hand in creating the credibility of gods in the heavens so that they are worthy of being worshiped. For instance, the teaching of Shaivism which talks about the five truths: suffering, cause of suffering, ways to end sufferings, Yoga, and regulations that are to be followed in order to end the suffering. Such teaching has spread to today's Champasak Province in Lao PDR. In the same light, beliefs found in the Book of Natya Shastra believe that the dances of Shiva will bestow fortune or cast the curse upon humans. Yet, symbolically, the dance simply expresses stories through beautifully crafted postures. Therefore, studying the carving of people as well as their forms and beliefs is worth the while.

RESEARCH CONCLUSION

Indian culture is a strong cultural group that had been passed on and exchanged through the migrations. From the evidences of the carvings of people with stories, the beliefs that exist within the carvings were influenced by the Indian and Khmer arts. The beliefs were influenced by Bhramanism-Hinduism and can be categorized into four following groups:

1) Shaivism group. The posture found in the Book of Natya Shastra is the sitting posture, which is similar to the 22nd and the 85th postures of the Shiva dance. According to the choreographic meaning of the posture, it is a gesture imitating human gestures which gives a feeling of peace and fulfillment called Shanti (a peaceful emotion) that is reflected through a determined emotion. If analyzed by the Semiology Theory, finding the meaning from the carving of Shiva holding Aksa Mala and Mala Mahayogi Dakshinamurthy, which means the posture that gives blessings on levels of gods, the protector. The goddess Uma Devi means the one who helps support the power of Shiva, a loving and loyal wife to her husband.

2) Vaishnavism group. The postures found in the Book of Natya Shastra are flying and fighting postures, which is similar to the 94th, 10th, 73rd, 59th, 13th, 70th, 31st, 43rd, 75th, 66th, and 57th Shiva dance. These postures derived from the imitation of the bravery and determination. According to the semiology theory, Krishna (Vishnu's avatar) means warrior, fighter, who has immense strength with the hope for the victory wars, and bravery. The executive leader, an athlete. Courage is a leader, executive, athlete. As for the Narayana avatar, (Vishnu avatar), it means a king with wisdom in decision-making, power, and courage, as well as a responsible leader.

3) Secondary gods group. The posture found in the Book of Natya Shastra is the sitting posture which is similar to the 61st and 86th Shiva dance. Analyzed through the semiology theory, Indra during the Vedic era was the protector of the sky, which provide the imexplicit meaning of abundance. As for the Indra during the Epic Period, he was the protection of the main sanctuary, in other words, the helper of people who are in trouble.

4) The servant of the gods (servant group). The posture found in the Book of Natya Shastra is the standing posture which is similar to the 5th, 67th, and the 97th sitting posture. Analyzed through the semiology theory, Apsara was the servant of Indra, the Door Guardian was the protector of the Prasada, and the hermit was the one who meditates and followed the gods. The three people mentioned were like the followers and soldiers who were protecting the land and the hermit was the representative of the religion.

In conclusion, the postures that exists in important locations of the prasadas were related to 20 dance postures of Shiva, out of the 108 dance postures. These postures can be applied as the main postures in the performance by connection the detail of the art elements, the proportion, the sizes, and the shapes, which can create a perfect balance and relationship.

RESEARCH BENEFITS

The study of the carvings of people from the aspects of the dance performance, is one direction that can be used as a concept in creating the different types of dance performances. However, the main factors and conditions that will lead to the creative process with principles and the aesthetics in the performance is decoding the meanings of the symbols and interpreting those meanings into dance postures in the following systematic and benefitting ways:

1. The social and national aspects. This research help us to understand the influence of religion on the construction of this Khmer temple, as well as the value worth preserving. Additionally, this topic can lead to additional study on other topics, such as the study of the different patterns found in Vat Phou temple, the study of the paintings of animals found in Vat Phou, etc.
2. Supporting cultural tourism and the arts and performances exchange by opening up the opportunities for the students of Champasak University to exchange the art of dancing with the Department of World Heritage in the Vat Phou Festival that is being held every year.
3. The aesthetic, or the beauty from the dacne performance can help clean the human souls and help them to be more creative and presenting the good things, the knowledge, and the beauty to the audience and help develop themselves to be better.

RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

1. Both public and private units should encourage people to create more contemporary dancing arts.
2. The communities within the vicinity of Vat Phou should be encouraged to exchange or pass on their arts and culture to the people in the community so that they can use the arts to welcome distinguished guests who visit the country.
3. There should be more encouragement for the people to conduct further study on the patterns discovered at Vat Phou before using it to recreate performances or products that signify Vat Phou.

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Interview

Saengprachan, A. Personal Interview, May 9, 2019.