

Doctoral dissertation (PhD)

Borbála Száva

**Costumes Carved in Stone in Banteay Srei**  
An Analysis of the Figural Depictions at a Tenth-Century Shaiva Sanctuary

Consultant: Prof. Dr. Gábor Vargyas (DSc)

University of Pécs, Faculty of Humanities  
Interdisciplinary Doctoral School  
*European Ethnology - Cultural Anthropology Doctoral Programme*

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Pediment of the third eastern gopura, Banteay Srei, depicting a scene of the Abduction of Tilottama. MG 18913.

# 1. FOREWORD

## 1.1. Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to express my gratitude to my consultant, Gábor Vargyas, whose enthusiasm and support have given me sustenance ever since I first approached him with my application to join the doctoral programme. With his patient advice, professional guidance and indefatigable attention, he set a personal example that far exceeded the duties of a consultant, and thereby contributed immensely to the successful outcome of my research.

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I am beholden to Kérya Chau Sun, director of the APSARA National Authority, for her devoted interest in my work, for always being there to assist me whenever I needed to obtain special permits for my research, and for facilitating the support of the team at APSARA.

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I owe a major debt of thanks to János Jelen, who first fired my interest in the culture of Angkor, when I was an undergraduate at university. He directed my attention towards the remarkable depictions of Khmer costumes, and their rich potential as a subject

of investigation, which put me firmly on the path towards a lifelong commitment to the topic.

At the end of a lengthy consultation with Professor Claude Jacques, dealing with the female attire visible on the walls of Angkor Wat, I asked him what he thought about an otherwise incidental problem that was connected to my research at the time: a pediment from Banteay Srei, now held in Paris, features figures whose attire I was unable to interpret and fit logically into the system I had devised for the other clothing items visible on the sanctuary walls. After Professor Jacques had listened to my explanation, he suggested I should write my doctoral dissertation on this topic, for he had never previously come across this question, and an iconographic examination of the attire at Banteay Srei had never been undertaken before. I therefore owe it to Claude Jacques's recommendation and approval that I, albeit uncertainly at first, modified my intended topic and embarked on my investigation of Banteay Srei. It is with gratitude and respect that I shall always cherish my memories of Professor Jacques.

From my very first meeting with Professor Charu Smita Gupta, she clearly expressed to me her heartfelt and sincere support, and during our many consultations and discussions she never failed to exert her strict criticism in pointing me in the right direction, and giving me precious advice concerning the compilation of my catalogue. I would like to thank Professor Gupta for her unending encouragement and for her meticulous and insightful evaluation of my work.

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Despite the fact that Dr Hedwige Miltzer O'Naghten was still adding the finishing touches to her own dissertation at the time, she nevertheless went out of her way to ensure that the days I spent at the EFEO library in Siem Reap were as fruitful as possible. To help me further with my research, Dr Miltzer O'Naghten also kindly allowed me to make use of her own photographs, for which I am immensely thankful.

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The first special research permit I obtained to work in Angkor was organised on my behalf by Mihály Rózsa. His friendly coaxing and methodological advice were priceless when it came to making progress with the composition of my dissertation. Mihály, sadly, is no longer around to see the final result, but I am happy that this paper will stand as an everlasting memorial to our friendship.

The drawings accompanying my dissertation were brilliantly executed by Anna Bakonyi, whom I thank wholeheartedly.

I would like to thank Steve Kane for his masterful translation of my paper into English.

It is especially important for me to highlight my Khmer colleagues, Prum Sopheak and Phouy Savoet, whom – I am delighted to add – I can now count among my friends. They unselfishly supported me in my work, often stretching beyond the call of duty. Without their help, I would never have found my way to the more remote and isolated sites that constitute part of my research. Thanks to their expert advice and our open conversations, I managed to expand the scope of my questions as a researcher and to broaden my perspective. It is due to their efforts that I now feel perfectly “at home” in Angkor, in every possible sense, and I will be eternally grateful to them for this.

The encouraging help of my friends and fellow researchers, Judit Bagi, Vera Brittig, Ildikó Gyöngyvér Sárközi and Veronika Szabó, often arrived at the point when I most needed some new momentum to drive my work forward. Their strength of personality, their human conduct and their enduring dedication to their own work set an example from which I take strength and courage. Over the last few years, including the months I spent in Cambodia, in addition to my PhD consultant, Vera Brittig has always been on hand with ideas and methodological suggestions, helping me while I conducted my surveys, drew up my documentation, processed my findings and composed my draft text, and offering me her unconditional support as an experienced expert and as a friend. Besides Gábor Vargyas and the members of my family, Vera has played the most instrumental role in ensuring that I brought my dissertation paper to full fruition.

The greatest amount of help and support I received was from my family. The memory of the life’s path and personality of my grandfather, István Száva, is still a source of determination in my work, an influence that will never fade.

I am humbly and inexpressibly grateful to my two darling daughters, Júlia Varga and Sára Varga, who endured the time I spent away from them with incredible patience and understanding, never making it harder than it already was for me – as a parent – to be

so far away for so long. Through all the inconveniences and hardships they suffered during the years I spent conducting my research and writing my paper, my girls were perfect models of cooperation. While I was working on my dissertation, they supported me with advice and with loving care, and they even helped to check my spelling! I cannot thank them enough!

My parents, Irén Ráczkevi and Pál Száva, did more for me than anyone could hope for when following their own dreams and realising their own plans. Not only did they provide the perfect background environment for my life and that of my children, they also helped me overcome the occasional hard patches in my research with invaluable architectural and art historical methodological advice. I would like to thank my mother for her translations of the French texts and for helping me out on so many occasions with difficulties in my Hungarian text. I thank my father for his insight into the spatial structure of the buildings and into my examination of the floor plan arrangement of the site, which contributed greatly to my interpretation of the data.

I dedicate my dissertation to them.



## 1.2. Transcriptions and Usage of Sanskrit and Khmer Names and Phrases

In general, names and phrases of Sanskrit or Khmer origin (as well as Indonesian and Vietnamese place names) are transcribed in this paper in accordance with the conventions established by Claude Jacques<sup>1</sup> and Ralph T. H. Griffiths, which are widely accepted by other authors dealing with Angkorian art and history.<sup>2</sup> In direct quotations and in the titles of cited works, however, I have not altered the respective authors' spelling, if different from the conventional form. Japanese words are transcribed using the Hepburn system. In the catalogue, the types of clothing are named in English, Sanskrit and Khmer. The Sanskrit expressions have been taken from the *Encyclopaedia of Indian Iconography* by Ramachandra Rao<sup>3</sup> and from the *Encyclopaedia of Hindu Iconography: Early Medieval* by Raju Kalidos.<sup>4</sup> The Khmer expressions have been given in accordance with my local research, based on the names used for classical dance costumes today.

Scientific opinion is split over which expressions to use for buildings erected to serve a ritual function. Holy sites consisting of several complexes of buildings are referred to in this paper as “temples”. The terms “sanctuary” and “sanctuary tower” refer to a particular building within the temple, and are synonymous with one another. The term “enclosure” is used in every case, regardless of the condition that exists at the monument today, for the rectangular area originally surrounded by an enclosure wall, interspersed with gate structures or other types of pavilions.

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques 1997, 1999, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Griffiths, R. T. H. 1870.

<sup>3</sup> Rao 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Kalidos 2006.

### 1.3. Inventory Abbreviations Used in this Paper

#### *Building inventory numbers:*

- IK** (Inventaire Khmer) - LAJONQUIÈRE, E. Lunet de. 1902–11.  
Inventaire descriptif des monuments du Cambodge<sup>5</sup>. Paris
- CISARC** Carte Interactive des Sites Archéologiques Khmers

#### *Carved stone inscription inventory numbers:*

- K** (Numéro d’Inscription khmère) - CŒDES, George 1937–66.  
Inscriptions du Cambodge<sup>6</sup>, Hanoi, Paris
- Ka** New catalogue, Corpus of Khmer Inscriptions<sup>7</sup>(CKI)  
inventory numbers

#### *Artefact inventory numbers:*

- MCSDN** Museum of Cham Sculpture Da Nang
- MG** Musée national des arts asiatiques – Guimet (Musée Guimet)
- MM** Metropolitan Museum of Art
- NMPP** National Museum Phnom Penh. The catalogue of museum holdings includes both the old inventory numbers (with the names B. Groslier and/or Boisselier) and those used today, to facilitate identification of items referenced in the earlier literature. In this paper, where possible, I have included all the inventory numbers.

### 1.4. Other Abbreviations Used in this Paper

- AFAO** Association Française des Amis de l’Orient
- APSARA** Authority for the Protection of the Site and Management of the Region of Angkor
- CA** Conservation d’Angkor<sup>8</sup>, Siem Reap
- EFEO** École d’Extrême-Orient<sup>9</sup>, Paris
- BEFEO** Bulletin de l’École française d’Extrême-Orient<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *Descriptive inventory of the monuments of Cambodia.*

<sup>6</sup> *Cambodian inscriptions.*

<sup>7</sup> <http://sealang.net/classic/>

<sup>8</sup> The artefact warehouse and restoration base established by the French School of Asian Studies (EFEO) in 1907 currently functions as a public collection with over 5000 sculptures and bas-reliefs from buildings in Angkor; a substantial part of the restoration of artefacts is undertaken here.

<sup>9</sup> *French School of Asian Studies.*

<sup>10</sup> *Bulletin of the French School of Asian Studies, 1901–*

*“The proportions of Banteay Srei remain unexplained and always amaze – it is a sort of ‘caprice’, where the exquisite and abundant detail is more impressive than the mass. And while it is generally true that the outlying sanctuaries never attain the grandeur of the capital temples, and that the Khmer, used to seeing the Meru in a pyramid, the ocean in a moat and chains of mountains in the retaining walls, readily accepted small things for large – here, nevertheless, all the usual devices are distorted, with gopuras the usual thickness of a large wall and minuscule openings where the priest could not enter but by crawling.”* (Maurice Glaize 1944. A Guide to the Angkor Monuments)

## 1.5 Introduction

The objective of my doctoral dissertation was to conduct a comparative iconographic analysis of the types of clothing, jewellery (and other adornments) and hairstyles worn by the figures depicted on the carvings (bas-reliefs and statues) of Banteay Srei, a temple erected in honour of *Shiva* in the Angkor region in the tenth century, during the flourishing Khmer Empire. My primary aim was to find explanations for the similarities and differences that manifest themselves in the sculpted attire. In my paper I take into account the previous findings of research into the temple, which was rediscovered in 1914 and restored by 1936; I devote particular attention to the debate surrounding the date when the temple was founded and the date(s) of its possible reconstruction(s). The history of Banteay Srei and its unique place in Angkorian architectural and art history constitute a subject that has occupied scholarly opinion since the 1920s. In 1926, not long after the temple was discovered by European explorers, the first monograph on the subject appeared in print, bringing together all the knowledge to date in a volume entitled *Le Temple d’Içvarapura*,<sup>11</sup> by Louis Finot, Henri Parmentier and Victor Goloubew; until now, no other summary work on the site had been published. Some outstanding researchers in a number of different scientific fields have dealt with the carved decorations of the temple complex, examining them according to different criteria. The costumes depicted were first analysed by Jean Boisselier, who produced detailed descriptions of the different attire, which he then classified into separate types. Despite the extraordinary thoroughness of his research, he did not focus on every tiny detail of the figures’ clothing and adornments; technical obstacles played a part in this, of course, and due to the fact that he examined the

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<sup>11</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926.

attire according to criteria of form, he did not fully investigate the iconographic and semantic connections.

In early Angkorian temples, within each individual site, the human figures depicted on the walls were shown wearing more or less identical clothing; in Banteay Srei, however, there were several substantially different types of clothing (and other aspects of attire) in evidence in the carvings – this change formed the starting point of my investigation. Having directly observed the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei, which largely confirmed the system of categories first established by Jean Boisselier, I later saw the female figures on the beautiful pediment from Banteay Srei which is now in the Musée Guimet in Paris, and realised that their garments could not be easily sorted into any of Boisselier's categories; this prompted me to look for further clarification. Professor Claude Jacques drew my attention to the fact that this question had not yet been formally explored. I therefore decided to concentrate my research on the temple complex at Banteay Srei.

My research started off from my unresolved iconographic and semantic questions. In order to interpret the costumes visible in the bas-reliefs, I considered it necessary to examine them against their cultural and religious background, from their spatial architectural position, and within the narrative context. I analysed how the depicted themes developed, the traditions they were based on, the way they were handed down and transformed from age to age and from place to place, and how they influenced each other. I was interested in the extent to which form and content altered in parallel with one another, and the ways in which old forms acquired new meaning, and vice versa. Questions also arose in connection with the mutual influence between different cultures, and with regard to different forms of archaism. In this case, when we are examining the depictions within the different parts of a building, in particular those in “fixed” positions on the walls, it is especially important to note where on the building a given subject is depicted (which part of the building, which direction it faces, etc.), and where it is located in comparison with depictions of other (related) subjects. An iconographic examination also cannot ignore the question of the functionality of the depictions in question, which may also reveal the underlying “artistic criteria”, if such a term can be applied in this instance. At Banteay Srei, and Angkor in general, it is extremely important to find out which written tradition from India was followed when the depictions were created. Iconographic analytical methods are naturally inseparable from the iconology of the artworks, for they can be classified according to their style (even though East Asian art needs to be interpreted

according to a different conceptual system to that of Western art), while their creation can be placed both in their historical context and in a chronological system.

One of the most important objectives of my research, besides coming up with further clarification of the question of dating, was to decipher what the differences among the types of attire could mean. Identifying the motifs visible in the clothing and adornments, and sorting them into a catalogue, enabled me to compare the costumes both in isolation and as worn by the figures in the compositions, and to examine the connections between them and their functions as markers within the mythological hierarchical system; this even facilitated a more precise identification of certain characters. Among the starting points for my investigations were analyses based on the related sciences of iconography and iconology. In most instances, the Hindu iconographic rules that were followed when the artworks at Banteay Srei were produced have been identified; on the basis of these rules, almost all of the figures who feature in the depictions have also been identified; nevertheless, the task is not over yet, and there is still abundant potential for further clarification. Iconology interprets each artwork as a symbol of a particular world outlook, and attempts to unveil its spatial, historical and ritual context. According to Panofsky, in order to be able to interpret a given artwork, one must know the circumstances under which it was created, that is, the context in which it was understood at the time it was made.<sup>12</sup> The totality of a Hindu temple does not consist solely of its spatial and formal appearance, its “decoration”. Its design was determined strictly in accordance with the rules set forth in religious texts, and further influenced by the cultural conventions in force in the region in question, as well as existing precedents, and the personal, political and/or economic interests and preferences of the founding group or individual. When conducting an analysis of the form and content of artworks, therefore, it is just as important to examine the geographical and historical context under which they were created as it is to take account of the factors known from the written sources, such as surviving inscriptions, and information about the creator. The collation of the historical data is always an arbitrary process, which takes place within a pre-defined and scientifically grounded system. A given object or group of objects can be used as a source material in a multi-layered way. This is particularly true when the objects in question are visual depictions. Since Francis Haskell<sup>13</sup> proposed that pictorial artworks are just as valuable as written sources in terms of

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<sup>12</sup> Panofsky 1955, 38.

<sup>13</sup> Haskell, Francis 1993. *History and Its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past*. Yale University Press, London.

their usefulness to historical research, this question has once more become a topic of scholarly debate. The system available to us for decoding written sources does indeed seem more sophisticated, but this does not mean that systems of similar rigour cannot be developed for other types of sources, in particular when it comes to analysing images.

The depictions in the surviving bas-reliefs on the walls of buildings make up a significant body of source materials for researchers, for alongside an analysis of the written sources and the architectural elements, it is through pictorial evidence that we can reconstruct the spiritual and cultural background that existed when the monuments of Angkor were constructed. In my opinion, among the archaeological and art historical studies that can be conducted *in situ*, the evaluation, systemisation and interpretation of the countless statues and bas-reliefs that can be found at the buildings may prove of crucial importance. A stylistic comparison of the attire depicted in the carvings may provide information with which the works can be dated. A comparison of the different costumes worn by figures within the same composition may give us clues to the system of symbols used in the depictions to distinguish between characters of different rank, be they secular or mythical. Close examination of the attire worn by certain individuals when compared with others around them may even help us to pinpoint their identity. The costumes depicted in the sculptures may also lead to tentative reconstructions of the actual clothing and jewellery worn at the time. To quote Michael W. Meister's thoughts on research into Indian art history, "*Only a few recent studies have placed temples into place-and-time-specific contexts, exploring the sociology of their use. That such use changes over time, and that the use and redefinition of monuments (as of symbolic forms) does require "deconstruction", is a challenge for the present generation of scholars. The temple's functions as a soteriological tool still demand a variety of ethnographic as well as art-historical explications.*"<sup>14</sup>

During my examination of the costumes carved in stone, I have placed particular emphasis on using knowledge pertaining to ethnography, the history of costume and the history of technology, three areas that have hitherto received remarkably little attention from researchers. With regard to the purported connection between Angkorian clothing and what is today regarded as traditional Khmer costume, the majority of assertions are merely hypothetical, and although the similarities are striking, there is as yet no firm evidence to confirm that modern attire has its roots in Angkor. However, ethnographic observations of

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<sup>14</sup> Meister 1990, 395.

modern-day garments make it easier to describe the items of clothing visible in the depictions and to reconstruct how they may have been produced. Textiles are usually functional items, and only rarely have ornamentation as their primary aim. Form, colour, pattern, thickness, material composition and any visible traces of how they were made are all – separately and jointly – imbued with meaning connected to the function of the clothing in traditional textile culture. A similar role is played by hairstyles, jewellery and other adornments. A precise analysis of the attire worn by the figures depicted in the bas-reliefs, involving the systematic classification of the clothing and jewellery and meticulous observation of any interconnections, is therefore indispensable for uncovering the meanings and symbols contained in the depictions, and can also prove useful when attempting to date the buildings and other material relics.

The statues and bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei have been frequently photographed, and the scientific institution that carried out the restoration of the temple, the *École française d'Extrême-Orient*<sup>15</sup>, has a rich collection of detailed drawings, photographs and written records in its archives. The most recent archaeological survey carried out at the site took place between 2002 and 2005, and the documentation of this survey includes descriptions, illustrated with photographs, of the pediments and other architectural details which were not restored to their original location, but which are now held in an open-air warehouse.<sup>16</sup> Despite this wealth of information, I did not have a database at my disposal with which I could have properly examined all the figural depictions at the site.

As a result of my research I have produced a descriptive catalogue that encompasses every single bas-relief and statues found at Banteay Srei, containing all details pertaining to the costumes (clothing, hair, jewellery and other adornments) worn by the figures in the depictions. This is the first database of its kind dealing with an Angkorian monument.

During my field work at Banteay Srei, carried out between 2013 and 2014 and lasting six months in total, I surveyed all the human figures visible *in situ* at the temple complex, numbering more than 500 in all, recording the details both photographically and in precise written descriptions. Having first divided the figures into male and female groups, I sorted the clothing, jewellery and hairstyles into different categories, which formed the basis of my database; I then added to the database not only the figures from the artworks observed *in situ*, but also those from other sculptures from Banteay Srei, both

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<sup>15</sup> French School of Asian Studies. Hereafter “EFEO”.

<sup>16</sup> *Banteay Srei Conservation Project Pediment Inventory*. 2002–2005.

bas-reliefs and in-the-round statues, which are presently in public collections. I compared the types of attire depicted in Banteay Srei with those visible in depictions from other temples built in the tenth or early eleventh century, which I also visited in person.

In addition to my own field work, I utilised all the available sources dealing with the archaeological excavations at Banteay Srei and with its architectural and artistic analysis, including the hand-written work diaries maintained by the builders and art historians engaged in the restoration of the site (*Journal de Fouilles. Région d'Angkor, Cambodge. 1909–1955*). In order to analyse the carvings that are now missing from the temple complex (as well as those that are now damaged), I relied on the archive photographs held by the EFEO in Paris.

All our knowledge about Banteay Srei, as excavated and analysed over the last hundred years by representatives of many different disciplines, could be refined and augmented through analysis of the new database and from the conclusions that I could draw from it. The majority of the new findings concern iconographic and semantic aspects.

Further valuable results were achieved by comparing Banteay Srei with other, contemporaneous sanctuaries, and with Indian parallels. I came up with some convincing evidence in support of the idea – hitherto reliant only on epigraphic research – that the temple was connected with the *Pashupata* school of Shaivism. The link with the *Pashupata* movement opens up new potential directions for research into Banteay Srei, and into the other monuments from the same period. The presence of the *Pashupata* school, unveiled in the present paper, forms the subject of my planned future research.

## 1.6. Structure of the Paper

In the first half of the paper I present an overview of all the historical, epigraphic, religious historical, architectural and art historical knowledge that has accumulated in connection with Banteay Srei over the last ninety years. Chapter 2 briefly summarises the history of the Angkor Empire and the scientific results produced so far during investigations into Angkor in general, and Banteay Srei in particular.

In chapter 3, I present the arrangement of the sanctuary area and the different buildings and building types. Here I also delineate the questions concerning the history of construction at the temple, the functions of particular buildings, and the date – subjects that have occupied scholars dealing with Banteay Srei for several decades.



In chapter 4, I provide a detailed presentation of the historical data uncovered so far in relation to when the temple was built, and discuss problematic issues regarding its founding and the possibility of later extensions. Based on the available written sources and on classification according to art historical style, a relative chronology of when the different sanctuaries and other buildings of Angkor were constructed can undoubtedly be put together, but due to periodic conversions and reconstructions, it is often difficult to determine when a given building was originally founded. Our knowledge in this regard is not universally helped by the inscriptions that commemorate such subsequent construction work; they appear only infrequently, and are sometimes entirely absent, even from such important sites as Angkor Wat. At Banteay Srei, by contrast, it is precisely the relative profusion of extant inscriptions that causes problems for researchers, for the dates given in them are up to several centuries apart from each other, presumably because the temple was reconstructed more than once. According to the available written sources, Banteay Srei was founded in 967 CE, so from a historical perspective, the temple clearly fits into the chronological system of Angkorian monuments. However, assuming that the building was indeed converted during its history, perhaps on several occasions, then our investigation must start out from the fact that the bas-reliefs presently visible on the walls of the complex cannot be proven to originate from the tenth century, neither stylistically nor iconographically. This implies that we may have been examining the carvings from the “wrong place” within the accepted system of stylistic evolution.

Eleven stone-carved inscriptions have been discovered at Banteay Srei, written in Khmer and/or Sanskrit. A few of these inscriptions also feature dates, although they refer to different periods of construction, separated by centuries. In chapter 5, I describe how epigraphic and historical research undertaken since the first monograph on Banteay Srei was published in 1926 has interpreted these inscriptions, and outline the hypotheses that have been put forward concerning the dates when Banteay Srei was built and possibly rebuilt. Thanks to the inscriptions, we know the name of the founder of the sanctuary, and several family members. Yajnavaraha was a high priest in the court of Rajendravarman II (944–968), and he was also the tutor and Guru of the ruler’s successor, Jayavarman V (968–c.1000). The latter king granted Yajnavaraha permission to found a temple in Ishvarapura, located relatively far from the capital city of the day.

Written relics occasionally hint at how cultured and knowledgeable Yajnavaraha was, at the donations made by his siblings and at the buildings they initiated, yet we cannot be sure which branch of Hinduism the high priest followed, nor do we have precise

information concerning the architectural and artistic rules that were adhered to when the temple complex was designed. In chapter 6, I explain how, despite the proven presence of architectural rules in the earliest written sources from India, and in spite of the fact that sets of rules have survived from many different periods of Hindu religious literature, it is still difficult to determine precisely which text was referred to during the design of any given temple, including those located in present-day India. The particular rulebooks used when Banteay Srei was created have not yet been identified, although it is beyond a doubt that regulations from India were applied, as demonstrated by the floor plans and by the compositions of the decorations adorning the walls of the buildings. The spatial arrangement and architectural proportions in evidence at Banteay Srei indicate that classical models were followed. In view of the fact that previous researchers into Angkorian art have, based on written sources and architectural characteristics, concluded that the *Manasara* texts must have been known within the royal court in the tenth century, I began my own examinations by comparing the attire worn by the different figures in the bas-reliefs with the requirements specified by these regulations.

In the tenth century, teachers of several different religious movements were in attendance at the royal court in Angkor, as proven convincingly by the written sources. In chapter 7, I go through the list of names of those members of the royal household who could have influenced the religious leanings of the monarchs, Rajendravarman II and Jayavarman V. There are no written sources to prove which form of Hinduism was practised by the designers of Banteay Srei, but in the late 1930s, based on epigraphic analysis, specifically the use of certain words in the inscriptions, George Cœdès conjectured that the people responsible for the design were probably familiar with the texts of the *Pashupata* school. Despite the relatively early publication of these epigraphic findings, nobody since then has looked into the possibility that signs of the architectural and artistic traditions of *Pashupata* Shaivism may be present at Banteay Srei. During my research, I compared the subject matter of the narrative reliefs at Banteay Srei with parallels from India, and by analysing their content, I attempted to prove that the principles of the *Pashupata* school are indeed present at Banteay Srei. I return to this subject in chapter 17 of the paper.

In chapter 8, I discuss the style periods of Angkorian art, in particular the artistic style of Banteay Srei. In addition to the chronological systemisation of Angkorian architectural history, the history of art in the region is also divided into a series of consecutive style periods. Within the chronological and evolutionary system of style

periods devised by art historians, Banteay Srei is regarded both as an independent style category and as an independent style period, for apart from a few ruined temples whose decorative motifs are largely similar (such as Prasat Sralao, Neam Rup, and the small, otherwise nameless temple behind the North Khleang), this style category only includes the buildings that form the subject of this study.<sup>17</sup> According to the motif-based stylistic classification devised by Gilberte de Coral-Rémusat and Philippe Stern, and later refined by Jean Boisselier<sup>18</sup>, Pierre Dupont and Mireille Bénisti, the Banteay Srei style was around for a few decades in the mid-tenth century. In my paper, I argue that, although the artistic styles are unquestionably linked to particular historical periods, and can therefore be dated accordingly, the fact that they come after each other in consecutive order does not necessarily mean that their characteristic features have to be interpreted as the result of consequential, continuous development.

Chapter 9 not only deals in general with the costumes of Angkor, but also covers their modern-day parallels and the possibility that items of attire have been handed down through the generations. The diversity in the costumes worn by the sculpted figures of Angkor was first pointed out in a 1921 study by George Groslier, who devoted great attention to presenting the figures in both words and pictures. The costumes were first examined using scientific methods in the 1950s by Jean Boisselier and his circle,<sup>19</sup> albeit only as components of the artistic composition, that is, as features that could assist them in determining the style periods. The historical change in Angkorian costume can therefore be studied in detail in the standard texts describing the historical development of Khmer art, although these summaries focus mainly on the way the clothes, adornments and hairstyles are arranged and worn. They deal hardly at all with the material of the items of attire, or how they were made. At several points in their examination of the development of costume, the Indian influence is alluded to, although little is said about where the garments originated from. When art historical research recommenced after 1985, much of it was concerned with clarifying the existing style categories. Gillian Green, in her

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<sup>17</sup> Based on the results of Martin Polkinghorne's comparative study of the Angkor lintels, the following can also be classified within the Banteay Srei style: Beng Kong (IK523), Wat Cedei (IK424), Kôk (IK462), Kralanh (IK388), Trapeang Sange (IK728) and Western Prasat Top, also called monument 486 within the walls of Angkor Thom (IK375). Polkinghorne 2007b, 28. The temples and sanctuaries listed are in an extremely ruinous state and the reliefs decorating the walls are to a large extent destroyed. The few extant human figures on the lintels wear the characteristic attire of the Guardians of the Directions traditionally seen in Banteay Srei. The low number of carvings precludes the possibility of an actual comparative analysis, so in the present paper and catalogue I have declined to analyse the other sanctuaries listed above.

<sup>18</sup> Boisselier 1955, 41.

<sup>19</sup> Boisselier 1955.

comprehensive monograph on textiles (*Traditional Textiles of Cambodia. Cultural Threads and Material Heritage*, Bangkok, 2003), was among the first to examine the so-called historical textiles visible in the bas-reliefs, although her attention concentrated less on the clothing and more on the patterns in the materials used for curtains, window coverings, parasols, saddle covers, and so on. Thanks to her work, we now know substantially more about the possible historical origins of the textile-producing traditions still followed in Cambodia today, although there is still copious room for further research into this area. Based on my own observations, I have supplemented Green's results in order to present the types of modern-day clothing that might conceivably have originated in Angkor.

Chapter 10 contains a description and analysis of the categories I established in order to compile the database containing the items of attire worn by figures depicted in Banteay Srei. The general surveys of the buildings at Angkor carried out by Japanese experts who have participated in monument restoration work in Cambodia since 1994 extend to details of the statues and bas-reliefs. Both the JSA (*Japanese Government Team for Safeguarding Angkor*) and the Sophia University of Tokyo (*Sophia Asia Center for Research and Human Development*) have carried out detailed data surveys and classifications at a number of different sites in Angkor. The surveys have also been recorded, among other ways, in the form of inventories.<sup>20</sup>

The Japanese method – which is indisputably extremely valuable due to its extraordinary thoroughness and its unsurpassed attention to detail – classifies the figures only according to their formal characteristics. This method is suitable for handling and analysing large quantities of data. Comparing the data in the registers of formal characteristics with the definitions of style periods previously established by art historians may also serve as the basis for research into the history of costume, which may help to clarify our knowledge about Angkorian social structures. My own method of cataloguing largely follows the example of the Japanese registers, except that it aims to interpret the categories (determined on the basis of purely formal observations) in terms of their content. During the course of my research, it proved necessary to carry out a comparative analysis of the motifs related to the items of attire visible on the figural carvings.

The catalogue of the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei comprises data on almost 500 figural depictions (human figures and mythological beings who are wearing visible items of clothing, jewellery and headdresses), which are still *in situ* at the temple complex. In

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<sup>20</sup> Examples being: Asai 1992, 70–94 and Park-Mizuno-Sunakawa 2001, 70–94.

addition, it includes the figures from nineteen more pediments and smaller architectural decorations that are now in museum collections (Musée Guimet, Paris, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the National Museum in Phnom Penh). My descriptions of a few sculptures were based on archive images in the photographic collection of the EFEO, either because the elements were so high up on the tower summits as to be indecipherable from ground level, or because significant details have suffered destruction since the 1920s, when the documentary photos were taken. I was also forced to rely on photographic records in the case of the sculptures that disappeared from the collection of the National Museum in Phnom Penh during the troubled 1970s and 1980s. I evaluated a few figural depictions that survive only fragmentarily in different public collections, as well as those on the statues-in-the-round that were recovered from the temple. The catalogue also includes a few statues whose origin is not known for sure, but which, as far as I am concerned, can almost certainly be classified among the artworks of Banteay Srei, by virtue of their costumes and their style. Bas-reliefs that survive on certain buildings that are contemporaneous with Banteay Srei are listed at the very end of the catalogue, with their inclusion justified by the similar attire visible in them. Together with the latter group, the catalogue summarises data for almost 550 figures in all.

The noticeable differences in the costumes visible on the walls of Banteay Srei were remarked upon by Boisselier in his summary work of 1955, but nobody to date has come up with a satisfactory explanation for this phenomenon. My observations tally with the findings of my predecessors, in that bas-reliefs featuring different types of attire in the same composition do not appear elsewhere in Angkor until a good century or so after 967 CE, with the earliest examples found in Baphuon. Is Banteay Srei a precursor of this development? Or is it possible that certain bas-relief decorations were made at a later period of the temple's history, during the eleventh century or even later? My questions pertaining to the Banteay Srei style as an independent artistic category, to its possible parallels and to its dating, are presented in chapter 11.

Some of the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei can be described as narrative reliefs, because of their compositions. Uniquely among tenth-century Angkorian temples, Banteay Srei features a bas-relief in which two consecutive scenes from the same narrative are depicted within a single composition. In chapter 12, I explain the criteria I used to distinguish between narrative reliefs, iconic reliefs, and other carvings that serve a different, primarily decorative function. I also touch upon the theory expounded by Éric Bourdonneau and Ly Boreth, who both perceived ways of pairing up the narrative

depictions on the basis of their content. In my opinion, however, the pairings do not apply to the choice of subject matter among the bas-reliefs in general, and the theory is also refuted when consideration is given to the location of the bas-reliefs within the temple.

Chapter 13 is dedicated to the content and compositional features of the narrative reliefs of Banteay Srei. I present the bas-reliefs in order, starting from the sanctuary towers and moving “from inside to outside” through the enclosures, passing around the individual buildings in accordance with the *Pradakshina* (clockwise circumambulation). At the end of each section I list the Angkorian sanctuaries where thematic parallels can be found. During my analysis of the bas-reliefs, I present the types of attire and jewellery visible in them in accordance with the categories given in my database. I also state how frequently the different types of attire appear, as a proportion of the total.

In chapter 14, I deal with the non-narrative reliefs at Banteay Srei, with my focus on the attire visible in them. The clothes, hairstyles and jewellery worn by the male and female figures flanking the doorways of the sanctuary towers merit special attention, because these figures are representative of the distinctive Banteay Srei style, which is only typical of this complex. I consider it highly likely that the clothing in which the male and female figures are “dressed” reflects the actual clothing people wore at the time – since these figures played a less significant role in the mythology, there were no fixed iconographic stipulations governing their appearance. Garments that are very similar, although there are certain small differences, can be found on the “side characters” that appear in bas-relief compositions on a few monuments from the eleventh century.

In chapter 15 of my paper, I analyse the statues discovered at Banteay Srei, all of which, without exception, are now held in different public collections. During my formal analysis of their attire, I concluded that some of the figures are dressed in a way that is not similar to the style found on the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei, although there are parallels with artworks created in the eleventh or twelfth centuries. Certain statues that are almost certainly from the tenth century show a style of attire that is clearly different from those seen in the depictions at Banteay Srei. In the light of my findings – relying, as my starting point, on the theory proposed by Martin Polkinghorne – I argue that there must have been several stone-carving workshops or schools of art around, not only in the Angkorian court, but also in other spiritual centres. The existence of multiple workshops may explain why some of the statues from Banteay Srei were carved in such a different style from the others.

In chapter 16, I propose a new way of categorising the lintels and pediments that contain – among other types of carving – narrative reliefs, based on their form. Martin

Polkinghorne, in his doctoral dissertation entitled *Makers and Models: Decorative Lintels of Khmer Temples 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries*,<sup>21</sup> defended in 2007, devised his categorisation of lintels originating from the classical Angkorian period on the basis of their compositional differences. He sorted the 34 extant lintels at Banteay Srei into six groups, and hypothesised that these six groups could be associated with six different artists or workshops. In addition to his formal analysis, Polkinghorne also examined how the depictions could be matched into thematic pairs. In my view, the thematic pairing of the bas-reliefs is problematic for several reasons. At the same time, however, the lintels can indeed be separated according to their compositional types, and in my paper I have classified them into seven groups. The pediments can be categorised along similar lines, and in their case I have identified six types.

The conjecture presented in chapter 7, namely that the phraseology of the texts discovered in Banteay Srei indicates an awareness of the teachings of the *Pashupata* school, prompted me to examine the possible influence of *Pashupata* tradition on the depictions. In chapter 17, based on the floor plan and on the thematic arrangement of the depictions, I compared Banteay Srei with the *Pashupata* temples of South India. Most of my information about the Indian parallels was derived from the work by Cathleen Cummings entitled *Decoding a Hindu Temple. Royalty and Religion in the Iconographic Program of the Virupaksha Temple, Pattadakal*,<sup>22</sup> especially the analyses and statistics presented in the volume. Based on the depictions that typically feature in Indian *Pashupata* temples, I tried to find equivalents on the same theme in the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei. The thematic comparison resulted in countless parallels, and also a significant new finding: the identification of a hitherto “unknown female deity”. Based on her location within the temple complex and on iconographic analysis, I have concluded that the goddess visible on the eastern lintel of the so-called south library building is probably *Annapurna*.

Chapter 18 summarises my attempt to find possible analogies between the depictions found at Banteay Srei and those visible on other monuments in Angkor, based on the style and design of the attire. I also deemed it necessary to examine how closely the choice of subject matter in the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei matched or differed from the themes identifiable at other monuments built at approximately the same time. The latter results are presented in chapter 19. The thematic comparison resulted in countless parallels with other Angkorian temples erected in the tenth century or later, although it also raised

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<sup>21</sup> Polkinghorne 2007.b.

<sup>22</sup> Cummings 2014.

some complex questions concerning chronological order, which once again demonstrated the insufficiencies of an approach that is based on an evolutionist view of the artistic styles in Angkor. My thematic comparison also produced a host of themes that are typically found in Angkorian temples from the tenth century, but are absent from Banteay Srei. It is conceivable that the bas-reliefs were destroyed over the centuries, but consideration should also be given to the possibility that such depictions were created when the sanctuary was first built, but later removed or replaced, for some unknown reason, during a later conversion.

I therefore deemed it expedient to examine the carved images on sanctuaries and temples built around the same time as (the original) Banteay Srei, as well as those on buildings believed to have been founded in the eleventh century, in order to determine analogies or discrepancies among the depicted costumes. It should be noted, however, that a comparative analysis between the attire visible at Banteay Srei and that at the sanctuary's contemporaries faces certain difficulties: in the case of the two temples that are proven to have been built close to the same time – East Mebon (952) and Pre Rup (961) – no female statues-in-the-round have survived at all, while the extant bas-reliefs are in such poor condition that they can hardly be used at all for research of this kind. The walls of almost all the contemporaneous buildings analysed are severely damaged, and only a few fragmentary bas-relief depictions survive. For this reason, these buildings are barely suitable for carrying out a significant comparison with Banteay Srei or for revealing any possible differences. Despite all these obstacles, the second part of my catalogue contains an analysis of a few representative examples of the bas-reliefs found at the tenth-century Prasat Sralao, at the small temple behind the North Khleang<sup>23</sup>, at Pre Rup, at East Mebon and at West Prasat Top. Due to their historic connections and their iconographic and art historical parallels, I also carried out comparative analyses on certain depictions at Koh Ker,<sup>24</sup> as well as those from the eleventh-century buildings at Phnom Rung, Ta Muan, Neam Rup and Baphuon.

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<sup>23</sup> When Lajonquière made his inventory, the small temple – like Banteay Srei – was unknown, and therefore was not given an inventory number. Not only its original name is unknown, but also its present-day name, so the description must suffice: “Small temple behind the North Khleang”. CISARC2306.

<sup>24</sup> Koh Ker, formerly named Chok Gargyar or Lingapura, is significantly further away from the sphere of the erstwhile capital, in the area to its south-east, where, from 921 onwards, King Jayavarman IV built his power base, which was capital of the Khmer Empire for just 25 years. The remains of countless mid-tenth-century sanctuaries and other buildings can still be found around the large, rectangular reservoir, and several large statues and meticulously carved, though generally extremely worn reliefs have been recovered from the area; an analysis of these stone carvings has led to the identification of an independent Koh Ker style of sculpture and clothing type. The majority of sculptures from here depict male figures or figures in men's clothing, which are worth comparing with works done in the Banteay Srei style.



The temple mountain at Ta Keo, erected during the rule of Jayavarman V, around the time as Banteay Srei was under construction, was probably intended as a state temple, although it was never completed. Hardly any decorative carvings can be seen on its walls, so a comparative iconographic or stylistic analysis of the building, as a contemporary of Banteay Srei, is pretty much out of the question. Although Jayavarman V was on the throne for a comparatively long time, there are no other buildings of any significance that can be directly associated with him. His successors, however, constructed countless religious and secular buildings, which reveal, to varying degrees, continuations of the Banteay Srei style and iconography. These include the gate pavilions at the Royal Palace in Angkor Thom, the small temple behind the North Khleang, and Neam Rup, whose figural bas-relief decorations could not be omitted from my catalogue because of the similarities between the items of attire visible there and those found at Banteay Srei. Based on my own on-site observations, I also believe that the ruined sanctuary at Prasat Preah Theat Khnau<sup>25</sup> falls into the same category.

Chapter 19 contains an outline of my hypothesis that the floor plan of the inner enclosure as it exists today might have come about during a later reconstruction, which altered the structure of the temple complex compared with its original, tenth-century design. This is another perspective from which it is necessary to examine the depictions that indicate the *Pashupata* tradition, as revealed during the thematic comparison.

The appendix to this dissertation contains the data collected during my research as well as maps showing the different thematic groupings of the depictions. The accompanying photographs are mostly my own, while a few pictures and illustrations come from museums and other archives. The drawings highlighting the details of the attire carved in the depictions were produced by Anna Bakonyi after my photographs.

As a digital supplement to my dissertation, I attach my catalogue, which lists the details of over 500 figural depictions, indicating their location within the temple complex, their pose or posture, their attributes and other distinguishing features, their clothing, their hairstyles and/or headdresses, and their jewellery and other adornments.

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<sup>25</sup> IK. 236. CISARC 231.

## **I. BANTEAY SREI, ANGKOR**

### **2. AN OUTLINE OF ANGKOR**

The Khmer Empire, known to posterity as Angkor, was the leading state in mainland Southeast Asia from the beginning of the ninth century until the mid-fifteenth century. During its golden age, between the tenth and fourteenth centuries, the empire occupied a territory that included not only Cambodia, but also modern-day Thailand, Laos and part of Vietnam. The ruling centre changed location on several occasions, but after the ninth century, all of the new capitals set up by various rulers were situated in the region to the north-east of Lake Tonlé Sap, known today as the world renowned Angkor Archaeological Park.<sup>26</sup> This region is where the architectural remains of the capital cities of the medieval mainland superpower known as Angkor can be found, including the most famous temple complex, Angkor Wat, and the largest walled city, Angkor Thom, featuring, among other sights, the Bayon Temple, celebrated for its “Tower of Faces”. Among the hundreds of built relics scattered across the region are Hindu and Buddhist sanctuaries, secular buildings, roads, bridges, reservoirs, dams and defensive walls, as well as countless ruins whose functions have not yet been fathomed.

Despite the intensive research that has been continued uninterruptedly for so long, surprisingly little is known about the history of the architectural artefacts of the Angkor Empire. In the fourteenth century, after forces from the Sukhothai Kingdom<sup>27</sup> had defeated the centre of the Angkor Empire for the umpteenth time, the Khmer leaders moved their base to the southern part of the land, to what is today Srey Santhor, leaving their ancient capital and its surroundings to be forgotten by the outside world, while the people living here underwent significant changes in their historical fortunes.<sup>28</sup> After the “fall” of Angkor,

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<sup>26</sup> At present a total of 1080 monuments of historic significance are registered in Cambodia, a large number of which are relics of the Angkor Empire. Over a hundred of these are in the immediate vicinity of the city of Siem Reap. Ruined buildings from many different periods, in varying states of dilapidation, are scattered across a once urbanised area encompassing around 300 km<sup>2</sup>. Angkor was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1992, under the name of Angkor Archaeological Park.

<sup>27</sup> The Sukhothai Kingdom was the first major state entity to be established by Thais, in the central part of modern-day Thailand. According to official history, the kingdom existed between 1287 and 1438. An area that was once part of the Khmer Empire seceded from its motherland under the leadership of King Ramkhamhaeng, who declared independence and set up his capital in present-day Sukhothai.

<sup>28</sup> Despite the disappearance of the Khmer royal court and the collapse of the empire, Angkor was never completely deserted or forgotten, and Angkor Wat and several other sanctuaries continued to exist as Buddhist pilgrimage sites. The first known account of Angkor by a European was written by the Portuguese

the area of modern-day Cambodia became subject to invasions and occupations by Thai, Cham and Viet armies, before being subjugated by French colonisation. The monuments, built from laterite,<sup>29</sup> mud-bricks or sandstone, gradually deteriorated over the centuries due to the forces of nature and human interference. By the nineteenth century, the complexes of buildings were almost completely hidden by the tropical vegetation. It was at this time that they were rediscovered for Europe and for the “world” by French explorers. Beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century, scientific expeditions, mostly led by the French, came to excavate and examine the ruins. Under the supervision of the EFEO, founded in 1898, teams led by some of the most outstanding experts of the day carried out archaeological digs in and around the ruins in the second decade of the twentieth century. These were soon followed by “classical” inspections undertaken by specialists in the fields of linguistics, epigraphy, history and the history of art and architecture. Étienne Aymonier published a three-volume work in which he resolved 350 inscriptions.<sup>30</sup> In 1925 Philippe Stern, followed a few years later by the then-director of EFEO, George Cœdès, used the inscriptions as the basis for establishing a chronology of Khmer history, and for defining the historical periods and the related artistic styles. Restoration of the monuments progressed on a large scale, using the latest methods and the expertise of architects.

During the First Indochina War (1946–1954) and again under the regime of Pol Pot (1975–1979), on-site research had to stop. The buildings that had already been restored suffered serious destruction once again due to fighting and neglect, and the number of statues remaining *in situ* and in local collections was reduced to a tenth of what it had been. Even the scientific documentation and the collections of archive photographs were severely damaged. After the civil war ended at the end of the 1980s, the international scientific community returned to Cambodia without delay: at conferences discussing

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historian Diogo do Couto (1542–1616), based on the thorough and precise notes written by the Capuchin friar Antonio Da Magdalena (? – 1589), from a mission based in Goa, who visited the area of modern-day Cambodia in 1583. It is possible that Da Magdalena was the very first European to lay eyes on the buildings hidden deep in the forest. Shortly before the friar died, he met the Portuguese historian, who turned the notes entrusted to him into a manuscript, which remained unpublished and was passed down through his family until 1958, when Diogo do Couto’s volume was finally published in Paris (Groslier. 1958. *Angkor et le Cambodge au XVI ème siècle, d’après les sources portugaises et espagnoles*. Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 68–74). The earliest description published in a European language was the brief account by the monk Marcello de Ribadeneyra (*Historia*. Barcelona, 1601), which was followed soon after by “A Brief and Truthful Relation of Events in the Kingdom of Cambodia”, written by the Spanish Dominican friar Gabriel de San Antonio, based on his talks with the abbots Antonio Dorta and Luys de Fonseca (*Breve y verdadera relacion de los sucesos del Reyno de Camboxa*. Valladolid, 1604). The place of pilgrimage was also the subject of a work by the French Missionary Chevreuil in 1668 (*Cochinchine: Lettres*, 1663–74).

<sup>29</sup> Laterite, or lateritic bauxite, is a type of igneous rock formed by tropical weathering, which was traditionally cut into regular, identically sized blocks and then allowed to dry, for use as a building material in South and Southeast Asia.

<sup>30</sup> AYMONIER’s synopsis: *La Cambodge*. (3 volumes) Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1900–1903.

Angkor, international commitments were made, and in the meantime, on-site restoration work resumed. Nowadays the monuments are easier to reach and the artworks held in museum collections make the treasures of Angkor more accessible than ever before, so researching the artefacts is far less problematic than in the past. An increasing amount of research documentation about the art of Angkor is available online, and thanks to technical advances, there are almost limitless opportunities for research involving quantitative methods.

There are few written sources relating to the history of the Angkor Empire. Primary written sources comprise the stone-carved inscriptions in Sanskrit or Old Khmer, found on the walls of ritualistic and secular stone buildings and on the stelae and statue pedestals among their ruins. In most cases, these texts were written in both languages together, or close to one another, demonstrating that both languages and scripts were in use simultaneously. Some of the inscriptions are dated, while others can be dated from their content and from the style of lettering. Although there are now over a thousand deciphered and published inscriptions, their subject matter is decidedly limited: a substantial part of the corpus consists of texts recording the foundation of a temple or about donations made to the temples.

Besides the written sources in Angkor, we also have at our disposal the chronicles and inscriptions of foreign states who had diplomatic or trade contacts with the Angkor Empire over several centuries, or who regarded the empire as an enemy. The Sanskrit or Old Cham stone inscriptions of the Cham states, the chronicles of the Viet state, and the historical and geographical literary works of the Chinese often supplement our fragmented or otherwise completely unrecorded knowledge about events and other phenomena. To date, no “foreign” written sources have been found that make any mention of Banteay Srei.

The sources left to posterity are extremely scarce and selective with regard to the history and culture of Angkor, especially when it comes to details of everyday life. There have been hardly any archaeological excavations in the region, so the quantity of material relics is negligible compared with those of some other past cultures.<sup>31</sup> Below I outline a

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<sup>31</sup> Countless depictions of human or human-like figures can be found on the walls of Angkorian buildings, and even the deepest, most concealed recesses are adorned with stone-carved likenesses of gods and goddesses, armed guards or warriors, or simple market traders. The materials of their garments and the style in which they are worn are depicted in extraordinary detail. The bas-reliefs also feature a large number of textiles being used for a wide variety of other functions. Analysis of the patterns of the textiles used in the depictions as wall coverings, curtains, window blinds, carpets, parasols and fans, as well as covers on the backs of horses, buffalos and elephants, can provide supplementary information to support our observations about the attire. Our knowledge about how the textiles portrayed in the bas-reliefs would have been produced has hitherto been based only on hypotheses. Research into ancient methods of textile-making in Cambodia

brief sketch of the history of the empire, so as to provide a context in which to set the circumstances under which Banteay Srei was founded.

### 2.1. A Brief Summary of the History of the Angkor Empire

Angkor is the traditional name for the mainland state that emerged at the very beginning of the ninth century in the area bordered in the south-west by Lake Tonlé Sap and in the north-east by the Kulen Mountains; the state gradually grew to become, for a while, the largest empire in mainland Southeast Asia. Angkor is also the name for a period in the cultural history of today's Cambodia, Laos and Thailand. The pre-Angkorian period was between the fifth and eighth centuries, the classical Angkor period lasted from the ninth to the fifteenth century, while the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are known in the specialist literature as the post-Angkorian period. According to the extant written relics, that is, the stone inscriptions, as well as historical tradition, the empire was founded by Jayavarman II, who gave himself the title of *cakravartin* – “universal ruler” – in 802 CE. He was presumably the first king to use the model of governance that would recur over the next six centuries or so, which is now regarded as characteristic of the Angkor Empire. The Angkorian rulers who succeed him built ever newer structures to legitimise their rule, and often even set up a new capital city somewhere else. Whoever was in power strove to build a so-called “state temple” in whichever location they had chosen as the empire's religious and administrative capital; in addition they erected one or more sanctuaries to honour their own ancestors, as well as their own palace and a reservoir for water. He bestowed land upon his noble subjects, as well as the right to build a temple, and provided them with the necessary resources and labour to set up a temple economy. The network of temple economies created in this way kept the empire together and provided the state with revenue, as well as the continued opportunity of “merit-making”, for taxpayers and for the ruler imposing the taxes.

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rely mostly on the relatively well researched history of Thai, Javanese, Chinese and Indian textiles. The original materials may be identified by analysing the patterns and attempting to identify analogies. One written source of immense value with regard to the research of classical Angkorian textile-making is the description of Angkor Thom, then capital of the Khmer Empire, written by the thirteenth-century Chinese traveller Zhou Daguan. (*Zhou Daguan: A Record of Cambodia: The Land and Its People*. Translated by Peter Harris. 2007.) However, as his work was written at the end of the thirteenth century and describes Angkor Thom, whereas Banteay Srei was presumably founded in the tenth century and lies 25 km to the north (a considerable distance in those times), the temporal and geographical differences are too large for Zhou Daguan's work to serve as a direct source in this paper.

The classical Angkor period can therefore be determined as between 802 and 1432 CE. The names of thirty-nine rulers from this period are known from the stone inscriptions. Apart from a brief interlude, when the royal court moved to the area known today as Koh Ker, all of the capitals were located within the “core” of Angkor, the plain between Lake Tonlé Sap and Mount Kulen. Among the monuments that survive in Hariharalaya, the capital built by Indravarman I (877–c.886) and his son, Yashovarman I (889–c.915), the most outstanding are the Lolei and Preah Ko sanctuary complexes and the Bakong temple pyramid (*see appendix 1*). After completing his father’s constructions, Yashovarman I built the temple pyramid of Bakheng, around which he built a new capital Yasodharapura, where he moved his court. Albeit with several interruptions, this area served for almost 500 years as the central core of the Angkor Empire, which still preserves countless Hindu, Buddhist and secular buildings and engineering monuments from the once flourishing Khmer culture. Yashovarman I also erected sanctuaries on prominent geographical locations far away from the capital, known today as Phnom Bok and Phnom Krom. Yashovarman I was succeeded to the throne by two of his sons in succession, before power was seized unlawfully by Jayavarman IV (928–c.941). The usurper moved his court to the north-eastern part of the region, where he founded what is now called Koh Ker, formerly known as *Chok Gargyar* or *Lingapura*, which – judging from the extant buildings and inscriptions – must have been an extremely wealthy and powerful capital district. Koh Ker is accorded its own artistic and architectural style within Angkorian art historical research, and in the present paper I devote particular attention to an examination of its buildings as well as to its sculptural and inscriptional relics, which are mostly kept in museum collections today. Jayavarman IV’s nephew, Rajendravarman II (944–968), managed to consolidate his power by imposing control over the troubled political situation, and in 944 he moved his capital back to the region of Yasodharapura. He was responsible for constructing East Mebon and Pre Rup on the artificial island in the middle of the Eastern Reservoir that Yashovarman I had created, and for the Bat Chum, Kutishvara and Baksei Chamkrong sanctuaries. Countless inscriptions from the reign of Rajendravarman II have survived for posterity, and although it is not possible to reconstruct everything in detail, with the help of these inscriptions we can conclude that Indian and local scholar priests or religious leaders of several different faiths ensured a high level of cultural life within the court. The high priest of Rajendravarman II, who also taught the ruler’s son, the future Jayavarman V, may have been Yajnavaraha, who built Banteay Srei. Jayavarman V acceded to the throne in 968, when he was still a child, and his long reign lasted until the

year 1000. His own temple pyramid, Ta Keo, was uncompleted at the time of his death. Several smaller sanctuaries and sanctuary complexes located at some distance from the capital can be dated to his reign, although they were not necessarily founded by the ruler.

When Jayavarman V died, he was succeeded by Udayadityavarman I, who ruled for just three months, after which there followed nine years of struggle for the throne between Suryavarman I and Jayaviravarman, as can be reconstructed from the surviving fragmentary written reminders. Suryavarman I (1002–49) was one of the more successful of the Angkorian rulers, who consolidated his control over internal politics and through military might extended the borders of his empire to the Gulf of Thailand and towards what are now southern Laos and eastern central Thailand. The architectural monuments left behind by Suryavarman I and his son, Udayadityavarman II (1050–1066) – the gate pavilions of the Royal Palace in the territory of Angkor Thom, the Khleangs, Phimeanakas, Preah Vihear, Wat Phu, Baphuon – and the large quantity of sculptural relics that survive there facilitate an analytical comparison with the reliefs of Banteay Srei, in terms of style, iconography and subject matter equally.

In the second half of the eleventh century, a new royal dynasty appeared on the throne of the descendants of Jayavarman IV, whose members came from the region of the Khorat Plateau, in modern-day Thailand, that is, from what was then the northern part of the Angkor Empire. The most famous ruler from this dynasty was Suryavarman II (1113–c.1150), who constructed the temple complex at Angkor Wat. Suryavarman II's 37-year rule was unquestionably one of the pinnacles of Angkorian culture. His memory is preserved not only in Angkor Wat, but also in the groups of buildings in Thommanon, Chau Say Tevoda, Banteay Samre and Beng Mealea, and the temple complex of Phnom Rung, in present-day Thailand. The enormous amount of sculptural works that have been discovered in these buildings are an inexhaustible source of art historical information. In this paper, during my thematic analysis of the reliefs in Banteay Srei, I compare them with the subjects portrayed in certain sanctuaries that date from the reign of Suryavarman II.

From the second half of the twelfth century onwards, the most extensive state in mainland Southeast Asia was forced increasingly to confront invasions from outside and attempts at secession by peoples in outlying regions. In this period, the ruler whose power and influence rival those of Suryavarman II was Jayavarman VII, the last ruler in the history of Angkor to successfully reinforce the empire. Several hundred spectacular monuments to his reign can be found in many parts of Cambodia and Thailand today: sanctuaries, secular buildings, and engineering works, in the form of embankments, water

regulation and roads. Jayavarman VII created what was at the time one of the largest walled cities in the world, today known as Angkor Thom. He is also credited with the erection of the Temple of Bayon, and the complexes of buildings at Ta Prohm, Preah Khan, Banteay Kdei, Ta Som and Mangalartha. Examination of the Buddhist-influenced buildings constructed during the reign of Jayavarman VII falls beyond the scope of this paper, and only those are mentioned that bear depictions of the same subject matter as those that appear on the reliefs of Banteay Srei.

Under the last four Angkor rulers, the empire's territory continuously shrank under almost constant assault both from Cham forces, encroaching from what is today central Vietnam, and from Thai armies, who had settled in the border districts. Besides the invasions, there were probably also social and economic reasons why the rulers decided to move their court further south in the mid fifteenth century, bringing to an end the Angkor period and heralding a new era in the history of Cambodia.

## 2.2. The Position of Banteay Srei in Angkor and in the History of Research into Angkor

Banteay Srei lies relatively far away from the central monument area known as Angkor, around 25 km to the north-east, directly next to the Siem Reap river. The temple was erected in honour of *Shiva* in the town of *Ishvarapura*, which was not a royal seat, but probably a regional economic and cultural centre in the tenth century. It is located 20 km north of the capital of the time, Yasodharapura. The temple was founded in 967,<sup>32</sup> as testified by a stone inscription.<sup>33</sup> The same inscription also immortalises the name of the founding guru, Yajnavaraha,<sup>34</sup> and details the merits and good deeds of the high priest. It is thanks to this inscription that Banteay Srei is of such importance to researchers of Khmer history, for it not only records the date of foundation, but also the surrounding circumstances, the identity and rank of the founder, and his tasks. In addition to the

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<sup>32</sup> In the Khmer Empire, the Indian calendar was adopted, so the dates are given according to the *Shaka era*. This era began in 78 CE (Gregorian calendar), so the date 967 was originally given in the inscription as *Shaka era* 889. In this paper I have used the dates according to the Gregorian calendar.

<sup>33</sup> Sanskrit inscription K842. The inscriptions are designated in accordance with *Inscriptions du Cambodge* (1937–66) by George Cœdès. See chapter 1.2 of the present paper.

<sup>34</sup> This name is unusual, for the inscriptions, and indeed the entire iconography of the sanctuary, bears the influence of the Shaiva branch of Hinduism, and yet the term *Varaha* links the personal name to Vishnu. The brother of *Yajnavaraha* is referred to in the inscriptions as *Vishnukumara*, which is also a Vaishnavist name. There is so far no explanation for this. The name “*Yajna-varaha*” (Sanskrit) can be translated literally as “Sacrifice-Boar” or “Boar Sacrifice”. The name refers to Vishnu's avatar as a boar, who, in the *Purana* myths, sacrifices himself in order to create world order. In the *Vajru Purana*, for example, he is credited with the start of the present era of the world. *Yajna-varaha* is a character from stories that feature in other texts. For the most recent scientific study on this subject see: Renner 2012.



inscriptions found on both sides of the founding stele, a further ten stone inscriptions have survived in the area of the temple. Interestingly, their dates differ significantly from one another, with the year 1011 appearing twice, and the year 1306 also featuring once. Since these stones were discovered, the scientific debate concerning when Banteay Srei was constructed – and presumably reconstructed, more than once – has still not been resolved.

The first summary about the temple was published in 1926 with the title *Le Temple d'Īçvarapura*, written by Henri Parmentier, Victor Goloubew and Louis Finot. This was the first volume in a series of archaeological texts published by EFEO, which included the results of several fields of research (archaeology, architecture and art history, and epigraphy) together in the same book; for a long time this was the only interdisciplinary work on Angkor. Since this monograph was published by its trio of authors, no other work dealing solely with Banteay Srei has yet appeared. In the volume, the original construction of the temple was estimated to the reign of Jayavarman V (968–1000), while the buildings in the inner enclosure – the three sanctuary towers, the two libraries and the connecting buildings – were dated to the rule of Srindravarman (1296–1307) some three centuries later. The chronology in those days was determined primarily on the artistic styles and on deciphering the stone inscriptions that were available at the time. The problem of the twin dates that was first raised in the almost hundred-year-old monograph is still a matter of interdisciplinary discourse, and a subject of the present paper.

The creation of Banteay Srei, begun during the reign of Rajendravarman II and completed under the rule of his son and heir, Jayavarman V, is, in several respects, a unique phenomenon in the known history of Angkor. The fact that it was not founded by the ruler, and that we even know the name of the high priest who initiated the temple's construction, Yajnavaraha, is in itself sufficient to make this temple one of the most interesting in Khmer history. Among the style periods classified in chronological order in art historical specialist literature, Banteay Srei is the main relic of the eponymous period. A number of sanctuaries that are the same age, such as Prasat Sralao, are included in this style. At the same time, many other roughly contemporaneous buildings are defined as belonging to the Khleang style. There are several reasons for this. An examination of the types of costumes found in Banteay Srei clearly shows that certain types are exclusively found in this style. Certain elements of the attire can be found elsewhere, even as late as the Baphuon period of the eleventh century, for example in the reliefs of the Royal Palace or in countless statues recovered from many different sanctuaries, but taken as a whole, the method of portrayal with which the male and female gate guardians of Banteay Srei were

carved, as well as certain figures in the narrative reliefs, is quite without parallel anywhere else. Moreover, the temple was exceptionally built out of pink sandstone, with only the enclosure walls and a few structural walls inside some buildings being constructed from laterite. Pink sandstone, which is extraordinarily hard and therefore highly resistant to weather damage, was only used in one other sanctuary besides Banteay Srei, for certain decorative elements at Prasat Sralao; there is therefore no other building complex in Angkor where the same material was used for the entire building. The quantity of decorations covering the walls of Banteay Srei, and the quality of the carving, is also unmatched in the region. The thematic variety in the narratives portrayed in the reliefs, let alone the choice of subject matter itself, deserves special attention from researchers.

### 3. THE SANCTUARY AREA OF BANTEAY SREI AND THE TYPES OF BUILDING FOUND THERE

Prior to commencing my detailed description of the history of the temple and of the art historical research, and my iconographic analysis of the reliefs and statues, I deem it necessary to provide a brief presentation of the buildings in Banteay Srei and to outline their arrangement, in order to aid understanding of the place names used later in the paper. Banteay Srei belongs to Angkor's so-called "temples on the plain" (*maps 1 and 2*). Its enclosures and the buildings that stand within them are ranged along the east-west axis of the temple, symmetrically in every case except the fourth enclosure.<sup>35</sup> Its distinguishing characteristics are the unique pink sandstone used as the main building element and the tiny size of the buildings; both these aspects deviate significantly from the other monuments, whether built in the tenth century or in other periods. The modern-day name of the temple – which means "*Citadel/Fortress of Women*" – is also a consequence of its size.

The internal arrangement of Banteay Srei is in line with the archetypal arrangement of space used in classical Khmer architecture. The floor plan of the sanctuary area is rectangular, not square. Progressing along the axis from the east, we pass through a series of gate structures ever further towards the interior, to the sanctuary, which in Hindu belief symbolises the mother's womb. This, or more specifically the statue of the god guarded inside the sanctuary, is the essence of the holy site, and in the present description I will begin here and move progressively outwards as I present the complex of buildings. The defining elements of the floor plan are: the four concentric enclosures and their enclosure walls, the gate pavilions, the vestibules and sanctuary towers, the library buildings and the moat. Other buildings are located along the path leading to the sanctuary, and on either side of the path there once stood open galleries, although today only their side walls and columns remain.

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<sup>35</sup> Jacques stresses that although Banteay Srei and other temples with similar floor plans may seem to be axially designed, this is actually not the case. The floor plan should be seen as central, starting out from the sanctuary tower, while the approach path and some of the symmetrically or asymmetrically arranged buildings along it were not created when the temple was founded, but added later. Jacques 2004, 5.

The inner, or first enclosure<sup>36</sup> has square floor plan, and its enclosure wall is open both to the east and to the west via a gate pavilion, or *gopura*.<sup>37</sup> The enclosure wall was built of bricks, as was the western gate.<sup>38</sup> This is the only gate building in Banteay Srei that was made from bricks. The interesting feature of the western gopura is that it has no opening towards the west, and therefore is more reminiscent of a sanctuary tower than of a gate pavilion. This effect is reinforced by the size of its floor plan, which is exactly the same as that of the central sanctuary tower. It is possible that this was originally a gate pavilion that was later converted into a sanctuary. This was probably the original home of the group statue of the divine couple *Shiva and Uma*<sup>39</sup> (*fig. 115*), held at the National Museum in Phnom Penh since the temple's discovery in 1914. The pedestal attributed to this group statue by Goloubew was only discovered in 1924, so its exact location is uncertain. Although the statue was found in the western gopura, its pedestal stood in the sanctum of the central sanctuary, so it is also possible that the statue was moved to the gate pavilion at a later period.<sup>40</sup>

The eastern gopura of the first enclosure consists of a central chamber attached to smaller rooms on either side, the latter of which also have separate entrances. Based on our knowledge of architectural conventions, we can state that this eastern end was the main direction from which the building was approached, and the eastern gopura can thus be regarded as the main entrance. It is therefore extremely unusual that the three rooms that pass through the gate pavilion are so narrow that passage is almost impossible. Entrance pavilions play an especially important role in Hindu temple complexes. They are places and devices for accessing and transubstantiating from the secular world into the divine. It is exceptionally interesting that in Banteay Srei (and in the central sanctuary of Koh Ker, built slightly earlier), the size of the entrance pavilions “threaded” along the embanked approach way decreases proportionately as one moves closer to the sanctum. The earliest known examples of this in India, for example in Tanjore, did not appear until the eleventh century, around half a century later.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> In line with standard practice in the literature on Khmer temple complexes, the numbering of the concentric enclosures and their walls begins from within, from the enclosure of the central sanctuary, and increases towards the outer areas.

<sup>37</sup> *Gopura* or *gopuram* is the name given to the gate pavilions that interrupt the enclosure walls of Hindu temples. In this paper I use the terms gopura, gate hall and gate pavilion interchangeably.

<sup>38</sup> Marchal 1936, *Journal de fouilles*.

<sup>39</sup> NMPP Ka. 1797/B.24/B.43.1.

<sup>40</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 51–52; Pl. 44. a-b.

<sup>41</sup> Jacques 1997, 62–63.

In Cambodia, entrance pavilions also served as sanctuaries guarding statues, as demonstrated by the pedestals and the *linga*<sup>42</sup> statues found inside them. The use of gate pavilions as shrines is an unknown practice in India, according to the joint work by Dagens and Miltzer O’Naghten, which analyses Angkor temple architecture as a sacral space.<sup>43</sup> It remains a matter of debate, however, particularly in the case of buildings whose dates are disputed, such as Banteay Srei, whether the gate pavilions were designed as sanctuaries when they were first built, or were later modified to perform this new function.

The central sanctuary group standing behind the eastern gopura consists of three sanctuary towers, the *mandapa*, or vestibule, belonging to the central sanctuary tower, and the two *antaralas*, or connecting halls.<sup>44</sup> The three sanctuary towers, known in Khmer as *prasat*,<sup>45</sup> and the vestibule stand on a common terrace that is raised above ground level, and has a T-shaped floor plan. The terrace of the sanctuary towers is approached via six steps, with a guardian figure standing sentry on either side. Guardian figures portray four types of mythological being: *Garuda*,<sup>46</sup> *Yaksha*,<sup>47</sup> lion and ape.

The only true entrance to the central sanctuary is from the east, for the other three sides of the tower are closed off with false doors. The sanctuary tower is connected to the vestibule via a round, windowless chamber. Interestingly unlike most Angkorian towers, where the square tower is crowned with a round-based summit, and the transition is disguised with lotus petal decoration, in Banteay Srei the summit is square to the very top, with its capstone carved in the shape of a vase.<sup>48</sup>

Claude Jacques proposed that the *Shiva linga*, worshipped under the name of *Tribhuvanamaheshvara*, may have originally stood in the central sanctuary tower, and this may have determined the original name of the temple, which we still do not know.

There are two more sanctuary towers, located to the north and south of the central sanctuary.

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<sup>42</sup> The meaning of *linga* (Sanskrit) is “symbol”, and it is a phallic symbol of Shiva. These columnar statues, usually made of stone and more rarely of metal, are the main cult objects in shrines to Shiva.

<sup>43</sup> Dagens-Miltzer O’Naghten 2000, 63.

<sup>44</sup> Marchal found that the earliest vestibule in Angkor was here at Banteay Srei, and it later became a widely spread element of other temples. Marchal. 1969, 1. Based on our present knowledge, however, the *mandapa*, or sanctuary tower vestibule, as an architectural element, first appeared in Koh Ker in the first half of the tenth century. The *mandapa* subsequently became a standard part of temples founded by the monarch and erected on level ground, until the twelfth century, when the practice suddenly stopped. The last known example is in the temple of Chau Say Tevoda, founded in the twelfth century during the reign of Dharanindravarman. Miltzer O’Naghten 2000, 48.

<sup>45</sup> The Khmer word *prasat* is derived from the Sanskrit word *prasada*. Dagens 1994, 264.

<sup>46</sup> *Garuda*: a mythical giant being whose body is half-human, half-bird; the mount of *Vishnu*.

<sup>47</sup> *Yakshas*: nature spirits in Indian mythology, usually depicted in ways that reflect wealth and prosperity (e.g. large bellies and copious jewellery).

<sup>48</sup> Marchal 1939, 4.

The northern sanctuary tower was erected in honour of Vishnu, and its entrance is guarded by *Garuda* figures. The statue of the four-armed, standing Vishnu that was originally found here was also placed in the collection of the National Museum in Phnom Penh, although it sadly disappeared from the museum in the early 1980s, so my analysis is based on archive photographs.<sup>49</sup> According to the inscription carved into the frame of the entrance to the sanctuary tower, the statue was erected by the founder's father, *Prthivindrapandita*.<sup>50</sup> The southern tower, like the central sanctuary, contained a *linga* statue,<sup>51</sup> which, according to the inscription on the doorpost, was erected by the founder's sister, *Jahnavi*.<sup>52</sup> Claude Jacques suggested that the southern tower was originally erected in honour of *Devi*,<sup>53</sup> as implied by the lion statues guarding the entrance. If this is the case, it is possible that the sanctuary once contained a statue of *Devi-Durga*.<sup>54</sup> I should mention here that in the majority of Angkor temples with three sanctuary towers, the southern sanctum held a statue of *Brahma*, which was common practice in temples dedicated to *Shiva* until the twelfth century. For now, we can only speculate why this convention was not followed when Banteay Srei was designed. We shall return to this question in chapter 17 of this paper.

The entrance to both the northern and the southern sanctuary towers – like that of the central sanctuary tower – is in the east wall, while the other walls are sealed with false doors facing the other three cardinal points. The exteriors of the buildings are extremely ornate, whereas the interiors are covered with bare walls. Recesses on either side of the openings to the central sanctuary contain standing male figures, those on the side towers have female figures, carved in relief (*fig. 1 and 2*). The literature on Angkor names these male guardian figures *dvarapala*.<sup>55</sup> The female guardian figures are generally called

<sup>49</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, Pl. 45. EFEO Photo Inv. Nr. CAM 15954.

<sup>50</sup> Inscription K573: “*Celui qui, parent et ami spirituel de Yajñavaraha, a reçu le nom Çrī Prthivīndrapāṇḍita, Ce noble Bhagavata, connaissant le sens de tous les çastras, a érigé avec piété cette statue du tout-puissant Viṣṇu.*” Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 93.

<sup>51</sup> When the temple was discovered, the *linga* statue was still in its place. Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 55.

<sup>52</sup> Inscription K.574: “*Jahnavī, soeur cadette de Yajñavaraha, a érigé pieusement ici un liṅga d'Īçvara.*” Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 93.

<sup>53</sup> *Devi* is the consort of Shiva, and represents the fertile energy of nature. In Hindu mythology she is manifested in numerous *avatars*, or forms, the best known including *Parvati*, *Uma*, *Kali* and *Durga*.

<sup>54</sup> Jacques 1999, 210.

<sup>55</sup> The eight human figures who stand in the niches either side of the entranceways of the central sanctuary tower were named “young warriors” (“*jeune guerrier*”) by Goloubew. He determined that the depth with which they were carved qualifies them more as statues than bas-reliefs. The figures hardly differ from each other in type and posture, so they were probably not representations of mythological beings with particular names. Goloubew 1926, p.54. There is no scientific consensus on the naming of the guardian figures standing sentry either side of the sanctuary entrances in Angkor. They are known as door guardians or gate guardians, or else by the Sanskrit terms *dvarapala* or *dvarapalaka*, which also means “door-guardian”. They have

*devata*, or sometimes *apsara*. The term *dvarapali* can also be found in connection with the female guardians, for they perform the same function as their male counterparts. In this paper I use the most widely accepted and used name, *devata*. The figures seen either side of the openings and false doorways are almost the same, and therefore do not comply with the earlier compositional practice of having a *devi* (deity) on one side and an *asura* (demon) on the other.<sup>56</sup> The bases of the statue niches in the central sanctuary are supported by three lions, while in the side sanctuaries, the female figures are held aloft by three *hamsas*.<sup>57</sup> Above the *dvarapalas* and *devatas* are pairs of flying-dancing figures holding garlands in their hands, while in the central sanctuary, above everything is a carving of a pair of musicians and a dancing female figure. The entrances and false doors on all four sides of the sanctuary towers, as well as those of the other buildings in the sanctuary, are topped with exceptionally elaborately carved lintels,<sup>58</sup> above which are pediments carved in relief, either with abstract decorations or else showing deities and mythological episodes. Whereas the sanctuary tower (*prasat*) and its vestibules, together with the other buildings in the sanctuary area, have forms derived from Indian architecture, the richly decorated lintels and pediments clearly bear the distinguishing features of Khmer architecture. Beautifully carved pediments can also be found in Cham art, although these are clearly related to early Angkorian art.

On either side of the vestibule, that is to say, in the north-eastern and south-eastern corners of the first enclosure, stand the two so-called library buildings, both of which open towards the west. The name and function of these special buildings constitute a problem that I consider worth highlighting in the case of Banteay Srei. The name of the library buildings is based on scholarly consensus, and based on an inscription<sup>59</sup> found in Prasat Khna,<sup>60</sup> which refers to the small buildings as the “houses of palm-leaf manuscripts” (Sanskrit: *pustakashrama*).<sup>61</sup> The fragmentary inscription was incidentally carved during the reign of Rajendravarman II or his son, Jayavarman V, that is, around the time that Banteay Srei was built.

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served an important role since the early Vedic era, and appear in the Rigveda as gods or lowly-ranked deities portrayed as temple guardians. Loof-Wissowa 1997, 330.

<sup>56</sup> See the “Roluos Group” of temples: the sanctuaries of Bakong, Lolei and Preah Ko.

<sup>57</sup> In Hindu mythology, *hamsas* are wild geese or swans, the mounts of *Brahma* and *Sarasvati*.

<sup>58</sup> Stone-carved beams above doors and false doors are uniformly referred to as “lintels” in this paper.

<sup>59</sup> K 661.

<sup>60</sup> Prasat Khna is a small sanctuary in Preah Vihear Province, in northern Cambodia. IK. 315. Cisarac 627.

<sup>61</sup> Cœdès 1911, 406. In the fragmentary, tenth-century inscription found on the doorpost of the small building in the south-eastern corner of the inner sanctuary enclosure at Prasat Khna, stanza 22 contains the Sanskrit term “*pustakashrama*”, which can be translated as “place for storing manuscripts”. This prompted Cœdès to use the phrase “library building”. Cœdès 1911, 406.

Beyond classical Angkorian temple complexes, such buildings have only been observed in Cham Hindu temples from the same period; a building of this sort stands in the south-eastern part of the first enclosure of east-facing sanctuaries there, but these are not referred to as libraries by any sources in the literature.<sup>62</sup> In Angkor they are usually found in pairs in the first enclosure around the sanctuary.<sup>63</sup> They have tiny windows in their side walls, and there are also ventilation openings in their stepped roofs, which have no ceilings beneath them. The actual original function of these buildings is unknown, but based on the latest findings of epigraphy and art and architecture history, they may have been used to guard the holy fire. Angkorian inscriptions clearly demonstrate that a variety of fire ceremonies were conducted in the sanctuaries, and several of them refer to the “house of fire”.<sup>64</sup> According to Hindu tradition, the holy fire had to be maintained and watched over within the walls of the temple, and the “library buildings”, with their open gables and side vents, would have served this purpose perfectly.

The place where the cult of the holy fire was practised can be deduced from the reliefs that portray the Planetary Deities or ascetics.<sup>65</sup> In the south-eastern library building of Bakong, built in the ninth century, next to a frieze depicting ascetics, can be seen a fragment of an architectural decoration that shows the nine planets. Among other scholars, Maurice Glaize proposed a link between the cult of the nine planets and the frequent portrayals of the Seven Ascetics. In East Mebon, erected in the second half of the tenth century, a frieze of the Nine Planetary Deities (*navagraha*) was found in the south-eastern building, and in another location in the vicinity was a depiction of the Seven Ascetics. A similar discovery was made in Pre Rup, although in this case there were problems with regard to internal arrangement.<sup>66</sup>

If we assume that the “library buildings” were actually used to guard the holy fire, it is unsurprising to find them adorned with images of the planets. The fact that depictions of the planets are consistently found in the south-eastern buildings can be explained with the role of Agni, the god of fire, whose task was to guard the south-eastern cardinal point. Nevertheless, when referring to this type of building in this paper, in order to avoid confusion I use the term “library”, following the customary practice found in the specialist

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<sup>62</sup> In west-facing sanctuaries, the building is located in the opposite, north-western corner.

<sup>63</sup> In Buddhist sanctuaries there is only ever one library building, always in the south-eastern part of the sanctuary enclosure. Miltzer O’Naghten 2000, 50.

<sup>64</sup> Haendel 2005, 248. Inscriptions found in Phimeanakas and Prasat Tor feature phrases that can be translated as “hall of fire”.

<sup>65</sup> Bhattacharya draws our attention to the fact that the cult of the holy fire referred to in Khmer inscriptions is, in its original Indian context, closely connected to the cult of the planets. Bhattacharya 1961, 148.

<sup>66</sup> Glaize 1937, 673–74.



literature, although in my descriptions of the reliefs I give a detailed presentation of the ascetics or *rishis* depicted in them.

The enclosure wall around the second enclosure is made of laterite, and is surrounded by six long buildings, also with walls of laterite. The arrangement of the buildings foreshadows the rows of galleries that would become common in subsequent centuries.<sup>67</sup> The pediments that have survived intact are ornately carved and depict seated deities among rich floral ornamentation. The damaged pediments are today lined up in the open-air external storage site.<sup>68</sup> The inscription carved into the frame of the entrance door to the southwestern building<sup>69</sup> records – among other information – the name Yajnavaraha, the guru who founded the sanctuary. The same inscription also informs us that a statue of the goddess *Vagisvari* (*Sarasvati*)<sup>70</sup> was erected inside the building. The eastern gopura of the second enclosure wall has three chambers, the middle of which has a cross-shaped floor plan. The pediments on the gate building are outstandingly intricately decorated. All that remains of the western gopura today is the central door frame, above which can be seen the famous pediment depicting the duel between *Vali and Sugriva* (*fig. 104*).

The laterite enclosure wall around the third enclosure surrounds a wide water-filled moat. The wall is interrupted in both its western and eastern sides by a gopura. There are no remains of any buildings visible within this enclosure. The eastern gate pavilion has a cross-shaped floor plan, and its central hall extends in all four directions. In terms of structure it is similar to the eastern gopura in the second enclosure wall, except that here it is not proven beyond doubt that the side rooms could be accessed directly from the central hall. There are no steps leading up to the side entrances, from which we can infer that they were there as compositional elements only, without functioning as actual entrances. There is a pedestal in the inner hall of the gopura, whose ritual function cannot be precisely determined.<sup>71</sup> The doorposts of the third eastern gopura have five inscriptions carved into

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<sup>67</sup> The first instance of such a contiguous row of galleries can be found in Ta Keo, approximately the same age as Banteay Srei, built around 1000 for Jayavarman V.

<sup>68</sup> These pediments were identified and analysed between 2002 and 2005 by the research team of the Banteay Srei Conservation Project. See: *Banteay Srei Conservation Project, Pediment Inventory*. Siem Reap, Apsara Authority, 2004, 1–12.

<sup>69</sup> K575. “*Yajñavaraha, qui connaît la stabilité, a établi pieusement une statue de Vagīçvarī et celles de deux Vidyagura.*” Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 92.

<sup>70</sup> *Vagisvari* (Sanskrit) is the name for *Sarasvati* (Sanskrit) that was used in Angkor. She is *Brahma*’s consort, and goddess of music, knowledge and wisdom. In Angkor, texts in honour of *Vagisvari* have been found dating from the 10th–12th centuries.

<sup>71</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 28.

the stone.<sup>72</sup> This gopura was the original location of two pediments which are now in museum collections, in Phnom Penh and Paris, showing scenes of the *Abduction of the Apsara Tilottama*<sup>73</sup> (fig. 109) and the *Duel between Bhima and Duryodhana*<sup>74</sup> (fig. 108).

The 70-metre-long approach path that begins behind the imposingly large eastern gate in the fourth enclosure wall has boundary stones along its edges. Running parallel alongside the path were once (presumably) half-open galleries, covered with wooden ceilings supported on stone columns, whose external walls were once made of laterite. Archaeological finds imply that the galleries and the side buildings had tiled roofs. Approximately halfway along the approach road, there is one building on the north side and three buildings on the south side that are oriented in a north-south direction, whose function is still unknown. All four buildings are open towards the approach path, that is, the central axis of the sanctuary, and above their doorways are finely carved pediments.

The interior walls of the buildings are unornamented, while the exteriors are richly decorated with carved reliefs. From an iconographic perspective, the most important reliefs can be seen on the lintels over the doors and false doors and the triangular pediments above the lintels. The figures carved onto the surfaces of the walls either side of the sanctuary doorways and onto the niche-shaped antefixes (roof decorations) on the tower summits are not major characters from mythological stories, but they are nevertheless integral elements of the temple's iconographic system.

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<sup>72</sup> The translation and interpretation of the five inscriptions was published as early as 1926 in the monograph by Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 70–92. Pl. 48–53.

<sup>73</sup> MG 18913.

<sup>74</sup> NMPP Ka1660.

#### 4. THE HISTORY OF EXCAVATING BANTEAY SREI

Under the expert coordination of the École française d'Extrême-Orient, founded in 1900, archaeological excavations of the ruins on the site began in the first half of the twentieth century, led by some of the most outstanding experts of the period. Étienne Lunet de Lajonquière compiled a systematic, descriptive three-volume catalogue of the Angkor monuments that had been discovered by then.<sup>75</sup> His work was completed by Henri Parmentier between 1911 and 1939. The list, illustrated with drawings, photographs and maps, registered all the monuments known at the time and allotted each one an inventory number. Since the volumes were published, these inventory numbers have served as key references in the specialist literature, abbreviated to “IK” (*Inventaire Khmer*). Until 2007, when the new databases were published, based on the surveys conducted by Christophe Pottier<sup>76</sup> and Damian Evans,<sup>77</sup> and on the clarified and supplemented lists, research always referred to the Lajonquière inventory.

Simultaneously with the excavations, research also began in the “classical” fields of linguistics, history and art history. Étienne Aymonier published a three-volume work,<sup>78</sup> in which he processed 350 inscriptions found at the site. In 1927 Philippe Stern,<sup>79</sup> followed a few years later by George Cœdès, then-director of the EFEO, established the chronology of Khmer history, based on the translation and interpretation of the available inscriptions, and defined the historical periods and the associated artistic styles.<sup>80</sup> George Cœdès was also responsible for systematically cataloguing the inscriptions and setting up the system for assigning inventory numbers; his work was refined by Claude Jacques.<sup>81</sup> Besides the written documentation, the EFEO also has a photographic collection numbering some

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<sup>75</sup> Lunet de Lajonquière, Étienne: *Inventaire descriptif des monuments du Cambodge*. (3 volumes) Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1902–1911.

<sup>76</sup> Pottier, C: *Carte archéologique de la région d'Angkor - Zone Sud*, Thèse de Doctorat, Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris III, 1999. 3 volumes, 384 p. + 32 pl.

<sup>77</sup> Evans D., Pottier C., Fletcher R.: *A comprehensive archaeological map of the world's largest preindustrial settlement complex at Angkor, Cambodia*. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America 2007.

<sup>78</sup> AYMONIER, Étienne: *La Cambodge*. (3 volumes) Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1900–1904.

<sup>79</sup> STERN, Philippe: *Le Bayon d'Angkor et l'évolution de l'art khmer; étude et discussion de la chronologie des monuments khmers*. Paris, P. Geuthner, 1927.

<sup>80</sup> CŒDÈS, George: *Études Cambodgiennes*, 1911–1956 I-XL. BEFEO; *Listes générales des inscriptions et des monuments du Champa et du Cambodge*. 1923; and his chef d'œuvre: *Inscriptions du Cambodge*, 8 volumes. 1937–1966.

<sup>81</sup> JACQUES, Claude: *Études d'épigraphie cambodgienne* BEFEO 54, p. 605–622; 56, p. 57–69 and 70–73; 57, p. 57–67 and 68–89; 58, p. 163–176; 59, p. 193–205 and 205–220; 63, p. 351–365; 65, p. 281–332; 86, p. 357–374.

30,000 archive photos. Most of the photographs were taken as documentation during restoration projects. The greatest difficulty in conducting research using the photos is that the data accompanying the majority of the images taken before 1962 are missing or imprecise, which often makes it hard to identify the subject of the photograph or even the location. Bernard Philippe Groslier was the first to systematically provide data for the photographs he took between 1962 and 1970. Due to limitations on how many photographs could be taken in total, the quantity of pictures taken at each site varied according to the system of hierarchy that had been set up for the different locations.

The first architectural survey was conducted by Lucien Fournereau, who visited the site between 1887 and 1888, producing high quality drawings, ground plans and cross-sectional drawings.<sup>82</sup> One of the most comprehensive works on architecture is *Les Monuments du groupe d'Angkor* by Maurice Glaize, published in 1944, although it does not describe every built monument. The drawings produced during the architectural surveys can be found in the Angkor Conservation Office in Siem Reap, or in the Paris headquarters of the EFEO, and the majority of the drawings are also available in various publications. Of inestimable value to later researchers are the *Journal de Fouilles*, the onsite working diary maintained by the experts out in the field, and the *Rapports d'Angkor*, based on these diaries, containing notes made over a period lasting sixty-five years, between 1908 and 1973.

The list that was finalised in 1911 by Étienne Lunet de Lajonquière did not yet feature Banteay Srei. The first Frenchman to come across this outlying temple, far from the central area where the majority of ruins are found, was Captain Marec of the *Service Géographique*, who discovered the site in 1914. He immediately arranged for the removal of the group statue of Shiva and Uma,<sup>83</sup> which has been in the National Museum in Phnom Penh ever since, and a miniature sanctuary tower carving. The EFEO sent the architect G. Demasur to visit the site in 1914; he soon lost his life in the Great War, fighting on the French front.<sup>84</sup> Demasur's final report on 29 September 1914 made no mention of the discovery of the new temple, only the brick tower of Phnom Dei, discovered at the same time.<sup>85</sup> The first public announcement of the exciting new discovery of the sanctuary of

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<sup>82</sup> His drawings were published in 1890 in a volume entitled *Les ruines khmères. Cambodge et Siam*.

<sup>83</sup> NMPP Ka1797.

<sup>84</sup> Rapport au conseil de gouvernement sur la situation et les travaux de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient en 1914–1915. BEFEO, vol. 15, 1915, 89.

<sup>85</sup> *Documents administratifs*. In: BEFEO, vol. 14, 1914, 102.

Banteay Srei came in 1916, in the pages of the *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*.<sup>86</sup>

The sanctuary was at this time still wrongly dated to the reign of Yashovarman (889–c.915), but it was already described as an exceptional building within classical Angkorian art, with special mention made of its tiny dimensions and the extraordinary intricacy of its ornamentation.<sup>87</sup>

Architectural and art historical documentation of the temple began in 1916 under the leadership of Henri Parmentier. Due to the lack of roads and the overgrown forests all around, the temple was virtually inaccessible, but in December 1923 it was visited by André Malraux, who had several details of the reliefs on the south sanctuary tower removed, so that he could sell them on the art market. This notorious “Malraux affair” highlighted the need to protect the ruined temple.<sup>88</sup> In 1924, Parmentier led a project to clean and conserve the walls, which revealed a number of hitherto unknown carvings.<sup>89</sup> During the project, the artworks retrieved from Malraux were restored to their original position. Reconstruction of the buildings in the sanctuary area, which were in a mournfully ruined state, was carried out between 1931 and 1936, led by Henri Marchal: using what was then the most modern method of modern conservation, anastylosis,<sup>90</sup> the stones on the ground were documented and identified, the still standing parts of the buildings were taken to pieces, and then the entire temple was rebuilt, using as many of the original stones as possible, and filling in the gaps with substitute material of a different colour. The walls were reinforced with concrete where necessary.<sup>91</sup> The primary objective of the restoration, in Marchal’s view, was to bring back the uniform style of the complex as it had been when originally completed: “*Le temple reprend ainsi son aspect intégral de jadis.*”<sup>92</sup> Two prestigious pediments were not restored to their presumed original position, and the surface of the wall was left blank in those places. One of the pediments is in the National Museum

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<sup>86</sup> *Chronique*. BEFEO, vol. 16, no. 5, 1916, 98–103.

<sup>87</sup> “...l’autre, le Bantài Srëi, peut compter parmi ce que l’art classique à ses débuts a exécuté de plus gracieux ; le monument très complet offre dans ses formes réduites une sculpture des plus variées et d’un haut intérêt archéologique.” *Chronique*. BEFEO, vol. 16, no. 5, 1916, 99.

<sup>88</sup> André Malraux (1901–1976), French writer, was French Minister of Cultural Affairs in 1945–1946. In 1923, Malraux, his wife and a friend travelled together to the then almost inaccessible Banteay Srei, where they removed some bas-reliefs, intending to sell them to museums. The French authorities prevented the artworks from being taken abroad, and at the end of a lengthy trial, Malraux was acquitted. The writer turned the incident into a literary work titled *La voie royale*, published in 1930.

<sup>89</sup> Marchal 1933, 1.

<sup>90</sup> The technique of anastylosis was devised on Java by a specialist team of monument conservation engineers led by Stein Callenfels. Marchal travelled to Java in 1930 to study the new method, which he used when he started work on restoring Banteay Srei in 1931.

<sup>91</sup> Marchal 1933, 59.

<sup>92</sup> Marchal 1951, 58.

in Phnom Penh, while the other is in the Musée Guimet, Paris, where it has been one of the highlights of the permanent collection since 1936.<sup>93</sup> Aiming for a uniform style, of course, always comes with the risk of inaccuracies in the reconstruction. Based on subsequent investigation of the restored state of the complex of buildings, it is difficult to judge whether every component of every building was actually put back in its original position during renovation. This must be borne in mind when examining the bas-reliefs, especially with regard to their present-day location.

Following the temple's discovery in 1914, it did not take long for Banteay Srei to acquire world fame thanks to its intricately decorated walls, and the architectural and art historical analysis of the complex has remained one of the most fundamental themes in the literature on Angkor over the last century. Since the first study was published by Henri Parmentier in 1919 (*L'Art d'Indravarman*),<sup>94</sup> followed by a further single-volume monograph in 1926 (revised 1929),<sup>95</sup> the date of construction of certain buildings in the complex has – as I mentioned above – formed a recurring subject of dispute. This interdisciplinary discourse came about in 1926, when Parmentier postulated that the temple was founded in the tenth century, but substantially rebuilt and expanded some three centuries later. The 1926 monograph did not, of course, contain the results of later excavations, published in an array of works by architectural, linguistic, art historical and archaeological researchers of Banteay Srei. The debate surrounding the dates is fired by questions arising partly from the different styles of the inscriptions, partly from discrepancies in the dates given in the inscriptions, and partly from the stylistic analysis of the sanctuary's decorations. Besides carrying out stylistic and structural examinations of the architectural elements, and translating and interpreting the inscriptions, further decisive clues towards resolving the question of dating Banteay Srei may be provided by undertaking art historical analyses and comparative iconographical inspections of the bas-reliefs on the walls in the temple complex and of the surviving sculptures in the round that are now in museum collections, and in the present paper I focus in particular on the costumes worn by the figures portrayed in the stone carvings.

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<sup>93</sup> Inventory numbers NMPP Ka1660 and MG 18913.

<sup>94</sup> Parmentier 1919, 1–98.

<sup>95</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926.

## 5. HISTORICAL DETAILS ABOUT WHEN BANTEAY SREI WAS BUILT AND ITS FOUNDER

During excavations at Banteay Srei, eleven Sanskrit or Khmer inscriptions<sup>96</sup> were discovered carved into doorposts or onto stelae. The inscriptions contain dates within a time span of three and a half centuries. The floor plan of the temple and the close, almost touching arrangement of the inner buildings can also most probably be explained by subsequent reconstructions of the inner enclosure.

List of inscriptions discovered at Banteay Srei (*see map 3*):

	location	language	date	excavated	translations	subject
K869	2nd eastern gopura	Sanskrit			Cœdès	Contains a detail of the text visible on the founding stele. 2 sandstone tiles, probably brought here from elsewhere, as their colour is different from that on the doorpost. Bears the name <b>Yajnavaraha</b> .
K 568	3rd eastern gopura, western gate, south side of inner doorpost	58 lines Sanskrit			Finot 5 <sup>97</sup>	Tells of King Sri Srindravarmavibudha (Srindravarman), who wisely listened to his royal tutor, <b>Yajnavaraha</b> .
K 569	3rd eastern gopura, western gate, north side of inner doorpost	a/ 10 lines Khmer b/26 lines Khmer	a/ 01 April 1011 ( <i>Shaka era</i> 933) b/ 04 August 1306 ( <i>Shaka era</i> 1226)	1924	Finot 4.1-2	2 parts with different dates. 01 April 1011: mentions Sri Srindradeva ( <b>Srindravarman</b> ). Sri Jayavarmadeva Paramsvradapa ( <b>Jayavarman VII?</b> ) and Vrah Guru <b>Yajnavaraha</b> . During the reign of Jayavarman VII, the royal official donated firewood in honour of Sri Tribhuvanamaheshvara of Ishvarapura.
K 570	3rd eastern gopura, eastern gate,	22 lines Sanskrit and 7	969 ( <i>Shaka era</i>	1924 IC 1. 144-145	Finot 1	Mentions <b>Jayavarman V</b> (Sri Jayavarmadeva), who makes a donation in honour of Sri

<sup>96</sup> Claude Jacques hypothesises that the Sanskrit inscriptions address the deities, hence the use of the ritual language. The Sanskrit texts, written in verse, greet the deity, and then record the name of the person who founded and made donations to the temple, their family, their meretricious deeds and the size of their donation. The Khmer inscriptions, by contrast, are in prose, and list the estates and grants of the temple, and record royal decrees on the foundation or maintenance of the temple. Jacques 2012, 18.

<sup>97</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 70.

	south side of inner doorpost	lines Khmer	891)			Tribhuvanamaheshvara.
K 571	3rd eastern gopura, eastern gate, north side of inner doorpost	33 lines Khmer		1924 IC VIII. 168	Finot 2	Donations arriving in Ishvarapura from the surrounding villages, e.g. rice, ghee, sesame seeds, servants.
K 572	3rd eastern gopura, western gate, north side of outer doorpost	12 lines Khmer	01 April 1011 ( <i>Shaka era</i> 933)	1924	Finot 3	Sri <b>Suryavamadeva</b> makes a donation in honour of his chief official, Sindura Sri <b>Tribhuvanamaheshvara</b> . Sindura's parents are Vap Vrah Prasada and Chlon Parabrahma
K842a	4th eastern gopura	Sanskrit		Marchal 1936	Cœdès	The ruler received <i>Shivacarya</i> from his guru, <b>Yajnavaraha</b> . Founded by
K842b	4th eastern gopura	Sanskrit and Khmer		Marchal 1936	Cœdès	Guru <b>Yajnavaraha</b> and his nephew in honour of <i>Shiva Sri Tribhuvanamaheshvara</i> , who erected a <b>linga</b> in the central sanctuary. <i>Vishnukumara</i> copied the " <i>Shiva Samhita</i> " <sup>98</sup> and the <i>Kasikavrtti</i> , and then also the <i>Parameshvara</i> .
K783	1st western gopura, south doorpost	Sanskrit		Cœdès 1934 (Rapport 1934)	Cœdès	<b>Yajnavaraha</b> had statues erected in honour of <i>Shiva</i> and <i>Parvati</i> .
K 573	North sanctuary tower, eastern doorway, south side of doorpost	6 lines Sanskrit		1924	Finot 8	<b>Yajnavaraha</b> 's father and spiritual companion, <b>Prthivindrapandita</b> , who informs him of the meaning of the Shastras, erected a statue to Vishnu.
K574	South sanctuary tower, eastern doorway, south side of doorpost	2 lines Sanskrit		1924	Finot 7	<b>Jahnavi</b> , Yajnavaraha's sister, erected a linga in honour of <b>Ishvara</b> .
K575	South-western long building, northern gate, east side of doorpost	2 lines Sanskrit		1924	Finot 6	<b>Yajnavaraha</b> erected a statue in honour of <b>Vagisvari</b> and two statues in honour of <b>Guru Vidya</b> .

<sup>98</sup> The term *samhita* means an edited or combined text or set of texts. All Hindu texts could be referred to as *samhita*, but the term tends to be reserved for the most archaic parts of the Vedas, typically those texts that were passed down through the centuries orally, not only in writing.



The north and south sanctuary towers and the south-western long building in the second enclosure each held one brief inscription in Sanskrit,<sup>99</sup> while five longer texts in Sanskrit and Khmer were found on the doorposts of the third eastern gopura.<sup>100</sup> During later restoration work, additional inscriptions were uncovered: a twin panel in Sanskrit on the second eastern gopura,<sup>101</sup> a Sanskrit inscription on the door frame of the first western gopura,<sup>102</sup> and texts in Sanskrit and Khmer on both sides of a stele located close to the fourth eastern gopura.<sup>103</sup> Three of the eleven inscriptions included dates. Two of the Khmer texts carved into the door frame of the third eastern gopura (K572 and K569) include the date 01 April 1011. However, in another part of K569 can be read the date 04 August 1306. The Khmer and Sanskrit inscriptions on the founding stele located close to the eastern main gate of the temple complex feature the dates 22 April 967 and 03 July 968, as dates connected to the founding of the temple. The dates in question are therefore the consecutive years 967 and 968, 1011 half a century later, and the much later 1306, and these must be reckoned with in our attempts to establish the chronology of the sanctuary.

As mentioned earlier, Henri Parmentier, in his first study, published in 1919,<sup>104</sup> dated the construction of Banteay Srei to the age of Indravarman, i.e. the second half of the ninth century; a short while later, however, Philippe Stern, basing his hypothesis on the style of the ornamentation in the temple complex, believed that it must have been built a hundred years later.<sup>105</sup> Dating in those days was estimated from the artistic distinguishing features and the stone inscriptions that had already been discovered.

The monographic work on Banteay Srei that was first published in 1926 and revised in 1929 dated construction of the temple to the period when Jayavarman V was the monarch (968–1000), while Louis Finot's epigraphic analyses led him to conclude that the buildings of the first enclosure (three sanctuary towers, two libraries and connecting buildings) were built during the reign of Srinravarman (1296–1307). Dating the gate pavilions was a matter of less conclusiveness, especially because the inscriptions on the doorposts of the third eastern gopura included dates from both the tenth and the fourteenth centuries. Complicating the situation even further, although the inscription on the wall of

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<sup>99</sup> K573, K574, K575.

<sup>100</sup> K568, K569, K570, K571, K572.

<sup>101</sup> K869.

<sup>102</sup> K783.

<sup>103</sup> K842. Now held in the storage facilities of Conservation d'Angkor.

<sup>104</sup> Parmentier 1919, 1–98.

<sup>105</sup> Stern 1927, 184–8.

the first western gopura only included one date, 1304, the text also mentioned the name of Yajnavaraha, who lived in the tenth century. According to Parmentier's revised hypothesis, all the buildings in the first enclosure were made during the second stage of construction, that is, during the reign of Indravarman II (1220–1243). He based this supposition not only on the written sources, but also on the design of the roofs and on the types of external ornamental motifs used on the peaks of the roofs, opining that these decorative elements clearly indicated a later date of construction, and that as such, the examples on this temple were the only ones from the period in question to survive.<sup>106</sup>

The question of the two different dates therefore arose as early as 1926. The first investigations revealed a number of incompatible phenomena that suggested Banteay Srei had been constructed in several phases. Interpretation of the inscriptions led to the hypothesis that the building, originally erected during the reign of Jayavarman V (968–1000), was later extended and rebuilt in a rather surprising archaicising style.<sup>107</sup> The three inscriptions on the doorposts of the north and south sanctuary towers and the south-western long building of the second enclosure<sup>108</sup> do not reveal any dates, but they commemorate the installation of statues in the sanctuary towers. In the lines where the names of the people inaugurating the statues are given, besides Guru *Yajnavaraha*,<sup>109</sup> the founder of the sanctuary, can also be found the names of his brother, Guru *Vishnukumara*, his sister, *Jahnavi*,<sup>110</sup> and his father, *Prthivindrapandita*, who is described in the text as “understanding every sense of *shastra*”.<sup>111</sup> The inscription on the western doorpost of the third eastern gopura is dated 1304, and yet it refers to *Yajnavaraha* as being the name of a guru living in this period, that is, the fourteenth century.<sup>112</sup> Taking this as his basis, Louis Finot concluded that the famous guru lived at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, during the reign of Srindravarman (1296–1308).<sup>113</sup> The epithet “*obedient to Yajnavaraha*”<sup>114</sup> is mentioned in the text in connection with the name of Mahurendrasuri

<sup>106</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 3.

<sup>107</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 1.

<sup>108</sup> K573, K574, K575.

<sup>109</sup> The *yajna* at the beginning of his name means “fire sacrifice”, that is a sacrifice made to the fire god *Agni*.

<sup>110</sup> Donations from high-ranking women were not unknown in Hindu culture. In South India, especially in the territory of the erstwhile Chola Kingdom, inscriptions written between the 8th and 12th centuries mostly record the names of female donors. The Virupaksha temple in Pattadakal, discussed in this paper, was built by a queen, Lokamahadevi, whose name as founder is preserved in an inscription. Cummings 2014, 326.

<sup>111</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 93.

<sup>112</sup> K569.

<sup>113</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 126.

<sup>114</sup> “*narendraguru-Yajñavarahadhīmad-vaśya*” is translated into French as: “*obéissant avec intelligence au précepteur royal Yajñavaraha*” Finot 1928, 47, Cœdès 1929, 289.

(or Mahurendrapandita), chief minister of Jayavarman VIII (1243–1296) and later protégé of Srindravarman.<sup>115</sup>

Going against the opinion of Louis Finot, in 1929, even before the text of the founding stele was translated, George Cœdès argued with conviction that the inscriptions referring to the family members of Yajnavaraha on the doorposts of the sanctuary towers were made in the tenth century, his assumption resting on the regular patterns found in Khmer palaeography.<sup>116</sup> Cœdès's conclusion was not only drawn from his palaeographic analysis of the inscriptions in Banteay Srei. Parmentier had in the meantime discovered two additional inscriptions<sup>117</sup> – in 1928, at the tenth-century Prasat Sek Ta Tuy,<sup>118</sup> and in 1929, at Prasat Trapeang Khyang,<sup>119</sup> also from the tenth century and regarded as the “identical twin” to Sek Ta Tuy –, whose texts reinforced the postulation that the temple erected in honour of *Tribhuvanamaheshvara* (Lord of the Three Realms) at Banteay Srei was already around in the tenth century.<sup>120</sup> The inscription found in Sek Ta Tuy commemorates the inauguration of a *linga misrabhoga*,<sup>121</sup> likewise dedicated to *Tribhuvanamaheshvara*. Its text states that the *linga* was erected by Yajnavaraha, grandson of the ruler Harshavarman I (900–922) and guru to Jayavarman V. Even when he learned of these texts, Louis Finot insisted that the identically named guru who built the sanctuaries at Banteay Srei was a contemporary of Srindravarman, who was not only the namesake of his – presumably highly esteemed – forebear from three centuries earlier, but

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<sup>115</sup> Finot's conjecture that Yajnavaraha lived contemporaneously with Srindravarman at the end of the 13th century would imply that the statues erected by him, his brother and his parents, and the sanctuary towers accommodating them, were created at the end of the 13th or beginning of the 14th century. If this were the case, the artistic style of Banteay Srei would have to be moved to a different part of the chronology. In Finot's view, when the temple was reconstructed, strict efforts were made to maintain the original style of decoration in the newly produced carvings, which explains why the later extensions are stylistically indistinguishable from the buildings erected earlier. He suggested that the archaism employed by the 14th-century renovators was not restricted to the style and technique of decoration, but that even the type of script used in the inscriptions followed precedents from the 10th century. Finot therefore claimed that the archaism could be demonstrated even in a palaeographic sense, although this has not been corroborated by any more recent researcher. Archaism is not unprecedented in Angkorian art, and it seems buildings were commonly reconstructed in keeping with the original style. When setting out with the intention of archaism, the style of ornamentation and even the method of carving could be relatively easily reproduced. At the same time, however, it is hard to imagine that efforts would have been made to revive a style of writing that had clearly changed over the centuries, for this would have had hardly any stylistic significance at all.

<sup>116</sup> Cœdès 1929, 293.

<sup>117</sup> K. 620 and K. 662.

<sup>118</sup> IK. 213,02. Finot 1928, 46.

<sup>119</sup> IK. 561 Prasat Sek Ta Tuy and Prasat Trapeang Khyang lie about 50 km to the south-east of Banteay Srei, not far from Koh Ker. The connections between the three temple complexes would form the subject of separate research.

<sup>120</sup> Finot 1928, 46; Boulbet and Dagens 1973, 50.

<sup>121</sup> The administrative units of the Angkorian state were based on a network of temples of varying sizes, which were related to one another in a hierarchic system. The so-called *misrabhoga* temples belonged to a large central sanctuary, sometimes even a state temple; together they constituted a single administrative and ritualistic “unit”. For more on this, see: Lustig 2009, 53; Hall 2010, 164.

who also gave the statue he erected in Banteay Srei the same name as the linga mentioned in the inscription from Sek Ta Tuy.<sup>122</sup>

In the paper he published in 1929, Cœdès was the first to call Finot's hypothesis into question, relying on the text of another inscription found in Sek Ta Tuy, this time in Khmer. Written during the reign of Suryavarman I (1002–1049), the inscription mentions *Vnam Vrahmana*, a name that appears in exactly the same form on one of the inscriptions in Banteay Srei. During the palaeographic and epigraphic examination of the inscriptions found on the two buildings erected in honour of *Shiva*, at Prasat Trapeang Khyang and Sek Ta Tuy, it transpired that the *lingas* raised on these two sites shared a close ritual connection with the *Tribhuvanamaheshvara linga*, the central statue in Banteay Srei. The inscriptions dated them to the very beginning of the eleventh century, which in Cœdès's view clearly proves that the linga in question and the sanctuary that housed it, that is Banteay Srei, must have existed by the dawn of the eleventh century, and therefore its founder, Guru Yajnavaraha, must have lived in the tenth century. It should also be taken into account that the chief deity at Banteay Srei has the same name as the chief deity at Prasat Thom in Koh Ker, constructed decades previously. The central sanctuary of Koh Ker was built in the first half of the tenth century, during the reign of Jayavarman IV. The formal similarities between this building and Banteay Srei are striking. In addition to the tenth-century Koh Ker (previously called *Lingapura*), *lingas* were erected in honour of *Tribhuvanamaheshvara* at three further sites, and both the written sources and the stylistic comparisons point towards the conclusion that all three of them were made during the tenth century.

In the 1930s, monument excavation and restoration work led by Henri Marchal revealed hitherto unseen sections of building, some of which bore additional written sources, which corroborated the notion that the complex was originally founded in the tenth century.<sup>123</sup>

The final proof determining when the temple was founded came with Marchal's discovery of the founding stele in 1936. Written in Sanskrit on one side and Khmer on the other, the inscription<sup>124</sup> states that the temple was founded by Guru Yajnavaraha and his brother in honour of *Shiva Sri Tribhuvanamaheshvara*, and that its "consecration" took

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<sup>122</sup> Finot 1928, 49.

<sup>123</sup> *EFEO Rapports*. June 1934, 1936.

<sup>124</sup> K. 842.

place on 22 April 967 with the erection of a *linga* in the central sanctuary.<sup>125</sup> Yajnavaraha was a guru in the court of Rajendravarman II, and presumably the tutor of the future ruler, Jayavarman V; he was himself a member of the royal family, for his grandfather had been the monarch Harshavarman I. The inscriptions tell us that he studied philosophy and science, founded several sanctuaries and created water reservoirs. He therefore could easily have founded the temple to *Shiva* that is now known as Banteay Srei, in 967, the last year of the rule of Rajendravarman II. The Khmer text was made one year later, in 968. It includes a royal decree, ordering the temple estate and the establishments of Yajnavaraha, the “*Vrah Guru*”, to be combined, and therefore seemingly granting permission for the guru to exercise control over the entire estate.<sup>126</sup> Judging from the date, this decree may have been issued by the recently ascended king, Jayavarman V. The temple was definitely in continuous “use”, as evinced by the inscriptions on the walls that were written centuries later. None of the inscriptions, however, provide any data that could be used to reconstruct with greater accuracy the history of the conversion or reconstruction of the complex of buildings and of the carved decorations adorning them. Furthermore, there are no suitable direct sources available concerning the statues that were removed from or relocated within the temple’s buildings.<sup>127</sup>

To summarise the problem of dating, all the evidence implies that Banteay Srei underwent two periods of construction, although determining exactly what was built when is beyond the means of the available information. During an architectural analysis of the temple, it was revealed that the building technology that can be reconstructed for those

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<sup>125</sup> Claude Jacques reminds us that the exact date given for the statue inauguration ceremony is not necessarily the same as when the building was finally completed, because the tower accommodating the statue – presumably together with several other parts of the building – was only built after this ceremony. The building, and all the decorative carvings adorning it, may therefore have been made much later than the year in which the statue was erected. This also has an effect on investigations into stylistic periodisation. Jacques 1992, 57.

<sup>126</sup> It is, of course, entirely possible that a guru lived here in the thirteenth century as well, who shared a name with his forebear, Yajnavaraha, and who commemorated his forebear’s activities in inscription K569.

<sup>127</sup> Our knowledge is further complicated by the twelfth-century inscriptions K194 and K383, found in Phnom Sandak, in the north of modern-day Cambodia, more than 200 km from Banteay Srei. The texts provide a detailed report of the sanctuaries founded by Suryavarman II and his guru, Divakarapandita, and of the donations they made to the sanctuaries. They state that the sanctuary was built by *Guru Vrah* during the reign of Jayavarman V (Paravamiraloka), and that it was later given by Suryavarman II to Divakarapandita, who restored it to its original condition. C&D, 150, “*A K.S. Īcvarapura, œuvre du seigneur Vrah Guru du règne de S.M. Paramavīraloka, que S.M. Ārī Sūryavarmadeva a donné de nouveau au vénérable seigneur Guru Ārī Divakarapaṇḍita, tous les terrains et esclaves du temple que le respectable (padamūla) avait vendus pour payer d’autres . . . , le vénérable seigneur Guru Ārī Divakarapaṇḍita les a tous rachetés, et il a restauré le temple et le culte çivaïte de ce temple, comme au temps du seigneur Vrah Guru*”. The inscription found in Phnom Sandak therefore reveals that the complex of buildings erected there in the tenth century was rebuilt in the twelfth century. The consensus among researchers is that Banteay Srei was also reconstructed around this time, and perhaps at other times too. It is not unimaginable that the reconstruction of Banteay Srei was also decreed by Suryavarman II.

parts of the building once regarded as fourteenth-century relics was actually typical of the tenth century. Henri Marchal, and later also Thierry Zéphir, concurred with the hypothesis put forward by Louis Finot that this did not exclude the possibility that some of the buildings were made in the fourteenth century, but using archaic building techniques.<sup>128</sup>

In my opinion, this subsequent rebuilding – or, as Parmentier describes it, “duality of construction” – would also explain why the first enclosure is so narrow, and why its sanctuary towers, libraries and outer longitudinal hall are so unusually closely “bunched together”.<sup>129</sup> It was previously assumed that the location of the building visible today, especially the three towers, originally housed a single sanctuary building. Although this idea seems reasonable when the floor plan is considered, there is no evidence for this, and indeed, the inscriptions carved into the doorposts of both side sanctuaries refer, by name, to the siblings of Yajnavaraha, who lived in the tenth century. It cannot be ruled out, of course, that these inscriptions were carved at a much later date but preserving historic tradition, celebrating the achievements of people from the tenth century as a means of self-legitimation, but once again, there is no evidence to support this idea either.

The study by Claude Jacques entitled *Moats and Enclosure Walls of the Khmer Temples*, published in 2004, recapped all the available written sources and architectural and stylistic elements that can be used to clarify the problem of dating. Judging from the inscriptions found in Banteay Srei, the temple was more or less in constant use from its founding in 967, presumably as far as the fourteenth century.<sup>130</sup> In Jacques’s view, despite its multiple conversions and reconstructions, the temple still perfectly preserved its uniform artistic style. It is for this reason that I am convinced that a close and detailed iconographic examination of the figures in the carvings, together with an analysis of the compositional and representational techniques with which they were made, will prove an invaluable aid in further clarifying what we know about the dates of the temple complex.

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<sup>128</sup> Zéphir 1997, 124.

<sup>129</sup> Marchal 1965, 285.

<sup>130</sup> Jacques 2004, 5.

## 6. THE PRINCIPLES OF TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE IN ANGKOR

One of the defining problems of my research was the fact that, despite the availability of written records about the sanctuary area of Banteay Srei, none of them shine a light on the architectural and artistic rules applied when the temple was founded, that is, on the precise religious inclination, level of education and intent of the founder. New kinds of research findings would ensue were we ever to discover the concrete architectural or iconographic text that was known in the royal court of Angkor in the tenth century, but it appears that even in India it is impossible to identify the holy books that were deemed acceptable by the religious and secular leaders in the given time and area. To quote the words of Banerjea, “*If we carefully analyse the large number of available iconographic and iconometric texts, we seldom fail to find differences, however slight they may be.*”<sup>131</sup>

Although texts referring to architectural rules can be gleaned even from the earliest written Hindu sources, the Vedas, until the compilation of the *Vastu Shastra* in the sixth century, there was no systematic set of guidelines governing architecture in India. The literal meaning of the *Vastu Shastra* is “the science of architecture”,<sup>132</sup> and in addition to setting forth specifications for architectural design, the text deals with every branch of the arts pertaining to the construction of a building. The text is partly concerned with the theoretical and philosophical aspects of architectural design, while other parts provide practical principles, accompanied by explanatory diagrams. It encompasses town planning, the design of residential dwellings and the canon pertaining to ritualistic buildings, as well as the structural criteria for pictorial depictions, including the location and function of interior fittings. There are chapters on edifices erected for ritual purposes, secular buildings, homes and military establishments, as well as guidelines on urban design, garden planning, and the construction of drainage systems, water reservoirs and enclosure walls. The *Vastu Shastra* is not a single corpus of canonised texts, as countless variants were drawn up in the different regions of India, and certain parts were reformulated with different titles and content over the centuries. Among the books of the *Vastu Shastra*, the iconographic principles for pictorial portrayals can be found in the body of texts

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<sup>131</sup> Banerjea 1956, 332.

<sup>132</sup> The Sanskrit term *vastu* may perhaps be more generally translated as (architectural) *realisation*, but it does in fact have a deeper philosophical meaning.

collectively known as the *Shilpa Shastra*. *Shilpa*, meaning “art”, is an umbrella term for sixty-four branches of the arts. The system of principles regulates in minute detail the proportions of pictorial depictions compared with each other and with the building accommodating them, describes the materials to be used and the method of preparation, and also exhaustively discusses the rules on iconography. In addition, it devotes particular attention to the ritual order of production and use.<sup>133</sup> In Indian Hindu architecture there are two fundamental schools or movements, which can be distinguished even in terms of geographical location. In the south there is the *Dravida* or *Maya* school, while in the north can be found the *Nagara* (*Arya*) or *Vishwakarma* styles, and their traditions of the *Shilpa Shastra* differ substantially from one another.<sup>134</sup> The most detailed and presumably most ancient collection of *Shilpa Shastra* texts for the southern school, which still survives in manuscript, is the *Manasara Shilpa Shastra*.<sup>135</sup> Consisting of over 10,000 lines, the text is divided into seventy chapters, which separately discuss the principles for depicting individual deities and the detailed rules on proportions, attributes and attire, jewels and items of clothing that convey rank, hairstyles, the design and decoration of different types of building, and the rituals involved in creating and using all these artworks. The text describes the rules governing the proportions and dimensions of the piece to be created, as well as its “meaning”, although it has nothing at all to say when it comes to matters of artistic style. Consequently, when attempting to identify the holy text referred to when a particular complex of buildings was created, stylistic questions can be disregarded, and we can concentrate solely on iconographic issues and those pertaining to spatial arrangement.

The sacred buildings in Angkor, as in India, were designed and decorated in accordance with strict iconographic principles. Traces of the rules on Hindu iconography that originated in India can be seen in practice in the surviving works of Khmer architecture, but the organisational and structural principles and the focuses of the subject matter are so significantly different from those in India that Khmer architecture must be treated as a distinct, independent system. During the golden age of the Angkor Empire

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<sup>133</sup> I consider it necessary to note here that all the way through my studies I have endeavoured to bear in mind that the making of images in Indian and Khmer tradition was always a ritual activity, and an art historical analysis of the pictures can only be carried out from a conventional European perspective by emphasising different characteristics.

<sup>134</sup> Shluka 1958, 57.

<sup>135</sup> The first analytical examinations of the *Manasara* texts, with translations of excerpts, were published by Ram Raz (*Essay on the Architecture of the Hindus*. 1834, London) and, almost a century later, by Kumar Prasanna Acharya (*Dictionary of Hindu Architecture*. 1927). With minor changes, Acharya’s work was republished in 1946 as *An Encyclopaedia of Hindu Architecture*. The surviving Orissan Sanskrit variant of the *Shilpa* text, the *Shilpa Prakasa*, was published in a critical edition in 1966: Bhattaraka, Ramachandra Mahapatra Kaula: *Shilpa Prakasa Medieval Orissan Sanskrit Text on Temple Architecture*. 1966.)



(9th–14th century), almost every single monarch launched his own ambitious construction projects, which resulted in the erection of temple pyramids surrounded by cities. The primary objective of founding a temple was *punya*,<sup>136</sup> or merit-making, which the king performed either as an individual or as a “representative” of his people. The establishment of a holy site was also a means of expressing a sense of responsibility for the nation and of conveying the desire to offer protection. At the same time, by constructing a new temple, the ruler ensured that the cosmic social order would be maintained and recreated.<sup>137</sup> The king demonstrated his ability to organise the empire by taming nature itself: regulating the water by constructing gigantic reservoirs and systems of channels, and shaping the land by building artificial islands and sanctuary hills. Through his transformation of the environment, the ruler proved that he possessed creative power that was comparable with that of the gods. In line with the traditions followed in India, by creating an earthly counterpart of *Mount Meru*<sup>138</sup> surrounded by an artificial body of water representing the universal ocean, the new city, or *angkor*<sup>139</sup> was not just a spectacular demonstration of the ruler’s power and divinity, but also a symbol of the regeneration of the order within the empire. The state temple, as a manifestation of the ruler’s imperial power, was in fact a replica of the supernatural realm of Shiva.

It was for this very reason that the orientation and design of a Hindu temple was a task of extreme complexity and distinction, requiring advanced aptitude in astronomy, mathematics, geography, number mysticism and, last but not least, theoretical and practical engineering. Experts specialising in the construction of temples collaborated as royal officers of the very highest rank. The leader of the construction was the *sthapaka*, the Brahmin architect, who was fully conversant with the conditions laid down in the *Vastu Shastra* and had the requisite architectural, sculptural and engineering skills.<sup>140</sup> The name of only one Angkorian architect has survived in the inscriptions: Kavindrarmathana was

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<sup>136</sup> The term *punya* is used in Hinduism to refer to an act of merit or earning merit, which can be manifested in both a physical and a spiritual sense.

<sup>137</sup> For details see: Cummings 2014, 11.

<sup>138</sup> According to the Hindu and Buddhist cosmology, as well as Jainist doctrine, Mount Meru is the centre of the Universe, the axis of the world, and the home of the gods. It is an “axis mundi”, a symbolic gateway between the mythological planes of existence. The gods of Hindu mythology live on Mount Meru, which rises from the middle of the Universal Ocean; the mountain has five peaks, symbolising divine creative energy, and four corners, representing the cardinal points. Divine fertility in Hindu religious philosophy, particularly in Khmer Hinduism, is expressed in the Shivalinga cult.

<sup>139</sup> The Khmer word “*angkor*” means “city” or “capital”, and is equivalent to the Sanskrit “*nagara*”.

<sup>140</sup> Gulia 2007, 47.

the “minister of architectural affairs” under Rajendravarman II.<sup>141</sup> His name is also mentioned in several hymns of praise. He designed two state temples for Rajendravarman II: East Mebon, dedicated to the ancestors (built 952), and Pre Rup (built 961); he almost certainly also designed Baksei Chamkrong, a sanctuary built on a brick pyramid during the reign of Rajendravarman II, but it is not at all certain that this temple was founded by the ruler. It is generally assumed that the creation of Baksei Chamkrong was connected to the Buddhist minister Kavindrarithana. However, it is remarkable that an expert who was, according to the sources, a follower of Buddhism, should design temples dedicated to *Shiva* in accordance with Hindu architectural principles.

Unfortunately there are no known written relics of any kind to inform us of the texts that Khmer architects relied upon, but it can be reasonably assumed that they observed the architectural principles that originated from India. Some of the Angkorian inscriptions refer to Shaiva texts called the *Agamas*,<sup>142</sup> which were therefore known at the time, and whose practical instructions, such as those related to architectural design, were presumably followed.<sup>143</sup> Inscription K842 from Banteay Srei,<sup>144</sup> like inscription K300 from Angkor Wat, mentions the Shaiva text, the *Parameshvara Agama*. Each *Agama* traditionally consists of four chapters, and one of the chapters in the *Parameshvara Agama*, the *Kriyapada*, deals with rituals and with the guidelines for designing the buildings where the ceremonies are performed.

These stone inscriptions prove that Brahmanic literature and Indian Hindu traditions were known in the Angkor Empire, although there are no extant direct written sources to determine whether or not Angkorian literature had its own sets of principles, similar to those in the Indian texts *Mayamata* or *Manasara*.<sup>145</sup> There are also no surviving medieval books or notes from the age of the Angkor Empire pertaining to sculpture or to architectural or iconographic rules. Dating the different text variants of the original *Puranas* is problematic in itself. In the case of Hindu buildings constructed in India, many of our assertions about the texts employed by architects are based on conjecture. In Angkor, meanwhile, based on the floor plans and iconographic characteristics of the

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<sup>141</sup> According to extant written sources, Kavindrarithana was a Buddhist. The fact that he held one of the highest positions in the royal court leads us to conclude that Buddhism was accepted alongside Hinduism, and may have been a widely practised religion in tenth-century Cambodia. Jessup 2011, 71.

<sup>142</sup> The *Agamas* were collections of texts that varied with each school of thought. Besides texts on cosmology, philosophy and epistemology, they also contained techniques of yoga and meditation, mantras, and descriptions of rituals and the principles of temple architecture.

<sup>143</sup> Miltzer O’Naghten 2000, 37.

<sup>144</sup> Filliozat 1981, 79.

<sup>145</sup> Miltzer O’Naghten 2000, 37.

temple complexes and sanctuaries, it can be assumed that the *Shilpa Shastra* texts were known and used, at least to an extent, because the architectural organisational principles contained within the texts can be recognised in every sanctuary in Angkor, albeit sometimes only partially.

In my opinion, despite the lack of sources, we should assume, particularly in the case of state temples, that observance of the formal architectural criteria was not the only consideration borne in mind during the design process, and that the conventions of the age, as well as earlier precedents, local religious and philosophical ideas, and political and economic interests, all exerted an influence on the outcome. The design of a temple was a collaborative effort, involving the patron, the “spiritual master”, who was conversant in the ritual texts, the architect, who ensured adherence to the principles, and the sculptor, who fully understood the rules governing the creation of images. During our investigations, it is important to take account of the fact that artistic interpretation could vary from master to master, or at least among the different workshops and schools.<sup>146</sup>

In addition to an investigation that takes the language and content of the inscriptions of Banteay Srei as its starting point, an analysis of the design and iconographic features of the decorations may also provide clues to uncovering the textual sources that were available at the time the sanctuary was constructed. When Banteay Srei was designed, some or other version of the Hindu principles for architecture and decorative art was definitely applied, for the internal arrangement of the temple complex and the basic iconographic features of the depictions adorning the buildings can be precisely recognised and identified as Hindu iconographic principles. However, in view of the difficulties that arise in dating Indian texts, it is extremely difficult to state with any certainty which set of principles formed the basis for the construction of the sanctuary complex or its iconographic concept. Banteay Srei, incidentally, is a classic example of the phenomenon in architectural design that Bruno Dagens referred to as “*more Indian than in India*”.<sup>147</sup> The design of the temple is a perfect reflection of the basic rules of Indian Hindu architecture. Let us take the gopuras of Banteay Srei as an example, for they were built exactly in

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<sup>146</sup> Here it should be noted that in his thesis, Martin Polkinghorne also wonders whether the artists who carved the reliefs knew how to read Sanskrit. In my opinion this question is irrelevant, because mythological stories were surely passed down by oral tradition, so both the artists and the devotees beholding their works would have known the legends, regardless of their level of education. During the construction of holy sites, the content and iconography of the sculpted decorations would have been supervised and influenced by the Brahmin leaders, while the composition and the method of depiction would, at least in part, have been determined by the personal talent and taste of the artist, as well as their level of artistic training, which does not necessarily imply that they were formally educated. Polkinghorne 2007b, 34

<sup>147</sup> “...comme plus <<indiens>> que les temples de l’Inde” Dagens 1994, 259.

accordance with the rules on gate structures set forth in the *Mayamata* or *Manasara*, in that they gradually diminish in size as one approaches the core of the sanctuary. It is particularly worth noting that this rule was not obeyed in modern-day India until the eleventh century, a hundred or so years after Banteay Srei was founded.

## 7. RELIGIOUS TRADITION IN BANTEAY SREI

For almost a century now, research into the Khmer civilisation of Angkor has constantly returned to questions regarding the presence, quality and intensity of the Indian cultural influence, reinterpreting and re-expressing our ideas about the Indianisation of the Southeast Asian region. It is not my concern in this paper to offer an opinion on this matter or to take sides in the scientific debate on the nature and extent of the process of Indianisation. Nevertheless, when examining the written sources and the extant material relics, it is impossible to ignore the undeniable fact that the sanctuaries and carvings discussed in this paper share a connection with the Hindu traditions of India.

During my research I have been mindful of Alexis Sanderson's conjecture (which I partly dispute) that the iconographic rules of Khmer art were not at all affected by the changing influence of different religious movements, and that the artistic style of Angkor followed its own traditions and developed independently. Whichever variant of Hinduism – or perhaps Buddhism – achieved primacy in the court of any given ruler, and therefore in general religious practice during that period, would – in Sanderson's view – exert little if any effect on the established and well-known iconographic principles and unique iconographic system of Khmer art. *"It is in any case implausible that even purely Indian rituals would not have taken on a Khmer character when performed by Khmers for Khmers, just as their images of Indian deities have a distinctive style and aesthetic quality while remaining within the parameters of an imported iconography."*<sup>148</sup> Nevertheless, although I also regard Angkorian art as having its own rules and autonomous system, I think it is impracticable to completely ignore the presence and influence of Indian cultural traditions.

The question of how extensively and deeply Indian mythology was known in Southeast Asia was first discussed in the 1920s by Nicolaas Johannes Krom in his analytical studies of the reliefs of Borobudur, Java. He contended that the sculptors would not have had any knowledge of what the canonised, written texts contained, but would have composed their scenes in accordance with instructions given to them by the literate priests, filling in the details as they saw fit. Krom asserted that the original scenes were often intentionally amended by the sculptors, who intentionally omitted details that they

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<sup>148</sup> Sanderson 2003, 379.

found incomprehensible or unacceptable, replacing them with additions of their own.<sup>149</sup> I personally side rather with Jan Fontein<sup>150</sup> in surmising that while the majority of the sculptors may indeed have been illiterate, this does not preclude them from being conversant with the mythological texts. Quite the contrary it is far more likely that they were very familiar with local variants of the legends, as part of their own oral tradition, and that they designed the scenes in accordance with their own knowledge. The iconographic principles, such as the essential details required when portraying a particular deity, would have been known by the artists at least as much as they were understood by the illiterate faithful, who were perfectly capable of interpreting the system of codes in the imagery. There are no primary sources from which to ascertain whether Khmer culture in the Angkor period was in the habit of passing on knowledge through spoken, musical or perhaps even dramatic traditions, so our hypotheses must rest on an analysis of today's architectural, artistic and folklore heritage.

All the nations in Southeast Asia developed their own variants of the Indian epics in their own local languages. The content was modified according to their own cultural traditions, belief systems and mythological stories. From the inscriptions found in Angkor, and even more so from the subjects portrayed in the decorations, it is clear that the legend of *Ramayana*, different texts from the *Puranas* and the *Mahabharata* were widely known.

Among the Hindu epics, *Ramayana* was unquestionably a powerful influence, dating back hundreds of years. Different variations on the epic have long permeated the folklore traditions in mainland Southeast Asia and on the islands.<sup>151</sup> Its Khmer variant, *Reamker*, is the “prototype” of Khmer literature and the influence of its style on literature and on various branches of the arts can be felt to this day, while its stories have for centuries provided the basic themes for works in the classical artistic genres.<sup>152</sup> Besides fine art, different schools of theatrical and movement art have long presented the legends

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<sup>149</sup> Krom, N. J. 1926, 128, *The life of Buddha on the stūpa of Barabudūr according to the Lalitavistara-text* / edited by Dr. N. J. Krom. 1926. The Hague: M. Nijhoff. Excerpts from the original Dutch text are cited in translation in: Jan Fontein 2000, 3.

<sup>150</sup> Fontein 2000, 4.

<sup>151</sup> The earliest translation of *Ramayana* is the Javanese text *Bhāttikāvya* (7th century). Further translations include: *Ramayana Kakavin* (Javanese), *Serat Ramayana* (Javanese), *Ramakien/Ramakirti* (Thai), *Lak Pha Lam* (Lao), *Hikayat Seri Rama* (Malay), *Rama Thagyin* (Burmese).

<sup>152</sup> The form of *Reamker* that is available to research today was completed between the 16th and 19th centuries. Several variants are known, and the style of language changes depending on the period when they were written. The first modern publication was in 1937, titled *Rioēn Ramakert*, which was based on two fragmentary palm-leaf manuscripts. This edition, legible only with difficulty, was not replaced by a version that strove for completeness until forty years later. In 1977 Saveros Pou published a critical edition of the two texts, including their translation into French, entitled *Ramakerti I and II*. A new translation of the epic, also in French, was published in 1978 by François Martini. The English-language critical edition was published in 1986, thanks to the efforts of Judit Jacob.

of *Reamker*. Artistic style, medium and technique may have changed throughout history, but the choice of subject matter is still very much defined by the great Indian epic.<sup>153</sup> Some scenes from *Ramayana* are depicted in Banteay Srei: the series of events relating to *Vali and Sugriva* can be seen in two places, while the *Abduction of Sita* and the *Demon Viradha Attacks Sita* appear on the pediments and lintels.

In addition to scenes from *Ramayana*, several episodes from the life of Krishna can also be seen in the depictions at Banteay Srei: *Krishna kills Kansa*, the *Burning of Khandava Forest*, and *Krishna Fighting a Lion and an Elephant*. These scenes reveal an awareness of the *Puranas*, especially the *Bhagavata Purana*.

The duel between *Bhima and Dushasana* is an episode from the *Mahabharata*. Despite the fact that not a single complete written artefact of the *Mahabharata* is known from modern-day Cambodia before the nineteenth century, scenes from the epic are often depicted in reliefs in Angkor, proving its uninterrupted presence in Khmer art and culture over many centuries.

When analysing the architectural and iconographic characteristics of Banteay Srei, the historical context in which it was created and the texts relating to the royal court, the knowledge and influence of Indian cultural traditions on all this is an unavoidable questions. Brahmin scholars from India, or who were at least educated in India, exerted a decisive influence on the royal courts of Rajendravarman II and Jayavarman V. A Khmer-language inscription<sup>154</sup> found in the sanctuary of Wat Enkosei informs us that the daughter of Rajendravarman II married a Brahmin named Divakarabhata, who was born in India near the river *Kalindi*. A new wave of Indian cultural influence may have joined the existing traditions in the Angkorian court thanks to the presence of Divakarabhata. *Kalindi* is one of the names for the Yamuna river, and the text from Wat Enkosai may refer to this. In the tenth century the region around the Yamuna river was part of the Rashtrakuta Empire, the most powerful state in India at the time. In the second half of the eighth century this empire created the Kailasanatha sanctuary, dedicated to Shiva, in modern-day

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<sup>153</sup> Almost the entire repertoire of the shadow puppet theatre (Khmer: speak dham) and the masked dance theatre (Khmer: Ikhon khol) consists of episodes from *Reamker*. The choreographers of the Royal Ballet of Cambodia have maintained a written version of *Reamker* for centuries, which has been continuously in use to teach the pieces. A sound recording of excerpts from its oral, recited version was made in 1960, performed by Ta Krut. The recording is held by the Bophana Center, and is accessible online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5B3g8O3yjsk> (last retrieved: 30 April 2018). The story of *Ramayana* still plays a major role today, not only in Cambodia, but more or less among all the peoples of Southeast Asia. I am kindly informed by Dr Gábor Vargyas that the Bru people of modern-day Vietnam, who have no Hindu cultural traditions of any kind, also keep alive some folk tales that recall the story of *Ramayana*.

<sup>154</sup> K 262. Coëdès 1937–66, 77. The inscription is in two languages. The Sanskrit inscription records, among other things, the religious foundations of Divakarabhata, wife of Rajendravarman II.

Ellora. My observations have led me to conclude that the choice of subject matter visible in the bas-reliefs on the walls of the sanctuary bears a striking similarity to the iconography found in Banteay Srei. I will deal with this matter in detail in chapter 17 of the present study.

The names of some of the Brahmin advisors to Rajendravarman II are known from surviving inscriptions. One advisor, *Kavindrarithana*, was – unlike Yajnavaraha – a follower of the Buddhist faith.<sup>155</sup> One of the inscriptions found in Banteay Kdei, meanwhile, seems to imply that Rajendravarman II, while erecting temples in honour of *Shiva*, was in fact a devotee of *Vishnu*.<sup>156</sup> The founder of Banteay Srei, Yajnavaraha, was the high priest of King Rajendravarman II (944–968), and also the guru (*Shivasharya*) of the future Jayavarman V. The high priest was a Shaiva, and it is conceivable that he was a follower of one of Shaivism’s oldest movements, the ascetic school of *Pashupata*;<sup>157</sup> this can at least be inferred from the phraseology used in the extant texts in Banteay Srei.<sup>158</sup> Furthermore, an undated inscription discovered in Wat Sithor<sup>159</sup> can also be associated with the reign of Jayavarman V: the text refers to a certain Kirtipandita, an adherent of Mahayana Buddhist doctrine, who was also proficient in the esoteric rites of *Yogatantra*.<sup>160</sup> According to the inscription, as the guru of the royal family he preached Buddhist teachings in the royal court and also conducted ceremonies. The same inscription, however, also extols Jayavarman V as ruling in the spirit of the Brahmanic teachings of

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<sup>155</sup> Cœdès 1968, 115. There are other sources (inscriptions and statues) that demonstrate the presence of the *Mahayana* school of Buddhism. Among the visual representations, the triple statue of Buddha-Lokeshvara-Vajrapani (MG14880), discovered in the sanctuary of Tuol Chi Tep, will be discussed later in the chapter on Banteay Srei-style male costumes.

<sup>156</sup> Finot 1925, 362. K532, XXXV. “*De son enfance à sa vieillesse, celui qui fut un acarya çivaïte, issu d’une pure famille vishnuïte, porta le nom bien justifié de Hr̥ṣīkeça.*” The inscription was installed by Shivacarya, who was the *hotar*, that is, the high priest who performed the *yajna* (fire sacrifice) from the reign of Ishanavarman II to that of Rajendravarman II, and who, according to the inscriptions, installed countless other inscriptions, as well as *lingas* and buildings.

<sup>157</sup> The now defunct *Shaiva* school was one of the oldest movements, believed to have emerged in modern-day Rajasthan in the first century CE before spreading to Gujarat. Its influence reached its zenith in South India between the 7th and 14th centuries.

<sup>158</sup> During the classical Angkor period, the presence of several movements of Hinduism, including Shaivism and the *Pancaratrika* branch of Vaishnavism, is beyond doubt, while *Mahayana* Buddhism was demonstrably practised as well, at least among the court elite. Although some rulers may, on occasion, have had an emphatic preference for a different sect, Shaivism remained the dominant religious movement all the way from the tenth to the thirteenth century. Sanderson 2003, 402. For the most recent article on this subject see: Chemburkar-Kapoor 2018.

<sup>159</sup> Situated in what is today Kompong Cham Province, Wat Sithor (CISARK165, IK123) lies at a substantial distance from the central Angkor region, some 350 km to the south.

<sup>160</sup> According to inscription K111, which bears no date, Jayavarman V decreed that the Buddhist religion should be practised in the monasteries. The same inscription also writes about Kirtipandita, a follower of *Mahayana* doctrine and a master of the esoteric teachings of *Yogatantra*, who was appointed to the position of guru to the royal family. Sanderson 2003, 249.



*Shruti and Smriti*.<sup>161</sup> Interestingly, then, at the time Banteay Srei was built, there were several exceedingly erudite Brahmins in the royal court, all of whom had markedly different religious beliefs from each other, presumably coupled with different sets of literary knowledge. An analysis of the inscriptions also seems to reveal that the number of sanctuaries founded by Brahmins increased during the reign of Rajendravarman II.<sup>162</sup> The ruler was still alive when the central statue in Banteay Srei was “brought to life” on 22 April 967.<sup>163</sup> He died soon afterwards, however, possibly during an uprising at the palace. He was succeeded to the throne by his ten-year-old son, who, as Jayavarman V, ruled until the year 1000. Immediately after his investiture he issued a decree bestowing privileges upon Yajnavaraha, his teacher and – almost certainly – his high priest, to establish Banteay Srei and other temples. Another decree issued in the same year refers to a sanctuary on Mount Bakheng; this is evidence that Jayavarman V moved his capital back to the area around Yasodharapura, next to the mountain, which had been the capital of the ninth-century ruler Yashovarman I.<sup>164</sup> The new city he established on the western shore of the enormous Eastern Reservoir was also given a name that emphasised the young ruler’s right to exercise power independently: the old name of Yasodharapura was eschewed in favour of *Jayendranagari* (“The city of the victorious king”).<sup>165</sup> In the centre of the city work commenced on construction of the temple known today as Ta Keo, and whose original name, according to the inscriptions, was *Hemasringagiri* (the “Golden-Peaked Mountain”, that is, *Mount Meru*). During the reign of Jayavarman V, the afore-mentioned Indian Brahmin scholar *Divakarabhatta* arrived in the city, and soon married the king’s younger sister.<sup>166</sup> He lived in the royal court, and he is presumed to have composed the verses on the stele discovered in Pre Rup.<sup>167</sup> The written sources seem to indicate that countless scholars and Brahmins lived in the court of Jayavarman V, for they are mentioned far more frequently in inscriptions dating from his reign than those originating under any other

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<sup>161</sup> Sanderson 2003, 428.

<sup>162</sup> Cœdès 1968, 116; cited in: Polkinghorne 2007b, 221.

<sup>163</sup> Jacques 1997, 108.

<sup>164</sup> The decision to move here was probably instigated by the war for the throne that had disrupted the start of his reign; not only was the new capital area easily defended, it was also steeped in history, which ritually reinforced his legitimacy as the ruler.

<sup>165</sup> Jacques 1997, 116.

<sup>166</sup> Cœdès-Dupont 1943, 56.

<sup>167</sup> K 806. The inscription on the stele found in Pre Rup, which is carved on both sides, is of immense historical importance, for it provides precise information about the lineage of Rajendravarman II, the circumstances surrounding his accession to the throne, the creation of his capital, and his temple foundations. The text is also of extremely high literary value, as its author was proficient in Sanskrit and well educated in Hindu literature. He alludes to the *Yogachara* system, the *Puranas*, the *Atharva Veda*, the stories of *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, the work of Panini and the famous poem by Kalidasa, the *Raghuvamsa*. Sharan 2003, 105; Cœdès 1937, 77.

monarch.<sup>168</sup> The majority of sanctuaries and temples erected during the rule of this father and son were dedicated to *Shiva*. The Brahmins played a dominant role in court life at this time. In my opinion, we are justified in assuming that the cultural, political and economic life of the empire in this period was greatly influenced by the Indian school of Shaiva faith that was followed by the Brahmin scholars, and that this influence determined – among other things – the principles for temple architecture.

Our present knowledge is insufficient to specify precisely which branch of Shaivism was followed in the courts of Rajendravarman II and Jayavarman V.<sup>169</sup> There are no available written sources naming an exact religious movement or school of thought, or any clearly identifiable Hindu or Buddhist literary corpus. An analysis of the words and phrases used in the inscriptions, however, allows us to conclude that one of the oldest Shaiva sects, the Pashupata School,<sup>170</sup> was highly influential. Moreover, according to one inscription, Yajnavaraha's brother, Vishnukumara, made several manuscript copies of a text on grammar.<sup>171</sup> We also have indirect evidence that the Hindu canonical texts called the *Agamas* were known at the time, as evidenced by an inscription found in Banteay Srei. The text variant of the *Parameshvara Agama* used in those days has sadly not survived, but references to the *Matangaparameshvara* and to the *Shiva Samhita* feature on one of the inscriptions, which is dated 967.<sup>172</sup> The same text commemorates *Vishnukumara*, who made copies not only of the *Shiva Samhita* but also the *Kasikavrtti* and the

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<sup>168</sup> Briggs 1951, 135.

<sup>169</sup> The *Shaiva* doctrine first appears in a text from the early seventh century that was found in Phnom Bayan. The concept it espouses, the personification of *Shiva*, recurs in Angkorian texts over subsequent centuries. Bagdi 1929, 58.

<sup>170</sup> The *Pashupata* movement is the oldest sect that centres on *Shiva* as the supreme deity, and it was also the most widely spread Hindu ascetic tradition from the 7th century onwards. The *Mahabharata*, the *Vamana Purana*, the *Shiva Agamas* and a few of the *Upanishad* texts describe the movement as one of the most important sects in honour of *Shiva* and the root for other Shaiva schools. According to tradition, the sect was founded by *Lakulisha*, a guru who lived in modern-day Gujarat at the turn of the 1st and 2nd centuries CE. The literary tradition attached to his name was later collected in a work titled *Lakulagama Samaya*, a summary of the tradition of *Lakulisha*. He is also associated with the corpus of texts titled *Pancharthavidya*. These books contained a description of the *Pashupata* doctrine and the daily tasks connected with religious practice. None of the works written by *Lakulisha* have survived, but references to what they contained can be found in several extant *Agamas*. Other sources pertaining to the *Pashupata* tradition are the *Vayu*, the *Linga*, the *Shiva*, the *Kurma* and the *Saura Puranas*, as well as different *Pashupata* texts, such as the *Gana-Karika*, and the commentary compiled by Kaudinya entitled *Panchartha Bhashya (Pashupata sūtram with Pañchartha-Bhasya of Kaudinya, translated and introduction: Haripad Chakraborti*. Calcutta, Academic Publishers, 1970). One of the most important elements of *Pashupata* rituals is for the initiates to smear their bodies with holy ashes from Agni, the god of fire, and to practise yoga, in order to come closer to *Shiva*. The sect began to spread in the states of South India in the 1st and 2nd centuries, and was a major movement until the 9th century. Cave temples 21 and 29 in Ellora (Rameshvara and Dhumar Lena cave temples) and the Elephanta cave temple are associated with members of the *Pashupata* sect. In a later chapter of this paper I attempt a thematic and stylistic comparison between the bas-reliefs on the walls of the buildings in the inner sanctuary area at Banteay Srei and those of the Virupaksha Temple of Pattadakal, in South India.

<sup>171</sup> K842 Stanza 30, Cœdès 1937, 154.

<sup>172</sup> Filliozat 1979, 41 K842 Stanza 30, Cœdès 1937, 154.

*Parameshvara*.<sup>173</sup> It is difficult to interpret what is meant here by *Shiva Samhita*, because the same name is given to a text in Tantric Yoga and to a section of the *Vayu Purana*. According to P. C. Bagchi, the text found in Banteay Srei<sup>174</sup> probably refers to the part of the *Vayu Purana* known as the *Shiva Purana*.<sup>175</sup> Identification of the title *Kasikavrtti* also poses problems. It is generally assumed to refer to a text containing grammatical explanations, compiled in the seventh century by Panini, which is known to have been a standard text read by followers of the Shaiva faith, and which is more usually referred to in Cambodian sources as *Saivakarana*.<sup>176</sup> The inscription on the stele also points out that Yajnavaraha's brother, Vishnukumara, was a master of Shaiva Yoga.<sup>177</sup>

In the thirteenth century, when the walls were built at the temple of Banteay Kdei (about two and a half kilometres from the tenth-century capital, Jayendranagari), among the building materials they used was an old block of stone bearing an inscription from the reign of Rajendravarman II. This inscription also mentions a *Samhita* by the name of *Sarvajnanottara*, which is the title of a well-known *Agama* in India. A reference to a text entitled *Shivadharmā*,<sup>178</sup> intended for reciting in the temple, has also been identified on an inscription that is contemporaneous with Banteay Srei, which was uncovered in Prasat Robang Romeas.<sup>179</sup>

The inscriptions found in Banteay Srei and in other buildings from the same period clearly show that certain Shaiva texts were known and used at the time,<sup>180</sup> although identifying exactly which texts from the titles given in the Angkorean inscriptions is problematic. What the inscriptions tell us for certain is that the sanctuary was originally erected in honour of *Shiva*, or more precisely, it was built for *Shiva*. When it comes to identifying the school of faith to which Yajnavaraha, the founder of Banteay Srei, belonged, the texts provide additional information. The inscription dated 968<sup>181</sup> states that Jayavarman V received *Shivacarya* from his guru, Yajnavaraha.<sup>182</sup> This is a Shaiva initiation ceremony (*diksha*), a kind of preparation that a disciple receives personally from

<sup>173</sup> K842 Stanza 30, Cœdès 1937, 154. For a more detailed analysis, see: Bhattacharya 1961, 47.

<sup>174</sup> Bagchi 1929, 48.

<sup>175</sup> Text K570 from Banteay Srei compares the relationship between *Shiva and Shakti* to that between fire and its heat. The *Shiva Purana* compares it to the Moon and its light. Bagdi 1929, 63.

<sup>176</sup> Bagchi 1929, 48.

<sup>177</sup> K842 Stanza 29, Cœdès 1937, 154.

<sup>178</sup> A text with this title is known from North India, written between 200 and 500 CE.

<sup>179</sup> Text K152 was written during the reign of Jayavarman V. Prasat Robang Romeas code: IK 165.

<sup>180</sup> e.g. inscription K806, found in Pre Rup.

<sup>181</sup> K842.

<sup>182</sup> Bagchi 1929, 72.

his guru. A text found in Banteay Kdei also mentions an initiation.<sup>183</sup> Almost every movement of Shaivism attaches importance to the celebration of gurus, although the *Pashupata* school is outstanding in this respect.

One of the characteristics of sanctuaries established by the Indian *Pashupata* movement, which distinguishes them iconographically from those of other sects, is to portray *Lakulisha*, the founder and teacher of the religion, in the innermost sanctum. Simply dressed and with his hair untied, the figure resembles an ascetic, while his most obvious attribute is his disproportionately large phallus. In the northern and eastern parts of India, he is portrayed seated, just like the chief god, *Shiva*, who also tends to be depicted as a yogi in statues and bas-reliefs. According to the *Pashupatas*, *Lakulisha* was the 28th avatar of *Shiva*, who is reincarnated with every new era. Honour of *Lakulisha*, as the founding and instructing guru, is unquestionable, and sets an example for all other gurus. A Mathura inscription from 381 CE states that Guru Udita installed “commemorative *lingas*” in honour of his own master, Kapila, in the sanctuary that was also built in his name. This is the first written record of the *Pashupata* practice of celebrating gurus being implemented.<sup>184</sup>

In Banteay Srei there is no clearly identifiable depiction to demonstrate that gurus were celebrated there, only textual evidence. Inscription K575 records the installation of two statues erected by Yajnavaraha in honour of *Vidyaguru* (his own guru, and the guru of that guru).<sup>185</sup> The celebration of *Vidyaguru*, regarded as an incarnation of *Shiva*, is typical of most Shaiva movements, but it has particular importance in the *Pashupata* school.<sup>186</sup>

The same text also informs us that Yajnavaraha practised the cult of *Shiva* “as regularly as he took food”.<sup>187</sup> The ceremony consisted partly of the fire sacrifice and partly of practising yoga. This detail is significant because exactly the same sentence can be found in the inscriptions at Sek Ta Tuy and Prasat Trapeang Khyang.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Bagchi 1929, 72.

<sup>184</sup> Mookerji 1959, 51.

<sup>185</sup> Inscription K575.

<sup>186</sup> The practice of erecting *linga* statues to celebrate a guru is referred to in sources from fourth-century India. An inscription from Mathura, for example, refers to a certain *Maheshvara*, who installed statues in honour of his own guru and his guru’s guru. Bagchi 1929, 73.

<sup>187</sup> K842 Stanza 16, Cœdès 1937, 153.

<sup>188</sup> Finot 1928, 51

From the available written sources, therefore, it is possible to deduce that Yajnavaraha was an adherent of the *Pashupata* school, and that Banteay Srei was built in accordance with the architectural and iconographic principles of this movement.<sup>189</sup>

The written evidence has been around, in processed form, since the 1930s, yet until now nobody has attempted to investigate which of the relics in Banteay Srei are possible manifestations of the influence of the *Pashupata* school. In later chapters of this paper I endeavour to uncover the missing “visual” evidence for this by examining the bas-reliefs, in particular the narrative reliefs.

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<sup>189</sup> The early presence of masters from the *Pashupata* school is evidenced in an inscription (K733) found in Preah Vihear, which states that King Bhavavarman II followed the teachings of a *Pashupata* sage named Vidyapushpa. Bhavavarman II was on the throne in the mid-seventh century. Sahai 2011, 75.

## II. BANTEAY SREI AS AN ARTISTIC STYLE

### 8. MOTIF ANALYSIS AND STYLE PERIODS

#### 8.1. The Style Periods of Khmer Art

Art historical motif analysis can be compared with the evolutionary analytical methods used in other disciplines. The development in a particular direction of the subject under investigation is generally analysed in isolation, without recourse to or assumption of external influences.<sup>190</sup> It is based on the theorem, first put forward by Heinrich Wölfflin,<sup>191</sup> that changes in the motifs used in works of art take place in accordance with a kind of internal rhythm, and that specific stylistic elements can be connected to sequences. In the case of Angkor, each stylistic sequence was named after a specific monument, with its time range generally determined by the reign of the monarch. In addition to translating and analysing the written sources and examining the architectural history, from the early 1930s onwards, with a new surge coming in the 1950s, there has been increasing emphasis placed on investigating the art historical style of the statues in Angkor and of the elements decorating the walls of the region's buildings.<sup>192</sup> Following the pioneering work of Philippe Stern and Gilberte de Coral-Rémusat, Mireille Bénisti, Pierre Dupont and Jean Boisselier carried out the chronological stylistic systemisation of Khmer art.<sup>193</sup> Using descriptions that focused on the motifs used, together with comparative analysis, they defined the art historical periods, whose names were associated with particular sites or temple complexes. Philippe Stern, in his work of 1927 entitled *Le Bayon d'Angkor et l'évolution de l'art Khmer*, was the first to set up a relative chronological order among the

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<sup>190</sup> Brown 1996, 124.

<sup>191</sup> It is worth mentioning the controversial theory of formalism, founded by Heinrich Wölfflin and perfected by Henri Focillon (*Life of Forms in Art*, 1934), which states that the political, social and economic circumstances have no effect at all on the creation of a work of art, and therefore examines art purely on the basis of its formal characteristics.

<sup>192</sup> The first of the orientalist to devise a chronological system built on the stylistic comparison of particular architectural or decorative elements within a process of artistic evolution was Gabriel Jouveau-Dubreuil, who did so in the 1910s during his research into the art of the Pallavas of India. His work still exerts an influence on French researchers today.

<sup>193</sup> In parallel with this, similar works analysing Indian art were also published, penned by, among other authors, Bénisti, Coral-Rémusat, Dalet, Filliozat and Stern. See, for example: Bénisti-Stern: *Evolution du style indien d'Amaravati*. (1961, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris).

Angkorian buildings known at the time. He analysed the supposed evolution of the motifs, which enabled him to refine the chronology he had drafted on the basis of epigraphic and archaeological data.<sup>194</sup> His student, Gilberte de Coral-Rémusat, completed her dissertation in 1940, titled *L'Art Khmer, les grandes étapes de son évolution*, in which she divided the evolutionary development of artistic style into thirteen stages. The motif-analysing method employed by Stern and Coral-Rémusat was further refined in a monograph by Jean Boisselier, published in 1955, entitled *La statuaire khmère et son évolution*, which is still an important starting point and an essential standard text for everyone researching the history of Khmer art. He examined the figural depictions in accordance with the following criteria and classified them according to style: clothing, jewellery (adornments – including crowns and belts), technique of depiction, material, method of depiction, anatomy, and pose. Boisselier supplemented the periodisation of his predecessors by defining two additional style periods,<sup>195</sup> as it happens, in connection with Banteay Srei, for the dating of the sanctuary complex was a continuous source of debate among experts. In a chronological sense, Banteay Srei is classified as part of the Pre Rup style, because construction began during the reign of Rajendravarman II, the founder of Pre Rup, and was completed when his son and successor, Jayavarman V, was on the throne. At the same time, however, Banteay Srei represents such a distinct architectural and art historical style that there is justification in separating it from the periods in the chronology and treating it as an independent category.

The fifteen style periods, in chronological order, are:

1.	Phnom Da style	6th century – early 7th century
2.	Sambor Prei Kuk style	first half of 7th century
3.	Prei Kmeng style	7th century
4.	Prasat Andet style	7th century
5.	Kompong Preah style	8th century
6.	Kulen style	9th century

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<sup>194</sup> Efforts to classify artistic styles according to a chronological system or one associated with buildings that each exemplify a particular style have been present in research into Indian Hindu architecture since the late 19th century, in accordance with the general art historical principles of the given time. See: James Fergusson, *History of Indian Eastern Architecture* (1876, London, John Murray). For a more developed application of this method, see, for example: Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture: Buddhist and Hindu* (1959, Taraporevala's Treasure House of Books, Bombay). The scientific research carried out by Stella Kramrisch is exemplary in the field of Indian Hindu architectural and art historical studies: during her examination of the ritual functions of buildings, she strove to uncover the ritual, architectural and iconographic practices that were typical at the time of construction, believing that this was the proper starting point from which to analyse a given building or complex of buildings. See: Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple* (1946, Calcutta).

<sup>195</sup> The styles of Phnom Da and Prasat Andet.

7.	Preah Ko style	late 9th century
8.	Bakheng style	late 9th century – early 10th century
9.	Koh Ker style	first half of 10th century (c. 921–944)
10.	Pre Rup style	mid 10th century
<b>11.</b>	<b>Banteay Srei style</b>	<b>967</b>
12.	Khleang style	late 10th century – early 11th century
13.	Baphuon style	mid-late 11th century
14.	Angkor Wat style	12th century
15.	Bayon style	late 12th century – early 13th century

The style periods defined by Stern and Coral-Rémusat were politely questioned by their contemporaries, Dalet, Dupont and Boisselier, who disputed the idea that a system of comparison based on the different ages and styles of specific buildings could be applied generally all over Angkor.<sup>196</sup> Regardless of this, the influence of Stern's method can still be felt in the questions raised by art historical research, while the periodisation that he and his colleagues defined is still considered relevant in most cases. Nevertheless, there are countless monuments whose classification in accordance with the Angkorian style periods determined by the chronology can be called into question. It is also possible to attempt to construct a periodisation of the history and art history of Angkor not only on the basis of the sanctuaries, but also according to the regnal periods. In my opinion, this practice is more closely aligned to the local attitude to history, but it can only be used to date artworks and place them within a chronological system if there are suitable written sources available.

## 8.2. The Banteay Srei Style Category

The art historical literature regards the style of Banteay Srei as an independent category, dated to the second half of the tenth century, which can be defined by the distinguishing characteristics of its decorative elements,<sup>197</sup> and of its statues and bas-reliefs. It stands out for being almost exclusively present in just a single temple. To the best of our knowledge, in the central Angkor region there are just two further places where monuments are located that could possibly be classified under the Banteay Srei style. In

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<sup>196</sup> Polkinghorne 2007 b, 141.

<sup>197</sup> In the case of lintels it is also customary to distinguish an independent Banteay Srei style, with the following characteristics: at the centre of each composition is the figure of a deity seated on a mount or on a *Kala* head, with the rest of the surface covered with an undulating garland and floral ornamentation. Small human or animal-bodied figures may also be present above the garland. Siribhadra 1990, 42. Authors claim to have discovered the influence of Javanese art in the case of several decorative elements.



Prasat Sralao,<sup>198</sup> situated at a distance of thirty kilometres from Banteay Srei, lintels carved in a similar style have been identified<sup>199</sup> (*fig. 71*), but the extant fragments whose decorations can still be distinguished are so few in number as to make a true comparative analysis impossible. Nevertheless, the similarity of Prasat Sralao is remarkable, for it is the only other place apart from Banteay Srei to have architectural decorations made from the rarely used pink sandstone. The other monument that can be placed in the same style category is a small, wall-ringed temple that does not have a name of its own, standing behind the building of the North Khleang, within the walls of Angkor Thom. Its proportions, its manner of decoration, and the female figures standing in niches either side of the doorways of the sanctuary tower share many similarities with Banteay Srei. A few other sanctuaries are associated in the literature with the Banteay Srei style, including the sanctuaries of Neam Rup<sup>200</sup> and Prasat Preah Theat Khnau.<sup>201</sup> During the comparative investigation I carried out on the costumes worn by the figures in the latter two sanctuaries, however, I determined that they are more closely related to the attire worn by the female figures depicted on the gate towers of the Royal Palace in Angkor Thom,<sup>202</sup> as a result of which I would argue that they can only be partially classified in the Banteay Srei style.

Defining the artistic style of the sanctuary at Banteay Srei has posed just as many problems since the complex was discovered as its historical periodisation. The French art historians who carried out stylistic examinations of the depictions in the bas-reliefs described them as a kind of historicising style and created an independent Banteay Srei artistic style category.<sup>203</sup> This makes Banteay Srei the defining monument of the eponymous Banteay Srei period. There were several reasons for according Banteay Srei its own style category.

Stern, Coral-Rémusat and Boisselier all determined that the style of Banteay Srei was difficult to fit into the system of Khmer art historical style evolution that they had established, and described it as a backward step, an archaïcising style that copied models

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<sup>198</sup> IK 609.

<sup>199</sup> NMPP Ka1819.

<sup>200</sup> Also known as: Prasat Bangrou IK 599. CISARC 494.

<sup>201</sup> IK 236. CISARC 231.

<sup>202</sup> Buildings built approximately at the same time as the Banteay Srei temple include, in modern-day Cambodia: Pre Rup, East Mebon, Ta Keo, Baksei Chamkrong, Prasat Sralao, Neam Rup, Prasat Preah Theat Khnau, Bat Chum, Prasat Bei; and in present-day Thailand: Wat Prang Thong (Nakon Ratchasima Province), where there is a depiction of Indra on his mount, Airavata, visible above the eastern doorway to the sanctuary. A statue of a “*Devata seated on a Lotus*” in the Phimai National Museum also bears the stylistic features of Banteay Srei.

<sup>203</sup> Coral-Rémusat 1940, 52; Boisselier 1966, 41.

from the past.<sup>204</sup> Dating the sanctuary therefore posed not only epigraphic dilemmas but also style-related problems.

Coral-Rémusat dated the transition between the styles of Koh Ker and Banteay Srei to the mid-tenth century, and included East Mebon (952) and the temple of Pre Rup (961) in this category. In her opinion, the year 967, which is nowadays generally accepted as the date when Banteay Srei was founded, was precisely in line with the decorations, while their motifs were borrowed from earlier styles, in particular the forms used in Preah Ko. The motifs on the lintels are almost the same as the decorative forms seen on the walls of Bakong, Preah Ko and Lolei.<sup>205</sup> Coral-Rémusat dated the Khleang period immediately following the Banteay Srei period to the last decades of the tenth century, and in this category she included the sanctuaries of Ta Keo, the North Khleang and Phimeanakas, and the gate buildings of the Royal Palace. She regarded the decorations of the monuments just listed as developments of the Banteay Srei tradition.

To recap, in 1919 Parmentier still considered Banteay Srei to be contemporaneous with Bakong, that is, constructed in the ninth century,<sup>206</sup> but in 1939 he stated that compositions of the type found in the narrative pediments (*“frontons à scènes sculptées”*<sup>207</sup>) were characteristic of the style of much later temples, built in the twelfth century. The homogeneity of the style of decoration, however, led him to the conclusion that later extensions had been constructed by faithfully following the style of the earlier ornamentation, that is, by archaïsation.<sup>208</sup> In 1933 Coral-Rémusat asserted that some of the pediments in Banteay Srei were copies of carvings from Bakong and other sanctuaries built at the same time.<sup>209</sup>

Clearly, the literature on the subject regards the style of the decorations at Banteay Srei as an example of archaïsation, in two separate contexts. Experts who consider the buildings visible today as constructions of the thirteenth century speak of archaïsation of the tenth-century style, while those who date the complex to the tenth century claim that it was built in a style that revived the typical method of depiction used in even earlier ages.

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<sup>204</sup> Stern 1927, 90. “*Elle est omise dans l’étude de l’évolution des motifs qui va suivre, car elle ne marque pas la continuation de développement de l’art khmer: c’est, semble-t-il, un retour en arrière, une période archaïsante qui copie des modèles anciens.*”

<sup>205</sup> Coral-Rémusat 1951, 47.

<sup>206</sup> Parmentier 1919, 66–79.

<sup>207</sup> Parmentier 1939, 153.

<sup>208</sup> Benjamin Rowland has conjectured that the present-day complex was constructed in 1304, during the reign of Srindevavarman, on top of a sanctuary built in 969. He based the late dating on what he called the “Rococo” style of the bas-relief: “*the carving is of a crispness and extravagant richness that are typical of his final ‘Rococo’ phase of Khmer Art*”. Rowland 1953, 238.

<sup>209</sup> Coral-Rémusat 1933, 192.

Henri Marchal, who restored the temple using the method of anastylosis, reopened the debate on dating in a study of 1965. In his view, having studied the floor plan arrangement, the fact that the inner sanctuary area is so crowded in spite of the tiny size of the sanctuary towers could be evidence of a later reconstruction, taking place in the fourteenth century, when what had hitherto been a single tower was replaced with the three now visible. Marchal was attempting to come up with a solution to the problem of why the artistic style of Banteay Srei, referred to by everyone as archaisation or even imitation, differed so remarkably from all the other surviving monuments. He quoted Coral-Rémusat in suggesting that a Javanese influence might explain the difference.<sup>210</sup> However, while the *yaksha* figures on the terrace of the central sanctuary tower are reminiscent of Javanese statues, this is not in itself evidence of influences in Banteay Srei that came from Java.

Until the end of the twentieth century, research into the sanctuary complex, no matter which field of science the experts specialised in, was dominated by studies that repeatedly started out from the system of stylistic and historical periodisation. I consider it beyond any doubt that changes in Angkorian art can be systemised into a chronological order by examining any or all elements of the art, just as it is possible to demonstrate the inheritance, termination or reappearance of decorative motifs, or changes in the style of image composition. At the same time, in the case of Banteay Srei, for example, the evolutionary analytical method is not applicable, at least on its own, and the decoration of the sanctuary does not fit into the established system, neither from a stylistic perspective nor with regard to the motifs depicted.

Martin Polkinghorne, in his doctoral dissertation entitled *Makers and Models: Decorative Lintels of Khmer Temples 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries*,<sup>211</sup> which he defended in 2007, clearly disputed the applicability of an evolutionary art historical approach that rested on motif analysis. He carries out his research using the comparative method of motif analysis while focusing solely on a single architectural element, namely lintels. Polkinghorne examined the decorative elements that feature on the lintels on the basis of how frequently they occur, comparing them with each other using a statistical analytical method that he calls *shape-analysis*.<sup>212</sup> Eschewing the commonly followed practice, based on style categorisation, he examined the extent and nature of the variations in the motifs used

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<sup>210</sup> Marchal 1965, 285.

<sup>211</sup> Polkinghorne 2007b.

<sup>212</sup> Polkinghorne 2007b, 215. The author analysed a total of 389 lintels. He divided the compositions into fields and classified them according to the presence or absence of pre-determined motif elements, before entering his results into a database. The 34 lintels found in Banteay Srei were included in his research.

during the different chronological/stylistic periods and in the transitional periods between them. He gave his method the name of *principal component analysis*. In his examinations of the lintels he determined that in the period from the seventh to the eleventh century, there was a noticeable process of standardisation in how sets of motifs were assembled or combined. Part of Polkinghorne's research reflected on the notion postulated by Groslier in 1966 that besides comparing the characteristics of the different style periods and uncovering possible similarities, it must also be assumed that different schools or workshops, sometimes even geographically far from one another, operated in the period under investigation, working in accordance with their own stylistic traits and using their own technical solutions.<sup>213</sup> He put forward the possibility that certain workshops operating within the royal courts may have increasingly spread their sphere of influence further afield, which could serve to explain the apparent "uniformisation" of the sets of motifs visible on the lintels.<sup>214</sup> Another matter that Polkinghorne highlights is that if we regard Angkorian art as a unified and evolving (or more precisely: changing) process, then we must assume that the stone-carving workshop changed its location just as often as the royal court, that is, with almost every new ruler. Writing about the early tenth century, he says, "*The consistency of design during the movement between Koh Ker and Angkor suggests that the workshop followed the court wherever it happened to travel*".<sup>215</sup> In this respect, the different artistic style used in Banteay Srei is even more remarkable. The question arises whether the sculptors of the court workshop, who presumably carried on the traditions of Koh Ker art and worked on the temples of Pre Rup and East Mebon, also worked in Banteay Srei, or a separate, independent workshop was established in the latter location. Based on his stylistic study of the lintels, Polkinghorne identified twenty-four tenth-century monuments which – in his view – probably involved members of the same workshop that helped to build the temple at Pre Rup.<sup>216</sup> He includes Banteay Srei among these monuments. When considering the idea that the stone-carving workshops moved on a regular basis, however, I believe it should be remembered that travel in those days was somewhat restricted and it was not easy to cover large distances, in addition to which a considerable amount of time was needed for the creation process. In the royal capital, making statues and bas-reliefs for sanctuaries would have been a source of continuous

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<sup>213</sup> Polkinghorne 2007 b, 187.

<sup>214</sup> Polkinghorne 2007 b, 189.

<sup>215</sup> Polkinghorne 2007 b, 216.

<sup>216</sup> The most important monuments he ascribed to the workshop in Pre Rup included: Pre Rup, East Mebon, Wat Enkosei, Wat Cedei, and Banteay Srei.

employment for the masters involved. This does not, of course, rule out the possibility that workshops moved temporarily to some distant location to take part in the construction work going on there. As there are no written sources about the craftsmen, I am forced to base my hypothesis on comparisons of the items of clothing in the depictions, and on a comparative analysis of the motifs and styles. In my view, among other things, the comparative analysis of the costumes depicted in Banteay Srei helps to demonstrate that the carvings, or at least a significant part of them, could not have been made in the sculptural workshop that produced the decorations in Pre Rup or East Mebon, because there are some significant differences between the costumes and hairstyles seen in the bas-reliefs and statues of Banteay Srei, and those visible on other buildings constructed during the same period.

### III. ANALYSIS OF THE SCULPTURES AND BAS RELIEFS

#### 9. A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ATTIRE IN ANGKOR

##### 9.1. Attire

*“From the king down, the men and women all wear their hair wound up in a knot, and go naked to the waist, wrapped only in a cloth. When they are out and about they wind a larger piece of cloth over the small one. There are very many different grades of cloth. The materials the king wears include some that are extremely elegant and beautiful, and worth three or four ounces of gold a piece.”*<sup>217</sup> Thus wrote the Chinese author Zhou Daguan in his work, *The Customs of Cambodia* (also translated as *A Record of Cambodia. The Land and its People*), about how people in Cambodia dressed at the end of the thirteenth century, but his findings also apply to earlier periods.

The figures visible in the bas-reliefs of Angkor are naked above the waist,<sup>218</sup> apart from only the soldiers of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, who are dressed in military attire.<sup>219</sup> The only item of clothing worn by the rest of the male and female figures is the loincloth, known in Khmer as the *sampot*, which is shaped by tying and folding the material.<sup>220</sup> It is difficult to trace the continuity of the traditions of Angkorian costumes, because between the fourteenth century and the nineteenth century there are no surviving images from the area covered by modern-day Cambodia, and no written descriptions either. We do know, however, that in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, the *sampot* was part of the typical clothing worn by Cambodians of both sexes, and it is still present in traditional Khmer costume.

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<sup>217</sup> Zhou Daguan 2007, 50.

<sup>218</sup> Images of women wearing shawls diagonally across their chests first appear in Cambodia in paintings from the mid-19th century; they wore the shawls in the same style as contemporary Siamese women. Some time towards the end of the 19th century they began to wear tailored blouses, in the European fashion, but they continued to wear shawls above the blouses. Also under influences from Europe, Cambodian men began to wear long, buttoned jackets, done up as far as the neck, likewise matched with shawls.

<sup>219</sup> Soldiers in scenes of military processions or battles on the walls of Angkor Wat and Bayon are shown dressed in various shirts or tailored, kaftan-like garments. Those wearing kaftan-style clothing are presumably Chinese characters, as indicated by their hairstyles and beards as well. Short-sleeved, waist-length shirts made from patterned textiles are also worn by the Khmer soldiers in the bas-reliefs.

<sup>220</sup> The Khmer word *sampot* simply means “a piece of cloth”. The function of the *sampot* is the same as that of the *lungi* or *dhoti* in India, and the *longyi* in Burma. The Thai name is *pha nung*, while the Indonesian and Malaysian equivalent is the *sarong* or *sarung*.

Art historical literature often uses the term *sarong* to describe Angkorian clothing. Jean Boisselier<sup>221</sup> was among several authors who referred to the skirt worn by female figures in Banteay Srei as a *sarong*. I am convinced, however, that – apart from the simplest loincloth – all the items of clothing depicted in the statues and bas-reliefs are types of *sampot* and cannot rightly be called *sarong*. In present-day Cambodia, as part of their everyday attire, women are known to wind a piece of cotton around their waist as a tube skirt, and this is known in modern Khmer as a *sarung*; the material comes from Indonesia and is patterned to imitate the batik technique (*fig. 136*). In my opinion, the name of this type of clothing preserves its origins from the islands of Indonesia. Also called *sarung* is the narrow piece of cotton textile that men wind simply around their waist when doing work at home; this garment resembles a short skirt (*fig. 139*). The same attire with the same name can also be found in modern-day Thailand.<sup>222</sup> The term *sarung* therefore designates a piece of everyday wear, shaped like a skirt, that is made from patterned material, especially cotton. The traditional waist skirt, worn on special occasions such as weddings, made of pure silk and carefully folded and knotted, as well as the trouser-like garment derived from it, is known by the original Khmer word, *sampot*. Further ethnographic research will be needed to precisely determine the scope of the term *sarung* and its entry into the Khmer language. Stoeckel, in his study of 1923, mentioned that batik-dyed cottons imported from Java and Malaya were very popular among the population of the time.<sup>223</sup> The “imitation” batik textiles worn today are the modern equivalents of these fabrics. For now, we cannot say when the word *sarung* first began to be used in the Khmer language. In the area around Siem Reap, based on my own questioning of the people there, the usage of the term *sarung* was considered quite recent.

Although it seems that our present knowledge is unable to demonstrate any certain continuity between the attire of Angkor and modern-day Cambodian costume, it is nevertheless important, from the perspective of this paper, to observe how items of clothing and jewellery that are regarded as “traditional” are worn today. In my view, certain types of *sampot* are folded and pleated in a way that follows Angkorian tradition. Because of this, a study of modern costume can enable a reconstruction of the attire worn in the Angkorian depictions, even though the materials, the manufacturing techniques and the methods of patterning the textiles have changed (or are completely different).

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<sup>221</sup> Boisselier 1966, 250.

<sup>222</sup> Green 2003, 200.

<sup>223</sup> Stoeckel 1923, 400.

To date very little attention has been paid to researching traditional Khmer folk costumes. Gillian Green's work of 2003, entitled *Traditional Textiles of Cambodia Cultural Threads and Material Heritage*, is the only comprehensive monograph that makes an attempt – using the few available sources – to trace the threads that lead to the origins of modern-day Cambodian textile manufacturing and use. Due to the influence of French fashion and then the spread of the jacket and trousers that was made obligatory under the regime of Pol Pot, the *sampot* today refers almost exclusively to festive, formal wear. The role of traditional items of attire is not insignificant, however, for they are worn during celebrations both in the cities and in rural areas.

The literature on the history of costume divides all the types of clothing in the world into two large groups that distinguish between what are called “draped garments” and “tailored garments”.<sup>224</sup> The *sampot*, essentially a cloth to wrap around the waist as a skirt, clearly belongs among the “draped garments”, although in many cases, the complex contours that arise from the pattern of folds and knots is far more advanced than the average item in this category. Closely observing the types of *sampot* worn today may aid the reconstruction of the folding methods used in the clothing seen in the carvings.

The types of *sampot* used in Cambodia today are as follows:

1. The *sampot chwang kbun* (fig. 140, 141, 142) was originally worn by both sexes. The piece of material, which is on average 3 metres in length (or 2.5 metres for women), is smoothed around the waist from the back to the front, with one end rolled together and then led back between the legs like a strap to create a trouser-like shape. A belt is worn around the waist, beneath which the strap is tucked. The textile is left baggy around the backside. The other end of the textile, still at the front, is tied neatly into different knots, above which the belt is threaded. Archive photographs show that in the early twentieth century, this type of *sampot* was not only worn on special occasions but also as everyday wear. Postcards produced at that time clearly show the simply knotted cotton garment (fig. 146). From the same period, a variant with a more elaborate knot and a decorative belt can be seen on images of classical dancers and the upper classes (fig. 147, 148). The intricately folded and tied *sampot chwang kbun* is still used as part of the costume for classical dance

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<sup>224</sup> The classical literature on the history of costume usually classifies the garments of the world into these two basic categories. See, for example: R. Broby-Johansen, 1969. *Body and Clothes: An Illustrated History of Costume*. Faber and Faber, London; R. Ross. 2008. *Clothing: A Global History*. Polity Press, Cambridge; Jill Condra (ed.) 2013. *Encyclopedia of National Dress around the World*. ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara; P. G. Tortora, 2015. *Dress, Fashion and Technology: From Prehistory to the Present*. Bloomsbury Publishing; G. S. Ghurye, 1951, *Indian Costume*, Popular Prakashan Press, Bombay.



and is a basic element of wedding attire (*fig. 140, 141*). On certain specific occasions, the King of Cambodia also wears a *sampot chwang kbun*. (*fig. 144*)

The *sampot chwang kbun* can probably be regarded as traditional Khmer costume, for portrayals of it can be seen in the bas-reliefs of Angkor.

2. The type of skirt called the *sampot sarabap ka'at kbal neak* (*fig. 140, 143, 150*), rather like *sampot chwang kbun*, is made from a long, unstitched piece of material. Here too, the textile is smoothed around the waist from the back to the front, but in this case, in the middle at the front, the two ends are placed together and folded like a “concertina” with pleats approximately 5 cm in width. This pleated “wing” is arrayed across the belly and fixed with a belt, above which the upper part of the wing is folded back, like a paper fan. The name of this *sampot* type comes from this: the fold at the front resembles the shape of the head (*kbal*) of a snake (*neak*).<sup>225</sup> These garments are made exclusively of silk and are typically worn by certain dancers or as bridal garments. The bridal *sampot* is made of special fabric, woven with metallic thread. This weaving technique probably originated in India.<sup>226</sup> I consider it possible that a similar method of folding would have been used to create the type of skirt that I refer to in this paper as Banteay Srei “type 2 male sampot”.

3. The *sampot samloy* (*fig. 137, 138*), a simple skirt stitched together at the edges, probably spread in the mid-nineteenth century under Thai influence.<sup>227</sup> This type of tube skirt is worn by several Southeast Asian peoples, as is part of the folk costume of the Thai, the Lao, the Maa and the Burmese, among others. The material measures on average a metre and a half in length, and the two ends are stitched together across the entire width. When this “tube” is formed, the wearer simply steps into it, arranges it around his or her waist, and then, taking up the slack, forms a wide fold at the front, which is then smoothed over the belly; finally, the top corner of the fold is tucked into the waist at the side. In modern garments, the fold is fixed with clips sewn on the inside. This type of skirt is in widespread use in Khmer costume, and on weddings and other celebrations people wear a variant made from silk.

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<sup>225</sup> Green 2003, 201.

<sup>226</sup> Green 2003, 203.

<sup>227</sup> The Thai name for the tube skirt is *pha sin*. Green 2003, 199.

In recent decades, “modernisation” can be clearly traced through the changes in traditional lifestyles, customs and clothing, but in one aspect, tradition lives on: the choice of basic material for a *sampot* (cotton or silk, patterns that are painted, batik-dyed or woven into the fabric, as well as which colour and what type of pattern) is still determined by the age of the wearer and the occasion on which it is to be worn. It is possible that the choice of colour for the costumes worn during (royal) court ceremonies and by ordinary people during special rituals in modern times originates from Hindu tradition.<sup>228</sup> Sunday is associated with red, Monday with orange, Tuesday with pink/purple, Wednesday with green, Thursday with the “cloud colour” (light green), Friday with blue, and Saturday with dark purple. During wedding ceremonies, which last for several days, the bride and groom, and their closest family members, all comply with this tradition. The verse song that preserves this tradition is taught to children in school and is performed regularly by popular singers.<sup>229</sup> The meanings of the colours and patterns of costumes are so important that they are maintained by the Khmer diaspora in Australia and America, as we know thanks to the research of Gillian Green.<sup>230</sup>

Reconstruction of the colours and materials of the textiles visible on Angkorian statues and bas-reliefs, and of the manufacturing and patterning methods, can only be hypothesised at present. The original basic material can be deduced from analysing the patterns and matching them with analogues. One exceptionally important written source for research into classical Angkorian textile production is the account written by Zhou Dagan, a thirteenth-century Chinese traveller, who visited Angkor Thom, when it was capital of the Khmer Empire.<sup>231</sup> From his description, he clearly regarded Khmer textile manufacturing as extremely backward:

*“...The only thing they can do is weave cotton from kapok. Even then they cannot spin the yarn, but just use their hands to gather the cloth into strands. They do not use a loom for weaving. Instead they just wind one end of the cloth around their waist, hang the other end over a window, and use a bamboo tube as a shuttle.”*<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Although the most recent studies also make the link with Hindu tradition (see, for example: Petcharaburanin-Saisavetvavee 2016, 59), it should be pointed out that the Hindu colour system used for each day of the week, in accordance with the Planetary Deities, is different both from the Khmer and the Thai colour system for costumes, which are in turn different from each other.

<sup>229</sup> The title of the song is: “*Sne doucj h Tek neng Trey*”. See, for example.: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCeJfKl4Z8U> [last accessed: 30 April 2018].

<sup>230</sup> Green 2003, 191.

<sup>231</sup> Zhou Dagan: *A Record of Cambodia: The Land and Its People*. Translated by Peter Harris. 2007.

<sup>232</sup> Zhou Dagan 2007, 75–76.

The spinning wheel did indeed arrive very late in Southeast Asia, and countless peoples today, especially in Indonesia, still twist their thread using a hand spindle. Cotton is just one of several plant-based fibres<sup>233</sup> that can be spun into excellent thread merely with the help of a hand spindle.<sup>234</sup> For a shuttle, even when weaving silk, a bamboo reed is still used today, or a plastic part moulded to resemble one.<sup>235</sup> The backstrap loom described by Zhou Dagan – which is still used today by certain isolated mountain- or island-dwelling tribes in Southeast Asia – can be used to weave even highly complex patterns. The devices mentioned could therefore be used to produce cloth of the same quality as contemporary horizontal looms, with the only difference being the limitations on the dimensions of the material. Another Chinese source, Zhao Rugua, writing in the early thirteenth century, informs us that Angkor was an international exporter of cotton and raw silk.<sup>236</sup>

In Southeast Asia, Indian textiles were once the most valuable commodity,<sup>237</sup> and the value of other goods was often given in pieces of silk or cotton, rather than in gold or another precious metal; at the same time, textile materials were status symbols, and also had a ritual function.<sup>238</sup> Whether they arrived by sea or land, there is no doubt that these fabrics were brought by merchants to the cities of Angkor in present-day Cambodia, where they enriched the local technical skills in weaving, dyeing and patterning. Zhou Dagan was also clear in his description: “*They do not produce gold or silver in Cambodia, I believe, and so they hold Chinese gold and silver in the highest regard. Next they value items made of fine, double-threaded silk in various colors ...*”<sup>239</sup>

I assume that what the Chinese author referred to as “double-threaded silk” was the fabric produced in Gujarat and known in that province of India as *patola*, made using the double *ikat* procedure, which was widely known at that time. During the production of double *ikat*, both the weft and the warp threads were treated with multiple colours, and when the threads were woven together, the final pattern appeared in identical quality on

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<sup>233</sup> Even today there are 28 different known plants that can be used to make thread. Green, Gillian 2003, 44.

<sup>234</sup> These days people in Cambodia also use the skeining wheel (Khmer: *ak*) and the spinning wheel (Khmer: *rohat*). The horizontal pedal loom (Khmer: *kei thbank*) is presumed to have been widely used throughout almost all of Cambodia since the nineteenth century. For further details see: Green 2003, 60–78.

<sup>235</sup> For more about the process of silk-weaving, see fig. 152–158.

<sup>236</sup> Zhao Rugua: *His work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the twelfth and thirteenth Centuries, entitled Chu-fan-chi*. Saint Petersburg, 1911. Vol. 1, chapter 4, 53.

<sup>237</sup> Indian cotton was traded in China and Southeast Asia for many centuries, both fabrics of more modest quality and Bengal muslin, a finely woven and much sought-after commodity. The most important export from India and China, however, was silk; after the fall of the Roman Empire, Asia – especially Southeast Asia – became the most important market for silk.

<sup>238</sup> Machado 2009, 59.

<sup>239</sup> Zhou Dagan 2007, 71.

both sides of the material. Making *patola* is extremely time-consuming and requires skill and experience, as well as the finest silk threads and bright, long-lasting dyes.<sup>240</sup> The Indonesian equivalent of *patola* was the better-known expression of *ikat*, called *hol* in Khmer. Textiles produced in this way were worn by the ruling classes across Southeast Asia for centuries. *Sampots* made from *ikat* fabrics are referred to in Khmer as *sampot hol*, regardless of their design. To be absolutely precise, items of clothing exist named *sampot hol chwang kbun*, *sampot hol sarabap ka'at kbal neak* and *sampot hol samloy*.<sup>241</sup> The *hol* technique in Cambodia always involves pre-patterning the weft threads with tie-dyeing. After the first dye is applied, the basic colour of the silk is usually yellow; to this are applied red, chestnut-brown and indigo blue pigments, which also result – through the superimposition of the colours on each other – in the intermediate colours of green and “indigo purple”. The weft thread is wound around a patterning frame (*snoeng*) and bound with palm-leaf fibres to cover up the parts which are not to be dyed (*fig. 154, 155*), and then the bundles of thread are dipped in the pigment and allowed to dry still tied up on the frame (*fig. 156*). This is repeated as many times as there will be colours in the final pattern. The thread is subsequently wound onto a bobbin (*knar*), carefully and strictly maintaining the correct order (*fig. 158*), which is fixed to the shuttle (*tral*) and woven between the warp threads. The final pattern emerges as a result of the weaving process. Cambodian silk-weaving is a unique traditional technique in Southeast Asia. Whereas the *ikat* technique is widespread elsewhere, it is only here that so-called “twill-woven” fabrics are made on looms fitted with an odd number of healds (*fig. 157*). The textiles are usually woven with three or five healds and are mostly ceremonial items with figurative patterns. Fabrics produced in this way are distinguished by the fact that the two sides have two different basic colours, but the patterns on them are identical.<sup>242</sup>

Evidently, all signs show that the skills for making “double-threaded silk” survive to this day in Cambodia, although there is no proof of historical continuity. Archaeological excavations are yet to uncover any pseudomorph fragment of textile or thread at Angkor. At present, our earliest example of Khmer textiles is “just” 160 years old. In 1856 King Mongkut of Siam sent a royal gift of patterned silks to US President Franklin Pierce. According to the list itemising the gifts, three of the fabrics were silks woven using the *hol*

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<sup>240</sup> The word *patola* is the plural of the word *patolu*. The name derives from the city of Patan, in the Indian state of Gujarat, where many materials were woven using the double *ikat* technique.

<sup>241</sup> As told to me by Prum Sopheak.

<sup>242</sup> Green 2003, 89.

technique, involving the pre-dyeing of the thread, which was then – and is now – only produced in Cambodia.<sup>243</sup>

The technical and compositional skills of the once thriving Khmer silk-weaving traditions were passed down by the womenfolk from generation to generation as family secrets and were only known in villages that specialised in this craft. No comprehensive ethnographic study of this subject has yet been published. From the 1960s onwards, during the period marked by the Vietnam War and the regime of Pol Pot, not only did the tradition of handing on this knowledge come to a halt, but so did the entire complex social and economic system of which textile manufacturing was an integral part. Civil War brought about the destruction of the silk samples in use at the time, and those held in museum collections. The mulberry tree plantations that are so essential for the production of silk, the basic material for the *sampot hol*, were yet another victim of Pol Pot's reign of terror. The technical equipment used for spinning and weaving ended up in ruins, and the specialists who would have known how to make new tools and revive the textile-making traditions were also annihilated. Cultivation of the silkworm and the practice of silk-weaving enjoyed new beginnings in the 1990s thanks to the initiative of Kikuo Morimoto, a Japanese silk-painting artist, in Siem Reap, close to the centre of the erstwhile Angkor Empire. It must be noted that before the Second World War, silk fabrics were *not* produced anywhere near the former capital cities, but in more remote regions of Cambodia.<sup>244</sup> Morimoto's conscientious research and personal ambition resulted in the "renaissance" of traditional Khmer silk-making, and in less than half a decade it grew into an important branch of Cambodia industry.<sup>245</sup> Silks produced using Khmer handicraft methods are mostly bought by the Cambodian diaspora living in the USA, France and Australia. The hand-weaving industry that came to life in the mid-1990s unquestionably traces its origins to the time of the Angkor Empire. The *sampot hol* in particular is regarded as a traditional Khmer textile, and is the clothing that symbolises Khmer ethnic pride.<sup>246</sup> Indeed, the *hol* silk-weaving technique and its patterns are considered almost as important an embodiment of Khmer tradition as Angkor Wat.

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<sup>243</sup> Green 2003, 192.

<sup>244</sup> Morimoto 2008, 19.

<sup>245</sup> The Institute for Khmer Traditional Textiles, founded by Kikuo Morimoto, employs around 200 professionals in agriculture and handicrafts. Apart from silkworm breeding and weaving, they also reintroduce the production and use of natural pigments, predominantly from plant materials. The other manufactory, the institute known as "Artisans d'Angkor", employs several hundred workers who produce items of clothing from traditional silk fabrics that partly use patterns that follow western fashion; a large number of their employees are orphans who have been raised to learn a trade.

<sup>246</sup> Horst 2008, 20

The part that silk plays in Khmer culture in the twenty-first century is as important as it is believed to have been centuries ago. At Buddhist initiation ceremonies, weddings and funerals, family members wear silk clothing of specific colours. The ceiling and wall surfaces above and behind sanctuary statues are decorated with silk pictures,<sup>247</sup> patterned using the *hol* technique and showing scenes from Buddhist legends; patterned silk parasols are also placed above the statues. In sanctuaries across Cambodia today, statues of the Buddha and those of Hindu deities deriving from the Angkorian period are dressed up, in accordance with Buddhist tradition – in silk gowns woven with decorative gold thread, with silk scarves placed across their shoulders.

It is a source of regret that very little is known about the traditional patterns used on *hol* textiles. Modern-day patterns are similar to those seen in Thai tradition: they are divided into one central panel and two end panels, with the central panel often supplemented with stripes along the edges. The central field is often decorated with a grid-like network of tiny geometric or floral patterns, sometimes leaves, birds, elephants and – more rarely – stylised human figures pressing their hands together (*fig. 159, 160*). Another special motif consists of pairs of snakes twisting towards each other. The two end panels feature alternating patterns in crosswise bands, also made up of geometric or figural motifs. These patterns, however, are not found anywhere on the relics from Angkor, neither the statues nor the bas-reliefs; the parallels can be found in Thai textiles. The unquestionably traditional *hol* weaving and pattering technique therefore has no proven Angkorian roots; and vice versa: current research into ethnography and the history of costume has resulted in very little evidence concerning the basic materials of Angkorian textiles. At present we do not have enough data available to reconstruct the material of the clothing worn by the figures in the carvings, or its possible method of production.

In summary, while parallels for Angkorian *sampots* can be seen in today's traditional Khmer costume, the patterns used today and the methods for creating them developed later, probably under Thai influence. Nineteenth-century murals in Thailand and Cambodia<sup>248</sup> feature clothing similar to the *sampot chwang kbun*, so this basic form of attire existed in the Siamese royal court, showing the influence of Angkorian culture; the mutual influences continued to develop, resulting in the traditional dress of the Siamese (Thai) and Cambodian courts (*fig. 145.a-b*).

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<sup>247</sup> The Khmer name is *pidan*, which means “ceiling”.

<sup>248</sup> See, for example: Wat Bo (Siem Reap), Wat Kompong Tralach Krom (Kompong Chhnang), Wat Prah Keo Morokot (Phnom Penh), Wat Phra Singh, (Chiang Mai), Wat Prah Keo (Bangkok), Wat Phra Si Sanpet (Ayutthaya).

## 9.2. Jewellery

The bas-reliefs in Angkor also feature a wealth of countless types of jewellery. Depictions of various crowns, diadems, anklets and bracelets, ear-rings and torso bands were common in Angkorian art for centuries. Jewellery similar to those in the carvings and to examples recovered from archaeological excavations can still be found as parts of the costumes worn on classical Khmer dance theatre, and as wedding attire. Once again, however, this phenomenon does not imply proven continuity in clothing traditions, at least not in every detail. Bangles, anklets and neck bracelets are worn by peoples across the region, for example as Thai and Lao celebratory attire. It can be assumed that the forms and designs date back a long time, even to the Angkorian period. Headdresses, however, especially those worn for the so-called *apsara dance*, which imitate the carved decorations of Angkor Wat, are more likely nineteenth-century reconstructions (*fig. 149, 150, 151*).<sup>249</sup> Deciding which types of jewellery are continuations of long-standing tradition and which are more recent revivals is a subject that falls beyond the scope of this paper, so the problem is mentioned here only in passing.

When examining the attire worn by the carved figures, it is important to remember that in Hinduism it was customary for the faithful to donate clothing and jewellery to the statues of deities, usually made of real textiles and real precious metals and gemstones. According to the inscriptions, such as one at Sdok Kak Thom,<sup>250</sup> the sanctuaries received large amounts of textiles and even complete items of clothing. This text, found in a sanctuary originally erected in honour of Shiva, is of inestimable scientific value to researchers of Angkorian history and culture; dated to the early eleventh century, the Sanskrit part of the inscription tells us the following about the donations:

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<sup>249</sup> These headdresses do not appear in early twentieth-century photographs of Khmer dancers at the time. The dancers' heads, like those of their contemporaries in Siam, are decorated with jewellery similar in form to the headdress worn by Siamese rulers.

<sup>250</sup> IK 235. Sdok Kak Thom is a ruined sanctuary in today's Thailand, where a carved sandstone column or stele was found, presumably in its original location, on its own base, whose four sides were covered with inscriptions in Sanskrit and Khmer. Among other information, the inscriptions list the names and deeds of Khmer rulers starting from the founder, Jayavarman II, making this discovery one of the most important first-hand sources in research into Angkorian history. For the most recent translations of the Sanskrit texts, see: T. NOVÁK, 2012. *The Inscription of Sdok Kak Thom*. Publications of the Hungarian Southeast Asian Research Institute, Budapest.

“...one hundred clothes and garments worthy of a king, one hundred upper garments, 4000 clothes, 400 garments ...<sup>251</sup> ... All those were given by the king as honorarium to him”.<sup>252</sup>

The inscriptions do not detail the types of attire, so reconstruction is impossible, but in my view, there is justification in assuming that the items made for or donated to the statues of deities were items that actually existed in real life at the time, perhaps worn by particular strata of society, or at least on certain special occasions. At the same time, based on my observations of present-day customs, I also assume that the statues were carved to show the figures wearing – at least partly – the same attire that they would later be “dressed up” in, with the real textile garments covering up the carved ones.

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<sup>251</sup> IK 235, Stanza 102, 103. Novak 2012, 136. The problem with translating the text is that in Angkor, as far as we can tell from the bas-reliefs, nobody wore upper garments. According to the translator, despite the most careful linguistic research, deciphering the Sanskrit expressions referring to clothing posed certain difficulties. I propose that the term *vastra* may have referred to a type of garment that signified the rank of the ruler, which was worn over the basic clothing, but not necessarily on the upper body. Due to the lack of research on the clothing of the monarch and the ruling elite, the solution to this problem lies beyond the scope of the present paper. See also. Bhattacharya-Golzio 2009, 177–178.

<sup>252</sup> IK 235, Stanza 116. Novak 2012, 148. See also: Bhattacharya-Golzio 2009, 181.



## 10. DIFFERENT TYPES OF ATTIRE

In the art historical literature, the divisions between the Angkorian style periods are based not only on the differences between the types of composition but also – relying on the research conducted by Boisselier and his contemporaries – on the characteristic features of the attire worn by the carved figures on the buildings erected during different periods. Beginning in pre-Angkorian times, statues and bas-reliefs show human figures, both men and women, wearing different types of *sampot*. Besides having different lengths, thicknesses and patterns, the textiles also differ in how they are worn. Sometimes the belly is covered, sometimes the line of the navel is left open down to the hips, and the ends of the textile, at the front or at the back, may be tied in spectacular knots, pleated or spread out like a fan. Belts can be extremely ornate, sometimes decorated with garlands of pearls or pendants, and they may also be spectacularly on show at the front or the back; during other periods, however, the material was folded up at the waist, completely concealing the belt. Boisselier described several distinct types of costume visible at Banteay Srei. He determined, without going into detail, that within Angkorian art, several different types of attire were depicted within a single composition for the very first time at Banteay Srei.<sup>253</sup> He did not examine the items worn by the figures, one by one, so he could not carry out a comparative analysis. By compiling my catalogue and analysing the data, I intend to fill this gap.

In the catalogue I have categorised the following elements both in the case of male and female figures (other mythological creatures and half-animal figures can without exception be regarded as male figures, on the basis of their attire):

1. clothing (in every case this refers to the item of clothing worn around the lower body, wrapped around the waist; none of the figures wear garments on their upper body), sorted into categories of form, following two criteria: the properties of the textile (plain or patterned, pleated across the entire width or only partly) and the way the item is worn (tied at the waist with a knot or a belt, method with which the garment is folded or tucked). The clothing could be categorised into several types that differed remarkably from one another in terms of both these criteria.

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<sup>253</sup> Boisselier 1955, 41–44; 71–71.

2. hairstyle: (different ways of arranging long hair), including the type of diadem or crown worn in the hair, or other jewellery decorating the hair, or the absence of such. I was able to identify the types of diadem and crown in accordance with Indian Hindu iconography. In the catalogue I have also provided the common Indian names for the types of jewellery.

3. jewellery: ear-rings, neck bracelets, anklets, bangles, armbands, as well as jewellery running around the waist or chest. Based on my observations, some of them are generally present in Angkorian art, while others, such as the disk-shaped ear-rings, are particular to Banteay Srei. The looped, bar-shaped ear-rings – which, to the best of my knowledge, are only depicted here – have parallels in the Cham art of India. I have dealt separately with what I term ring-shaped ear-rings, which – it seems – are jewellery items that are symbolic of demons.

The belt is often concealed on the portrayals, but it would have been necessary to wear one in almost every case, as a result of how the garment was folded (this information is based on observing present-day practices). The belts are not always shown precisely in the bas-reliefs, and in the catalogue they sometimes appear together with the clothing, as the two cannot be treated separately.

Some figures are wearing two belts: one actually holds the garment, while the other is for decoration. The latter belts can have very refined and intricately designed patterning and are often embellished with garlands of pearls or pendants of different sizes and shapes; the carvings must have been based on some true masterpieces of jewellery-making.

My catalogue also takes account of the attributes of the figures portrayed, that is, the objects they hold or which are in their immediate proximity (weapons, musical instruments, ritual items, tools, flowers), and the *vahanas*, or mounts, of the deities. I describe the postures and hand gestures of the figures, using the special terms for them when these are definable. I considered it particularly important to include in my database a precise indication of the location of the individual figures, both in terms of direction (compass point) within the building, and in comparison with the other figures in a given composition. The database includes information about **489** figures (402 male, 87 female) in the statues and bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei. Ninety of the male figures and three of the female ones have no lower body, either because it has been destroyed or because it cannot be clearly discerned, and in these cases I have only described the upper body and the

headwear. Together with the bas-reliefs at other monuments (57 in total), I have analysed 546 figures in total, but the latter 57 were not included when I calculated the percentages.

### 10.1. Types of Male Sampot

Following the work of Boisselier, the literature distinguished between three types of male costume on the figures of Banteay Srei: 1. *sampots* made of pleated material, folded back above the belt at the front; 2. pleated *sampots* not folded above the belt; 3. a completely new form of clothing, namely an unpleated *sampot* wrapped tightly around the waist, tied with a visible knot at the front, and therefore clearly different from the preceding items.

1. In the catalogue, I use the term *type 1 male sampot* (fig. 3, 4) for what Boisselier – and the literature – call the “traditional” *sampot*. This piece of clothing is folded from material that is pleated along its entire width, held by a belt at the waist, with no visible fixing or decorative knot at the front, but with the front half folded back broadly above the belt in a semi-circular shape. It is decorated at the front with a dangling anchor-shaped piece of material, which presumably takes its shape from folding a pleated strip of textile threaded into the concealed belt. When figures wearing this item are seated, the textile at the front is not visible. One end of the *sampot* material is twisted together into a “strap”, which is led between the legs to the back and tucked beneath the belt; the “strap” is then splayed out into a bow. The design recalls today’s *sampot chwang kbun* (fig. 140-141), apart from the broad fold and the additional threaded decoration at the front.

The majority of male figures (189 out of 312, approximately 60%) depicted on the walls of the sanctuary wear the type 1 male sampot. It is important to emphasise that this 60% comprises a large amount of the figures on the more important portrayals (pediments and lintels), so in this group, the larger proportion consists of defined, principal characters, rather than the repeated secondary figures, whose role is rather compositional.

Apart from a Vishnu and a *dvarapala*, all of the male statues discovered within the walls of Banteay Srei also wear what I believe to be the type 1 male sampot. The statues are of Shiva and his consort, as well as Vishnu, Ganesha, and the guardian figures: Garuda birds, yakshas, apes and lions, that is, specific mythological creatures.

2. The clothing that I term *type 2 male sampot* (fig. 5-8) is also made of material that is pleated across its whole width, and the strap led between the legs is either shaped into a bow above the belt at the back, or hangs down as a long ribbon. In the case of the paired figures in the upper fields of the pediments and niches, there is not one long ribbon hanging down, but three; these are presumably fixed by being tucked beneath the belt. It is easy to tell the arrangement of the textile on figures who are depicted with their backs to us or turned to one side, but even on those in frontal poses, type 2 male sampot can be recognised by the absence of the semi-circular fold, so the navel-height knot that fixes the garment to the waist is plain to see. This distinguishes type 2 from type 1. In certain cases, the simple, apparently unornamented belt has a long ribbon hanging from it, centrally at the front. In the case of flying figures wearing type 2 male sampot, a decorative bow can also be seen tucked under the belt (fig. 6). This type largely echoes today's *sampot chwang kbun*.

Based on my observations, type 2 male sampot only appears on the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei, and is completely absent from the statues. This sampot is found on 33% of the figures (104 out of 312). Some of these are “important” mythological characters, and it appears to me that this form of attire is intended to convey rank – I will expand on this in a later chapter. A significant proportion of figures wearing type 2 male sampot, though not confined to a merely decorative function, are repeated, secondary figures, visible, for example, in the topmost field of the pediments or in the niches on the tower summits.

I believe this type of sampot to be unprecedented, for it appears solely in Banteay Srei. In the mid-eleventh century, similar clothing can be seen on Baphuon-style bas-reliefs and statues, but there the curving shape of the textile is visible on the waist, leaving a broad area of the figures' bellies uncovered; at the back, meanwhile, the cloth covers the waist high above the hips.

Some of the figures in the bas-reliefs who are wearing types 1 and 2 male sampots have clearly visible hems on their garments (fig. 4, 5). These hems may have been formed simply by dyeing the textile, but we cannot exclude the possibility that they might have been stitched hems. I am of the opinion that, in the light of how much detail and artistic attention was put into the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei, this apparently insignificant feature – the depiction of hems – deserves our attention; it is possible that it merely came about through artistic imagination, but I consider this unlikely. To the best of my knowledge, the depiction of hems became common in Angkor from the eleventh century, but during the

period when Banteay Srei was built, in the mid-tenth century, this was an unusual and unparalleled solution.

3. The category I term *type 3 male sampot* (fig. 9) comprises what Boisselier called the “new type”. The material is visibly unpleated, and is pressed closely against the hips. At the belly line, the textile is slightly curving, and at the back it covers the waist high up. The front end of the textile lies across the thigh in gentle folds. At the waist, the edges of the double fixing knot hang down loosely. The belt is clearly visible, and is fixed at the front.

In Banteay Srei, type 3 male sampot is worn by the *dvarapalas* (door guardians) standing in the niches either side of the gateways to the central sanctuary tower, and by the male figures visible in the extant, self-standing niches on the summits of all three sanctuary towers, a total of 15 figures in all (4.8% of 312). This type can only be seen in the bas-reliefs, and is not demonstrably present on any of the statues originating from Banteay Srei.

The design of this garment recalls the *sampot* worn by the statue of Lokeshvara found in Tuol Ci Tep.<sup>254</sup> (fig. 11) The *sampot* worn by a Vishnu recovered from Prasat Damrei Krap is similar, but the flap on the front of the left thigh is carved with a wavy pattern, and there are additional ribbons of textile folded together above the belt and tucked beneath it.<sup>255</sup> I could make out the same form of attire on the statue of Vishnu found in Prasat Thma Dap.<sup>256</sup> In my opinion, based on the identical form of the *sampot*, the statue of Shiva that was found on the border of present-day Cambodia and Vietnam, which is now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, can also be regarded as belonging to the Prasat Andet style.<sup>257</sup>

4. A few of the figures in the bas-reliefs are wearing a *simple loincloth* (fig. 13, 14), which is likewise decorated at the front with a hanging ribbon. In my catalogue I treat the

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<sup>254</sup> The Lokeshvara (MG 14912) found in Tuol Ci Tep, which may be contemporaneous with Banteay Srei, wears a sampot similar to this new garment (Boisselier PL49B), but the folds of the textile are only indicated here with a row of simple incisions, recalling the technique and style of the eighth century. Also from the same sanctuary, a statue of a *yaksha* (MG 14982) (fig. 12) wears a similar sampot which is not folded at all, although the belt is adorned with a finely worked double fold. The depiction of the front loop on the *yaksha*'s clothing is extremely simplified, and therefore most unusual, but this is echoed in the pleated clothing of later styles. I regard the clothing of these two sculpted elements to be special in themselves. Their connection with the art of Banteay Srei is doubtful.

<sup>255</sup> Boisselier 1955, PL. XXVII.

<sup>256</sup> Boisselier 1955, PL. XXVIII.

<sup>257</sup> MM1987.17.

loincloth as a separate category. Loincloths are worn by the figures of *Vali* and *Sugriva* on the north lintel of the central sanctuary, and by Shiva in the form of *Kirata* on its south lintel. All three figures are following a way of life that is different from that of an average person, and their uncustomary attire is, I believe, a reference to this.

5. Another sculpture recovered from Banteay Srei, which was once in the National Museum of Phnom Penh but has now sadly vanished, was a full-length statue of Vishnu.<sup>258</sup> (*fig. 15*) The *sampot* worn in this case is so different from all the other items of clothing seen in the sanctuary that I deemed it necessary to classify it separately as *type 5 male sampot*. One end of this relatively long, pleated *sampot*, which reaches almost to the knee, is spread in a wavy pattern over the surface of the thigh, while its other end is led backwards, tucked beneath the belt centrally at the waist and spread open into a small bow. In the front, the band of textile twisted around the belt forms a small fan at the top, below which are two anchor shapes, with the “upper” of the two branches shorter than the other. Two binds tucked underneath the belt are also carefully depicted. The Vishnu statue is not completely alone in this category: the same costume is worn by another statue of a male figure, identified as a *dvarapala*,<sup>259</sup> and by figures in a few artworks that originate from elsewhere.<sup>260</sup>

Based on my observations, the male clothing worn by the figures of Banteay Srei can be sorted into five categories. The loincloth that appears on a few figures is treated as a separate category (type 4). The clothing worn by Vishnu in the statue originally found in the north sanctuary tower is classified as type 5, and there are no parallels in the bas-reliefs anywhere, only in a few in-the-round statues whose provenance lies in other temples.

Jean Boisselier found that the so-called “traditional” pleated clothing featured mostly on statues, especially those of high-ranking deities.<sup>261</sup> He therefore put forwards a kind of system, in which attire played a role that indicated status, although he could not see any consistency in the way hierarchy was reflected in clothing. As an example, he analysed the costumes worn by the paired flying-dancing figures seen on the pediments and above the niches, who are lifting garlands up into the air; in Boisselier’s opinion, they deviated

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<sup>258</sup> NMPP B269.

<sup>259</sup> NMPP Ka1799, B349, B61.5.

<sup>260</sup> e.g. Kalkin. Prasat Neang Khmau. NMPP Ka. 1656. Dalsheimer 2001, 113. (*fig. 17*), and Brahma. Phnom Prasat Reach. NMPP Ka. 1669. Dalsheimer 2001, 129. (*fig. 18*). For further details see chapter 15 of this paper.

<sup>261</sup> Boisselier 1955, 42.

substantially from the other depictions, in that while their sampots were pleated, the shape otherwise resembled those of *dvarapalas*, whose rank is below that of the deities. In his description of this clothing, he wrote that a flap of the garment, folded into a long, thin strip, “floated” from the waist.<sup>262</sup>

If it was obligatory for a god to be portrayed wearing a traditional pleated *sampot*, and if, for instance, the same costume was also worn by the *Ganas*,<sup>263</sup> then why, Boisselier wondered, would the *dvarapalas* – who were more or less equal in rank to the *Ganas* – be clad in significantly different attire? The answer he gave was that the costumes portrayed on the figures in the bas-reliefs were, from an iconographic point of view, completely inconsistent, and that the only thing one could say with certainty was that the small figures were dressed in traditional *sampots* and the large ones wore the new type.

In my view, however, one need only observe the characters on the western pediment of the north library to realise that the answer is more complicated than that (*fig. 93, 94*).

There are two main figures in the centre of the image: Krishna, wearing a pleated *sampot* which is not folded down at the front; and his uncle, Kansa, dressed in a traditional *sampot*, complete with the fold. The incidental characters – all residents of the royal court – wear clothes that resemble the *sampots* of both Krishna and Kansa. Analysis of my catalogue, which accounts for all the components making up the attire worn by every single figure, enables us to clarify, and in certain cases correct, the rather more generalised, observation-based findings that have been accepted until now.

## 10.2. Types of Female Sampot

Based on his observations, Boisselier distinguished between two types of female clothing: the “traditional” and the “new type” of *sampot*. According to the generally accepted terminology, the traditional *sampot* is ankle-length and made from pleated textile, unlike the other type, which is present only in Banteay Srei, which is made from unpleated material and tied at the front with a spectacular knot. Boisselier’s traditional *sampot* is defined in my catalogue as *type 1 female sampot*, while the new style is *type 2*.

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<sup>262</sup> Boisselier 1955, 42.

<sup>263</sup> In Hindu mythology *Ganas* are members of the entourage of the god Shiva. The *Ganas* live on *Mount Kailash*, and their leader is Ganesa (*Ganesha* or *Ganapati* “Lord of the *Ganas*”). In Banteay Srei, they appear on two pediments on the south library, on the different levels of *Mount Kailash*.

Type 1 female sampot (fig. 19) is made from a piece of material with tiny folds, which is turned back in a broad, semi-circular band at the front, above the belt. Seen from the front, the design largely resembles that of type 1 male sampot. The accompanying belt is relatively wide, but does not appear to be embellished with decoration. This *sampot* is found on the largest proportion of female figures depicted in Banteay Srei (68 out of 84, that is, 80%), and is the same regardless of the type of hairstyle and jewellery that are also worn.

Apart from the figure of Durga on the pediment of the eastern gopura of the first enclosure (the main gate building), the goddesses represented in all the other bas-reliefs and statues all wear *type 1 female sampot*. This type of skirt is similar to those seen on the walls of buildings erected in the preceding periods, such as the sanctuaries of Koh Ker, Pre Rup and East Mebon.

Type 2 female sampot (fig. 20, 22) is a skirt made of unpleated textile, also ankle-length. The garment is fixed at the waist with a knot at navel height, so the material is creased at the front. The S-shaped loop of the knot is turned back in an eye-catching manner. The top edge of the skirt is broadly curving, and while the belly is covered quite high up, the material at the back is even further up the waist.<sup>264</sup> The costume is adorned with a wide, patterned “belt”, decorated with pendants and garlands of pearls. It was mainly because of the similarities in the design of the belts that Boisselier suggested that the clothing worn by the *devatas* of the sanctuary towers was influenced by contemporary Javanese art.<sup>265</sup> The presence of this style of clothing in Banteay Srei, which appeared without any precedent and is virtually never seen again after the tenth century, is a constant source of unanswered questions in research into Angkorian art history. *Type 2 female sampot* is worn by 20% of the female figures in Banteay Srei (16 out of 84).

Type 2 female sampots can be seen on the devatas who stand, holding lotus flowers, in the niches either side of the entranceways of the south sanctuary tower. Apart from these, there is only one other instance of this combination of clothing, worn by the figure of Tilottama, on a pediment of the third eastern gopura. The figure of Durga on the first

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<sup>264</sup> It is conceivable that the skirt was tied up in a similar way to the *sampot sarabap ka'at kbal neak*, among today's types.

<sup>265</sup> Boisselier 1966, 250. In my opinion, certain Javanese formal elements do appear analogously in Angkorian art, in particular in the art of Banteay Srei. However, this does not necessarily prove the presence of a Javanese cultural influence in the tenth century. Analogies in form in individual items of attire, especially jewellery, which appear across extraordinarily great distances are more likely to be the result of the widespread exchange of goods taking place within trading networks that have existed since ancient times.



eastern gopura wears the same type of skirt, but without the elaborate belt. I would like to draw particular attention to the fact that, whereas the male figures standing in the small niches at the different levels of the tower summits are wearing type 3 male sampots (the “new” type), which is the same as those worn by the *dvarapalas*, their female counterparts standing in similar positions are dressed not in type 2 female sampots, but in the traditional, type 1. I have not yet found a suitable explanation for this. When it comes to statues in the round, it seems that the traditional attire was used in every case. To the best of my present knowledge, there is no female statue from Banteay Srei wearing a type 2 female sampot.

I have found costumes very similar to type 2 female sampot, although accompanied with a simpler belt, on the female figures standing either side of the openings on the gate pavilions of the Royal Palace (*fig. 24*), at Neam Rup (*fig. 25*), and the sanctuary tower of the small temple behind the North Khleang (*fig. 23*), and on the small figures that originally adorned the tower summit of Preah Theat Khnau, which lies some distance to the south of the central region (*fig. 26*). Apart from these four locations, type 2 female sampots of the kind seen in Banteay Srei do not appear elsewhere. From the early eleventh century onwards, the sampots were pleated, laid close to the body, and had higher waists which covered the belly above the navel. At the front are some ornate S-shaped loops, but the elaborate, pendant-fitted belt is completely absent from later depictions.

Further research is required into the hypothesis that the sanctuary of Phnom Bayan, originally erected in the seventh century,<sup>266</sup> was converted by Suryavarman I in the eleventh century. Suryavarman was responsible for building the Royal Palace whose gate towers feature images of female figures wearing type 2 female sampots of the kind seen in Banteay Srei (*fig. 21*). If Phnom Bayan was indeed converted in the eleventh century, this would explain the similarity of the clothing worn by the female figures in the bas-reliefs there and by the *devatas* in Banteay Srei and the other monuments listed above. In my opinion, this would also add weight to the idea that the sanctuary towers of Banteay Srei were constructed at a later date.

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<sup>266</sup> Phnom Bayan, located about 40 km south of the town of Takeo in southern (modern-day) Cambodia, is a Hindu temple on the top of a mountain, built – according to its inscriptions – between 615 and 635.

### 10.3. Types of Headdress and Hairstyles

Research into Angkorian headdresses and hairstyles, similarly to investigations into attire in general, has previously focused on classifying them mainly in accordance with the architectural and art historical style periods. Boisselier classified hairstyles as an especially important category of decoration, or, to use the fashionable term, accessories. As he expressed it, “Attire, as a reflection of fashion, is essentially in perpetual change. It therefore seems to be particularly valuable as a means of studying evolution. In Khmer art, jewellery has the added rare benefit of most closely following the changes in architectural decor.”<sup>267</sup> As a result of Boisselier’s research, it seemed to be proven that the basic motifs visible in the headdresses and jewellery matched the architectural decorations on the sanctuaries where they were located; in other words, the design of the decoration reflected that of the sanctuary building, and the artistic style period in general. In his opinion, while the depictions of clothing could vary substantially even within a single building, the “accessories” not only followed the iconographic criteria but also appeared in a completely uniform style within any given period. He saw no difference in the way hairstyles and jewellery were portrayed between the statues and the bas-reliefs depicting the same figures from mythology. In brief, Boisselier claimed to have discovered a consistent system when it came to hairstyle and jewellery, and this fitted in neatly with the evolutionist structure of architectural and art historical style categories.

In disputing Boisselier’s findings, I would argue that at Banteay Srei, besides hairstyles that comply with the (otherwise relatively unified) iconographic rules and the traditions of earlier periods in Khmer art, it is also possible, even within the same composition, to observe types that are clearly different. These new kinds of hairstyles, which are unique to Banteay Srei, are partly visible on those figures whose clothing is also special. The categories that are based on Boisselier’s formal descriptions have been adopted in my catalogue, but in addition to simple formal analysis, I have given more precise identifications of the different types, in accordance with Indian rules, and I have attempted, via comparative analysis, to interpret the differences between the headdresses.

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<sup>267</sup> “La parure, reflet de la mode, est, par essence, en perpétuel changement. Elle semble donc particulièrement précieuse pour la conduite d’un travail d’évolution. Dans l’art khmèr, la parure orfèvrée a, de plus, le rare avantage de suivre au plus près les transformations du décor architectural.” Boisselier 1955, 96.

### 10.3.1 The Mukuta (Crown)

Beginning in the Koh Ker period, the general headdress worn by deities was the *mukuta*, which became the most distinctive item adorning the carved figures of Angkor (fig. 39-41).<sup>268</sup> In early depictions, only Vishnu wore a *mukuta* (apart from a few crown-wearing figures who played a secondary or even merely decorative role).<sup>269</sup> The Sanskrit word *mukuta* means a crown or a tiara. According to Indian iconographic rules, different types of *mukuta* serve as the attributes of specific deities or mythological characters or groups of characters. The term *mukuta* encompasses all kinds of headdress in Sanskrit texts. Countless types are known in India, where they may refer to anything from a crown-like item of headgear to a simple hairband or a specially arranged hairstyle. In general the front of a *mukuta* is embellished with a jewel or a central decorative motif.

The *Shilpa Shastra* texts, in particular the *Manasara*, contain detailed iconographic rules for depicting certain headdresses. Chapter XLIX of the *Shilpa Shastra* is about crowns as markers of rank. The rules classify the forms of jewellery into different categories, and determine which can be worn by rulers or deities of particular ranks, as they appear in the depictions.<sup>270</sup> In the *Manasara*, the *manuli*, as the general headdress, is divided into many categories, including the following: *jata-makuta*,<sup>271</sup> *kirita-makuta*, *karanda-makuta*, followed by the lower ranking types: *shirastraka*, *kuntala*, *keshabandha*, *dhammilla*, *alaka-cudaka*.<sup>272</sup> The descriptions of the types of jewellery are rather generalised, and it is difficult to identify them on Angkorian carvings, but I am nevertheless attempting to do so. I work on the assumption that the figures depicted in Banteay Srei are indicated as having a higher rank within the mythology primarily by being depicted wearing a headdress or crown. I am of the opinion that the figures of Banteay Srei wear either a conical headdress – *kirita mukuta* and *karanda mukuta* – or a hairknot known as *jata mukuta*, which is arranged into a cylindrical form and decorated; the *keshabandha* can also be discovered in the depictions.

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<sup>268</sup> Boisselier 1955, 112.

<sup>269</sup> Boisselier 1955, 96.

<sup>270</sup> Acharya 1934, 53. Of all the head decorations created by arranging the hair in a special way, the highest ranked was the *patra-kalpa* headdress, with leaf ornamentation, which only the gods could wear; the *chitra-kalpa*, adorned with flower and leaf ornamentations and gemstones, designated the *cakravartin*, the ruler. The *ratna-kalpa* and the *mishtra-kalpa* were headdresses worn by those of lower rank. Within the system of attire, therefore, the combination of decorative headdress and hairstyle served as an important designator of rank.

<sup>271</sup> The transcription as *makuta* or *mukuta* (Sanskrit) are both widespread. In the present paper, I use the form *mukuta*.

<sup>272</sup> Categories which are not dealt with in this paper, because they do not appear in Banteay Srei, are: *shirastraka*, *kuntala*, *dhammilla*, *alaka-cudaka*. Rao 1968, 27.

1. *Kirita Mukuta* (fig. 39-40)

The cylindrical headdress, or conical headdress that narrows towards the top, is common in traditional Vaishnava imagery in India, and was found in Khmer art from the pre-Angkorian period onwards. In earlier centuries, the cylindrical *mukuta* was shown placed on the head like a mitre, but beginning in the tenth century, it became a peaked hoop crown, somewhat triangular in shape, decorated with gemstones. The form that appears in Koh Ker resembles several ornate crown hoops placed on top of one another in several levels. This form can also be seen in the depictions at Banteay Srei. In general, they are worn by characters associated with Vishnu (57 out of 215 *mukutas*, 27%). The statue of Vishnu found in the north sanctuary tower at Banteay Srei also wears this type of crown.

2. *Karanda Mukuta* (fig. 41-43)

I regarded it as strange that the majority of male and female figures visible on the bas-reliefs of the building complex, the “supporting characters”, the tiny, decorative figures and the *dikpalas*, or Guardians of the Directions, typically wore the *kirita mukuta* characteristic of the deities, while the Durga on the first eastern gopura (fig. 101) and the Parvati on both pediments of the south library (fig. 41) also wore the same *mukuta*, even though they are associated with Shiva.

Boisselier also made a distinction between the *mukuta* constructed from several hoops in a row – which he termed *mukuta en pagodon* – and what he describes in the bas-reliefs as the “conical mukuta”.<sup>273</sup> On this subject he writes, “*The mukuta en pagodon is reserved, undoubtedly for the last time, for the Vishnu of Banteay Srei*” (“*Le mukuta en pagodon est conservé, pour la dernière fois sans doute, pour le Vishnu de Bantay Srēi*”). Based on my observations, I believe that this headdress – despite its difference from the original Indian shape – can be identified with the *karanda mukuta*. In India, in Chola and Tamil depictions of Parvati, the consort of Shiva (who wears *jata mukuta*), she is often portrayed wearing a *karanda mukuta* on her head. In my opinion, the headdress of both Durga and Parvati in Banteay Srei is the *karanda mukuta*. I identify this type of crown with what Boisselier describes as the conical mukuta. According to the rules of *Manasara*, this attire is worn by lower-ranked deities.<sup>274</sup> In line with this, I hypothesise that countless

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<sup>273</sup> “*Mukuta conique*” Boisselier 1955, 113.

<sup>274</sup> Banerjea 1956 (1985), 287.

mythological figures of low rank in the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei are wearing this type of headdress and not the *kirita mukuta* (150 out of 215 *mukutas*, 70%).

In sum it can be said that at Banteay Srei, two types of crown-like headgear can be seen on the heads of the carved figures, and in my view, these crowns – thanks to their iconographic references – help to support the identification of the characters, determined on the basis of other observations.

Depictions of crowns with multiple levels, both the *kirita mukuta* and the *karanda mukuta*, can be found at Ta Keo<sup>275</sup> and on a few other buildings dated to the turn of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Such portrayals continue in subsequent centuries as well, for example, in one of the most famous bas-reliefs, the “Military Parade” of Angkor Wat, the ruler, Suryavarman II, is wearing a conical crown on his head.<sup>276</sup>

### 3. Jata Mukuta

The style of hair and headdress that is an attribute of the figures of Shiva, Rudra and Brahma is known as the *jata mukuta*. The word *jata* means chignon. (*fig. 44-47*) A broad – or narrow – ornamental crown, presumably made of metal, forms the base on which the wearer’s long hair is arranged up on the top of the head in a tall chignon. According to the original Indian rules, the top of the chignon is adorned with a crowning decoration of a gem inside a blooming lotus flower. Further gemstones or garlands of pearls are attached to the decoration, and are laid flat onto the chignon. There is often a cobra slithering around the chignon on Shiva’s head, as well as one or two half-moon motifs.<sup>277</sup> The *jata mukuta* can be seen in Banteay Srei on the western pediment of the south library, for example, on Shiva being targeted by Kama (*fig. 44*). His chignon, arranged into a towering cylindrical shape of plaited locks of hair, is surrounded by a thin crown ring or garlands of pearls. A snake is wound around the chignon, which also reveal the symbol of the half-moon. Parvati, kneeling beside him, is wearing the *karanda mukuta* (*fig. 41*). At the eastern end of the same building, in the scene of Ravananugraha Murti, Shiva is wearing a broad, ornamental forehead band. Unfortunately, the bas-relief is damaged immediately above the god’s head, so we cannot determine whether in the original composition he was wearing the *kirita mukuta* or *jata mukuta*.

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<sup>275</sup> Fragment of a male head sculpture. NMPP B301,13 Boisselier 1955, 121.

<sup>276</sup> According to the Manasara, the *cakravartin*, that is, the universal ruler, could wear the *kirita-mukuta* in exceptional cases, but in general the *karanda-mukuta* is visible on his head. Rao 1968, 29–30.

<sup>277</sup> Rao 1968, 28.

Both figures in the double statue of Shiva and Uma recovered from Banteay Srei<sup>278</sup> wear the *jata mukuta* (*fig. 46-47*) with a forehead band, while the fragment of the head of Shiva,<sup>279</sup> similarly to the *dvarapalas* of the central sanctuary tower and the male figures and ascetics standing in the niches of the tower summit, is without a forehead band, but with a beautifully arranged chignon (*fig. 45*). Still without a satisfactory explanation is the fact that on the pediment showing the *Abduction of Sita*, found in the third enclosure, the princes wear the *jata mukuta* and not a hairstyle that is associated with Vishnu; one possible reason for their hairstyle is that it symbolises the ascetic lifestyle they lead in exile.

In my opinion, the type of *jata mukuta* seen in Banteay Srei can be called traditional, because – albeit with some tiny differences – it is an element that was continuously present since the Preah Ko period in the ninth century. In Baphuon, the Shaiva type chignon, consisting of plaited locks of hair, also closely reflects the continuation of the Banteay Srei style.<sup>280</sup>

### 10.3.2. The Diadem

The headdress worn by divine figures is made up of two parts: below the *mukuta*, or the *mukuta*-shaped chignon, placed or arranged on top of the head, a forehead band or diadem can also be seen (*fig. 46-48*). It bears a geometric pattern that differs depending on whether the band is narrow or wide; the upper part is generally decorated with a rhythmic pattern of leaf motifs. Thanks to the extraordinarily intricate detail on the statues, we know that the diadems were affixed by tying together (presumably textile) straps at the back of the head. Boisselier identified a distinct Banteay Srei type of diadem, for unlike those of previous periods, the diadems seen here are supplemented with a tiny strip of patterning in the form of lotus leaves (*fig. 46*).<sup>281</sup> Based on my own observations, I believe that the same kind of diadem is also worn by the female deity held in the collection of the Musée Guimet.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> NMPP 1797.

<sup>279</sup> NMPP 2142.

<sup>280</sup> Boisselier 1955, 114.

<sup>281</sup> Boisselier 1955, 113.

<sup>282</sup> MG MA6843, Baptiste 2008, 162–163.

### 10.3.3 Hairstyles

#### 1. Male hairknot, knotted on top of the head (fig. 50, 51)

In Banteay Srei can be found a quite unusual hairstyle, visible on the bas-relief depicting the *Abduction of Tilottama*. The two *asuras* have their hair twisted into locks and tied together in a large knot on top of their head. I have identified the same hairstyle on the main characters (Krishna, Balarama and Kansa) in the scene of *Krishna Killing Kansa* on the north library building. Based on my observations, a similar style is also present in Baphuon, only the tail of the knot is much shorter. In the case of Krishna and Balarama, a ponytail tied in a single knot on the top of the head is common in Indian portrayals.<sup>283</sup> The hairstyle emphasises the gods' appearance as young men. I contend that the two *asuras* mentioned above were given the same type of hairstyle for the same reason.

#### 2. Male hairstyle, curly, tied in a chignon on top of the head (fig. 52, 54)

I believe that the densely curled hair, tied up on the top of the head in a chignon, as seen on the statues of the temple guardian *yakshas*, merits separate attention. To the best of my knowledge to date, this hairstyle is unprecedented in Khmer art. Demonic figures and *yakshas* wearing this style of hair can be seen in bas-reliefs on the walls of Prambanan, for example, in Java.<sup>284</sup> Marchal also pointed out this connection when hypothesising the influence of Javanese art on Banteay Srei. Having studied all the primary and secondary figures on the bas-reliefs in Banteay Srei, I have found just one more example of this unusual hairstyle, worn by a kneeling demon on the right side of the western pediment of the south library building.

#### 3. Untied hair (fig. 53)

Also unusual is the untied, shaggy hairstyle of the demon abducting Sita, visible on the western lintel of the central sanctuary tower and on the pediment of the third enclosure.

#### 4. Female hairstyle of the Banteay Srei type – keshabandha

Among the female hairstyles portrayed in Banteay Srei, the one worn by the *devatas* in the niches either side of the doorways on the side sanctuaries stands out because

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<sup>283</sup> Rao 2003, 362.

<sup>284</sup> Boisselier 1955, 113.

of its extraordinary design. I have termed this hairstyle the Banteay Srei type. (*fig. 55, 56, 58*)

In this special style, the hair is first braided together into locks and then wrapped together in a loose chignon at the back, with curls of hair cascading freely from the sides. The hair is adorned with flower-shaped hairpins. It seems that the chignon is fixed slightly to one side, resulting in an asymmetrical hairstyle. Boisselier was convinced that this hairstyle, like the clothing, was recognisably modelled on the figures in the depictions on sanctuary H in Phnom Bayan, which he also regarded as evidence of the influence of the Javanese style, especially that of Prambanan.<sup>285</sup> In his view, the indirect influence of Java is even more spectacularly apparent in the hairstyle of some of the auxiliary female figures in the pediment bas-reliefs,<sup>286</sup> which is basically a loose chignon pinned to one side.<sup>287</sup> It is important to note that, as far as I am aware, there are no extant statues in the round whose figures wear their hair in this style. This leads me to conjecture that the chignon pinned to one side might simply be a compositional solution, perhaps devised as a technique for the visual representation of a hairstyle that, in fact, was worn symmetrically at the back of the head. In my opinion, the analogies with which this loose chignon should be compared come rather from India than Java. Among the types of hairstyle specified in the *Manasara*, this Banteay Srei chignon most closely matches the one called the *keshabandha*. The *keshabandha* is considered an attribute of the goddess Sarasvati, but the wives of secular rulers are also often portrayed with the same hairstyle in Indian art.<sup>288</sup> I suggest that the hairstyle worn by the female doorway guardians and by the incidental figures in the pediment compositions can be identified as the Indian *keshabandha*. I consider it easy to imagine that female characters who did not occupy a prominent mythological position were presented dressed in contemporary secular attire with a matching hairstyle, because above and beyond the general aesthetic ideals, their appearance was not bound to any strict iconographic requirements. The dancing female figures visible on the wall surface above the door guardians of the sanctuary towers are wearing a traditional *sampot*, but with the same loose chignon-based hairstyle, adorned with hairpins, while the shape of their earrings – which form the subject of the next sub-chapter – are also analogous to forms from India (*fig. 65*). The question arises of whether this hair and jewellery combination reflected

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<sup>285</sup> Boisselier 1955, 113.

<sup>286</sup> Secondary female figures with this type of hairstyle can be seen in the pediments of the two library buildings.

<sup>287</sup> Boisselier 1955, 113.

<sup>288</sup> Rao 1968, 30.



contemporary Angkorian or contemporary Indian secular attire. It is worth noting that the *devatas* on the gopuras of the Royal Palace also sport hairstyles that are largely the same as those on their counterparts in Banteay Srei (*fig. 57*). Regrettably, the upper bodies of the *devatas* carved on the other two buildings that may serve as parallels for the style of attire – Neam Rup and the small sanctuary behind the North Khleang – are so damaged that no sign of the hairstyle can be made out, so even a conditional reconstruction is impossible.

#### 10.4. Belts

Belts were generally used to fix the *sampots* around the waist; they are visible in some of the depictions but concealed in others. In addition, the attire is sometimes supplemented with a decorative belt, fitted with pendants. In his observations of the decorative belts worn by female figures, Boisselier found that the pendant-fitted belt that first appeared on temple H at Phnom Bayan, and then later turned up in many places from Banteay Srei to sanctuary U of Preah Pitu, seemed to be of Javanese or Indian origin, based on a similarity of form.<sup>289</sup> Compared with the Phnom Bayan type of belt, the type found in Banteay Srei is more ornate; the belt is divided into panels with floral patterns, between the suspended garlands of pearls there are additional strings of pearls, with what is probably a gemstone or large pearl weighing them down at the end.<sup>290</sup> (*fig. 69*) The Banteay Srei type of belt is indeed extremely similar to the type in Phnom Bayan, which suggests an as-yet unknown connection of some sort between the two sanctuaries or the two “schools” of art. I deem it important to emphasise that in the classical Angkorian period, belts fitted with pendants had already appeared in earlier bas-reliefs than those in Banteay Srei; clear examples are those worn by the *devatas* of the Bakheng sanctuary, and their almost identically dressed counterparts in Pre Rup (*fig. 68*).

The belts worn by the *devatas* of the Royal Palace, Neam Rup and the small sanctuary can be regarded as belonging to the Banteay Srei type, although they are slightly less ornate. The belts visible on the female statues recovered from Banteay Kdei, which are believed to be of the same age, are also decorated with pendants, but the shapes of the pendants and the patterns on the belts are different from the Banteay Srei type (*fig. 23*).

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<sup>289</sup> “*Cette composition est franchement indienne ou indo-javanaise. Pour le jeu de copies successives, nous la retrouverons dans l’art khmèr depuis Bantay Srēi jusqu’à Prāḥ Pīthu U.*” Boisselier 1955, 130.

<sup>290</sup> Boisselier 1955, 132.

The belts worn by the male figures in Banteay Srei are all plain, and in most cases they are concealed by the folded hem of the *sampot*.

### 10.5. Jewellery

Actual examples of the types of jewellery carved in stone that are listed in my catalogue, including the diadems, have survived – albeit in very small quantities – from the Angkorian period; they are made of metal, often gold. These archaeological finds, dug up in present-day Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand, are in the main poorly documented, so their precise place of origin and their date are unknown. The objects found at the sites Óc Eo in Vietnam and Angkor Borei in Cambodia prove that gold or gilded jewellery was used in great quantities for personal attire or ritual purposes even during the pre-Angkorian period, by members of the so-called Funan culture; some of these objects arrived in the region thanks to international trade.

The majority of the pieces held today in public and private collections – as can be deduced from their size and their less elaborate working on the reverse or underside – were originally used as adornments of stone statues.<sup>291</sup> When analysing the present form of statues, it must be remembered that “missing” items of jewellery might once have existed as real metal accessories. Some statues even have holes in their earlobes, which indicate that they probably “wore” ear-rings as part of their complete appearance. According to Khmer tradition, statues of deities were dressed in clothes made of textiles and adorned with real jewellery. The practice of dressing up statues with gold or gilded jewellery is even mentioned in stone inscriptions recording the donations of the monarch; the oldest known such text dates from the seventh century. Inscription K21 from Ponhea Hor states that the ruler, Bhavavarman II (c. 639–656), gave embossed gold-plate jewels for the statue of Vishnu.<sup>292</sup>

#### 10.5.1. Neck Bracelets

The style of the neck bracelets depicted on the figures in Banteay Srei are not all that different from those produced in the preceding periods. They are probably made of metal, and they are quite wide, getting even wider on the chest, where they are decorated

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<sup>291</sup> During excavations at Koh Ker, a ceramic pot was found containing an extremely valuable set of jewellery, consisting of a diadem, a pair of gold roses for decorating the temples of the head, a pair of ear-rings, a neck bracelet, upper torso bands and a bangle. Bunker-Latchford 2008, 59. Figure 4.24.

<sup>292</sup> Cœdès 1953, 5–6.

with quadripetalous flower motifs (*fig. 58, 67*). They are typically worn by the Guardians of the Directions, the *dvarapalas* and the *devatas*. Many of the characters portrayed, including the figure of Tilottama on the pediment of the third eastern gopura (*fig. 109*), wear nothing at all around their necks.

An uncommon form of neck bracelet can be seen in the same pediment, however, on the two *asuras*, as well as on the figure of *Bhima* on the bas-relief of the second western gopura (*fig. 59*). Their broad neck bracelets are adorned at the back with nine large and ornate pendants. I believe that an equivalent to this necklace can be seen around the neck of one of the wrestling figures in the statue recovered from Prasat Thom, in Koh Ker (*fig. 38*).<sup>293</sup> A large part of the statue is missing, so it is impossible to identify the figures with certainty, but the work has previously been hesitantly identified as the fight between *Arjuna and the Kirata*, that is, *Shiva*. Whether or not this is the case, the figure with the pendants is not wearing a traditional *sampot* but a loincloth, which is also adorned with some extraordinarily elaborate pendants. As the figure of the *Kirata* in Banteay Srei is wearing a loincloth, I consider it possible, by analogy, that the figures on the group statue from Koh Ker are *Arjuna* and the *Kirata*. I have not yet determined a reason why the neck bracelet part of the attire, which is otherwise so different from the sculptured relics of Koh Ker, appears in Banteay Srei both on a positive hero from the *Mahabharata* (*Bhima*) and on two negative characters (the demons *Sunda* and *Upasunda*). Whatever the reason may be, I believe that the presence of this neck bracelet is definitely worthy of our attention.

#### 10.5.2. Armbands, Bangles and Anklets

The armband ending externally in the shape of a flower, which is worn on the upper arm, first appears in Khmer art in the pre-Angkorian settlement of Phnom Da; it is one of the most ancient types of jewellery or physical adornment depicted in Angkor. This item, originating from India, is known as *angada* or *keyura* (*fig. 58*). Due to a paucity of available images, it is hard to say for certain whether or not it was present continuously in Khmer art throughout the eighth and ninth centuries. What we can say for sure is that depictions of armbands of this kind have been found in sanctuary H in Phnom Bayan and in Ak Yum.<sup>294</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> NMPP 1657, Groslier B. 759, Boisselier B. 702.56. Dalsheimer 2001, 114. The truncated statue of the wrestlers was found in Prasat Thom sanctuary. Estimated date: second quarter of 10th century.

<sup>294</sup> Boisselier 1955, 145.

These armbands were completely commonplace in the Preah Ko style, at least in bas-reliefs. Although the Javanese and Indian origins of such armbands are indisputable, this type became a regular and typically Khmer style of decorative element. Such items decorated with floral patterns appear in the same way on all kinds of figures in the bas-relief compositions, regardless of their gender, rank, or role in the mythology, so they were presumably not used as indicators of status.

The figures also often wear simple, undecorated, cylindrical bangles and anklets, commonly in pairs, around their wrists and ankles. This item of jewellery was a widespread part of the attire worn throughout the entire region during every period, and so it does not, in my opinion, merit separate treatment in the present paper.

### 10.5.3. Ear-rings

I distinguish between six different types of ear-rings seen in the bas-reliefs.

1. The majority of the figures, especially the deities, wear lotus-bud ear-rings, which were typical also in previous periods. (*fig. 61*) A pair of gold ear-rings of the same form as those in the depictions was discovered by archaeologists as part of a set of jewellery from Koh Ker, and they are now in the private collection of Douglas Latchford.<sup>295</sup> These conical ear-rings, folded from thin sheets of gold so that their tips pointed downwards, originally surrounded the earlobe.

2. By contrast, the *devatas* standing either side of the doorways wear disk-shaped pendant ear-rings (*fig. 63*). The ear-rings are portrayed as being so heavy that they stretch the wearer's ears downwards. This type of ear-ring originates from India, where it is called *ratna kundala*. This type of jewellery can be perfectly reconstructed today with the help of a pair of ear-rings from Angkor, now in a private collection. On the gold jewellery it can be clearly seen that every "tooth" of the disk is shaped like a *naga* snake.<sup>296</sup> Among the other bas-reliefs in Banteay Srei, the one showing the *apsara* Tilottama depicts her wearing disk-shaped ear-rings (*fig. 109*). Based on my observations, during the Khleang period, the female figures on the Royal Palace who have their hair in a chignon wear the disk-shaped ear-rings known from Banteay Srei, while those who wear a *mukuta* combine

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<sup>295</sup> Bunker-Latchford 2008, 59.

<sup>296</sup> Richter 2000, 81. *fig. 57*. Further examples can be found in museums and in private collections. See: Bunker-Latchford 2008, 57–58.

this headdress with lotus-bud ear-rings. This leads me to theorise that the disk-shaped ear-rings are somehow connected to the new “Banteay Srei type”, loose chignon hairstyle.

3. Several female figures, such as those visible in Kansa’s court, wear ear-rings that resemble garlands of pearls, which form a frame around their long, distended earlobes (*fig. 62*). It looks as though the rounded pearls were threaded around the edge of the earlobe. It seems that this type of jewellery was one of the typical kinds, if not the most typical kind of ear-ring seen in the depictions of Cham female figures in the tenth to twelfth centuries.<sup>297</sup>

4. In addition to the types listed above, Krishna and Balarama wear simple “disk-shaped” ear-rings with a plain surface. (*fig. 64*)<sup>298</sup> These were among the earliest ear-rings depicted in the region, appearing on statues from the seventh century. As an example we could turn to the fragment of a statue that is presumed to depict Kubera, a relic of the Funan culture, now held by The Metropolitan Museum of Art.<sup>299</sup> It is worth noting that, whereas the majority of figures in the bas-reliefs on all kinds of different wall surfaces at Banteay Srei are wearing the *karanda mukuta* and lotus-bud ear-rings, the two male figures close to the edges of the lintel on the second western gopura have a neat chignon on their head and wear simple disk-shaped ear-rings, similar to those worn by Krishna. The two figures are as yet unidentified, but as their *sampots* are the same as those worn by Krishna and his brother, it is not impossible that they are reiterations of the very same figures in a different part of the same composition.

5. The dancing female figures above the niches of the sanctuary towers wear ear-rings of a kind that is very unusual in Angkorian art (*fig. 66.a*), being looped bar-shaped ear-rings that grow thicker towards the two ends; in my opinion, the origins of this shape of ear-rings can be traced to India. It seems to me that the pair of ear-rings from the first century BCE, now held in The Metropolitan Museum of Art,<sup>300</sup> share the same shape and proportions as those portrayed in Banteay Srei (*fig. 66.b*). The presence of this type of ear-

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<sup>297</sup> See, for example: Altar base with dancing ladies. MCSDN 22.05. Origin: Tra Kieu, 10th century (Vardemeersch-Ducrest 1997, 133); Frieze with a court scene. MCSDN 45.8. Origin: My Son, 11th century (Baptiste-Zéphir 2005, 285).

<sup>298</sup> A similar object is known from a private collection. A photo of the object was published in: Richter 2000, 81, fig. 56.

<sup>299</sup> MM 1983.550. Photo in: Lerner 1984, 95.

<sup>300</sup> The “*Kronos ear-rings*”, named after the first collection that held them, are presumed to originate from the state of Andhra Pradesh. Inv. no.: MM 1981.398.3,4. Date unknown. Portrayals of *cakravartins*, that is Indian rulers, wearing almost exactly the same ear-rings are known, for example, in the carved bas-relief of Jaggayapeta *cakravartin*, from the 1st century BCE. Lerner 1984, 21.

rings on the walls of Banteay Srei is still an unresolved mystery, but the parallels to be found in Indian art are definitely remarkable.

6. The *dvarapalas* do not wear ear-rings, but the statues of the sanctuary guardians and the demons do have large ear-rings in their stretched-open earlobes (*fig. 65*). The prototype for this kind of jewellery is the Javanese *patrakundala*, which can be seen, among other places, in Prambanan, which was also erected in honour of Shiva.<sup>301</sup> On the western pediment of the north library can be seen a female figure, who is also dressed in “demonic” jewellery. The explanation for this requires further research.

As we can see, the depictions in Banteay Srei are extremely varied when it comes to the types of ear-rings. In addition to the traditional lotus-bud style, there are several other forms present, for which analogies can be found among the motifs of Cham and Javanese art. We may assume that the different types of ear-rings somehow reflected status or rank, but this is not always done so regularly.

#### 10.5.4. Upper and Lower Torso Bands

Also visible on the figures in the bas-reliefs are upper and lower torso bands, which were probably originally items of jewellery made of precious metals. The wide metal bands, which ended in peaks in the middle of the chest or above the hipline, had intricate decorations across their surfaces. (*fig. 67*) This type of jewellery almost certainly originated from South India, where it has been a common decorative element in both Hindu and Buddhist portrayals since the eighth century. In Southeast Asia it is also present in Cham art; there are countless examples of it seen across Angkor since the Preah Ko period. A few upper torso bands, originally used to decorate statues, have been uncovered by archaeological excavations, as part of the heritage of both Angkor and Cham culture.<sup>302</sup> In Angkorian art, upper torso bands are seen without exception on the figures of male gods or mythological beings, and undoubtedly served as a means of indicating rank. The lower torso band, by contrast, has appeared on the figures of female door guardians on Lolei and Preah Ko, all from the ninth century. Based on my observations, apart from a few minor differences in the decorative motifs, there was no stylistic change in the depictions of these

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<sup>301</sup> “*Ce détail seul pourrait indiquer un renouveau d’influences javanaises se superposant à la copie du passé...*” Boisselier 1955, 174.

<sup>302</sup> Upper torso band in the Bunker-Latchford private collection. Bunker-Latchford 2008, 62–63.

items – or in the manufacture of them – between the ninth and eleventh centuries, and the same is true for those portrayed at Banteay Srei.

## 11. CLASSIFYING BANTEAY SREI ATTIRE INTO A STYLE CATEGORY OR SCHOOL, AND THE QUESTION OF ARCHAISATION

### 11.1. The Banteay Srei style category

At Banteay Srei, which gives its name to an independent style, there are several different types of attire visible on the statues and bas-reliefs, some of which can be associated with preceding periods, especially the style of clothing from the Koh Ker period, while others are unprecedented and – based on my observations – not typical of later periods either. The male *sampot* formed by folding back the pleated material into a semi-circle can be called “traditional”, and a simpler variant of this type, without the back-fold, can also be seen on certain statues. The latter design is, at first sight, almost identical to the *sampots* worn in the Koh Ker style, with the only difference being that in Banteay Srei, the end of the material that is rolled together and led back between the legs is not simply held down with the belt, but is opened out above the belt into a bow.<sup>303</sup> This means that some of the clothing observed in Banteay Srei seems to follow the art tradition of preceding periods. Based on the depictions of pleated male and female garments, Banteay Srei could be fitted into the linear system of art historical periodisation.

At the same time, however, the walls of the sanctuary also featured male and female *sampots* that differed from the traditional form, being made of material that was unpatterned and unpleated; in the classical Angkorian period, as understood in its broad sense, these *sampots* were without precedent, and apart from a few widely dispersed exceptions, also have no later parallels. In 1934, in the catalogue published by the Musée Guimet, Philippe Stern drew attention to this “anomaly”:

*“It is important to note an anomaly that is common in the Banteay Srei style: this is the unpleated garment ending in a hem, which is not a direct imitation of the art of the eleventh century. The double anchor-shaped pendant is long and winding. The hem, pulled*

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<sup>303</sup> This form, spreading out like a bow above the belt, can also be seen on bas-reliefs in East Mebon and Pre Rup.



*down at the waist, verges towards a rectangular shape with numerous almost right-angled folds; this form is fully achieved in the following group.*<sup>304</sup>

We have already seen that Boisselier named this unpleated *sampot*, elaborately knotted at the front and decorated with broad pendants, a “new type” of male and female *sampot*. In my catalogue I classified them respectively as type 3 male *sampot* and type 2 female *sampot*.

Unpleated attire, which, according to Boisselier, “reappeared” in Banteay Srei as a renaissance of pre-Angkorian art, was indeed not entirely unprecedented in Angkor. Examining the history of costume in parallel with the art historical style periodisation, it can be asserted that, in statues and bas-reliefs from the earliest times of Angkorian culture until the ninth century, *sampots* were only depicted made of plain, smooth textiles. In the Preah Ko period (second half of the ninth century), the skirt was folded back at the front with concertina-like pleating, while the rest of the surface of the skirt remained smooth (*fig. 27*). It was not until the Bakheng period in the early tenth century that the style of clothing made a radical break from earlier traditions.<sup>305</sup> It was here that the first examples of textiles with dense, vertical pleats could be seen in the depictions; a style which was maintained as the typical costume in sculpted male and female figures throughout the rest of the Angkor period (*fig. 28*). Boisselier claims that the pleated costume is the only constant element in Khmer human sculpture all the way until, and including, the Bayon style.<sup>306</sup>

Boisselier identified the most spectacular break with existing traditions of clothing in the Koh Ker period (first half of the tenth century). The depictions in Koh Ker are the first to feature male *sampots* with a broad piece of pleated material folded back at the front in a semi-circular shape that almost completely conceals the belt (*fig. 36*). This style had already been seen on women in depictions of the Bakheng period, although beneath the foldback, the decorative pendants of the belt were clearly visible underneath (*fig. 28*). Boisselier observed that, compared with the pleated clothing that emerged in the Koh Ker style, there had been very few innovations in the styles of East Mebon and Pre Rup, which in a certain sense can be regarded as the transitional style immediately preceding that of

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<sup>304</sup> “Une anomalie, fréquente dans le style de Bantay Srēi, est à signaler: c’est le vêtement sans plissé se terminant par un bord qui n’est pas horizontal imitation de l’art du 11. siècle. La double chute en ancre est longue et sinueuse. Le bord rabattu à la taille évolue vers une forme rectangulaire à nombreux plis presque droits, forme qui se trouve atteinte dans le groupe suivant.” Stern 1934, 28.

<sup>305</sup> Boisselier 1955, 41.

<sup>306</sup> Boisselier 1955, 37 “Ce plissé, exprimé d’une manière plus ou moins conventionnelle, va devenir en fait le seul élément constant du costume dans la ronde-bosse jusqu’à la toute dernière période du Bâyon.”

Banteay Srei (*fig. 29*).<sup>307</sup> Boisselier considered the “traditional” pleated clothing seen in Banteay Srei to be a continuation of this trend.

I would argue that an examination of female attire proves that Boisselier’s assertions are incorrect. When I compared the depictions of clothing found in the sanctuaries that are contemporaneous with Banteay Srei, but which Boisselier believed to be its predecessors, I discovered numerous points that contradict the generally accepted linear system and the theory that it all derived from the art of Koh Ker. I therefore deem it necessary to outline the costumes visible on the monuments in question and to present the postulations that I have formulated by comparing them.

## 11.2. Costumes on buildings regarded as “predecessors” to the sanctuary of Banteay Srei

Buildings that are contemporaneous with Banteay Srei are the sanctuaries associated with the rulers Rajendravarman II and Jayavarman V: Bat Chum and Kutishvara, and the temple pyramids of East Mebon and Pre Rup. Although the inscriptions clearly prove that they were founded around the same time, there are no traces of the so-called Banteay Srei style in the bas-reliefs found in the other sites.

### 11.2.1. Bat Chum and Kutishvara

The sanctuary complex of Bat Chum and the sanctuary of Kutishvara were built during the reign of Rajendravarman II. Ornate lintels survive from both sites, showing figures of male gods. Without exception, they all wear the traditional, type 1 male sampot.

### 11.2.2. East Mebon

East Mebon is a three-storey, pyramid-shaped complex of buildings erected in the middle of the so-called East Reservoir; the upper terrace supports five towers, built in honour of Brahma, Devi, Shiva, Vishnu and *Shiva linga*.<sup>308</sup> The few surviving lintels of the sanctuary towers and gate pavilions feature figures of the Guardians of the Directions, all of which wear type 1 male sampot. The style and composition of the carvings on the two lintels showing Narasimha and Gajalakshmi are very similar to the bas-reliefs on the same topic at Banteay Srei. (*fig. 78, 103*).

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<sup>307</sup> Boisselier 1955, 40.

<sup>308</sup> The sanctuary was founded in 953. Jacques 1999, 161.

### 11.2.3. Pre Rup

The upper level of the Pre Rup,<sup>309</sup> built as a state temple by Rajendravarman II, also supports five sanctuary towers. The central sanctuary tower, dedicated to Shiva, is surrounded by four others: the southwestern tower is dedicated to Lakshmi, the north-western to Uma, the south-eastern to Vishnu and the north-eastern to Shiva.<sup>310</sup> Figures of *devatas* can be seen on the southwestern sanctuary tower. The carvings of the *dvarapalas* and *devatas* on the walls of the sanctuary towers at Pre Rup are in a very damaged condition, which makes it hard to examine and identify the female figures.

At first sight, the female sampot resembles the Bakheng style (*fig. 29*). At the top of the ankle-length pleated skirt, the material is folded over to cover the belt, but leaving the belly bare quite some distance beneath the navel line. Although the support belt is hidden, the double decorative belt, from which pendants hang down, is a spectacular part of her costume. Such decorative belts were among the most distinctive components of the earlier Bakheng style, according to the literature. During my examinations of the details of the female *sampots* depicted in the late ninth century (Preah Ko) and in the tenth century (Bakheng, Koh Ker and Pre Rup), I made interesting findings concerning how the *sampot* and the decorative belt were worn,<sup>311</sup> which contradicts the ideas of my forebears.

In the Preah Ko style, only the front fold is pleated, not the entire surface of the skirt (*fig. 27, 31*). The two-row decorative belt is fitted with elaborately worked pendants that hang down. One end of the skirt is turned back at the waist into the shape of a small triangle. In the chronology, the Preah Ko style is succeeded by the Bakheng style. The sanctuaries of Bakheng and Phnom Bok, built during the reign of Yashovarman (889–910), feature *devatas* whose costumes are strikingly different, so I refute the earlier claim that the clothing of the Bakheng style was homogeneous. The female *sampot* visible at the sanctuary in Bakheng maintained the front back-fold from the Preah Ko style, but now with the entire surface of the skirt pleated (*fig. 28, 32*). The decorative belt with pendants now consists of only one row, not two. The female *sampot* at Phnom Bok, meanwhile, has no back-fold at the front, although there are small triangular folds above the waist, as at Preah Ko (*fig. 33*). This female *sampot* is fully pleated, but the decorative belt has two rows. It is therefore quite clear that what is known as the Bakheng style consisted

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<sup>309</sup> The sanctuary was founded in 961.

<sup>310</sup> Jacques 1999, 160.

<sup>311</sup> These *sampots* were usually tied with a belt around the waist, which is not always visible on the depictions. The clothing was supplemented with another, more visible, ornamental belt, which I refer to as a decorative belt.

uniformly of pleated skirts, but these were worn in different ways at different sanctuaries, with each sanctuary preserving certain traits from the previous style.

The material on the skirt of the *devata* visible on the western second gopura of Prasat Thom in Koh Ker is wrinkled; there is a broad semi-circular fold at the front; and the folded end of one side is triangular in shape (*fig. 34*). This design is typical of the Preah Ko style. Based on my own observations, depictions of costumes of this kind can be seen today in several parts of the site of Prasat Thom, but the condition of the bas-reliefs is quite poor, and apart from two figures, the clothing is hardly discernible. The afore-mentioned *devata* is also only partially extant, as the feet are missing from the bas-relief. Other statues and carvings – such as the female figure discovered in Prasat Krap, also in Koh Ker (and also discussed by Boisselier) – are shown wearing a pleated *sampot* with a broad fold at the front that completely covers the belt, which Boisselier defined as the Koh Ker style.<sup>312</sup> For now there is no explanation for the presence of two completely different styles of clothing, as the dates of the bas-reliefs are also not known precisely.<sup>313</sup>

To return to the attire of Pre Rup, it can be affirmed that it is indeed reminiscent of the Koh Ker style, although the double decorative belt recalls the style of Phnom Bok. In Pre Rup, therefore, there is no trace of the type of female *sampot* typical of the contemporaneous sanctuary, Banteay Srei, nor is there evidence of the Koh Ker tradition. At the same time, there are clear parallels with the clothing worn in depictions on Bakheng-style sanctuaries, in particular that of Phnom Bok (*fig. 29, 33*).

A thorough analysis of the *sampots* depicted in the bas-reliefs that survive on the walls of Pre Rup and the sanctuaries of Koh Ker clearly demonstrates that Boisselier's interpretation of the styles of clothing as a sequence of consecutive periods largely requires amending. It is evident that in Koh Ker, in parallel with the development of a distinct new style, there was an awareness of the ninth-century traditions of Preah Ko, which were followed in certain depictions; at the same time, there are questions surrounding the presence of the Bakheng style, which – according to the chronological system – predated the Koh Ker period.

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<sup>312</sup> Boisselier 1955, 69. Pl. XV, fig. 6.

<sup>313</sup> The extant carvings from Koh Ker that show female figures are so few and in such poor condition that it is almost impossible to carry out an iconographic comparative analysis.

Based on my observations, therefore, in Pre Rup, which was built in the mid-tenth century and gave its name to the eponymous style, the long, pleated *sampots* worn by the female figures visible on the southwestern sanctuary tower of the temple are in the Bakheng style, and sometimes, just about discernible on the surface, one can also make out the most distinctive feature of the Bakheng style, the belt with pendants. The idea that the Bakheng (late ninth – early tenth century), Koh Ker (first half of the tenth century) and Pre Rup (mid-tenth century) styles succeeded one another, with each style building upon the preceding one, may seem obvious in a chronological sense, but with regard to the costumes visible in the sculptures, this hypothesis can be refuted, for – as we have seen – the distinguishing traits of the Preah Ko (ninth century) style also appear in Koh Ker, while those of the Bakheng style can be found in Pre Rup. I consider it necessary to find an explanation for this phenomenon in connection with my own research.

King Rajendravarman II, who erected Pre Rup, abandoned the area of Koh Ker and moved the capital of the empire back to the region around the former capital, Yasodharapura. I speculate that during the intervening period, when the capital was in Koh Ker, one or more sculpture workshops continued to operate in the former centre of Yasodharapura, and after Rajendravarman II returned to the city, these workshops carried on their work in the style of the Bakheng complex, even when constructing the temple for the new ruler. In my view, this may explain the style of the male *sampot* on the statue of Vishnu found in Banteay Srei and in several similar depictions from the same age, which, according to Boisselier's findings, disappeared in the Koh Ker period, only to reappear in Pre Rup as a kind of archaisation or revivalist fashion, when the king moved back to the old capital. In my opinion, however, this can all be explained by the continued existence of the Bakheng style, without any need to impute an archaicising intent. The pleated material of the *sampot* worn by Vishnu on the statue from Banteay Srei is intricately arranged, being tied at the front into the shape of two anchors, one above the other, which hang down fixed to the belt (*fig. 15*). Above the belt, the textile is spread out like a fan. A strip of material can be seen wedged into the belt on both sides, and it is likely that the belt was tied in such a simple way. One end of the cloth lies flat against the left thigh of the statue. The *sampot* most closely matches those seen in the statues and bas-reliefs classified within the Bakheng style.<sup>314</sup> The difference, however, is that on the Bakheng *sampot*, the upper fold at the front is significantly longer than – and covers most of – the lower one, while on

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<sup>314</sup> See, for example, the truncated statue MNPP IN1650, which originates from the sanctuary of Bakheng. See: Dalsheimer 2001, 110.

Vishnu's *sampot* in Banteay Srei, the lower fold hangs down below the upper one (*fig. 16*). This type originally appeared in Koh Ker in the early tenth century, but none of the depictions of the male *sampot* that were found there shows the end of the textile lying flat against the thigh; moreover, in Koh Ker, the textile is folded forward in a broad semi-circle above the belt, which is a detail missing from the Pre Rup style. In summary, then, it can also be asserted in the case of male costumes that the Bakheng style does not undergo development and transformation in the Koh Ker style, for the same form reappears in the mid-tenth century on statues associated with Pre Rup and East Mebon. In my opinion, this similarity can be explained by Martin Polkinghorne's hypothesis, namely that the sculptors grouped around the local schools of art or workshops developed their own unique styles. It is quite conceivable that one or more schools or "carving workshops" existed in Yasodharapura, which continued to function even after the king moved his capital elsewhere, while the master sculptors stayed put. If this is the case, it is not surprising that, half a century later, the style of the works produced had changed hardly at all. We can say, then, that around the middle of the tenth century, during the reign of Rajendravarman II, the sculptural tradition was a continuation of the Bakheng style. The Koh Ker "episode", therefore, if we insist on some kind of linearity, can be viewed as a detour, even with regard to the manner in which the *sampot* was worn during the period; this remains no less true if the art of Koh Ker is attributed to a supposed local workshop or school of sculpture.

#### 11.2.4. Costumes on sanctuaries approximately contemporaneous with Banteay Srei

Below I present sanctuaries built around the same time as Banteay Srei, selected because the depictions on the walls can be used to make comparisons with the costumes under analysis. Some of the buildings that are approximately contemporaneous with Banteay Srei (Prasat Sralao<sup>315</sup>, the small temple behind the North Khleang,<sup>316</sup> the gopuras of the Royal Palace in Angkor Thom, and the carved decorations of Neam Rup<sup>317</sup>) are defined as belonging to the Banteay Srei style primarily by virtue of their depictions of clothing, although the latter two just mentioned are, architecturally, closer to the Khleang style, which follows Banteay Srei in the chronology. Buildings erected in the late tenth

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<sup>315</sup> IK 609. CISARC 499.

<sup>316</sup> CISARC 2306.

<sup>317</sup> Also called Prasat Bangrou. IK599, CISARC494.

century are generally classified under the Khleang style, as are carved decorations and statues associated with these buildings.

The similarity between Prasat Sralao and Banteay Srei is quite striking, for both were built with architectural decorations made from pink sandstone, which was used nowhere else. Prasat Sralao is an extremely damaged monument, and only a few carvings have survived, including an exceptionally fine lintel stone<sup>318</sup> (*fig. 70, 71*); it is on the basis of these relics that Coral-Rémusat assigned Prasat Sralao to the Banteay Srei style in 1951.<sup>319</sup> At the centre of the composition on the lintel is a figure of four-armed *Vishnu* mounted on the back of *Garuda*. The twelve male figures in the upper frieze, half crouching and waving their arms as though dancing, are dressed, like Vishnu himself, in type 1 male sampot. I have identified the adornments on their heads and arms, in their ears and around their ankles as the jewellery items “customarily” worn by the figures of deities in Banteay Srei. At present, there are no other known figural depictions associated with Prasat Sralao.

Deep in the city of Angkor Thom stands the small temple behind the North Khleang, which was made of laterite and is surrounded by a wall. The gates and the other buildings have walls of sandstone. Entering through the western gopura, there are library buildings on either side, and in the middle is a sanctuary tower on a raised terrace. The sanctuary is open to the west, and on either side of the entrance opening and the false doors on the other three sides there are bas-reliefs of female figures, now severely damaged. The building, which was not even named by posterity due to a lack of pertinent written sources, is dated to the tenth century because of architectural and art historical analogies, and because of its location. The clothes and hairstyles of the female figures still visible on the walls are strongly reminiscent of the new type of attire found at Banteay Srei (*fig. 23*). The hair on their heads – although it must be stressed that the carvings are in such poor condition that studying the details of the portrayals is extremely difficult – is arranged in Banteay Srei-style chignons, and their ear-rings are the same kind of heavy, disk-shaped adornments found on the female *devatas* in Banteay Srei. Their type 2 female *sampots* are tied with a knot at the front, and their extraordinarily ornate decorative belts are clearly visible. The double anklets at their feet are easy to make out, and they also match the items

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<sup>318</sup> NMPP Ka1819. Groslier C.346, Boisselier C.30.32, Dalsheimer 2001, 196–197.

<sup>319</sup> Coral-Rémusat 1951, 121. The inscription found in the sanctuary area (K782) is dated 1071, and therefore more than a hundred years younger than Banteay Srei. Polkinghorne suggests that the sanctuary may indeed be from the mid-tenth century, while the inscription, made later, records the founding not of the sanctuary, but of the city. Polkinghorne 2007b, 28.

worn around the ankles of the female figures in Banteay Srei. As for the differences between the carvings, in Banteay Srei the lower part at the front of the skirt is much more intricately worked, with the wrinkles also conveyed, while in the small temple behind the North Khleang, only the first, pleated fold can be seen.

Based on my own observations, the attire is similar to that worn by some of the female figures (which are also in a very damaged condition) on the gate pavilions of the Royal Palace (*fig. 24*). The enclosure wall of the early eleventh-century Royal Palace features five large sandstone gopuras. The carved decoration on the southwestern gopura is completely destroyed, but the remaining four (south-eastern, north-eastern, north-western and main) gopuras still bear valuable bas-relief depictions, although they are severely damaged in places. These are significant for my research: on both sides of the topmost levels of the gate towers can be seen images of female figures, while in the few remaining ornamental niches there are male figures, including one ascetic, resembling those in Banteay Srei. The intricately detailed carving of some of the female *devatas* on the intact sections of wall is still apparent today, even down to the clothing they wore, although this is not always easy to discern with the naked eye. In my judgment, their *sampots*, their decorative belts with pendants, their loose chignons, decorated with hairpins, and their disk-shaped ear-rings all exactly match those worn by the *devatas* of Banteay Srei (*fig. 57*).<sup>320</sup> Based on these findings, I have to dispute Boisselier's assertion,<sup>321</sup> who stated that, while the attire of figures in the Khleang style followed the traditions of Banteay Srei, there were certain differences: namely, smooth skirts completely disappeared, and the front fold of the *sampot* and the S-shaped loop above the knot were not present in the bas-reliefs (although the front fold remained on the statues). My own observations lead me to conclude that the figures in the extant bas-reliefs of the Royal Palace are almost exactly the same as the *devatas* of Banteay Srei.

Seeing that the figures in the (now damaged and incomplete) bas-reliefs on the small temple behind the North Khleang once looked exactly the same as the *devatas* on the Royal Palace gopuras, I suggest that the age of the tiny complex of buildings can be dated

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<sup>320</sup> Boisselier states that the hairstyle of the *devatas* standing in the niches on the first level of the gopuras of the Royal Palace is broadly reminiscent of the type found in Banteay Srei, while the attire is completely different. The pleated skirt is held together by an ornamental belt, similar to those from Banteay Srei, with a distinctive clasp and richly worked pendant decorations, but this belt is worn much higher around the waist than those in Banteay Srei. Boisselier 1955, 72. Based on my own observations, I would add that not only the hairstyles are identical, but also the distinctive large ear-rings, known from Banteay Srei. Due to erosion of the bas-reliefs, it is difficult to pick out the details of the *sampot*, but it is still enough to assert with certainty that the style of clothing worn by the *devatas* is at least very similar at both sites.

<sup>321</sup> Boisselier 1955, 73.



with certainty to the same time as the Royal Palace, that is, it was built earlier than the Khleangs.

I have also found similar depictions on the walls of the ruined temple of Neam Rup,<sup>322</sup> located to the north of the Western Reservoir (*fig. 25*). The once large and significant site of Neam Rup originally consisted of three sandstone sanctuary towers, although nowadays mainly the ruins of the central tower offer material to be studied. The sanctuary tower is open to the east, but there are no surviving bas-reliefs on the eastern side. Beside the false doors on the other three sides I could find a total of five female figures. The skirts they wear are beautiful examples of the Banteay Srei *type 2 female sampot*, and their decorative belt and pendants are also clearly on show. The anklets and bangles they wear, as well as the lotus buds they hold in their hands, are likewise identical to those known from Banteay Srei. The pleats at the front and the size of the S-shaped loop beneath the knot are the only demonstrable differences between the depictions carved at the two sanctuaries, but in my opinion these are negligible discrepancies. Based on Sanskrit inscription K254, which was found at Trapeang Daun Onn (not far from Neam Rup) and is now in the collection of the Musée Guimet, Neam Rup is also considered a twelfth-century construction, which is corroborated by its architectural features.<sup>323</sup> The same inscription also mentions that the sanctuary was erected by a ruling high priest, just like Banteay Srei. The artistic style in which Neam Rup was built has not yet been identified, due to the poor condition of the fragments of bas-relief that survive, so I regard it as particularly important to underline the similarity between the clothing visible there and that worn by the figures in Banteay Srei. The question is, though: Was Neam Rup a continuation of the Banteay Srei style, or were all of the Banteay Srei-style *type 2 female sampots* carved in the later century?

#### 11.2.5. The Stance of the Guardian Figures

In my catalogue I have only analysed in detail the items of attire (clothing and jewellery) worn by the figures, and indicated features essential to their identification (attributes, mounts, postures and hand gestures). I have not made any attempt to analyse

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<sup>322</sup> Neam Rup is the name of the Buddhist shrine that stands on the site of the Hindu temple. First described by: Aymonier 1901, 380.

<sup>323</sup> Hawken 2013, 363.

the anatomical details, such as those discussed by Boisselier (hairline, facial form, brow line, nose, beard shape, shoulder and other musculature, physical proportions).<sup>324</sup>

In addition to the anatomical features examined by Boisselier, however, I believe that the stance of the feet on the male and female figures that stand in the niches, most of which function as door guardians, is deserving of special attention, although this aspect has hitherto been passed over by researchers. In the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei, the feet are parallel, slightly angled towards the viewer (*fig. 1, 2*). The same type of portrayal can also be seen next to the doors of Neam Rup and the small temple behind the North Khleang, and on the gopuras of the Royal Palace (*fig. 23-25*). I have also observed a similar stance in the sanctuaries of Preah Ko and Lolei, which are much earlier, dated to the ninth century (*fig. 31, 35*). By contrast, the figures on the walls of Pre Rup, built at the same time as Banteay Srei, stand so that their legs are apart with their feet turned away from each other, parallel with the wall plane. The same form can be found in the late ninth-century Bakheng style, in Phnom Bok and Phnom Krom as well as Bakheng itself, and on the door guardians at Koh Ker, erected in the mid-tenth century (*fig. 32, 33*).

It is not within the remit of this paper to conduct a comparative analysis of the anatomy of the figures portrayed, but nevertheless, in my opinion, this remarkable similarity in the stance of the guardian figures may play a part in corroborating Martin Polkinghorne's conjecture, namely that Angkorian art historical changes should be viewed not in accordance with strictly chronologically ordered style periods, each with a fixed *terminus ante* and *post quem*, but along the lines of schools of art, each of which centred on a particular city or holy site. At the same time, some of my own observations, such as this one regarding the stance, contradict Polkinghorne's assumptions linking both Koh Ker and Banteay Srei to the same workshop. In this regard, Banteay Srei is a continuation of the style of Preah Ko and Lolei, whereas the bas-reliefs on monuments erected contemporaneously with the sanctuary of Bakheng share closer parallels with Koh Ker, and even more so with Pre Rup.

### 11.3. The Question of the Style of Attire in Banteay Srei

As we have seen, when analysing the attire worn by the figures at Banteay Srei, comparison with the preceding style periods is a method that can only be applied with due

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<sup>324</sup> Boisselier 1955, 174–178.

caution. Boisselier regarded the Banteay Srei style as the most complex and varied style of Angkorian art.<sup>325</sup> His comparison of the clothing worn in Banteay Srei with items of apparel visible on certain pre-Angkorian artworks, such as the male *sampot*<sup>326</sup> on the Harihara statue discovered in Prasat Andet,<sup>327</sup> or the clothes in which the female guardian figures are dressed on the walls of Phnom Bayan,<sup>328</sup> led him to the clear conclusion that this depiction was a kind of renaissance of the style from the seventh and eighth centuries. He considered it reasonable that the so-called new style of Banteay Srei was in fact nothing more than an archaïcising revival.<sup>329</sup>

According to Boisselier, “...Copied almost directly after models from a distant past, the smooth skirt with a pocket reappeared in the bas-reliefs of the Banteay Srei style.”<sup>330</sup>

In my opinion, this prompts an unavoidable question about this supposed archaïcisation: Did it only concern the artistic style, as a method of depiction, or were there also connections with a change in costume or fashion around the same time? One of the fundamental questions at any time and place regards the canonistic system that the artists followed when depicting their individual figures or characters. What does it mean, for example, if a deity is portrayed wearing traditional clothes of bygone times? *Unlike* the compulsory attributes, such as certain objects, body parts or physical symbols, the clothing obviously reflected the style that was in use at the time in any given locality, even if that included showing a garment or style of dress that was considered old-fashioned. If, therefore, it turns out to be correct that the portrayal of attire was done with archaïcising intent, then this could imply either that the artist was striving for an archaic style, perhaps basing his own works on those from an earlier age, or that he was adhering to a rule (perhaps from the canon) concerning the subject he was carving, which called for certain

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<sup>325</sup> Boisselier 1955, 41. “*Le style de Bantây Srēi, novateur, puisant son inspiration dans un passé plus lointain que ne l’avaient fait le Mébon oriental et Prè Rup, passé qu’il met au goût du jour, est l’un des plus complexes du point de vue de la sculpture humaine, dans les formes du costume surtout.*”

<sup>326</sup> Boisselier 1955, 41.

<sup>327</sup> NMPP 1635. (Groslier B.113, Boisselier B.45.1) Dated to the last half of the 7th century, the four-armed statue of Harihara wears a male sampot of plain textile that has loose pocket fold on the front. Due to the front knot, it is creased over his thighs, the end of the garment hangs down relatively far below the knot, and is remarkably intricately carved. A belt, presumably made of metal, rests gently on the waist, having only a decorative function, while the sampot is fixed with a knot visible beneath the navel. The flap of cloth at the back of the sampot is folded above the waist and ends slightly spread out. See: Dalsheimer 2001, 91–92. Similar attire can be seen on the statue of Harihara found at Ta Keo, dated to the early 8th century. NMPP 1616. (Groslier B.865, Boisselier B.45.7). Dalsheimer 2001, 96–97.

<sup>328</sup> Boisselier 1955, 72.

<sup>329</sup> Boisselier 1955, 71.

<sup>330</sup> “...Copiée presque directement sur les modèles d’un passé lointain, une jupe lisse avec poche, réapparaît dans les bas-reliefs du style de Bantây Srēi.” Boisselier 1955, 71–72.

mythological characters to be shown wearing “ancient” clothing, that is, garments regarded as traditional compared with the fashion of the day.

When Boisselier described the attire seen in Banteay Srei as a revival of clothing from the seventh and eighth centuries, should we interpret this as a renaissance of the artistic style or a return of a fashion, or perhaps both?

I shall return later in this paper – in chapter 14 – to the possibility that some of the clothes depicted in Banteay Srei might have been – in my estimation – reflections of the items “in fashion” at the time the carvings were made.

The literature of the 1950s and 1960s unanimously regarded the so-called *new style* as a revival of the attire of Preah Ko,<sup>331</sup> whereas Boisselier, by 1966, was talking about a renaissance of the Kulen style.<sup>332</sup> The parallels were probably based on the use of smooth fabric and broad ornamental belts, but as far as I am concerned, the attire visible in Banteay Srei is significantly different from what had existed previously. Based on my present understanding, Phnom Bayan, from the seventh century, is the only site whose bas-reliefs – despite their severely damaged condition – reveal attire that is recognisably extremely similar to the Banteay Srei style and – moreover – serving the same function: as the attire of *devata* figures standing either side of the doorways on the sanctuary towers (*fig. 21*).

The skirt type seen in both Phnom Bayan and Banteay Srei is relatively long and only moderately pleated. The S-shaped loop of the knot is turned either to the right or to the left, depending on the composition. In Banteay Srei, the creasing at the front is much wider than at Phnom Bayan, while the skirt is slightly opened at the front. To the best of my knowledge, there are no statues on which exactly this type of skirt can be seen, and the only known examples are all on bas-reliefs.

Mauger, in his 1937 article on the complex of buildings at Phnom Bayan, mentioned the similarity between the clothes worn by the female figures (whom he identified as *apsaras*) beside the doorways of Sanctuary H in the external enclosure, and those seen in Banteay Srei.<sup>333</sup> In his view, the sanctuary tower was decorated in a pre-Angkorian style,<sup>334</sup> and the appearance of the female figures clearly followed Indian precursors. The head-dress, he writes, resembles a large sphere, while the ear-rings pull the

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<sup>331</sup> Coral-Rémusat 1951, 92; Boisselier 1966, 250.

<sup>332</sup> Boisselier 1966, 250.

<sup>333</sup> Mauger 1937, 254.

<sup>334</sup> Mauger regards the style of the architectural decoration as clearly pre-Angkorian, but in his view, it is the appearance of the *devata* figures that first occurs here, and represents a transition towards the style of the Roluos complex. Mauger 1937, 257.

earlobes down to shoulder height. Based on the drawings, however, it seems to me that the head-dresses are more like interestingly arranged chignons than crowns, while the ear-rings were probably originally disk shaped, like those seen in Banteay Srei. Compositionally, it is highly surprising that the *devata* figures are standing not in the centre of the bas-relief panel, but at some distance away from it, in a way which does not exist at all in the carvings of Banteay Srei.<sup>335</sup>

In connection with the Phnom Bayan parallel, I agree with Boisselier, for the type of skirt depicted in Banteay Srei is extremely similar to those seen in Phnom Bayan. Another similarity is found in the stance of the feet, turned slightly towards the viewer at both sites. We cannot rule out the possibility of archaism, put forward by Boisselier, but there is as yet no good explanation for this.

I would, however, like to emphasise that there is a conjecture, based on epigraphic research, which states that Phnom Bayan may have been reconstructed during the reign of Suryavarman I, at the very start of the eleventh century. In my view, this could give grounds for some extremely valuable suppositions, for this is the same ruler who ordered the construction of – among other things – the gopuras of the Royal Palace in Angkor Thom, whose female figures are stylistically similar to those in Banteay Srei (my comparative analysis of this is in chapter 18 of this paper). On top of this, featuring on the gopuras of the Royal Palace is a skirt that I refer to in this paper as Banteay Srei *type 2 female sampot*. If there really is a connection between the building work carried out by Suryavarman I at Phnom Bayan and the gate pavilions of the Royal Palace, then this is reinforced by the attire worn by the figures portrayed. Should evidence come to light in support of this conjecture, either from archaeological research or from architectural and art history studies, then the idea that the Banteay Srei style was archaism, which I dispute, can be discarded for good.

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<sup>335</sup> In addition to the similarity in the clothing, Mauger also found that the human portrayals in Phnom Bayan are far more naturalistic and lifelike. He also drew attention to the exceptionally well worked legs. Mauger 1937, 258. Contrary to Mauger, Boisselier, having studied the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei in their entirety, determined that a new, more naturalistic method of portrayal was in evidence in the artistic style of the site, which particularly manifested itself in the figures of the *devatas* of the sanctuary towers, who were depicted with full lips and smiling, almost emotive, facial expressions. Boisselier 1955, 71–72.

## 12. THE LOCATION OF NARRATIVE AND OTHER BAS-RELIEFS WITHIN THE SANCTUARY AREA

### 12.1. A Definition of Narrative Reliefs

The artistic style of Banteay Srei marked a decisive turning point in the history of classical Angkorian art, not only because of the unique archaisation or duality in its artistic portrayals or the question of its dating, but also because of the appearance of narrative reliefs. Among the sanctuaries in Angkor, Banteay Srei produced the earliest examples (provided we accept that the site dates from the tenth century) of sequences of related events being contained within the same composition of carved stone. These are not series of images passing from scene to scene like a cartoon, but dramatic moments from a story arranged together as one, so the main character(s) can sometimes be seen more than once in the same image field.

The term narrative relief appears frequently in the specialist literature on Angkorian art.<sup>336</sup> In Hindu art, the word “narrative” is applied to compositions which enable the viewer to “read” the story presented in the depiction. The narrative relief relates a story in a visual, not a verbal form, but its primary function is to bring the believer into closer contact with the deity. “Reading” the images, similarly to reciting a text or listening to one being told, is a device for creating a ritual connection.<sup>337</sup>

Although in this paper I treat narrative reliefs as a separate category, it is important to bear in mind that in Hindu art, where the primary function of every depiction is to invoke a deity (whether directly or indirectly, through the story portrayed), it could be argued that every artwork is narrative, at least in terms of function. The function of a statue representing a particular god or goddess was to conjure up the stories pertaining to that deity in the viewer’s mind, thereby forming a link between the viewer and the deity. As described by Archana Verma, “*The purpose of the visual narratives was primarily to communicate the qualities of the enshrined deity through myth-narration in the visual form.*”<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> Parmentier called them “*frontons à scènes sculptées*”. Parmentier 1939, 153.

<sup>337</sup> There is no perfect scholarly consensus as to what constitutes a visual narrative. For a recent discussion of the matter, see: A. Green (ed.) 2013. *Rethinking Visual Narratives from Asia*. Hong Kong University Press.

<sup>338</sup> Verma 2012, 3.

In this paper, my examination of the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei encompasses all the narrative reliefs uncovered at the site. (map 4) Where my research is concerned, the definition of narrative art and the narrative relief given by Wu Hung seems to be the most relevant. Hung made a distinction between two basic categories of depiction in his iconographic analysis of the funerary shrine of the Han-era Confucian scholar Wu Liang.<sup>339</sup> In Hung's view, the difference between an image arranged around a central, iconic figure, on the one hand, and a narrative composition presenting a story or an episode from one, on the other, was more than just formal. *“The viewer's sight is guided to the center, to be confronted directly by the central icon. The composition, therefore, is not self-contained; the central figure not only exists in the pictorial context within the composition, but the significance of its representation also relies on the existence of a viewer outside it. In fact, the design of such an open composition is based on the assumption that there is a viewer and that there is a direct relationship between the icon and the viewer. ... For convenience I term this type of composition iconic, in contrast to another type of composition termed in this study episodic. An episodic composition is usually organized asymmetrically, and the major character is always portrayed in profile or in three-quarters view and is always performing an action. The second feature implies that the major figure is always positioned so as to confront another figure (or figures) also represented in profile. In other words, the characters in such a composition are, without exception, directly interrelated; their gestures and movements represent actions and reactions. The picture formed by such interacting humans describes a narrative. This type of composition is, thus, self-contained; the significance of the representation is realized in its own pictorial context.”*<sup>340</sup>

Both of Hung's categories can be found in the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei and other sanctuaries built between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries: the iconic, which – in Angkor – consists of an emphatically central deity depicted frontally, and the episodic, or narrative relief. The former type of composition is called “heraldic” by Vittorio Roveda, to distinguish it from narrative reliefs and from a third category that he added: depictions that are purely decorative. In Roveda's categorisation of bas-reliefs, depictions which refer to a single episode of a mythological story, in which the main character occupies a central position, are classified as narrative reliefs, although from a formal perspective they could equally be included in the heraldic group.<sup>341</sup> The same dilemma was faced by Vidya

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<sup>339</sup> Hung 1989.

<sup>340</sup> Hung 1989, 133.

<sup>341</sup> Roveda 2005, 22.

Dehejia, who coined the term “*monoscenic mode of narration*” to describe depictions of single episodes, placing them in a separate category from those that reveal a narrative played out through time as a sequence of consecutive events.<sup>342</sup> After Roveda, it is customary to use the term “narrative relief” as a category in its broader sense when conducting analyses of Angkorian art, that is, “monoscenic” images are not treated separately, or at least they are not usually distinguished by having a different group name. Nevertheless, in the case of Banteay Srei, I consider it expedient to distinguish between two types of narrative composition: those that portray a single scene, and those that depict a series of scenes. Among the narrative compositions on the lintels above entrances, or on the pediments that tower above them, there are several depictions focusing on a single episode in the story of the main character, and only three narrative reliefs in which several consecutive episodes are arranged in the same composition. These three are: on the southern lintel of the central sanctuary tower (scene of *Arjunakirata*) and on the western pediment of the north library (*Krishna Killing Kansa*), the figures of the main characters appear twice within the same composition. The pediment of the second western gopura (*The Duel between Vali and Sugriva*) can be placed in the same category. In the centre of this relief, the monkey brothers are wrestling, while on the right is the figure of Rama, preparing his bow and arrow to intervene in the duel. On the left of the composition is the next scene, in which the mortally wounded Vali rests his head in his wife’s lap. No other example of the story being portrayed in such a way exists until Angkor Wat, built in the twelfth century. The style of simultaneously presenting several scenes in the same composition did not become common in Angkor before then, with Banteay Srei being the notable exception. Based on the linear art historical periodisation, the greatest innovation of the Banteay Srei style was its use of a large number of narrative reliefs. Koh Ker features examples of narrative lintels beneath florally ornamented pediments, or vice versa, episodic pediments above ornately decorative lintels,<sup>343</sup> but the first appearance of carved architectural ornamentation depicting several different epic scenes came with the construction of Banteay Srei. On the walls of the sanctuary, the narrative reliefs are only visible on the lintels and pediments. In a later chapter I present the detailed results of my comparative analysis of the subject matter on the bas-reliefs: in essence, the three “truly narrative” reliefs briefly outlined above deal with themes that will not become typical in Angkorian art until the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

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<sup>342</sup> Dehejia 1990, 374.

<sup>343</sup> Coral-Rémusat 1951, 48.



Prior to the eleventh century – apart from at Banteay Srei – there are hardly any known narrative depictions, as categorised by Dehejia. Even then, only narratives portrayed episode by episode on separate panels appear in Baphuon, while on the walls of Phimai, Thommanon, Muang Tam, Phnom Rung, Wat Phu and Preah Vihear, there are monoscenic “narrative” images, not only on the pediments and lintels, but also on columns, side walls, and other architectural elements. At present there is no explanation for why a composition of *The Duel between Vali and Sugriva* was carved in Banteay Srei without any precedent at all, and without being copied for a long time afterwards. The novelty could of course be due to an exceptional artist, who broke the general conventions of the age, but in the context of Angkor this seems highly unlikely. A far more likely explanation is that the pediment was made during a later period, when the sanctuary was expanded. I shall return to the novelty in the choice of subject in the chapter dealing in detail with the narrative reliefs.

## 12.2. The Direction of Circumambulation within the Sanctuary

*“It is the direct worship of gods and goddesses (devapuja) that forms the focal point of the religious activities embraced by the Hindu temple.”<sup>344</sup>*

Before delving into a thematic analysis of the narrative reliefs, it is incumbent upon me to present a matter of fundamental importance to the design of Hindu sanctuaries, namely the question of the direction of circumambulation. When investigating the history of costume, it is important to bear in mind that the bas-reliefs in question are visual expressions of the Hindu religious system and symbology that was particular to Khmer culture, presumably reflections of the particular intent of the person or group who commissioned the buildings and their decorations. For the last half century or so, experts examining the bas-reliefs have debated the function served by the artworks. According to the art historian Vittorio Roveda, determining this function is the only way of uncovering the true meaning of the depictions.<sup>345</sup> The method that takes “function” as its starting point is relatively new, and stands in sharp contrast to the classical art historical approach.

The Angkorian temple, as a complex of buildings constructed for the purposes of worship, must be regarded as a public space. In the absence of written sources, the actual public use of the space has to be deduced from the structure of the building complex, from

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<sup>344</sup> Michell 1988, 62.

<sup>345</sup> Roveda 2003, 17.

the arrangement of the visual depictions contained within it, and from the specific order of the subject matter. The central question concerns the identity of the people who would have “read” these bas-reliefs, as well as the occasions on which this would have taken place. Were they intended as “instructive” picture books, designed to educate the masses, in line with similar schemas in Europe? Or quite the contrary, were they devotional “aids”, aimed at enhancing the sacrality of the building, and reserved for just a privileged few? Among the countless scientific theories surrounding this matter, I make more detailed reference to those of George Cœdès and Maurice Glaize. Cœdès emphasised the “invocatory” function of the bas-reliefs, that is, their role in rituals performed in the sanctuary, in which the deities are “brought to life”. As he interpreted it, the visual depictions transformed the building of this world into the realm of the divine. To cite just one example, the female figures that are present in large numbers throughout the sanctuary, regardless of the mythological scene they appear in, were regarded by Cœdès as *apsaras*,<sup>346</sup> whose function he assumed to be to render the building as a celestial palace, which explains why they can be seen on the surface of almost every wall. As such, Cœdès rejected the idea that the bas-reliefs were “educational”; he believed that the depictions played an active role in the transformation, and had nothing to do with creating interaction of any kind with the faithful. In 1933 Cœdès noted that any effort that attempted, at all costs, to reconstruct the erstwhile direction of circumambulation within the sanctuary had the potential to divert the progress of the investigations. *“The difficulties one has faced since the desire arose to interpret the bas-reliefs according to Pradakshina or Prasavya may have their origins in a basic misapprehension. The great royal foundations of Ancient Cambodia, by analogy with our own places of worship or even with modern Buddhist pagodas, are ascribed a utilitarian purpose they undoubtedly never had. In order to study bas-reliefs to which a didactic value has been gratuitously attributed, one places oneself in the position, which I believe to be entirely false, of a hypothetical visitor, of a pilgrim, about whose existence one postulates without having resolved, or even asked, the question of whether he would have had access to the monuments.”*<sup>347</sup> The question posed by Cœdès

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<sup>346</sup> In the literature they are generally regarded as *apsaras*, celestial nymphs, or they may be called *devatas*, minor deities. Based on my observations, I conclude that nothing in their attire or movements suggests that they must be mythological beings. I cannot determine any known attributes in connection with them.

<sup>347</sup> *“Les difficultés auxquelles on se heurte dès qu’on veut interpréter les bas-reliefs suivant le pradakṣiṇa ou le prasavya ont peut-être leur origine dans une méprise fondamentale. On attribue aux grandes fondations royales de l’ancien Cambodge, par analogie avec nos lieux de culte ou même avec les pagodes bouddhiques modernes, un but utilitaire qu’elles n’ont sans doute jamais eu. Pour étudier des bas-reliefs auxquels on attribue gratuitement une valeur didactique, on se place au point de vue, selon moi entièrement faux, d’un*

will remain relevant until written or visual sources provide evidence for exactly what kind of rituals were performed in the sanctuaries and the extent to which they were visited by the faithful.

In the opinion of Maurice Glaize,<sup>348</sup> the temples and other sacral buildings in Angkor were erected as acts of merit-making, and are therefore closely tied to the people who commissioned them. In opposition to Cœdès, Glaize addressed the question of how public the sanctuary area was, assuming that anyone could have entered the buildings and read the messages of the bas-reliefs, bringing about genuine interaction between the circles of deities, rulers and ordinary people. There is no evidence for Glaize's hypothesis in the written sources, and we also have no knowledge of any other Hindu areas from the same period that could be used as parallels for Angkor. It is conceivable that the outer enclosures of the sanctuary were open to the public – just as Hindu temples are today – while the inner sanctuary was the exclusive domain of the statues of the gods and the Brahmins. The depictions visible on certain buildings within the concentric enclosures show scenes from different works of Hindu mythological literature that can be clearly identified and interpreted. Wendy Doniger determined that, “*The images carved on the temples brought into the public sphere the mythology of the Puranas*”.<sup>349</sup>

Across Southeast Asia, including at the sites I have examined, all branches of Hinduism ceased to be followed centuries ago, with the majority of the population converting to Theravada Buddhism. The only place in the region where Hindu religious practice has been – it seems – continuous is the island of Bali, Indonesia. Would it be reasonable for us to deduce the “use” of Hindu sanctuaries several centuries ago from our knowledge of present-day rituals on Bali? George Michell, in his work titled *The Hindu Temple*, writes, “*What may be observed of rituals and ceremonies in present-day Hindu Asia indicates that they have not basically altered from what was practised in the earliest periods of Hinduism, even though the ancient rituals have doubtless become greatly simplified.*”<sup>350</sup> As the ceremonies regularly conducted in India today are performed exactly as set forth in the *Puranas*, it is not unreasonable to assume that many centuries ago, the same ceremonies took place in a similar way, following the same instructions.<sup>351</sup> The function of a Hindu temple is to serve as the venue for the connection between the secular

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*visiteur hypothétique, d'un pèlerin dont on postule l'existence sans avoir résolu, ni même posé, la question de savoir s'il avait accès aux monuments.*” Cœdès 1933, 306.

<sup>348</sup> Glaize 1944, 33.

<sup>349</sup> Doniger 2009, 381.

<sup>350</sup> Michell 1988, 63.

<sup>351</sup> Michell 1988, 63.

believer and the divine deity. It is simultaneously the place and the object of worship. The temple is where the deities take visible form, as alluded to by the names used: *prasada* (the edifice of the deity); *devagriham* (the house of god); *devalaya* (the residence of god); *mandiram* (the place of waiting and staying). The deity to whom the temple is dedicated is embodied in a statue placed in a small chamber in the central sanctuary tower. This innermost chamber is called the *garbha-griha*, the “mother’s womb”. The portrayal, like the complex of buildings itself, serves to invoke the deity. “*The divinity that is revealed within the sanctuary may also be revealed in the very fabric of the temple itself.*”<sup>352</sup> The presence of the gods and goddesses in the depictions and in the building(s) is only temporary, and they must be called forth anew each time by performing the appropriate rituals. These rituals are the *devapuras*, essential for maintaining the true functionality of the temple. Four times each day, in order to awaken and invoke the deity, Hindu priests carry out a series of ceremonies in the central sanctuary tower (an important part of which involves numerous circumambulations of the image of the deity); in addition, believers can perform their own act of worship at any time of the day, which also involves circumambulating the sanctuary. In Hindu temples, one never passes straight through a holy enclosure; one must always progress around the central sanctuary – or the statue within it – in a particular direction. During circumambulation in a clockwise direction, known as *Pradakshina*, the object of devotion is always on the right of the faithful. During *Pradakshina* the believer follows the path of the sun, that is, the path of life. Anti-clockwise circumambulation, known as *Prasavya*, is mainly reserved for rituals of the dead. Circumambulation can be carried out by entering through the gate pavilions of the temples (which are designed with a central floor plan) and proceeding around the enclosures. The sanctuary chamber is located in the centre of the innermost enclosure, where the circumambulation is performed not by the pilgrim, but by the Hindu priest, acting on his behalf.

When interpreting the bas-reliefs, the “reading” of the depictions was influenced by the surrounding space and by the circumambulation, that is, by the direction taken by the person passing in front of the bas-reliefs. Decades of scientific research has been aimed at deciphering the “direction of circumambulation” in Angkor Wat, the largest Angkorian complex of buildings, known for the varied themes that appear in its bas-reliefs.<sup>353</sup> The interpretation of the series of mythological and historical bas-reliefs arranged across the

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<sup>352</sup> Michell 1988, 62.

<sup>353</sup> Cœdès 1933, 303–309. See also: Chihara 1996, 42, Kim 2001, 27–28.

walls can vary dramatically depending on whether one progresses from one to the next in a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction.<sup>354</sup> Apart from Angkor Wat, the direction of circumambulation in the other Angkorian temples has been largely neglected by the specialist literature. It is likely that most of the sanctuaries were used in both directions, depending on the given ceremony; exceptions are a small number of religious buildings with specific functions, such as mausoleums.

In examining the iconographic programme of Banteay Srei, we may consider the location of the reliefs not only with regard to the cardinal points but also from the perspective of the narrative that follows the direction of motion within the temple, assuming that the practice of circumambulation also contextualised the depictions, whose themes and positions were chosen accordingly when the sanctuary was designed. I believe that a reconstruction of how the holy area of Banteay Srei was originally used may be attempted by taking present-day Indian ritual customs as our starting point, with the help of the way the complex of buildings in Banteay Srei is arranged and by categorising the depictions that are found there. As the written sources make no special reference of any kind, we can safely assume that Banteay Srei was not used, for example, as a mausoleum, and so we can take the direction of the *Pradakshina* as the norm when examining the interconnections between the different bas-reliefs.

### 12.3. The Question of the “Iconographic Programme”

A substantial amount of present research into the art of Banteay Srei focuses primarily on the iconographic analysis. One of the main questions concerns the hypothetical reconstruction of the iconographic programme, based on the surviving texts and the extant artworks. The narrative reliefs at Banteay Srei were identified thematically quite early on in the history of research into the site, but since then very little attention has been paid to the questions of why certain narratives were chosen, or why they were chosen for their given locations within the building complex. How to interpret the narrative reliefs was a divisive question in the 1960s, and the matter raised its head again in the 2000s. As I stated at the beginning of this chapter, a narrative relief is a visual representation – in this case, carved in stone – of a scene, or series of scenes, taken from a text or legend. An

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<sup>354</sup> In the light of Hindu ritualistic rules, circumambulation in an anti-clockwise direction could be a ceremony to purify the holy site (*Prasavya*), which would refer to the function of the mausoleum. Moving in a clockwise direction, meanwhile, would be more typical of ceremonies in honour of the living ruler (*Pradakshina*). Roveda 2003, 18.

examination of a narrative relief involves determining which known stories match what can be seen in the depiction, although we can never know for sure if the sculptors, or the scholars in charge of them, were actually aware of the texts in question, or were simply following an oral/visual convention. The amount of “artistic freedom” – as it would be called in Europe – that the sculptors may have enjoyed in deciding how to convey certain details (naturally based less on personal preference than on the trends of the time), and the level of specificity contained in the local variant of the narrative being portrayed are questions that need to be considered; another relevant factor is which particular Hindu guide on the rules of art and architecture was in currency in the region at the given time.

In his study titled *Redéfinir l'originalité de Banteay Srei: relation entre iconographie et architecture*, published in 1991, Éric Bourdonneau first raised the question of whether the iconographic programme in Banteay Srei could be uncovered and interpreted from the starting point of where the narrative reliefs were placed within the building.<sup>355</sup> In his opinion, above and beyond stylistic and thematic investigations, an iconographic analysis was also required to look into the system of connections among the different depictions and between them and the architectural elements on which they were carved. Bourdonneau attempted to reconstruct the relationship between the bas-reliefs, and the thematic system underlying them, from the direction of circumambulating the sanctuary. His conjecture, namely that by starting from the third eastern gopura and proceeding in a clockwise direction (in line with the *Pradakshina*), the bas-reliefs can be arranged in an order that reveals a kind of overarching system, is – in my opinion – a problematic one. On the western side, only two gopuras survive, so circumambulation cannot possibly be reconstructed from there, nor can we have any idea about the likely subject matter that once decorated the now missing pediments and lintels; in sum, the potential order for reading the bas-reliefs along the third enclosure wall cannot be realistically determined.

Boreth Ly dedicated his doctoral dissertation to reconstructing the visual programme – as he envisaged it – of Angkorian narrative reliefs. In his paper entitled *Picture-Perfect Pairing: The Politics and Poetics of a Visual Narrative Program at Banteay Srei*, published in 2005, he attempted to formulate a thematic system for the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei that was based on pairs. He speculated that the bas-reliefs were arranged in thematic pairs within the central buildings of the temple complex. Ly

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<sup>355</sup> Bourdonneau 1999, 28.

mentioned the possibility that the complex might have undergone multiple reconstructions, but in his analysis he treated the inner sanctuary area as having been created in accordance with a unified iconographic and narrative programme.<sup>356</sup> He therefore left the possibility of subsequent additions out of his equation, and in his reconstruction of the supposed narrative programme, he spoke about a complex of bas-reliefs executed in line with a single, coherent programme. Ly's research was not confined to Banteay Srei, for he also included the narrative reliefs of Phimai, an eleventh-century sanctuary complex in present-day Thailand. He found that the scenes from *Ramayana* were not placed in proximity to one another, but were spread across the lintel stones of the central sanctuary in an order that was not even chronological.<sup>357</sup> As such, in his view, the "narrative" does not come into play, for it cannot be "read", through circumambulation alone, as a linear sequence of connecting episodes.<sup>358</sup> He described the sequence of the carved narratives as simply chaotic. At the same time, however, he suggested that the placing of the narratives within the building might follow the rules of a "mandala drawing".<sup>359</sup> He strove to make pairs out of compositions whose subjects were either related to or diametrically opposite to each other, retrospectively assuming the presence of a kind of method of interpretation that he termed "*picture-pairing*".<sup>360</sup> Pairing the bas-reliefs, however, is fraught with barriers, and there is also the question of whether the duality of compositional solutions can genuinely be associated with thematic duality, whether that be in connection with two depictions or within the same composition. All that can be stated with utter certainty, as Ly himself implies, is that the facades on the buildings located along the north side of the temple complex bear images that are connected to *Vishnu*, while those visible on the south are about *Shiva*, which is in line with the original deities to whom the two side sanctuaries were dedicated. At Pre Rup, also dated to the tenth century, the central sanctuary is surrounded by four secondary sanctuary towers, which were also covered with bas-reliefs depicting scenes from the tales of *Shiva* or *Vishnu*. Interestingly, however, the north-eastern sanctuary here was dedicated to *Shiva*, the north-western to *Parvati*, and the south-eastern and south-western to *Vishnu* and his consort, *Lakshmi*, so in my opinion, the analogy is not perfect.

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<sup>356</sup> Ly 2005, 179. "However, I strongly believe that the sculptural program at Banteay Srei and its narrative intention and meanings point to a gradual articulation of complex cultural and political ideologies."

<sup>357</sup> Ly 2006/07, 43.

<sup>358</sup> Ly 2005, 151.

<sup>359</sup> Ly 2006/07, 46.

<sup>360</sup> Ly 2005, 152.

Thierry Zéphir's analysis of the subjects depicted at Banteay Srei resulted in him concluding that they were devised in accordance with a distinct iconographic programme. In his view, the universal theme decided upon by the founder of the sanctuary, Yajnavaraha, was the fight between good and evil, as the scenes selected are all connected with gods battling demons.<sup>361</sup>

I consider this finding to be true for Angkorian artworks in general, as the subject matter is mostly derived from *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas*. The themes depicted in the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei, however, do not appear to have been particularly consciously chosen for their emphatic contrast between good and evil.

In my opinion, if the hypothetical iconographic programme at Banteay Srei can be reconstructed at all, then we must expand our focus beyond the narrative reliefs and analyse the location within the temple of all the figures who can be clearly identified. I consider it necessary to make a thematic comparison between the bas-reliefs here and those visible on other Angkorian buildings. I will examine parallels for the bas-reliefs from two perspectives: form and content. In the case at hand, formal analysis involves comparing compositional techniques and pointing out the stylistic similarities between specific elements within the depictions, especially those related to attire. Comparison of the content in this case means identifying which of the narratives featured in the Banteay Srei bas-reliefs can be found in other sanctuaries in Angkor, and specifying where exactly they are located, that is, in which part of which building. I have taken into consideration the Angkorian buildings whose bas-reliefs can be compared with those in Banteay Srei in terms of their subject matter, with particular attention paid to their dates. This has enabled me to build up a picture of which narratives were typically present or absent in any given period, and which appeared continuously over a period of centuries. With the help of the comparative method, certain themes that were typical of particular eras can be ascertained, and the presence of these themes can help us to deduce the date of a given building.

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<sup>361</sup> Baptiste-Zéphir 2008, 176.



### 13. NARRATIVE AND ICONIC RELIEFS

At Banteay Srei, not only the direction of circumambulation is difficult to specify, but also the possible route. The territory of the first enclosure is completely filled with buildings, making true circumambulation practically impossible. It is probable that people circumambulated the deity around the *outside* of the first enclosure wall. The location of *Shiva Nataraja* on the gate pavilion, together with the presence of the statue of *Nandi* in front of him, led Bourdonneau to conclude that the first enclosure, symbolising *Mount Kailash*, must have been closed off to the general public, so lay believers would have paid their devotion by moving around the first enclosure wall.<sup>362</sup>

In this case, the ceremonial circumambulation began at the depiction of *Shiva Nataraja*, passed by the scenes of *Shiva* on the south library building, and continued past the portrayals of *Umamaheshvara*, *Yama* and *Varuna* on the south sanctuary tower. On the western side, the first gopura is now in such a condition that no narrative depiction can be identified on it. On the eastern facade of the second western gopura is a bas-relief showing the duel between *Vali and Sugriva* and the *Death of Vali*. The pediments on the north facade of the south tower and the south facade of the central sanctuary, respectively depicting *Kubera* and *Yama*, cannot be seen with the naked eye from beyond the enclosure wall. The western pediment of the central sanctuary depicts *Varuna*, while on the northern side – also not visible from outside – is another scene of the duel between *Vali and Sugriva*; carrying on, the figure of *Varuna* can be seen on the western side of the north tower, and on the northern side is a scene of *Bhringi*. At the end of the circumambulation come the scenes of *Krishna Killing Kama* and the *Burning of Khandava Forest*, that is, the two narratives involving *Krishna* and *Vishnu* on the north library. This route makes little sense according to our present understanding of the narratives, and so further comparative research with other sanctuaries is needed.

In my descriptions of the subject matter of the bas-reliefs, I follow the direction of *Pradakshina*, but progressing gradually outwards from the central sanctuary tower. In other words, I do not follow the path that erstwhile pilgrims would presumably have taken,

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<sup>362</sup> Bourdonneau 1999, 55. “...l’édifice n’est pas seulement cet accès à la première enceinte, il ouvre sur le séjour de Śiva peuplé d’êtres divins ou ‘semi-divins’ et réservé aux rares élus. Ajoutons que si la première enceinte désigne le Kailasa, la deuxième est l’espace même au pied de celui-ci: le dévot qui y chemine s’intègre et participe également à cette image du sanctuaire qui identifie son architecture au centre du monde.”

starting from the fourth – most external – gate pavilion, and making their way ever closer towards the “womb” of the sanctuary; as we lack sufficient knowledge of ceremonial customs at the time, their precise route cannot be authentically reconstructed. Furthermore, certain parts of the temple complex are missing today, rendering a true reconstruction even less possible. We are also unable to determine how close to the sanctuary towers members of the faithful were permitted to approach, which enclosure they would embark on their “reading” of the reliefs, and the extent this reading would cover. I therefore took the decision to present the narrative reliefs by starting at the centre and working progressively outwards, from the most important sanctuary tower to the less significant buildings.

In my text I only make references to mythological stories that are well known, although in the case of less frequently depicted narratives, I deemed it necessary to include a brief summary of the legend in my analysis and interpretation of the compositions.

### 13.1. The Bas-Reliefs of the First Enclosure

#### 13.1.1. The Bas-Reliefs of the Central Sanctuary Tower

The lintels and pediments above the eastern entrances of the sanctuary towers, as well as over the false doors facing the other three compass points, either depict narrative scenes or single figures of deities. The images on the northern, western and southern pediments are centred on the gods of those directions: *Kubera*<sup>363</sup> faces north, *Varuna* to the west and *Yama* to the south. Some of the pediments feature seated gods among floral ornamentation.<sup>364</sup> The *vahana*<sup>365</sup> associated with the deity is usually not portrayed, but is

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<sup>363</sup> It must be mentioned here that the identification as *Kubera* is based on his location within the sanctuary, not on any iconographic characteristics in his portrayal. In Banteay Srei, seated deities were not shown with their distinctive attributes. In medieval Indian Vaishnava and Shaiva temples, he is portrayed on the external facades as a *dikpala*, or Guardian of the Directions, always symbolising north. He usually sits on a lotus flower, his feet hanging down and resting on two flasks. In his hand he holds a bag or a gemstone, and in his mouth is a guardian mongoose. For a detailed description see: Banerjea 1956, 339.

<sup>364</sup> The decorative edges of the pediments are designed with great variety. They typically end in a *Makara head*, from whose mouth dangles a pendant. On the triple pediments of the library buildings, the first two also end in *Makaras*, but here not pendants but creatures protrude from the mouths: lions above and *Garuda* birds below. At the top of each curve is a depiction of a *Kala*, which – according to Coral-Rémusat – clearly follows Javanese tradition. On the topmost pediments can be seen a motif that later became quite widespread: a *Kala* head in profile, mouth agape, turning to the corner of the building and “biting a *naga*”.

<sup>365</sup> *Vahana*: “carrier” or “mount”. In Hinduism usually some kind of mythical creature, associated with a particular deity.

replaced with a monster.<sup>366</sup> The lintels beneath the pediments are carved with narrative reliefs depicting scenes from *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.<sup>367</sup>

The southern lintel of the central sanctuary tower depicts *Arjunakirata*, featuring one of the avatars of *Shiva*, the western lintel shows the *Abduction of Sita*, while the northern is adorned with a scene of the *Duel between Vali and Sugriva*. It is surprising that the sanctuary tower erected in honour of *Shiva* only features one narrative actually related to the god, while the other two are from *Ramayana*, part of the Vaishnava mythology.

The lintel above the southern false door shows *Shiva* as *Kirata*, wrestling with *Arjuna* (fig. 72). To the best of our present knowledge, this is the earliest depiction of *Arjuna* in Angkorian art.<sup>368</sup> The combatants are in the middle of the composition, while on either side, some distance away, are figures drawing their bows; at the extreme edges of the bas-relief are the standing figures of *Arjuna* and *Shiva* once more. There is also a wild boar in the depiction, in accordance with the *Mahabharata*.<sup>369</sup>

Attire: *Arjuna* is wearing a *type 2 male sampot*, and his hair is bound in a chignon. *Kitara* is wearing a loincloth, and his loose hair and ear-rings give him a demonic appearance.

Parallels: the duel between *Arjuna* and *Kitara* became a popular theme in Angkorian sculpture from the eleventh century on. Other examples are at Preah Vihear (without the wild boar); on the second eastern and western gopuras of Baphuon; on the walls at Banteay Ampil and Khna Sen Keo, and the twelfth-/thirteenth-century Prang Hin Daeng (Phimai), Sikhoraphum; on the bases of columns in Angkor Wat and Thomannon; on the third western gopura of Preah Khan; and on the lower gallery at Bayon (the latter two were built in the thirteenth century during the reign of Jayavarman VII).

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<sup>366</sup> This iconographic type was typical of Angkorian decorative art until the 11th century, but in later periods its popularity gradually declined.

<sup>367</sup> Above the east entrance there is no such pediment and lintel, for it is built into the antarala.

<sup>368</sup> Rodriguez 2000, 99.

<sup>369</sup> In Book III of *Mahabharata*, *Arjuna* is subjected to countless trials and tribulations when he is in exile with his brothers, living in the forest, leading an ascetic lifestyle. When *Shiva* sees *Arjuna*'s strict asceticism, he pays him a visit in the form of a *kirata*, that is, a mountain-dwelling hunter. At the same time, a demon named *Muka* attacks *Arjuna* in the form of a wild boar. The hero fires an arrow at the wild boar, but at the very same moment, so does the *kirata*, *Shiva*'s manifestation. Their argument over their quarry turns into a duel and then into a wrestling match, and this scene is portrayed on the bas-relief in Banteay Srei. The grip of the *kirata* is unbearably painful, and *Arjuna*, in his mind, pleads for help from *Shiva*, at the same time as he recognises the divine nature of his opponent. *Arjuna* bows down to the ground, and *Shiva*, in exchange for this acknowledgment, gives him the magic weapon, the *Pashupata*. As interpreted by Roveda, "When *Shiva* consecrated *Arjuna* by returning him his power and giving him the *Pashupata*, *Arjuna* was rewarded for his sacrifice and could re-establish the dharma. This myth thus exemplifies the divine legitimacy of royalty and semi-divine status of the king, a theme highly appreciated by Khmer rulers." Roveda 2008, 162.

The *Abduction of Sita*, depicted on the western lintel of the central sanctuary, is a popular and well-known Hindu legend (*fig. 73*).<sup>370</sup> The depiction at Banteay Srei shows the two central figures: the demon *Viradha* and *Sita*; *Rama* and his brother *Lakshmana*, the deer, the other characters, and the forest environment are not featured here. It must be noted that the demon cannot be identified on the basis of the attributes portrayed. According to the story in *Ramayana*, *Viradha* fails to abduct *Sita* because *Rama* and *Lakshmana* intervene. The second attempt to abduct her, this time carried out by *Ravana*, is successful. *Sita* is left alone with *Ravana* after the demon tricks the brothers into leaving the queen's side. I agree with Bourdonneau that the figure in question, seen on the western lintel of the central sanctuary tower and on the pediment uncovered next to the third eastern gopura, is *Viradha* and not *Ravana*, for the two archer figures at the sides of both compositions probably represent *Rama* and *Lakshmana*. Moreover, the demon is holding a spear, which also indicates that he is *Viradha*, for *Ravana* approached *Sita* disguised as an ascetic.<sup>371</sup>

Attire: *Sita* is dressed simply in a *type 1 female sampot*, and her hair is in a ponytail, without jewelled adornments. The demon is wearing a *type 2 male sampot*, but – uniquely in Banteay Srei, and also unparalleled in the tenth century – the surface of the textile bears a wavy pattern. The demon's hair hangs loose around his head, and he has ring-shaped ear-rings.

Parallels: the entire story, broken down into separate episodes, can be seen on the antarala of Phnom Rung (eleventh century), on one of the outer gopuras of Angkor Wat, and on a pilaster at Banteay Samre (the latter two both twelfth century).<sup>372</sup>

The *Duel between Vali and Sugriva*<sup>373</sup> can be seen in two places in Banteay Srei (*fig. 74*). (The narrative relief on the pediment of the second western gopura is discussed with particular emphasis in this paper because of its exceptional composition.) The depiction on the northern lintel of the central sanctuary tower shows the moment when the monkey brothers are wrestling. At the centre is the duel itself, while to the left and right, male archer figures are aiming their bows at the fighters. These figures are presumably

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<sup>370</sup> *Ramayana*, Book III, *Aranyakanda*, chapter 49.

<sup>371</sup> The demon's *sampot* is made from patterned fabric. To the best of my knowledge, textile patterns do not appear in Angkor before the Angkor Wat period, but they become the norm during the Bayon period. (*fig. 7*).

<sup>372</sup> Roveda 2008, 122.

<sup>373</sup> *Ramayana*, Book IV, *Kishkindhakanda*, chapter 16.

*Rama* and his brother, and although the myth states that only *Rama* fires his arrow, the depiction was probably made with both men taking aim in order to achieve compositional symmetry.

Attire: *Vali* and *Sugriva* are wearing loincloths. The archer on the right is wearing a *jata mukuta*, the one on the left a *kirita mukuta*. In my opinion, the difference in crown and hairstyle helps to distinguish between the two brothers. In the original story, both princes wore the simple garments of an ascetic during their time in banishment. The chignon hairstyle of the figure on the right is in line with this. I postulate that the figure on the left was shown with a *kirita mukuta* so as to identify him as *Rama*.

Parallels: The story is depicted at the eleventh-century sites Baphuon and Phnom Rung, on the walls of the twelfth-century Banteay Samre and Angkor Wat, and on the even later Chau Say Tevoda, Preah Khan and Preah Pitu.

It should be noted, therefore, that three lintels on the central sanctuary tower are decorated with scenes whose subject matter was less typical of the tenth century and rather more common in the Angkor Empire in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

### 13.1.2. The Bas-Reliefs of the South Sanctuary Tower

The south sanctuary tower, like the central one, was erected (we presume) in honour of *Shiva*, as deduced from the Sanskrit inscription on the doorpost of the entrance.<sup>374</sup> The gods that feature on the pediments – *Kubera*, *Varuna* and *Yama* – are repeated on the lintels beneath them, so all three Guardians of the Directions can be seen in two depictions, one above the other. The Guardians of the Directions are dressed almost identically, in attire that is the same as that worn by the *dikpalas* on the pediments or lintels of the other buildings. Above the *type I male sampot*, most of the figures are adorned with richly decorated upper torso bands, armbands and broad neck bracelets. They wear conical crowns and have large bud-shaped ear-rings. I believe that their appearance is in accordance with the *Shilpa Shastra*, which states that deities symbolising the ideal kingdom must be depicted similar to *Vishnu*, dressed in magnificent royal garments and jewellery.<sup>375</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> Inscription K574.

<sup>375</sup> Shluka 1958, 142.

Compared with the three identically structured sides of the sanctuary tower, the eastern side is an exception: here the lintel depicts Indra on the back of a three-headed elephant, while the pediment above it portrays *Shiva* and *Uma Nandi* on the back of a bull (fig. 114). The so-called *Umamaheshvara* scene was a popular theme in Khmer depictions; in Banteay Srei it can be seen on the sanctuary tower and on the pediment of the long hall standing on the north side of the fourth enclosure. In Angkorian depictions, *Shiva* embraces *Uma* with his left arm, while in his right hand he holds an *aksamala*, or string of beads, or – less commonly – a *trishula*, or three-pronged harpoon (trident).<sup>376</sup> This is different from Indian tradition, where *Shiva* is portrayed with four arms, one of which also wields an axe, while his body is draped in an antelope skin.<sup>377</sup> The Indian-style portrayal is unknown in the classical Angkorian period.

Parallels: beginning in the eleventh century, images of *Umamaheshvara* appear very often in bas-reliefs.<sup>378</sup> Another popular choice of subject for sculptures was the seated pair of *Shiva and Uma*. The twin statue found in Banteay Srei is discussed in a later section of this paper.

Attire: all the male and female figures on the lintels and pediments of the south sanctuary tower wear *type I (male or female) sampot*.

### 13.1.3. The Bas-Reliefs of the North Sanctuary Tower

The north sanctuary originally housed a statue of *Vishnu*<sup>379</sup> (fig. 15.b). The eastern pediment is dominated by the figure of *Narasimha*, one of the avatars of *Vishnu*, in the act of destroying *Hiranyakashipu*. The lintel beneath shows Indra, the Guardian of the East, mounted on his elephant, *Airavata*. The lintels beneath the other three Guardians of the Directions depict, respectively, *Shiva* and *Bhringi* (south), *Vishnu* sitting on the neck of *Garuda* (west), and *Bhima Fighting Dushasana* (north).

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<sup>376</sup> On the pediment of the hall in the fourth enclosure, deviating from Indian conventions, in which the left-ear-ring is in the shape of a crocodile while the right ear-ring is leaf-shaped, *Shiva* is wearing identical lotus-bud shaped ear-rings in both lobes. This detail is not visible on the sanctuary tower because the bas-relief is damaged. Rao 2003, 213.

<sup>377</sup> Roveda 2008, 163.

<sup>378</sup> Depictions of the divine couple seated on the back of a bull are common on pediments; 11th-century examples can be seen on the walls of Phnom Chisor, Preah Vihear, Muang Tham, Wat Ek, Kampeang Yai and Wat Phu, and carved into the cliffs at Kbal Spean; 12th-century examples are at Banteay Samre, Chau Say Tevoda and Kampeang Noi, and there are instances in 13th-century Bayon temples.

<sup>379</sup> NMPP B269. The statue is now lost and known only from archive photos: CAM04041 and CAM15954 in the EFEO photo archive.

In the scene of *Narasimha*,<sup>380</sup> *Vishnu*, as a creature with the upper body of a lion, is tearing apart the body of *Hiranyakashipu*, the demon king who condemned his own son to death (fig. 75).

Attire: both figures are dressed in *type 1 male sampot*. *Hiranyakashipu* has bud-shaped ear-rings and untied hair. Unfortunately, we cannot see the head of *Narasimha*.

Parallels: what is presumed to be the earliest known Khmer treatment of the subject is on the eastern lintel of the third eastern gate pavilion of Prasat Thom, a sanctuary in Koh Ker; this means it was above the route of the main entrance leading to the sanctuary. The sanctuary area was built in the first half of the tenth century.<sup>381</sup> The legend of *Narasimha* can also be found on the eastern gopura of Wat Enkosei (fig. 76), constructed in the mid-tenth century, around the time that Banteay Srei was founded. The composition at Banteay Srei is almost identical to those in the bas-reliefs of the second western gopura at Pre Rup (fig. 77) and of the western gopura of East Mebon (fig. 78), both of which are contemporaneous with Banteay Srei. The *type 1 male sampot* is the same in all three cases, and only the hairstyle of the demon king is different: in Pre Rup and East Mebon, he wears the head-dress of a ruler, whereas in Banteay Srei – perhaps in order to enhance the dynamism of the composition – his hair hangs loose, devoid of all royal adornments. Clearly, depictions of the scene of *Narasimha* were widespread in Angkorian art in the middle of the tenth century, around the time when Banteay Srei was founded. Due to the striking similarities in all three depictions, we can safely assume they were made contemporaneously, by masters belonging to the same artistic school. Within Banteay Srei, however, on the pediment of the long building on the north of the fourth enclosure, there is another scene of *Narasimha*, but this one is of a fundamentally different composition.<sup>382</sup>

Several different interpretations have been put forward concerning the subject matter of the scene on the southern lintel of the north sanctuary tower, the most widely accepted of which is that of *Krishna Fighting a Demon* (fig. 80).<sup>383</sup> However, the

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<sup>380</sup> *Bhagavata Purana* VII, 8–9.

<sup>381</sup> The lintel stone has been stolen; I examined the bas-relief from the photo in the EFEO archive: EFEO\_GROBO01898

<sup>382</sup> *Hiranyakashipu* is wearing the jewels of a monarch; only his upper body is visible, which is turned towards the observer and bent in two by lion-headed *Narasimha*.

<sup>383</sup> As understood by Claude Jacques, the figure of *Krishna* fighting a demon appears on the south lintel. *Krishna* is holding the demon's neck and one of its ankles with his bare hands. Three of the demon's legs are shown clearly. It is possible that the three legs are intended to give a sense of motion, and in several legends about *Krishna* his demonic enemies are "twisted to death". Jacques 1997, 214.

identification of the episode with *Krishna* is disputed by Vittorio Roveda,<sup>384</sup> who sees it as a scene from the mythology of *Shiva*, namely a version of the story of an *asura* named *Andhaka*, related in the *Vamana Purana*, which ends with *Parvati* giving the demon the name *Bhringi*. The son of *Parvati* and *Hiranyaksha*, *Andhaka* takes part, as a demon, in the victorious battle over the gods, which results in his cousin, *Prahlada*, proclaiming himself Lord of the Three Worlds, although he later confers power on *Andhaka*. *Andhaka*, unaware of his own origin, attempts to abduct *Parvati*, the most beautiful woman in the world, and take her for his wife. After several failed attempts, he ends up duelling with *Shiva*, who stabs *Andhaka* in the heart. *Shiva* then places him on the end of his *trishula*, where he keeps him for a thousand years, during which time *Andhaka*'s strong body withers away. He begins to pray to *Shiva*, begging for forgiveness; the god promises to release him provided the demon accepts *Parvati* as his mother and worships her as a goddess. The demon refuses, and then conceals himself in the form of a bee, and then a rat, in his attempts to avoid *Parvati*, who has become one body, one half, of *Shiva*. Offended, the goddess makes *Andhaka* skeletally thin and weak, while *Shiva* gives him a third leg on which to support himself. *Andhaka*, now lord of the Ganas, is taken by *Shiva* to *Mount Mandara*, where he is eventually blessed by *Parvati* and given the name *Bhringi*. On the lintel in Banteay Srei, the figure standing with his back to the viewer visibly has the upper hand over the other figure, depicted with three legs. From the costume and hairstyle, it could easily be identified as *Krishna* or *Shiva*. However, none of the stories about the life of *Krishna* features an enemy with three legs. Based on my own observations, I consider Vittorio Roveda's contention – that the scene is not of *Krishna* and some unspecified demon, but of *Shiva* and *Bhringi* – to be correct.

In the scene – according to Roveda – the figure standing with his back to us, wearing large, disk-shaped ear-rings, is *Shiva*, who is trying to persuade the weak, three-legged *Bhringi* to change his ways. Roveda describes *Shiva* as an ascetic, but I disagree, for the figure is wearing some spectacular adornments: apart from the ear-rings, the bracelets and anklets are also completely incompatible with the attire of a hermit. The hair is also tied in a single knot, which also indicates that the figure is not an ascetic; according to the iconographic rules followed in Banteay Srei, ascetics have their hair tied in a cylindrical chignon on the top of their head. He is wearing a *type 2 male sampot*.

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<sup>384</sup> Roveda 2008, 171.



Parallels: to the best of our present knowledge, the story of *Bhringi* is not depicted on the walls of any other sanctuary in Angkor. The choice of subject is unusual, not only because it is unique, but also because it is the only depiction on a sanctuary dedicated to *Vishnu* which has nothing to do with the *Vishnu* mythologies. In chapter 17 of this paper, however, I will explain why the presence of this scene at Banteay Srei could be viewed as evidence in support of the claim that the artistic style of the sanctuary was influenced by *Pashupata* Shaivism.

On the western side of the sanctuary tower is a depiction of *Vishnu* mounted on *Garuda* (*Garudavahana*) (fig. 79), above it, on the pediment, is a seated *Varuna*. This arrangement is unusual in that it overturns the hierarchical order between the gods, placing *Vishnu*, the most important deity of the sanctuary tower, whose statue originally stood inside the building, in an image field beneath that of *Varuna*, a god of lower rank.<sup>385</sup>

Attire: *Vishnu* is wearing a *type 1 male sampot* and a *kirita mukuta*.

Parallels: The composition of *Garudavahana* first appeared in Prasat Kravan in the first half of the tenth century, and became widespread in Angkor by the twelfth century. Fine examples can be found in Thomannon (eleventh century) and on the walls of Phimai, Banteay Samre and Angkor Wat (all twelfth century).

The northern lintel depicts the *Duel between Bhima and Dushasana*, specifically the fatal moment when *Bhima* splits his enemy's body in two (fig. 81).<sup>386</sup>

Attire: *Bhima*'s hair is tied in a single knot at the back, and he is wearing large, disk-shaped ear-rings, just like those worn on the opposite lintel by *Shiva*. His *type 2 male sampot* appears to be made of smooth, uncreased textile, while his opponent is dressed in a *type 1 male sampot*, whose material is patterned with two horizontal stripes along the middle and two more close to the edge.

Parallels: the scene reappears in Baphuon (eleventh century), and again on the walls of Wat Phu and Phnom Rung (both also eleventh century), and twice at Angkor Wat (twelfth century).

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<sup>385</sup> Bourdonneau 1999, 40.

<sup>386</sup> *Mahabharata*, Book VIII, chapter 83.

In summary, it can be stated that the pediments and lintels of the north sanctuary tower feature exclusively male figures. *Bhima* and *Bhringi* are wearing *type 2 male sampots*, but all the other characters are dressed in *type 1 male sampot*.

While the three sanctuary towers seem to have been constructed in accordance with the same schema, it can be seen that they differ quite substantially in terms of iconography.

Both the south and north side sanctuary towers have pediments above their southern, western and northern false doors depicting the Guardians of the Directions. Beneath the pediments of the north tower are lintels bearing narrative reliefs.<sup>387</sup> On the south tower, meanwhile, the lintels are carved with reiterations of the deities visible in the respective pediments. On the eastern side of both sanctuary towers, however, the order is reversed: the narrative relief (relating a scene from the mythology of the main god to whom the sanctuary is dedicated) is on the pediment above the true entrance, and the Guardian of the East, Indra, is depicted on the lintel. The reason for this surprising difference is as yet a mystery, and one also highlighted by Éric Bourdonneau. The two main gods – *Shiva* (in the form of *Umamaheshvara*) and *Vishnu* (as *Narasimha*) – are shown on the eastern, that is, the most important, facade of their own sanctuary towers, and what is more, on the pediment (i.e. above the lintel, as befits their rank, one might say “logically”). By contrast, as pointed out by Bourdonneau, on the western facade of the north sanctuary tower, *Vishnu* mounted on *Garuda* is not on the pediment but on the lintel (below the Guardian). This striking contradiction within the same building is not yet satisfactorily explained.<sup>388</sup> In Bourdonneau’s view, this could be an example of the phenomenon whereby the iconographic hierarchy is overruled by architectural functionality,<sup>389</sup> which I would, in this case, prefer to refer to as a compositional principle.

One thing that I consider to be a significant anomaly is the fact that whereas the south tower has no true narrative reliefs, both the other towers have episodes from the mythologies of *Shiva* and *Vishnu* even on their lintels as well as their pediments. Nevertheless, the similarity between the south and north towers is manifested in the thematic choices made for the eastern pediments and lintels, as described above. If we disregard any hierarchy between the lintel and the pediment, and treat them as surfaces that

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<sup>387</sup> An exception is the western lintel of the north tower, where the image of *Vishnu Mounted on Garuda*, which features frequently in the mythology, cannot be identified with any particular narrative.

<sup>388</sup> Bourdonneau 1999, 40.

<sup>389</sup> Bourdonneau 1999, 40 “... sur la face Ouest de la tour Nord, le rôle architectural des images infléchit la hiérarchie divine habituelle en inversant l’ordre des thèmes sur l’élévation.” “Elle est un exemple de cette opposition entre hiérarchie divine et hiérarchie ‘de fonction’.”

have no bearing at all on the relative rank of the figures depicted on them, then an analysis based solely on the thematic arrangement as defined by the cardinal points leads to the following findings: two of the *dikpalas*, *Yama* and *Kubera*, appear in pairs on the north and south sides, respectively, of all three sanctuary towers. Likewise, *Indra* and *Varuna*, as another pair, adorn the east and west sides of the two side sanctuaries. *Varuna* is also depicted on the western facade of the central sanctuary, but on the opposite side, the building is constructed almost contiguously with the mandapa, so there was no room for an ornate pediment.

The bas-reliefs on the north sanctuary tower, apart from those showing the *dikpalas*, are all related to the legends of *Vishnu*. *Narasimha* is on the eastern side, while four-armed *Vishnu* on the back of *Garuda* is on the opposite side. The other two lintels are carved with narrative reliefs showing episodes from the life of *Krishna*. To use the words of Boreth Ly, a kind of “*picture pairing*” certainly seems to be in evidence here.

Éric Bourdonneau draws our attention to the presence of the *dikpalas* placed at the four compass points. Such consistency, Bourdonneau observes, was not typical in earlier periods of architecture in Angkor. “*If this is a constant in Angkorian architecture, the complete series of the four divinities has never before been so clearly identified as here, on each of the towers making up the sanctuary.*”<sup>390</sup> The depiction of the *dikpalas* is a defining component of the iconographic programme of the entire temple. *Indra* and *Varuna* can be found not only on the eastern and western pediments of the sanctuary towers, but also on those of the gate pavilions. They can still be seen today on both sides of the second and fourth eastern gopuras, while the lintel stone featuring *Varuna*, which is now lying on the ground, probably once adorned the western facade of the third eastern gate. “*Literally, their iconography is justified in the centre of the sanctuary and on its periphery: on the central towers and on the gate pavilions, although undoubtedly in a less essential manner, as shown by the afore-mentioned example of the third eastern gate pavilion, where Varuna and (probably) Indra are sculpted on the lintels.*”<sup>391</sup> Two of the long buildings (the south-eastern and north-eastern) in the second enclosure of the sanctuary area still have their lintels *in situ*, while a third lintel stone, lying on the ground outside the second enclosure

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<sup>390</sup> “*Si elle est une constante de l’architecture angkoriennne, on n’a jamais comme ici la série complète des quatre divinités, clairement identifiées, sur chacune des tours que compte le sanctuaire.*” Bourdonneau 1999, 40.

<sup>391</sup> “*Littéralement, leur iconographie se justifie au centre du sanctuaire et à sa périphérie: sur les tours centrales et au pavillon d’entrée mais sans doute de façon moins essentielle, comme le montre l’exemple déjà cité du pavillon d’entrée III Est où Varuna et (probablement) Indra sont désormais sculptés sur les linteaux.*” Bourdonneau 1999, 40.

wall, is presumed to originate from the front of the north-western building. All three show figures of deities holding a *vajra*. We can assume that the lintel of the southwestern building was similarly adorned. Though it may seem convenient to regard them as *dikpalas*, this cannot be done in this case, for the Guardian of the South, *Yama*, is customarily depicted with a buffalo, while the Guardian of the North, *Kubera*, tends to be shown holding a lotus bud in his hand, accompanied by lions.

Bourdonneau devotes particular attention to the fact that certain narrative episodes and iconic depictions are repeated on the walls of the temple complex. He attempts a hypothetical thematic reconstruction of the depictions that could once have adorned the lintels and pediments that are now lost. According to his conjecture, the scene of *Arjunakitara* on the south facade of the central sanctuary tower may have been repeated on another building, in the same way as the subject matter of other bas-reliefs – the *Duel between Vali and Sugriva*, the *Abduction of Sita*, the *Duel between Bhima and Dushasana* and the *Duel between Bhima and Duryodhana*, *Narasimha* and *Umamaheshvara* – appears twice at Banteay Srei. He considers the depictions of *Krishna Fighting a Demon* as pairs of the pediments on the north library. Based on my present knowledge, I can neither confirm nor refute Bourdonneau's theory about the missing scene of *Arjunakirata*, but the idea is possible, especially if we assume that some of the bas-reliefs were replaced with new ones during the periods of reconstruction on the complex.

#### 13.1.4. The Bas-Reliefs of the Mandapa

The eastern pediment of the mandapa portrays *Indra*, while the lintel beneath him shows three lions (*fig. 116*). The south and north sides of the mandapa each feature the figure of a god, but due to their damaged condition and lack of distinctive attributes, identifying them is impossible. Claude Jacques refers to the god on the north side as *Kubera* and the one on the south as *Rahu*.<sup>392</sup> They are seated in the royal pose (*Sanskrit: Lalitasana*) on the back of a *Makara* that is clasping an elephant. (*fig. 118*).

Attire: the figures of the gods all wear *type 1 male sampots*.

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<sup>392</sup> Jacques 2012, 213.

### 13.1.5. The Bas-Reliefs of the Libraries

The so-called south and north library buildings stand in the southeast and northeast corners of the first enclosure. In Angkor, such structures were always located on the eastern side of the enclosures, close to the southeast or northeast corners. Their pediments and lintels are ornately decorated, proving their exceptional importance within the sanctuary area.

#### 13.1.5.1. The South Library

The eastern pediment of the south library shows the scene of *Ravananugraha-murti* (fig. 82).<sup>393</sup> This is a dramatic moment in a decisive episode of the epic, *Ramayana*, when *Shiva* stops *Ravana* from shaking *Mount Kailash* simply by moving his big toe.<sup>394</sup>

The composition of the pediment depicts *Mount Kailash* divided into four different levels, with the characters placed all across them. At the pinnacle is the divine couple, seated on a raised throne that resembles a pedestal (fig. 83). Seated beneath them on three terraces are ascetics, female figures and mythological characters, while in the bottom row can be seen wild animals and the demon *Ravana*, who is down on one knee, shaking the mountain with his thousand arms (fig. 84.a). The Khmer sanctuary, or *prasat*, is the model on earth of a celestial palace, a divine residence, whose uppermost level is occupied by the god himself. This idea is most clearly visible in depictions showing *Mount Kailash* with exactly the same construction as a Khmer temple mount, in which the statue of the god, who lives in the sanctuary tower that tops off the temple mount, is the divinisation of a monarch.<sup>395</sup>

Attire: *Shiva* and his consort, *Parvati*, are dressed in *type 1 male and female pleated sampots*. The clothing is folded back at the front in the shape of a large fan, presumably fixed with a belt around the hips, although this cannot be made out in the depiction. They are wearing heavy, inverted bud-shaped ear-rings, and ornate diadems, and *Parvati* also has on her head a *karanda mukuta*. *Shiva's* headdress cannot be seen due to damage to the

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<sup>393</sup> *Ramayana*, Book VII, *Uttarakanda*, chapter 16. This depiction is particularly popular in South India. See: Banerjea 1956, 478.

<sup>394</sup> Ly 2005, 72: Boreth Ly, in disagreement with L. Finot, argues that the episode depicted in Banteay Srei was taken not from *Ramayana* but from the *Shiva Purana*.

<sup>395</sup> Cœdès 1947, 93.

surface of the bas-relief. Neither of them has any additional adornment. Unusually, the figure of the god, seated in the *Lalitasana* pose, has only two arms, not the customary four. With one he embraces *Parvati*, while the other is holding not the *trishula* but a flowering branch, from which hangs a string of beads. The female figure to their right is wearing a traditional pleated sampot, with a broad fold at the front, and the belt visible above her left hip. She is not wearing anything in her extremely long earlobe, but her hair is smoothed back (perhaps plaited into locks), and tied loosely in a special Banteay Srei chignon (*fig. 56*). Wound around the chignon is a string of beads or a plait of hair. The female figure seated beneath her, pressing her palms together, is dressed in the same way. Their hairstyle is almost exactly the same as that worn by the guardian figures on the north and south sanctuary towers. Both these female figures are looking at *Ravana*, who is shaking *Mount Kailash* in order to strike fear into people. It is not easy to identify who these female figures could be. In certain Indian analogies, the images feature the goddess *Ganga* or perhaps *Vijaya*, *Parvati*'s attendant.<sup>396</sup> *Ganga* – as far as I am aware – is not depicted anywhere in tenth-century Angkorian art, so I could not attempt an identification using comparative analysis. Both female figures are dressed simply, without special jewellery items, a decorative belt or a headdress, which leads me to assume they were probably low-ranking mythological characters, such as *Parvati*'s attendants. The ascetics or *rishis* around them, like *Parvati* herself, bear expressions of fear, and the composition also features *yakshas* gazing in wonder. The monkey-headed *yaksha*, who is larger than the other figures, seems to be talking to the demon king. This may be *Nandikeshvara*, one of the manifestations of *Nandi* (*fig. 84.b*). Although *Nandi*, *Shiva*'s mount, is generally portrayed as a bull, in one of the tales from *Ramayana* (*Book VII of Uttara Kanda*), *Mahadeva*, *Shiva*'s faithful servant, takes the form of a monkey in order to pacify a raging giant.<sup>397</sup>

To the left of *Shiva* (from our perspective) can be seen an ascetic whose beard and chignon make him easy to identify (*fig. 83*). The garment he is wearing is similar to that worn by *Shiva*, but without any pleating on the cloth. One level down, a heavily damaged figure in a chignon is wearing a similar male sampot. The clothes worn by the ascetics crouching at *Shiva*'s feet are also the same. On the lowest terrace, the residents of *Mount Kailash* are sitting shocked and alarmed; among them are the *Ganas*, attendants of *Shiva*: demigods with the body of humans and the head of a lion, a parrot, a monkey, a horse or an

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<sup>396</sup> Donaldson 2007, 173.

<sup>397</sup> Rao 1971, 458–459.

elephant, as well as *Ganesha*. They are all dressed in the traditional male sampot. The monkeys have bud-shaped ear-rings, while the parrots – interestingly – wear the cylindrical ear-rings typical of demons (*fig. 84.c*). *Ravana*'s male sampot is pleated, and its front flap is presumably folded back. The end of the garment is spread out like a fan at the back above the belt. He has a *kirita mukuta* on every one of his heads, and cylindrical ear-rings in his earlobes. Apart from the two female figures, all the characters in the composition are wearing the traditional sampot. Also, apart from the two female figures and the ascetics, all the characters have the *kirita mukuta* on their heads. This bas-relief exemplifies the type of composition where several different hairstyles appear together, clearly proving that hair and headdresses were iconographic distinguishing features. I believe the two female figures could be *apsaras*, semi-divine beings, or members of the gods' entourage; whichever they are, it is quite likely that their "mythological rank" is below that of the other characters in the bas-relief, as indicated by their noticeably different attire.

Parallels: A depiction of *Ravananugraha-murti* that is stylistically different but compositionally very similar can be seen on the south-eastern corner pavilion at Angkor Wat, and on the walls of Thomannon (twelfth century) and Bayon (thirteenth century).

I consider it fruitful to compare the composition of this bas-relief with Indian analogies as well. The way in which *Shiva and Parvati* are portrayed, especially their poses and hand gestures, has much in common with medieval Indian depictions. Across India there are countless contemporary images of *Shiva* sitting in the *Lalitasana* position, with his arm around *Parvati*, as she sits on his lap.<sup>398</sup> Taking some other basic compositional details into consideration, the range of analogies for the Banteay Srei bas-relief can be narrowed down. In the bas-reliefs of *Ravananugraha-murti* at sanctuaries 14, 21 and 29 at Ellora, and at the Virupaksha Temple of Pattadakal, all erected by the *Pashupata* movement, *Ravana* – deviating from the customary depictions in India – is shown with his back to the viewer. This may be a coincidence, but I consider it far more probable that the two compositions are visual representations of the same theoretical background. In the Indian examples, the figures of *Ganga* and *Skanda* can be seen on the right side of the lotus throne, while *Ganesha* can also be seen close by. There is nothing that proves that either of the female figures on the Banteay Srei bas-relief could be *Ganga*, but nor is there anything that rules this possibility out. *Ganesha*, meanwhile, is clearly present here, as he is on the western pediment of the library building.

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<sup>398</sup> Donaldson 2007, 173–198.

On the eastern lintel is the figure of a hitherto unidentified goddess, holding a ladle in her hand (*fig. 135.a*). The literature has so far described her as a female figure holding a lotus flower, but her attire unmistakably signifies her divine nature. Based on the location of the bas-relief within the temple and on her iconographic attributes, I concluded that the figure represents the goddess *Annapurna*. The details of this identification will be presented in chapter 17, as part of my analysis of the influence of *Pashupata* Shaivism.

Attire: she is wearing a *type 1 female sampot* and a *kirita mukuta*, although the latter is barely discernible due to the poor condition and small size of the bas-relief. Apart from the lotus-bud ear-rings, she is otherwise unadorned.

The western pediment of the south library has a similar composition to the one on the eastern pediment, resembling a pedestal divided into four levels (*fig. 85*). The scene in which *Shiva Burns Kama to a Cinder* is an episode from the *Shiva Purana*.<sup>399</sup> At the top of the composition sits *Shiva Mahayogi*. He is not adorned with jewellery of any kind, but his arms and upper body are entwined with snakes. His hair is tied into a *jata*, or chignon, at the front of which can be seen a half-moon symbol. He is seated in a position of relaxation, with one leg folded and the other reaching from the pedestal to the ground (*fig. 86*). In his right hand is a string of prayer beads, which he is proffering to *Parvati*. His eyes are fixed on the god of love, *Kama*, who is kneeling to take aim at him. Behind *Kama*, a female figure stands with a lotus in her hand; based on the story she can be identified as *Kama's* wife, *Rati*. There are eight ascetics on the same level; the *Shiva Purana* mentions eight *rishis*, who are called upon to verify *Parvati's* true love and genuine intent to marry.<sup>400</sup> I suggest that the eight ascetics in the bas-relief are depictions of the eight *rishis*. Across from *Rati*, kneeling behind *Parvati*, are two female figures wearing ear-rings and the *jata mukuta*, who are pressing their palms together in the *anjali* gesture. These may be the goddess's attendants, mentioned in the text of the *Purana*.<sup>401</sup> On the third level are seated the animal-headed mythological creatures, the *Ganas*, depicted in a way that is reminiscent of the seated statues guarding the stairways to the terraces of the sanctuary towers. Like the figures on the eastern pediment, here too can be seen half-human, semi-divine beings with the head of a lion, parrot, horse or elephant, as well as two monkeys and *Ganesha*. The

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<sup>399</sup> *Shiva Purana* 1.2.77–79.

<sup>400</sup> *Shiva Purana* 1.2.85.

<sup>401</sup> *Shiva Purana* 1.2.78.



headcount is different however, for on the western pediment there are two parrot-headed and two horse-headed creatures in the composition. On the same “terrace” can be seen, on the left, a male figure whose hairstyle is the same as that worn by *Shiva*, while on the right sits a *yaksha* with curly hair. Both these figures are noticeably larger than the other characters. On the lowest level, standing out among figures of deer and men in simple garments, is *Nandi*. Some of the men are turning to face *Kama*, with several even pointing in his direction.

Two members of the group visible on the left, however, seem to be performing physical examinations or acts of healing (*fig. 87. a-b*). One is raising the patient’s head, while the other is turning his companion’s head to one side, perhaps in order to look into his ear. I can offer no explanation for the scene at present. Its existence is not even mentioned in the previous literature, although it undoubtedly has some significance.

Attire: all the figures in the composition are wearing the traditional pleated male or female sampot. The pleats on the sampot worn by *Shiva* cannot be seen, but this could be due simply to erosion of the surface of the stone. *Shiva*’s hair and that of the kneeling figure on the left is done up in a chignon, and the same is true of the ascetics. *Parvati* and the two kneeling female figures behind her are wearing diadems and conical *karanda mukutas*, while *Rati*’s hair is arranged in the special Banteay Srei chignon, as also worn by the two female figures on the eastern pediment and the *devatas* on the side sanctuaries. Assuming that the Banteay Srei chignon designates characters of lower rank in the divine hierarchy, then the two figures kneeling behind *Parvati* must be regarded as having higher status than *Rati*. In the *Shiva Purana*, the figure of *Rati*, as *Kama*’s consort, was an *apsara*, so it is entirely possible that the chignon was part of the attire designating a noble figure without rank.<sup>402</sup> The hairstyle of the figures in the lowermost section is the “ordinary” chignon, from which we can infer that they are merely auxiliary characters. The female figures and the monkeys are wearing lotus-bud ear-rings, while the *yaksha* and the parrot-headed Ganas have cylindrical ear-rings.

Parallels: the legend of *Kama* appears as a narrative composition in Phnom Rung, in a severely damaged bas-relief whose upper field nevertheless reveals the figure of *Shiva* meditating, as well as *Parvati* and *Kama*. In the lower field *Kama* now lies dead, accompanied by his wife, meaning that two consecutive scenes were arranged in the same composition. Further narrative depictions can be found in the southwestern corner pavilion

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<sup>402</sup> Benton 2005, 49.

of Angkor Wat (twelfth century), on the walls of Preah Khan and Bayon (both thirteenth century), and – in a simpler form – at Banteay Chmar (also thirteenth century).

As already mentioned in the general introduction to the so-called libraries, an iconographic analysis of these buildings leads us repeatedly to the issue of their function as places for guarding the holy fire. The presence of frieze compositions of the *navagraha*, or Nine Planetary Deities, in the “library” buildings at several Angkorian sanctuaries lends credence to this idea, for some of the ceremonies associated with the Indian-originated cult of fire are closely connected to worshipping the *navagraha*. Several of the texts in the *Puranas* mention the link between the Nine Planetary Deities and the Seven Rishis,<sup>403</sup> although other stories refer to Eight *Rishis*.

The compositions of both pediments on the south library at Banteay Srei feature ascetics or *rishis*. On the eastern side are seven such figures,<sup>404</sup> while on the western side there are eight, all wearing *type 1 male sampots* and with their hair in the chignon that is characteristic of an ascetic’s appearance (*fig. 82, 86*). In both compositions they are depicted crouching on their heels, with one knee raised, pointing and talking excitedly. Despite the fact that their role in the stories is only secondary, the way they are depicted here adds dynamism to the overall composition of the bas-reliefs.

I contend that the *rishis* are not only included in the composition because of the part they play in mythological tales whose main protagonist is *Ravana* or *Kama*, but also, indeed even more so, because the creators of the pediments wished to allude to the rituals of the holy fire, which was kept aflame inside the building.

#### 13.1.5.2. The North Library

The eastern pediment of the north library shows the *Burning of Khandava Forest*<sup>405</sup> (*fig. 88*). The depiction was previously interpreted as a scene of *Krishna and Balarama in*

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<sup>403</sup> *Agni Purana* 149, 167, *Matsya Purana* 93, 239, *Bhavisya Purana* 2, 141–142. For more details see: Bhattacharya 1951, 148.

<sup>404</sup> On the left of the pediment, the larger figure kneeling beneath the divine couple is heavily damaged, and apart from the face and hair, nothing at all can be seen from its upper body, while the figure’s lower body is only partly visible. Fortunately, the upward-looking face and a partial portrayal of the hair arranged into the typical chignon of an ascetic have survived. The simple male *sampot* can also be made out, which – together with the hair – clearly identifies the figure as an ascetic.

<sup>405</sup> *Mahabharata* I, 223–224. Vekerdi 1964, 198–211.

*Vrindava Forest*,<sup>406</sup> so in many descriptions it is referred to as the “Rain of Indra”. Claude Jacques was the first to postulate the current interpretation, in 1997.<sup>407</sup> *Agni*, the fire god, prepares to consume the *Khandava Forest* to satisfy his unquenchable hunger, but Indra puts a stop to this by inundating the forest with incessant rain. *Agni* asks *Arjuna* and *Krishna* for their help, who stop the raindrops from landing by firing them with arrows, thus conspiring with *Agni* to set the forest alight. On the left of the composition, *Arjuna* stands on a war chariot, holding the bow given to him by *Agni* (fig. 91), while on the right, holding – among other things – a discus in his hand, is four-armed *Krishna* (fig. 92). The horses drawing the chariots have horns on their foreheads, a phenomenon that I am at a loss to explain, for the legend only tells us that these horses had magical abilities and were provided to the warriors by *Agni*. The rain cast by *Indra*, at the top of the bas-relief, is visibly being prevented from reaching the forest by the “layer” of arrows fired up into the sky. At the centre of the composition is a large *naga* snake with a smaller one above it; these are presumably *Takshaka* and his son, *Ashvasena*, who were the unwitting victims of the story.<sup>408</sup> Until now, the two male figures standing helplessly in the foreground of the bas-relief have passed without identification (fig. 90). One is wearing disk-shaped earrings. Despite the heavily worn surface of the carving, I believe that there are signs of the eye-teeth glinting from the mouth of this figure. I am convinced that these are the demons who live in the forest – their presence on the bas-relief further corroborates Claude Jacques’s identification of the scene as the *Burning of Khandava Forest*. According to the story, the forest fire is survived by just a single demon, named *Maya*, who later designs and builds a palace for *Arjuna* and his brothers in gratitude for them having spared his life. It is possible that the demon figure on the bas-relief is *Maya*.

Parallels: there are no known parallels for this depiction in classical Angkorian art.

On the western pediment of the north library can be seen *Krishna Killing Kansa* (fig. 93), a scene from the *Bhagavata Purana*.<sup>409</sup> *Kansa*, *Krishna*’s maternal uncle, was the ruler of the Vrishni Kingdom, whose centre was located in Mathura. Fearing the power of *Krishna*, his uncle tried to destroy him in any way he could, for example by ordering the murder of all the babies in the kingdom. *Kansa* failed, of course, and later he held an

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<sup>406</sup> *Harivamsa*.

<sup>407</sup> Jacques 1997, 110.

<sup>408</sup> Roveda 2005, 349.

<sup>409</sup> *Bhagavata-Purana* 10/42-44.

archery contest in the city of Mathura, where *Krishna* and *Balarama* won resounding victories. The bas-relief on the pediment shows the moment during the celebrations when *Krishna* suddenly jumps up to the royal stand, grabs *Kansa* by the hair and drags him down from the throne, and then proceeds to batter him with blows (fig. 94). The king's court, made up mostly of women, watches the drama in shock, and one princess even faints (fig. 96). Another takes hold of a weapon as though rushing to the aid of her master. Beneath the royal stand can be seen two warriors, *Canura* and *Mustika*, who were mortally wounded by *Krishna* and his brother, and who now lie dying on the ground, surrounded by their comrades (fig. 73).

The figure on the left, accompanied by two other figures, is probably *Balarama*. The weapon he wields is probably an elephant's tusk. This scene may refer to an episode that took place before the archery tournament, when *Krishna*, en route to the capital, killed the elephant named *Kuvalaypida*, who had been sent to challenge him, and wrenched out his tusk. The building that frames the scene must be *Kansa's* palace. War chariots on either side of the composition, each led by a charioteer, carry *Krishna* and *Balarama*, firing their arrows from raised bows (fig. 95). The horses drawing the chariots, like those on the eastern pediment of the same building, have horns on their foreheads, so that they resemble unicorns.

Attire: this composition is particularly important to my research, for several types of clothing and jewellery are depicted in the same scene. The male sampot worn by *Krishna* and his brother is different from the one in which *Kansa* is dressed. Based on the story, *Kansa* can be expected to be dressed in the attire of a monarch. His lotus-bud ear-rings do indeed match the ear-rings worn by deities portrayed in other bas-reliefs. He is not wearing a crown or other head-dress, but at the moment of action, *Krishna* is holding him down by the hair, so his "original" hairstyle cannot be observed. *Kansa* is not wearing any other jewellery. His sampot is of *type 1*, which fits in with my supposition that the local iconographic rule for portraying high-ranking mythological figures and gods was to dress them in traditional, as it were "old-fashioned" costumes. By contrast, the young *Krishna* and his brother – who entered the tournament as simple, ordinary competitors – are wearing *type 2 male sampots*, like the members of *Kansa's* court. The hairstyle of *Krishna* and *Balarama* follows the Indian "specification" for young gods, namely a ponytail tied in a knot. Their simple, disk-shaped ear-rings are also different from those worn by the king. Within this composition, then, the distinguishing role played by the attire could hardly be much clearer. One other figure in the bas-relief, *Krishna's* charioteer, is dressed in the

same *type 1 male sampot* as the ruler (*fig. 95*). In my search for an explanation for this apparent sartorial aberration, I came to the conclusion that *Krishna's* charioteer is none other than *Akrura*, who also features in the mythological story. *Akrura* was *Krishna's* friend and his paternal uncle. *Kansa* sent him out in search of *Krishna* and *Balarama*, but *Akrura* warned the brothers of the impending danger and encouraged them to destroy *Kansa*. He took them – or at least accompanied them – to Mathura, to *Kansa's* palace. I am convinced that the charioteer on the left of the pediment is *Akrura*, as indicated by his distinctively regal attire. Identifying him also enabled me to specify that the male figure on the war chariot on the left (driven by *Akrura*) must be *Krishna*, while the one on the right is *Balarama*.

Parallels: the scene reappears in the twelfth century in Angkor Wat, Phimai and Thomannon.

To return to the eastern pediment of the north library, the two demons standing among the wild beasts are wearing *type 1 male sampots*, while all the other figures – including the deities – are dressed in *type 2*. This is also true for *Indra*, one of the main protagonists in the story of the *Burning of Khandava Forest*, although his non-traditional, *type 2 male sampot* is accompanied by the *karanda mukuta* befitting a monarch. This is not the same piece of clothing that I identify as *Kansa's* regal attire. The same *type 2 male sampot* is worn by *Arjuna* and his charioteer, both of whom are also crowned with *mukutas*. *Krishna* stands on the right of the composition, with his back to us, so the type of sampot he is dressed in cannot be fully determined.

At present, then, the system for distinguishing between the different types of attire worn by the figures in the bas-relief of the *Burning of Khandava Forest* is not entirely clear. The two figures I have identified as demons are dressed in the traditional, *type 1 male sampot*, although the pleating of the material cannot be seen. Further research is required in order to explain these sampots and the attire worn by *Indra*.

#### 13.1.6. The Bas-Reliefs of the First Eastern Gopura

The enclosure wall that once surrounded the first enclosure was opened to both east and west via gate pavilions. The eastern gopura is much larger than its western counterpart, which was incidentally converted into a closed sanctuary. Its pediment shows the figure of *Shiva* dancing, known formally as *Shiva Nataraja* (*fig. 98*). In this role, *Shiva* dances the

*Tandavam*, the dance of destruction.<sup>410</sup> According to Khmer tradition he has ten arms, but his hands are empty and bear no attributes.<sup>411</sup> He holds one of his arms in the *gaja-hasta* pose, imitating an elephant's trunk, in line with Indian parallels.<sup>412</sup> The Angkorian examples of *Shiva Nataraja* are local variants, both pictorially and iconographically. His raised legs are not crossed, and the method of depiction is not exactly the same as Indian exemplars, but – in my opinion – they are most similar to the depiction of *Shiva* found in the Virupaksha Temple of Pattadakal.<sup>413</sup> Only a few of *Shiva*'s most distinctive attributes, as prescribed by the *Shilpa Shastra*,<sup>414</sup> can be recognised in the depictions at Banteay Srei: the third eye in the middle of his forehead, and the snake winding its way from the left side of *Shiva*'s neck down towards his chest. His hair, however, is not arranged into a chignon, but braided, and it does not feature any attribute referring to the half-moon or to the figure of *Ganga*. He is accompanied by an attendant on each side of him. On the left is a seated male figure playing on a drum, probably a *mridanga*.<sup>415</sup> On *Shiva*'s other side, the figure of *Karaikkalammaiyar*<sup>416</sup> squats low on the ground (*fig. 99*).

Attire: *Shiva Nataraja* in Banteay Srei wears a pleated *type 1 male sampot* around his waist, not the antelope skin specified in Indian rules. His hair is braided and he has bud-shaped ear-rings. The type of sampot worn by the drumming figure cannot be specified, but his hair is arranged in a *jata mukuta*. *Karaikkalammaiyar* is dressed in the *type 1 female sampot*.

Parallels: depictions of *Shiva Nataraja* must have been extremely popular at the time of the Angkor Empire, as demonstrated by the countless surviving examples, all of which, however, were made between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. Some interesting variants can be seen at Phnom Chisor and Wat Basen, both built at the start of the eleventh century.<sup>417</sup> The dancing figure can also be found at Preah Vihear (eleventh century); at Phimai, Phnom Rung, Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre and Beng Mealea (all

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<sup>410</sup> The *Tandavam* is the all-destructive dance of *Shiva*, which helps to bring about the end of an epoch and sets up the conditions for the birth of the next epoch.

<sup>411</sup> In Indian images, *Nataraja* is usually shown with eight arms.

<sup>412</sup> The *gajahasta mudra* is one of the canonical features of *Shiva Nataraja*. The divine figure raises one leg up high, and with one of his opposite arms he imitates an elephant's trunk, pointing his arm towards his raised foot. This position refers to *Shiva*'s son, elephant-headed *Ganesha*, the remover of obstacles.

<sup>413</sup> Virupaksha Temple, Pattadakal, in the niche of the eastern inner wall of the south vestibule. Cummings 2014, 212.

<sup>414</sup> Acharya 1934, 68.

<sup>415</sup> The *mridanga* is a largish drum that bulges in the middle. According to the iconographic rules, it is the instrument of the attendants to the gods, especially *Shiva*. Banerjea 1956 (1985):303.

<sup>416</sup> In a Tamil story, the beautiful maiden lived in the port of Karaikal (south India). She was so devoted to *Shiva* that she asked the gods to take away her beauty so that she could serve him completely. *Shiva* then transformed *Karaikkalammaiya* into the figure of a demon. Roveda 2008, 171.

<sup>417</sup> Roveda 2008, 163.

twelfth century); and in Bayon, Preah Khan and temple “U” at Preah Pithu (all thirteenth century). Further instances are in the sanctuaries of Narai Jaeng Waeng (eleventh century), Kamphaeng Yai (eleventh century) and Sikhoraphum (twelfth century).<sup>418</sup> He is depicted together with the figure of *Karaikkalammaiyar* in a similar pose to that found in Banteay Srei in Phiman and Kamphaeng Yai. It is also possible that a female auxiliary figure can be recognised on the south wing of the eastern inner gallery at Bayon.<sup>419</sup>

Mireille Bénisti identified one of the figures beside *Shiva Nataraja* on the pediment of the first eastern gopura as a seated *Karaikkalammaiyar*. If we accept her finding and the date of 967 CE, then – based on our present knowledge – the bas-relief at Banteay Srei bears the earliest known Khmer depiction of *Karaikkalammaiyar*, and this proves that the cult of the goddess was known in present-day Cambodia in the second half of the tenth century. This is also the oldest known sculpture of the deity, preceding the earliest known examples in India – the carvings of *Karaikkalammaiyar* found in Tanjore and in Kantaikontaco Lapuram are both dated to the beginning of the eleventh century.<sup>420</sup>

Sadly, the lintel above the eastern entrance to the gopura has an important part missing (the head of the protagonist has been broken off), so for my analysis I had to rely on the photographs taken by Goloubew.<sup>421</sup> The figure grabs the trunk of an elephant in his right hand and rests his left hand on the head of a lion – this *Krishna*.

Attire: the figure is wearing a *type 1 male sampot* and has hair that is smoothed back simply, presumably gathered together in a single plait, although due to the frontal depiction this cannot actually be seen. His disk-shaped ear-rings are extraordinarily large, as is the bracelet around his neck, from which hang three sizeable pendants. The ear-rings are the same as those worn by the figures of *Krishna* and *Balarama* on the western pediment of the north library. This implies that this type of jewellery was associated – in Banteay Srei sculpture – with *Krishna* and figures related to him, such as his brother, although we must also add that the same ear-rings can occasionally be seen on an assortment of other characters. The pendants decorating the neck bracelet, which are ring-shaped and have inlaid gemstones, are mostly found in Angkor Wat style bas-reliefs, and actual jewels of this kind have also been recovered during archaeological excavations.<sup>422</sup> In

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<sup>418</sup> Roveda 2008, 163.

<sup>419</sup> Roveda 2008, 428.

<sup>420</sup> Bénisti 1969, 166.

<sup>421</sup> Goloubew 1926, Pl. 39/b

<sup>422</sup> See, for example, the piece in the Douglas Latchford collection. Bunker-Latchford 2008, 73.

Banteay Srei, however, this type of necklace only appears on this figure of Krishna and nowhere else. The significance of this has not yet been explained.

The western pediment features a scene of *Mahishasura Mardini*, that is, the victory of *Durga*<sup>423</sup> over the demon *Mahisha* (fig. 101). In this legend, the half-demon, half-buffalo *Mahisha* asks *Brahma* to grant him immortality in exchange for a life of devotion, the god refuses, but he does ordain that *Mahisha* cannot be killed by a man. *Mahisha* goes on to defeat the army of the gods, led by Indra. At this point *Durga*, the warrior goddess, is summoned to intervene, in order to ensure that balance is maintained in the world. The human body of the demon that emerges from the buffalo is entwined by a cobra. *Durga* holds the demon's buffalo body with one of her eight arms and kills her foe with a spear held in another hand. Although the hands on the bas-relief are severely damaged, it is still possible to make out a sword in her upper right hand, and a bow lower down; in her left hands are a discus, a noose and an arrow. The missing attributes, therefore, are the conch shell and the shield, one of which was probably held in the now damaged remaining right hand, while the other must have been left off the depiction entirely, for with her eighth hand *Durga* is gripping *Mahisha*'s buffalo tail. Her third eye – routinely depicted in Indian portrayals – cannot be seen here, nor does she have a snake wrapped around her chest. Her mount, a lion, sits on her right; amongst the tendrils of the floral ornamentation filling out the background there used to be four additional lions, one of which is now destroyed.

Attire: *Durga* is wearing lotus-bud ear-rings and the *karanda mukuta*, but no other adornments. Quite exceptionally, she is dressed in the *type 2 female sampot* worn by the female figures on the sanctuary towers, although hers is not embellished with a decorative belt. Apart from the *devatas* on the two side sanctuaries, the only other figure at Banteay Srei who is depicted wearing the same sampot is the *apsara Tilottama* on the pediment of the third eastern gopura (fig. 109). At the same time, the version without a belt, as worn by *Durga*, is very similar to the female sampot visible on the gate towers of the Royal Palace at Angkor Thom, on the small temple behind the North Khleang, and on both sides of the doorways at Neam Rup. It must be stressed, however, that in all three of the locations just mentioned, as in most cases at Banteay Srei, this unusual type of sampot

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<sup>423</sup> *Durga Shiva* is an avatar of *Shakti*, or *Mahadevi*, the mother goddess. She is a warrior goddess, depicted with 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16 or even 18 arms, during her fight against the buffalo demon, *Mahisha*. When shown with eight arms, her attributes are usually a conch shell (*shankha*), a discus (*shankha-cakra*), a bow and arrow (*dhanus-sayaka*), a sword (*khadga*), a shield (*khetaka*), a spear (*prasa*) and a noose (*sula-pasha*). Rao 2003, 713.



is only worn by female figures standing in niches either side of a doorway, and not by figures who play central roles in a composition, and certainly not by important goddesses. To the best of my knowledge, then, this new type of female sampot does not appear in any narrative compositions anywhere in Angkor, except for the two pediments in Banteay Srei (*Durga* and *Tilottama*). By way of explanation, one possible factor is that *Durga*, the warrior goddess, was created in this form and for this purpose by the gods, and this “simpler” garment alludes to this less noble role. On the other hand, we know that the general rules on attire stipulated in the *Shilpa Shastra* call for the goddesses *Durga*, *Lakshmi* and *Kali* to be depicted in the contemporary fashion for noblewomen.<sup>424</sup> Could it be that the Khmer sculptors adhered to this requirement? If so, this would explain why the goddess on the gopura is portrayed in clothing that is different from the other goddesses. It would also suggest that the *devatas* either side of the doorways are also dressed in the same way as ladies of the time. In the mythology, the *apsara Tilottama* – the other figure wearing this type of sampot – appears on Earth as a beautiful young maiden, so it would be easy to imagine that she was also depicted as a contemporary noble lady.

Parallels: *Mahishasura Mardini* is depicted on the walls of Bakong (tenth century), Banteay Samre and Sikhoraphum (both twelfth century) and Preah Khan (thirteenth century).

The western lintel of the first eastern gopura depicts *Hayagriva*, holding two demons, *Madhu* and *Kaitabha*, by the hair (fig. 129).<sup>425</sup> This Vaishnava depiction is unique in Angkor.

Attire: *Hayagriva* is dressed in a *type 1 male sampot* with a *kirita mukuta* on his head, matching the requirements for depictions of *Vishnu*. His armbands, upper and lower torso bands, and broad neck bracelet are all intricately worked. The demons are wearing ear-rings.

Parallels: at present I know of no parallels for this depiction in Angkor.

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<sup>424</sup> Shluka 1958, 146.

<sup>425</sup> *Bhagavata Purana* VII, 9, 37.

## 13.2. The Bas-Reliefs of the External Enclosures

### 13.2.1. The Eastern Pediment of the Second Eastern Gopura

The eastern side of the second gopura has an entrance that is crowned with a double pediment. The bas-relief on the outer pediment shows the figure of a god, presumably *Indra*, holding a *vajra* and seated in the royal pose.

The inner pediment depicts *Gajalakshmi*, that is, *Lakshmi* among the elephants (*fig. 102*). The elephants are pouring spring water from a golden vase onto the head of *Vishnu*'s beautiful "consort".<sup>426</sup> This motif appears in numerous medieval temples in India, usually on the entrance building to the central sanctuary, regardless of which deity the sanctuary is dedicated to.<sup>427</sup> The design of this pediment and the lintel below, which centres on *Garuda*, is completely unique in Banteay Srei, for the floral tendrils that fill out the images match up, so that the pediment and lintel together form a single composition.

Attire: *Lakshmi* is wearing a *type 1 female sampot*, with a broad fold-back at the front; she has bud-shaped ear-rings and a *kirita mukuta* on her head, in line with the "regular" iconography of the tenth century.

Parallels: in Angkor, the same scene is depicted on pediments at East Mebon (tenth century) (*fig. 103*), Kamphaeng Yai (eleventh century) and Puey Noi (twelfth century), and on a lintel in Bayon (thirteenth century).

### 13.2.2. The Eastern Pediment of the Second Western Gopura

At the centre of the composition is the *Duel between Vali and Sugriva* (*fig. 104*). To the right, *Rama* is firing an arrow to intervene in the wrestling match, and behind him can be seen the crouching figure of *Lakshmana*. On the other side of the pediment can be seen a later moment from the same episode, when *Vali*, lying on the lap of his wife, *Tara*, is dying from the arrow wound, while *Sugriva* stands over them (*fig. 107*). With his left hand, the monkey king grasps the arrow buried in his chest, his face filled with astonishment and terror. All seven figures are of the same size, with no visible distinction between their rank

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<sup>426</sup> *Shakti*.

<sup>427</sup> Banerjea 1956, 375.

or role. Unusually, the background is completely empty, apart from two flying/dancing figures with garlands in their hands, carved at the top beneath the upper arch.

Attire: all the main figures are dressed the same, in the traditional *type 1 male or female sampot*; the monkeys have bud-shaped ear-rings and wear the *kirita mukuta*, whereas *Rama* and his brother have their hair tied up in a chignon on the top of their heads, in the style of an ascetic. *Tara* also has a *kirita mukuta* on her head.

Parallels: “single-scene” depictions of the duel between the two monkey kings can be found on the walls of Baphuon and Phnom Rung (eleventh century); in the temples of Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre and Chau Say Tevoda (twelfth century); and in Preah Khan and sanctuary “U” at Preah Pithu (thirteenth century). A narrative depiction of the story, told in several episodes, is visible on the wall of the southwestern corner pavilion of Angkor Wat (twelfth century); in this instance, the scenes of the duel and the last moments of the wounded *Vali* are more distinctly presented, almost in two different registers.

In my opinion, among the sculptured representations in Angkorian art of the intensely dramatic *Duel between Vali and Sugriva*, there is none that compares with that of Banteay Srei in terms of the conciseness of imagery and content. I contend that this depiction, which condenses several consecutive scenes into one composition, is the most sophisticated narrative relief in Banteay Srei, and is definitely one of the pinnacles of Angkorian art, both for its artistry and for its message. It is for this reason that it would be particularly important for research into Banteay Srei to determine when this bas-relief was made.

It is worth noting that details showing how items of attire were affixed at the back of the body tend to appear only on sculptures in the round, and not on bas-reliefs; in this instance, however, the attention to detail is so intricate that even the fixings of the headdresses can be reconstructed from the imagery. *Sugriva*, as he stands over his dying brother, turns his head to one side, allowing us to see the ribbon that holds the diadem onto the back of his head (*fig. 105*).

### 13.2.3. The Western Pediment of the Second Western Gopura

The pediment, now in the National Museum in Phnom Penh,<sup>428</sup> was probably originally on the western side of the second western gopura (*fig. 108.a, original position:*

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<sup>428</sup> NMPP 1660. Groslier C.317. Boisselier C. 32.10.

fig. 163). It depicts the *Duel between Bhima and Duryodhana*, the final, decisive battle of *Kurukshetra* in the *Mahabharata*.<sup>429</sup> On the right of the composition can be seen the figure of *Bhima* as he rises into the air, preparing to smash his club down on his enemy, *Duryodhana* (fig. 108.b). Behind *Bhima* are his four brothers, *Arjuna*, *Yudhisthira*, *Nakula* and *Sahadeva*, crouching on the ground. On the left of the composition, four-armed *Krishna* is restraining his brother, *Balarama*, from intervening in the duel.

Attire: the figures on the bas-relief are dressed in the traditional *type 1 male sampot*; the adornments, in line with the story, refer to the regal rank of the characters, with the *kirita mukuta* on their heads, and bud-shaped ear-rings. *Bhima's* neck bracelet with pendants is quite an exceptional piece; there is a similar item worn by an *asura* in the bas-relief of the *Abduction of Tilottama*, also at Banteay Srei, but I could find no other parallels in any of the bas-reliefs from any of the other tenth-century sanctuaries. The only additional example known from the same period is worn by the figure of *Skanda* on a statue of *Shiva and Skanda* recovered from Koh Ker.<sup>430</sup> This adornment can, however, be recognised on several later statues from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>431</sup>

The composition of this pediment is spectacularly different from the general style seen at Banteay Srei, for the background to the scene of the duel is entirely empty. The figures are standing on plain soil, with no details or decorations behind them, a solution only visible on three pediments in all. (The other two are the eastern pediment of the second western gopura, featuring the *Duel between Vali and Sugriva*, and the pediment depicting the *Abduction of Tilottama* (fig. 167), which is presumed to have originally adorned the third eastern gopura.) All three pediments are topped off in the shape of a spear tip, and their central panels are framed with intricately carved ornamentation consisting of floral tendrils. The spear-tip shape is an unprecedented design that appears for the first time in Banteay Srei. The upper section of all three pediments features a pair of flying/dancing figures, holding garlands in their hands.

The compositional principle of leaving the background completely blank seems to be a characteristic used mainly in the eleventh century, and is also visible on pediments found in Preah Vihear and Baphuon.<sup>432</sup> These empty backgrounds raise the possibility that

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<sup>429</sup> *Mahabharata, Salya Parva*.

<sup>430</sup> The statue is part of the Douglas Latchford collection. Bunker-Latchford 2008, 44.

<sup>431</sup> For example, the standing statue of *Vishnu*, which derives from the Battambang region, and is classified as 11th-century, Baphuon style. MG MA1339. Baptiste-Zéphir 2008, 204–205.

<sup>432</sup> It should be noted that in Baphuon, for a brief time, a type of composition was used where the entire surface was occupied by the characters in the scene, so it was impossible to fill in the background.

the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei – at least these three – were produced also in the eleventh century, that is, later than their currently accepted date.

Parallels: as far as I know, the *Duel between Bhima and Duryodhana* is not portrayed anywhere else in Angkorian art, apart from the other example at Banteay Srei (see below).

#### 13.2.4. The Pediments of the Third Eastern Gopura

##### *The Abduction of the Apsara Tilottama (fig. 109)*

In 1932 George Cœdès reported a newly discovered pediment, uncovered during the restoration work led by Marchal.<sup>433</sup> The assumption was that the pediment had originally stood at the western end of the eastern gopura of the third enclosure. All the pieces of the pediment were found, enabling it to be restored perfectly. At the time, they hoped that, after the structural walls of the gopura were reinforced, the pediment could be restored to its original position.<sup>434</sup> In 1936, however, it was transported to Paris, where it was housed in the Musée Guimet.<sup>435</sup> In the end, none of the pediments was reinstalled on the third gopura, after its restoration.<sup>436</sup>

The bas-relief on the pediment depicts the story of the *apsara Tilottama*,<sup>437</sup> from the *Mahabharata*. The story concerns two demon brothers named *Sunda* and *Upasunda* – incidentally, they were descended from *Hiranyakashipu*, the ruler destroyed by *Narasimha* –, whose undesirable activities threatened to upset the equilibrium of the world. As they were destined only to die at each other's hands, *Brahma* asked the beautiful *apsara Tilottama* to appear before them, and while fighting for her favour, the demons end up killing each other.

The bas-relief shows the dramatic moment when both brothers take the *apsara* by one of her arms and each tries to pull her towards him. In the background of the depiction can be seen a *Karnikara* tree,<sup>438</sup> from which – according to the story – *Tilottama* was just picking flowers, when she was espied by the demons. The four figures in chignons are

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<sup>433</sup> Cœdès 1932.

<sup>434</sup> Cœdès 1932, 81.

<sup>435</sup> Inv. no.: MG18913.

<sup>436</sup> Marchal: “--- un très beau fronton qui reconstitué offre une scène d'une netteté et d'une simplicité contrastant avec les scènes habituellement si encombrées et si touffues des bas-reliefs khmers.” EFEO Rapports. Février 1932.

<sup>437</sup> *Mahabharata* 1/16.

<sup>438</sup> *Pterospermum acerifolium*

presumably the four *Mahashris* (sages), who have gathered to witness the world being restored to its position of balance.<sup>439</sup> In the air above the tree can be seen two dancing/flying figures.<sup>440</sup> The composition employed in the bas-relief, similarly to that of the bas-reliefs on the second western gopura, deserves special attention (*fig. 167*). As mentioned above, this design of pediment is unprecedented, and makes its first appearance here in Banteay Srei: it is framed with bold ornamental tendrils, and the image is topped off with spear-tip shaped decorations. Beneath the floral ornamentation is a decorative “ribbon”, whose surface is patterned with rhombuses and flower motifs. At each end of the ribbon is a *Makara* head, from whose mouth emerges a five-headed *naga*. This feature can be regarded as traditional, but the dynamism in this portrayal is quite innovative.

The questions that arose in connection with the items of attire worn by *Tilottama* actually provided the starting point for my present research (*fig. 109.a*). The skirt in which the *apsara* is depicted matches the attire of the guardian figures on the south and north sanctuary towers, as well as *Durga*, as she is portrayed on the western pediment of the first eastern gopura. The appearance of the *type 2 female sampot* on characters of such different rank in the mythology raised countless questions concerning the iconographic rules and our assumptions about how strictly the instructions were followed. We have already seen that clearly identifiable deities and lower-ranked mythological characters alike were mostly portrayed on the walls of Banteay Srei wearing traditional, pleated garments. What reason could there be for certain bas-reliefs to feature skirts that differ so greatly from the rest? It must be borne in mind that the pediment depicting the *Abduction of Tilottama* is located in part of the temple complex where the dating is still unresolved.

In general in Angkorian art, demons, *yakshas* and other malevolent mythological beings are mostly distinguished by their adornments and by facial differences. The main characteristics are untied hair, often with curly locks, glints of eye-teeth from their open mouths, and distinctive types of ear-rings; in Banteay Srei, these characteristics mark out the *asuras* abducting *Sita*, visible in two bas-reliefs, as well as the *yakshas* guarding the western stairs to the terrace on which the sanctuary towers stand. Here, however, in the composition of the *Abduction of Tilottama*, the hair and jewellery of *Sunda* and *Upasunda*, as well as the lack of moustaches and visible teeth, do not point to their demonic origins (*fig. 109.b-c*). Indeed, their appearance – their simple hairstyle, tied into ponytails on the top of their heads, their sampots, their noble neck bracelets with pendants at the back (as

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<sup>439</sup> Cœdès 1932, 82.

<sup>440</sup> *Mahabharata, Adiparvan*, 212.

seen in the *Duel of Bhima and Duryodhana*) and their other jewellery items – seems to be rather regal, and they look more like princes than fearsome demons. At present there is no explanation for this unusual deviation from iconographic convention.

The bas-relief on the pediment depicts just a single episode and scene, but on the basis of its style, I would definitely group it together with the compositions showing the *Duel between Vali and Sugriva* and the *Duel of Bhima and Duryodhana*. It is important to point out that one of the asuras attempting to abduct Tilottama and the figure of Bhima leaping up into the air are remarkably similar: apart from their identical neck bracelets, both figures are depicted with their backs turned towards the viewer (fig. 108.b and 109.c).

These are not the only bas-reliefs from Banteay Srei in which a protagonist actively “in motion” in the scene is portrayed with his back to us. The same feature can be found on the pediment depicting the *Duel between Vali and Sugriva*, on the lintel showing the fight between *Shiva* and *Bhringi*, and in the figures of *Ravana* and *Kama* on the south library building. Nevertheless, it is rare for characters to be portrayed in such a way, and not in any way typical before the tenth century, just as narrative reliefs in general did not exist before the Banteay Srei period.<sup>441</sup>

Parallels: the story of *Tilottama* is rarely depicted in Angkorian bas-reliefs, and the earliest seems to be the one from Banteay Srei. The scene can be recognised on a bas-relief in Baphuon (eleventh century) and on the southern pediment of the antarala at Thomannon (second half of twelfth century); there is also a composition very similar to the one from Banteay Srei on a lintel from Touk Daunsrei (probably eleventh century).<sup>442</sup> Now part of the collection at the National Museum in Phnom Penh, the composition from Touk Daunsrei shows the *asuras* with the same ponytails on top of their heads, but their ear-rings are disk-shaped, which is a standard signifier of demons in Angkorian art, so at least their jewellery follows the hypothetical iconographic regulations (fig. 110). *Tilottama* in this instance is wearing a conical *mukuta*, although the exact type cannot be made out due to damage on the carving. The *type 1 male sampot* worn by the main characters is in line with the style of bas-reliefs in the eleventh century. This depiction, despite its similar action (the demons each grab the *apsara* by one of her arms, while brandishing their weapons in the air with their free hands), does not even approach the level of dynamism exhibited by the counterpart scene on the Banteay Srei pediment.

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<sup>441</sup> It is worth noting here that in India, depictions in which the protagonist has his back to us typically occur in *Pashupata* sanctuaries, for example in the case of *Ravana*. I shall deal with this in detail in chapter 17.

<sup>442</sup> NMPP Ka.1673.

The pediment discovered close to the third eastern gopura, which now lies on the ground, probably originally stood above the gate pavilion's western entrance (*fig. 111*). The bas-relief depicts a scene from *Ramayana*, when the demon Viradha attempts to abduct Sita, but is thwarted by *Rama* and *Lakshmana*.<sup>443</sup> The demon appears as the protagonist in the centre of the composition, with *Sita* in his arms, whilst on either side stand the two brothers, *Rama* and *Lakshmana*, preparing to attack him. The entire background is filled with floral ornamentation, among which can be seen the head of a deer, with more deer visible on either side. This depiction of *Viradha* among deer may refer to the *Forests of Dandaka*.<sup>444</sup>

Attire: the demon's face is destroyed, but his large ear-rings and loose, "shaggy" hair can still be clearly discerned. He wears the *type 2 male sampot*, while the hem of the pleated material is placed on his thigh, as befits a prince. *Sita* is dressed in a traditional *type 1 female sampot*, without jewels, depicted with her hair gathered together simply, almost in exactly the same way as can be seen on the lintel of the central sanctuary tower. The simplicity of her attire probably alludes to the indigent lifestyle she led during her self-imposed exile.

#### 13.2.5. The Buildings of the Fourth Enclosure

On the northern side of the fourth enclosure, a long building stands perpendicular to the approach path. The pediment above its southern entrance depicts the scene of *Narasimha Killing Hiranyakashipu* (*fig. 112*). Unlike the depiction of *Narasimha* on the lintel of the north sanctuary tower, in this case, the figure of the lion-headed god is shown frontally, as is the upper body of the king, *Hiranyakashipu*, who is bent backwards completely from the waist.

Attire: *Narasimha* is wearing armbands on his upper arms, *Hiranyakashipu* has armbands too, but also wears a *kirita mukuta* and lotus-bud ear-rings.

Parallels: although the same subject matter can be found on the walls of other contemporaneous sanctuaries (Koh Ker, Pre Rup, East Mebon, Wat Enkosei), to the best of

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<sup>443</sup> In agreement with the definition of Éric Bourdonneau, I believe the same scene is shown on the western lintel of the central sanctuary tower. Research into the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei tends to identify the figure as *Ravana*, the demon king, and only designates the relief from the third enclosure as "*The Demon Viradha Abducting Sita*".

<sup>444</sup> *Aranyakanda* II, III, IV.



my knowledge, no other composition of this kind – and certainly not with such dramatic force – exists on any other bas-relief in Angkor.

On the southern side of the fourth enclosure stands another long building, opposite the previous one and also perpendicular to the approach path, which has a beautifully carved pediment above its northern entrance. The scene of *Umamaheshvara murti*, that is, *Shiva* and *Uma Nandi* on the back of a bull, was a popular and characteristic iconographic theme in Khmer art, and features on two of Banteay Srei’s pediments (*fig. 113*). In the bas-relief on the southern long building of the fourth enclosure, *Shiva* is holding a *trishula*. *Uma* sits behind him, wrapping her right arm around his left arm. Indian texts hardly ever mention that *Shiva* and his consort rode together on the back of a bull. In a scene in the *Skanda Purana*, they arrive on the back of *Nandi* when they visit *Viradha*, and in the *Mahabharata*,<sup>445</sup> they appear before *Krishna* in this fashion.

Attire: both figures are wearing the traditional sampot; *Shiva* has a *jata mukuta* on his head and bud-shaped ear-rings. *Uma*’s head is damaged and mostly missing, and only the shape of her earlobe can be made out, although she is not wearing an ear-ring in it.

On the fourth eastern gopura can be seen iconic reliefs of two *dikpalas*: on the eastern pediment is *Indra* (*fig. 117*), while the western is decorated with the figure of *Varuna*. The composition and depictions are similar to those of the other iconic reliefs.

### 13.3. The Different Types of Sampot in the Narrative and Iconic Reliefs

With regard to the clothing worn by the figures in the narrative and iconic reliefs, I have conducted a separate study of how frequently the so-called traditional, *type 1 sampot* occurs, and how it is related to the new types of sampot in any given composition. A summary of the types of sampot is presented in the table below, an excerpt from the catalogue (male and female figures dressed in *type 1 sampots* are not highlighted in the table, whereas instances of other types are highlighted in colour):

Building	Direction	Element	Character	Gender	Male sampot 1	Male sampot 2	Male sampot 3	Male loincloth	Female sampot 1	Female sampot 2
Central sanctuary	North	pediment	Kubera	M	x					
Central sanctuary	North	lintel	Vali	M				x		
Central	North	lintel	Sugriva	M				x		

<sup>445</sup> *Anusana-Parva*. ch. 14.

sanctuary										
Central sanctuary	West	lintel	Ravana/Viradha	M		X with hem				
Central sanctuary	West	lintel	Sita	F					x	
Central sanctuary	West	lintel	male figure (Lakshmana?)	M	not depicted					
Central sanctuary	West	lintel	male figure (Rama?)	M	x					
Central sanctuary	West	pediment	Varuna	M	? damaged					
Central sanctuary	South	lintel	Arjuna	M		x				
Central sanctuary	South	lintel	Kirata	M				x		
Central sanctuary	South	lintel	demon figure	M		?		x		
Central sanctuary	South	lintel	sitting demon figure	M	not depicted					
Central sanctuary	South	lintel	male figure with bow	M	not depicted					
Central sanctuary	South	lintel	demon figure with bow	M	not depicted			x		
Central sanctuary	South	lintel	standing demon? figure	M	damaged					
Central sanctuary	South	lintel	sitting demon figure	M						
Central sanctuary	South	pediment	Yama	M	x					
South sanctuary	East	lintel	Indra	M	x					
South sanctuary	East	pediment	Uma	F					x	
South sanctuary	East	pediment	Shiva	M	damaged					
South sanctuary	North	pediment	Kubera	M	x					
South sanctuary	North	lintel	Kubera	M	x					
South sanctuary	West	lintel	Varuna	M	x					
South sanctuary	West	pediment	Varuna	M	x					
South sanctuary	West	tower summit, 3rd level, pediment	Garuda	M	lower body not depicted					
South sanctuary	South	lintel	Yama	M	x					
South sanctuary	South	pediment	Yama	M	x					
North sanctuary	East	pediment	Narasimha	M	x					
North sanctuary	East	pediment	Hiranyakashipu	M	x					
North sanctuary	East	lintel	Indra	M	x					
North sanctuary	North	lintel	Bhima	M			x			
North sanctuary	North	lintel	Dushasana	M	x					
North sanctuary	North	pediment	Kubera	M	x					
North sanctuary	West	pediment	Varuna	M	x					
North sanctuary	West	lintel	Vishnu	M	? With hem					
North sanctuary	West	lintel	Garuda	M						
North sanctuary	South	pediment	Yama	M	x					
North sanctuary	South	lintel	Shiva	M	x					
North sanctuary	South	lintel	demon (Bhringi?)	M	?					
Mandapa	North	pediment	deity	M	x					
Mandapa	South	pediment	deity	M	x					
Mandapa	East	pediment	Indra	M	x					
North library	East	lintel	Indra	M	not depicted					
North library	East	lintel	male figure	M	x					
North	East	lintel	male figure	M	x					

library										
North library	East	lintel	3 + 3 male figures							
North library	East	pediment	Indra	M		x with hem				
North library	East	pediment	10 male figures	M		x (not pleated)				
North library	East	pediment	Arjuna ( <i>Lakshmana</i> )	M		x with hem				
North library	East	pediment	Arjuna's charioteer	M		x with hem				
North library	East	pediment	demon figure	M	x not pleated					
North library	East	pediment	demon figure	M	x not pleated					
North library	East	pediment	Krishna's charioteer	M		?				
North library	East	pediment	Krishna ( <i>Rama</i> )	M		? not pleated				
North library	East	bases of the columns	2 + 2 male figures	M	not depicted					
North library	West	lintel	2 male figures	M	x					
North library	West	pediment	Krishna	M		X with hem				
North library	West	pediment	Kansa	M	x with hem					
North library	West	pediment	female figure standing behind Krishna, left side	F					x	
North library	West	pediment	female figure standing behind Krishna, middle	F					x	
North library	West	pediment	female figure standing behind Krishna, right side	F					not visible	
North library	West	pediment	female figure sitting behind Krishna, left side	F					not visible	
North library	West	pediment	female figure sitting behind Krishna, 2nd from the left	F					x	
North library	West	pediment	female figure sitting behind Krishna, 2nd from the right	F					x	
North library	West	pediment	female figure sitting behind Krishna, right side	F					not visible	
North library	West	pediment	4 female figures at the feet of Krishna	F					x	
North library	West	pediment	3 male figures standing behind Kansa	M		?				
North library	West	pediment	3 male figures standing behind Kansa	M		?				
North library	West	pediment	3 male figures behind Kansa	M		?				
North library	West	pediment	Krishna	M		X with hem				
North library	West	pediment	Akrura	M	x with hem					
North library	West	pediment	male figure	M		x				
North library	West	pediment	male figure	M		x				
North library	West	pediment	male figure	M		x				
North library	West	pediment	male figure	M		x				
North library	West	pediment	male figure	M		x				
North library	West	pediment	male figure	M		?				
North library	West	pediment	1 male figure	M	x with hem					
North library	West	pediment	6 male figures	M	x					
North library	West	pediment	3 figures							
North library	West	pediment	charioteer	M		X with hem				
North library	West	pediment	? Balarama	M		X with hem				
South library	East	lintel	female deity	F					x	
South library	East	lintel	male figure	M	not visible					
South library	East	lintel	male figure	M	not visible					
South library	East	lintel	male figure riding on Makara	M	x					

South library	East	lintel	male figure riding on Makara	M							
South library	East	pediment	Shiva	M	x						
South library	East	pediment	Parvati	F						x	
South library	East	pediment	female figure	F						x	
South library	East	pediment	ascetic	M	x not pleated						
South library	East	pediment	ascetic	M	x not pleated						
South library	East	pediment	female figure	F						x	
South library	East	pediment	monkey	M	x with hem						
South library	East	pediment	Simha	M	x						
South library	East	pediment	Ganesha	M	x						
South library	East	pediment	Garuda	M	x						
South library	East	pediment	figure with a head of a bird	M	x						
South library	East	pediment	figure with a head of a horse	M	x						
South library	East	pediment	monkey	M	x with hem						
South library	East	pediment	Ravana	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	Shiva as Mahayogi	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	Parvati	F						x	
South library	West	pediment	Kama	M	?						
South library	West	pediment	standing female figure	F						x	
South library	West	pediment	8 ascetics	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	2 female figures at prayer	F						x	
South library	West	pediment	demon figure	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	figure with a head of a horse	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	figure with a head of a bird	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	monkey	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	Ganesha	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	Simha	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	figure with a head of a horse	M	not depicted						
South library	West	pediment	monkey	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	figure with a head of a bird	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	male figure	M	x						
South library	West	pediment	7 male? figures	M?	x						
South library	West	pediment	6 male figures	M	x						
LNE	South	lintel	Yama	M	x						
LSE	North	lintel	Kubera	M	x						
LSW	North	lintel	Kubera?	M	x						
EG1	East	lintel	Krishna (?)	M	x						
EG1	East	pediment	Shiva Nataraja	M	x						
EG1	East	pediment	figure with a drum	M	x						
EG1	East	pediment	Karaikkalamaiyar	F						x	
EG1	West	pediment	Durga / Mahishasura Mardini	F							x
EG1	West	pediment	female figure	F						x	
EG1	West	pediment	female figure	F						x	
EG1	West	lintel	Vishnu Hayagriva	M	x						
EG1	West	lintel	Madhu and Kaitabha demons	M							
WG1	East, southern	lintel	deity	M	not depicted						

	door									
WG1	West, northern door	lintel	Kubera(?)	M	x					
WG1	West, northern door	lintel	2 persons at prayer (figure on the left is missing)	M	not depicted					
WG1	West, northern door	lintel	2 male figures (figure on the right is damaged)	M		x				
WG1	West, southern door	lintel	4 dancing male figures	M	not visible					
WG1	West, southern door	lintel	2 male figures	M	not visible					
EG2	East	inner pediment	Lakshmbisheka or Gaja-Lakshmi	F					x	
EG2	East	inner pediment	Garuda		-					
EG2	East	pediment	Indra	M	x					
EG2	West	pediment	Varuna	M	x					
WG2	East	pediment	Vali	M	x					
WG2	East	pediment	Sugriva	M	x					
WG2	East	pediment	figure standing behind reclining/dying Vali, Sugriva(?)	M	x					
WG2	East	pediment	reclining/dying Vali	M	x					
WG2	East	pediment	Tara	F					x	
WG2	East	pediment	Rama	M	x					
WG2	East	pediment	Lakshmana	M	x					
WG2	East	lintel	Indra	M	x					
WG2	East	lintel	figure with a sword and a shield	M		x				
WG2	East	lintel	figure with a sword and a shield	M		x				
WG2	West	lintel on the ground	deity	M	x					
EG3	East	pediment on the ground	Viradha	M		X with hem				
EG3	East	pediment on the ground	Sita	F					x	
EG3	East	pediment	Rama	M		X with hem				
EG3	East	pediment	Lakshmana	M		X with hem				
LGN1	North	pediment	Hiranyakashipu	M	not depicted					
LGN1	North	pediment	Narasimha	M	not depicted					
LGS1	South	pediment	Shiva	M	x with hem					
LGS1	South	pediment	Uma	F					x	
LGS2	South	pediment on the ground	deity	M	x					
LGS4?	West	lintel on the ground	Varuna	M	x					
EG4	East	pediment	Indra	M	x					
EG4	West	pediment	Varuna	M	x					
WG2 (NMPP Ka1660)	West	pediment	Krishna	M	x					
WG2 (NMPP Ka1660)	West	pediment	Balarama	M	x					
WG2 (NMPP Ka1660)	West	pediment	Duryodhana	M	x					
WG2 (NMPP Ka1660)	West	pediment	Bhima	M	x					
WG2 (NMPP Ka1660)	West	pediment	4 Pandava brothers	M	x					
EG3 (MG 18913)	West	pediment	Tilottama	F						x
EG3 (MG 18913)	West	pediment	Asura Sunda	M		x				
EG3 (MG 18913)	West	pediment	Asura Upasunda	M	?					
EG3 (MG 18913)	West	pediment	2 male figures	M	x					
EG3 (MG 18913)	West	pediment	2 male figures	M	x					

The table clearly shows that a significant majority of the figures on the bas-reliefs discussed are dressed in the *type 1 male or female sampot*. Without exception, the male and female deities in the iconic reliefs are shown wearing the *type 1 sampot*.

In Banteay Srei, the *type 2 male sampot* can be seen on the figure of *Bhima*, the protagonist in the bas-relief on the northern lintel of the north sanctuary (*fig. 81*), although this categorisation cannot be asserted with complete certainty, as the pleats on the sampot cannot be discerned – this could, however, be due to the general lack of detail arising from the figure’s small size. The same attire is worn by – among others – the figure of *Krishna* on the western pediment of the north library (*fig. 93*). This pediment is remarkable in featuring both *type 1* and *type 2 male sampots* in the same composition. Whereas *Krishna*, *Balarama* and some of the members of *Kansa*’s royal court are dressed in the “new” *type 2* style, *Kansa*, the two charioteers and other courtiers are wearing *type 1* attire. In general, we can state that the *type 2 sampot* is worn by demons (*Viradha*) and by *Rama*, *Lakshmana*, *Arjuna*, *Bhima*, *Balarama* and *Krishna*. These figures are portrayed in simpler (i.e. non-regal) attire, probably because of their status in the given story (as warriors, in exile, or in disguise). At the same time, the auxiliary characters in the bas-relief of the *Duel between Vali and Sugriva* are dressed in *type 2 sampot*, while the main players, including *Rama* and *Balarama*, are clothed in *type 1*, as “monarchs” (*fig. 104.a*). I believe this is not in contradiction of the local iconographic rules. The Hindu regulations do not extend to the depictions of every single mythological character, so the way they are portrayed probably depends on their role in the particular myth. This means that the figures in a composition may be dressed in different sampots in order to demonstrate the relationship between them in terms of rank; it also means that the same figure in another composition (with another story) is wearing a different kind of sampot because of the different role. This is proven by a comparative analysis of the attire visible in the narrative pediments. At present, the composition of the *Burning of Khandava Forest* still poses an unanswered conundrum, for the character with the supreme rank in the story, *Indra*, is not wearing the “requisite” *type 1 male sampot* in this case (*fig. 89*).

The composition of the *Abduction of Tilottama* decorating the pediment that once adorned the third eastern gopura features two *asuras* dressed in the same *type 2 male sampot* (*fig. 109.b-c*).

The pediments at both ends of the north library clearly show the hem of the textile placed emphatically across the thigh; this is true for the main characters (*Arjuna and*

*Krishna* and *Krishna and Balarama*) and the side characters alike. Similar hems can be seen on figures of *Vishnu* (north sanctuary tower), *Ravana* (central sanctuary tower), and *Viradha*, *Rama* and *Lakshmana* (pediment of the third eastern gopura). With regard to the type 2 male sampot with hem, the possibility of a later date must be considered, because this form of attire is largely similar to the Baphuon style of sampot, although – as mentioned above – the waistline of the sampot in Banteay Srei is straight and “horizontal”, unlike the distinctive curving form seen in Baphuon.

Loincloths are worn by five male figures in total in Banteay Srei. I conjecture that the reason for this, in every case, is their role in the mythology.

There are significantly fewer female figures on the bas-reliefs under discussion, and apart from two, all are dressed in the traditional *type 1 female sampot*. The exceptions are the goddess *Durga* and the *apsara Tilottama* (fig. 101, 109.a). In *Durga*'s case, as stated previously, the “non-regal” nature of her clothing may derive from the rule governing her method of depiction, according to which she must be portrayed as a noblewoman, and not as a goddess. *Tilottama*, meanwhile, appears before the demons as a beautiful, young maiden, so portrayals of the *apsara* cannot give away her divine origins. In my opinion, my examination confirms my hypothesis that the traditional, pleated, type 1 sampot that appears most commonly in the bas-reliefs symbolises the rank and power of a ruler or deity, while the type 2 and type 3 sampots are used to designate that the wearer is a minor character or is playing a role of lower rank in the given narrative.

## 14. OTHER NON-NARRATIVE RELIEFS ON THE SANCTUARY TOWERS

Either side of the eastern doorway of the central sanctuary, as well as beside the three false doors on the other sides, are male figures holding spears, standing in their own niches. The literature generally refers to them as *dvarapalas*, door or gate guardians. In India *dvarapalas* traditionally “stand guard” in pairs, flanking the entrances to sanctuary towers.<sup>446</sup> They typically bear an attribute connected with the chief deity of the given sanctuary, but in their hands they always hold a spear<sup>447</sup> to keep away “malevolent intruders”, or a “club”,<sup>448</sup> demonstrating the power bestowed upon them by the deity. Their obvious function is to protect the sanctity of the sanctuary (*fig. 116, 117, 118.a-b, 119*).

The practice of placing seated or standing guardian figures on both sides of entrances was widespread across almost all of the Southeast Asian region. These statues or bas-reliefs depict the Guardians of the Directions, that is, the *ashadikpalas*.<sup>449</sup> At Banteay Srei, the stairs leading up to the common terrace of the sanctuary towers are also guarded by a variety of mythological figures. The question arises whether the actual function of the *ashadikpalas* is performed by the figures in the bas-reliefs beside the sanctuary tower entrance or those guarding the stairs. The *ashadikpala* gods appear on numerous pediments and lintels decorating the sanctuary towers and gate pavilions, where they are depicted with clearly identifiable attributes; however, the concept governing which deity guards which “direction” seems to have been followed slightly inconsistently in the case of Banteay Srei. In this paper and in my catalogue, as the guardian figures in the bas-reliefs cannot be proven to be Guardians of the Directions, I refer to them as *dvarapalas*.

Following the pattern of the male figures of the central sanctuary, a total of sixteen female figures are visible flanking both left and right of the doors (and false doors) of the

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<sup>446</sup> Rao 2003, 748.

<sup>447</sup> *Gada*.

<sup>448</sup> *Danda*.

<sup>449</sup> *Ashadikpala* is the collective name for the Guardians of the Eight Compass Points. The *ashadikpala*, or *lokapala*, or simply *dikpala* (Guardians of the Directions), is a concept originating in the Vedic era. At first there were only guardians of the four main cardinal points, and the other four came later. The compass points associated with each guardian are as follows: Indra – East, Agni – Southeast; Yama – South; Nirrti – Southwest; Varuna – West; Vayu – Northwest; Kubera – North; Ishana – Northeast.



side sanctuaries – the literature relatively consistently refers to them as *devatas*,<sup>450</sup> although there are numerous instances where they are called *apsaras* (fig. 2).

The Sanskrit term *apsara* is frequently used in the plural, indicating that the semi-divine female beings appear in the mythological stories not as individual characters, but as a group of a specific number. Some rule books, such as the *Shilpa Samhita*, describe them as thirty-two female figures,<sup>451</sup> each of whom has her own particular attribute and posture. In general they appear together with the group of male figures known as the *gandharvas*. In Hindu, Buddhist and Jainist depictions, the *apsaras* are portrayed as young girls lavishly adorned with rich jewellery, usually in a dancing pose. According to the rules set forth in the *Shilpa Shastra*, they are depicted as attractive young maidens, with slender waists and full breasts, dressed in ornate clothing and jewels, in postures that suggest they are dancing.<sup>452</sup> This description perfectly matches the figures in Banteay Srei, although their function as “door guardians”, implied by their location, seems so obvious that authors in recent decades have tended to call them *devatas*, a practice that I continue in this paper.

Examples of “guardian figures” placed either side of doorways can be found dating back to pre-Angkorian times,<sup>453</sup> with the earliest known figures whose appearance is similar to that seen in Banteay Srei being those on the wall of sanctuary “H” at Phnom Bayan, already mentioned above. According to Victor Goloubew, who first described the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei, all of them were composed in accordance with the same model, for their facial features are all largely the same. The female figures hold an open lotus flower in one hand, and a *padma*, or lotus bud, in the other; they have flat, round, disk-shaped earrings, which must be very heavy items of jewellery, for they have stretched the earlobes a long way down. Their clothing is extraordinarily ornate, a feature that can be regarded as the most distinctive component of the Banteay Srei artistic style.

Goloubew also made a detailed analysis of the smaller female figures visible in the smaller, roof-level niches (fig. 121-123). In his view, these figures are similar to the *devatas* guarding the doors, except for the conical diadems they are wearing, and their ear-pendants, which are in the shape of lotus petals. In my opinion, it is their clothing that clearly distinguishes them from the *devatas*. The female figures in the roof-level niches are dressed in *type 1 female sampots* made from pleated textile, worn with a fold at the front;

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<sup>450</sup> *Devata*.

<sup>451</sup> One among them is *Tilottama*.

<sup>452</sup> Rao 2003, 48.

<sup>453</sup> Pre-Angkorian is the name given to the period of history and art history between the second half of the 6th century and the year 802.

this is different from the garments worn by the *devatas*, which is the type of skirt only found in Banteay Srei. I am convinced that the function and the mythological role of the roof-level female figures have nothing to do with guarding doorways, for nothing in their appearance – neither their clothes, nor their adornments, nor even the fact that they are kneeling – resembles that of the *devatas* standing at the lower levels.

Above the niches of the central and south sanctuary towers can be seen bas-reliefs depicting female dancers (*fig. 120*). They are portrayed with their right legs raised elegantly in a dancing movement, while one arm is posed before them in the *gaja-hasta mudra*, the “elephant’s trunk” hand gesture.<sup>454</sup> They are dressed in *type 1 female sampots*, with their hair styled into the distinctive Banteay Srei chignon. Their ear-rings are their most extraordinary item of attire, completely different from any others found at Banteay Srei, consisting of twisted cylinders that are narrow in the middle and thicker at both ends. As mentioned in the chapter on ear-rings, their formal characteristics may indicate Javanese or Indian connections. The dancers are standing on lotuses.

On either side of the dancer on the central sanctuary tower are female musicians, each with a pair of small cymbals, presumably accompanying the dance. Their clothes and hairstyles are the same as those of the dancers, but they are not wearing ear-rings. The dancers on the south sanctuary tower are alone, unaccompanied by musicians. The same clothing and hairstyle are also visible on the eastern pediment of the south library, worn by two female figures, one standing and one kneeling, on the left of the divine couple, and also on the western pediment, worn by a standing female (*fig. 56*). This group therefore consists of the eight dancers above the niches on the two sanctuary towers, and three figures from the south library pediments. I have not yet determined any connection between their roles. There is also no explanation for why another sub-group of dancing female figures, whose portrayals survive in parts of the tower summits, set in their own little roof ornament niches (*fig. 121-122*), are wearing *mukutas*, while their ear-rings are rounded cylinders with thickened ends<sup>455</sup> and their sampots are pleated – in other words, their movements and most of their costumes are identical to those of the other dancers, but the fact that they are wearing *mukutas*, which are otherwise limited to deities, is something puzzling which, in my view, is worth thinking about.

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<sup>454</sup> See chapter 13.1.6.

<sup>455</sup> A photograph in the EFEO archive (inv. CAM7304) shows a roof decoration featuring the figure of a female dancer wearing lotus-bud ear-rings and a *mukuta*, whose hands are not in the *gaja-hasta mudra*. I was unable to observe this decoration *in situ*, so its original location is unknown to me. (*fig. 121*).

Pairs of dancing male figures, with garlands in their hands, can also be seen, both in the upper sections of the niches on the pediments and the sanctuary towers, and on the walls above the niches. This iconographic type is known as *vidyadhara*, and was popular in the Hellenistic art of Gandhara<sup>456</sup> (*fig. 134*). The rules governing their depiction can be read in two texts: the *Vishnudharmottara* (Bk. III. ch. 42. vv. 9-10)<sup>457</sup> and the *Manasara* (p. 370, vv. 7–9). According to the *Vishnudharmottara* – which summarises the new artistic and iconographic canon of medieval India –, the flying *vidyadhara* has a set place in the composition, and must appear either side of the *kirtimukha*. The *kirtimukha* head, more often known as *Kalana* in Angkorian contexts, is the head of a monster, a central motif generally found on lintels and less commonly on pediments. According to the *Manasara*, the legs of the *Vidyadharas* must be depicted bent backwards, as though the figures are flying, which is how they can be seen in Banteay Srei. We can be almost completely certain that these pairs of male dancers are indeed *Vidyadharas*.

I consider it particularly important to draw attention to Boisselier’s finding that certain figures on the pediments are dressed in a way that deviates considerably from the other figures: their male sampot is pleated, but otherwise identical in form to that of the *dvarapalas*. In Boisselier’s view these are traditional sampots, with a flap of cloth folded into a long, narrow strip “dangling” from the waist. Boisselier was probably referring to the figures that appear in pairs in the empty upper parts of the pediments and above the niches of the *dvarapalas* and *devatas*; they are opposite each other, and their movements imitate flying – in other words, they are *Vidyadharas*. As some of these figures are damaged, it is not possible to be certain about their clothing in every case, but my observations lead me to conclude that the garments are quite different from those worn by the *dvarapalas*, and cannot be described as loincloths. Their attire can be clearly classified as type 2 male sampot, as they have the special feature of a triangular band folded down from the belt line. Only two pairs of figures in the sanctuary complex differed from this: the flying male figures in the topmost fields of the two pediments of the third eastern gopura, both of which are now kept in museums, are dressed in the traditional, *type 1 male sampot*, with the broad fold-back at the front.

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<sup>456</sup> Banerjea 1985, 281.

<sup>457</sup> The last part of the *Vishnudharmottara*, the *Prasadalakshana*, deals with devotion to the pictures of deities placed in sanctuaries, and the related iconographic rules. For details see: Renner 107–110.

Clearly, despite the fact that the human figures described above were only incidental characters or even merely decorative, their presence on the sanctuary walls was just as much a part of the iconographic system as the main figures in the narrative reliefs. An examination of their attire contributes to our understanding of the meaning of the costumes worn by the figures depicted at Banteay Srei. The distinctive attire of Banteay Srei can be defined and described on the basis of the full costume of the male and female door guardian figures and the hairstyle of the female dancers. The regulations governing the depictions of these figures are not strict, for they do not have any fixed attributes or important distinguishing features. I therefore hypothesise that these figures were depicted according to the artists' own taste, more specifically, in accordance with the fashion of the day, copying the clothes that people actually wore. I conjecture, furthermore, that the special Banteay Srei type of male and female sampots represent genuine garments, unlike the traditional pleated clothes worn by the deities. The same holds true, in my opinion, for the hairstyle that is arranged in a loose chignon at the back and decorated with hairpins, without any crown or diadem. With the help of the catalogue it is easy to see that, apart from the *devatas*, this hairstyle is also visible among the narrative reliefs only on the pediments of the south library. On the eastern pediment, it is worn by two female figures sitting behind *Parvati*, while on the western pediment, the female figure standing close to *Kama* has the same hairstyle. The two figures on the eastern pediment are presumably *Parvati's* attendants, so their hairstyle probably alludes to their lower rank in the hierarchy. *Kama's* wife, *Rati*, was an *apsara*, also lower down the scale than the other deities. These are examples where the clothing (all three figures are wearing *type 1 female sampots*) is of less significance in determining the rank of a character than the special hairstyle.

## 15. STATUES RECOVERED FROM BANTEAY SREI

Relatively few statues from Banteay Srei have survived to the present day, which is one of the factors that makes it hard to define the specific functions of certain buildings. At present, none of the original statues can be found *in situ*, for they are all held in public collections. The statues of the guardian figures around the sanctuary towers are replicas.

The first art historical analysis of the double statue of *Umamaheshvara*, discovered in the “closed” sanctuary building that had been converted from the first western gopura, began in 1914 (*fig. 115.a-b*). The statue is now in the collection of the National Museum in Phnom Penh.<sup>458</sup> Unfortunately, *Uma*’s head disappeared in the 1970s,<sup>459</sup> but archive photographs still permit a description of her appearance (*fig. 115.b*).<sup>460</sup>

Both are wearing *type 1 male or female sampots*, whose front edge is folded broadly back over the belt. They have tall, cylindrical chignons (*jata mukuta*), with wide diadems tied at the back (*fig. 46-47*), they are wearing no other adornments, but it cannot be ruled out that they once had their own supplementary gold or gilded jewellery. As early as 1926, Parmentier noted that the deep cuts in the figures’ long earlobes may have been put there in order to hold real ear-rings or perhaps other items made of precious metal.<sup>461</sup> The chignon<sup>462</sup> is depicted with horizontal layers of plaited hair, distinctly reminiscent of the hairstyle known from Koh Ker.<sup>463</sup> *Shiva* holds a lotus in his hand, quite an unusual phenomenon, for his usual attributes, according to Indian rules, are the *trishula*, the goose or the rosary, although Bagchi has suggested that it refers to the “blue lotus” (Sanskrit: *utpala*), mentioned in certain Hindu texts, such as the *Vishnudharmottara*.<sup>464</sup> The wall of the building that once housed the statue of *Shiva and Uma* bears an inscription<sup>465</sup> commemorating its inauguration. According to the text, Yajnavaraha erected a statue of *Maheshvara* in order to augment his parents’ honour. When the sanctuary was founded, the first western gopura was almost certainly built as a gate pavilion, and was later converted into a sanctuary with closed side walls. It was then, it has been suggested, that the double

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<sup>458</sup> NMPP Ka1797.

<sup>459</sup> Dalsheimer 2001, 122.

<sup>460</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, Pl. 44. a-b.

<sup>461</sup> Parmentier 1926, 52.

<sup>462</sup> In *Shiva*’s chignon can be seen a crescent moon.

<sup>463</sup> Boisselier 1966, 249–250.

<sup>464</sup> Bagchi 1929, 82.

<sup>465</sup> K 575.

statue was placed in the position where it was found in 1914, although the original exact position cannot be reconstructed at present. Judging from the inscription referred to above, it is also possible that the statue had been in the same place since it was first erected.

The stairs leading up to the sanctuary tower terraces are flanked by full-length statues of guardian figures squatting with one knee raised. The original works are now in the collection of the National Museum in Phnom Penh, with replicas in the original positions (*fig. 48-49, 124.a-b*). There are *yaksha* figures<sup>466</sup> in front of the eastern entrance to the mandapa and on the west at the back of the central sanctuary, monkey-headed figures<sup>467</sup> on the north and south of the mandapa, *Garudas*<sup>468</sup> on the east of the north sanctuary tower, and lion-headed figures<sup>469</sup> on the east of the south tower. *Yakshas* are among the second-ranking deities populating the holy mountain, and are generally fitted with divine attributes. In 1997 Helen Ibbitson Jessup suggested that the guardian figures were in illogical places, and might have been located wrongly during restoration. According to the iconographic rules, for instance, the *Garudas* should face south.<sup>470</sup> Henri Marchal wrote about the restoration of the statues – which he called *dvarapalas* – in his work diary,<sup>471</sup> stating that the figures were reassembled from many pieces and restored to what he regarded as their original positions. In my view, *Garuda* – as *Vishnu*'s mount – is justifiably standing in front of the entrance to the north sanctuary tower, which was dedicated to *Vishnu*. The presence of the lion-headed figures in front of the south sanctuary tower, meanwhile, implies it may have been erected in honour of *Durga*.

The attributes (weapons) of the guardian figures have been lost, and only one *Garuda* holds a *vajra*. In 1929 Goloubew claimed that these mythological figures matched the ones that feature as auxiliary characters on both pediments of the south library. Accordingly, he defined all the statues as *yakshas*, which were depicted, as the case may be, with the head of a lion, monkey or parrot.<sup>472</sup> He therefore identified the sanctuary guardian figures with the *yakshas* who – according to *Ramayana* – reside on *Mount Himavat* as attendants of *Shiva*, and whose human bodies are paired with all kinds of

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<sup>466</sup> Ka. 722.

<sup>467</sup> Ka. 701.

<sup>468</sup> Ka. 801.

<sup>469</sup> Ka. 786.

<sup>470</sup> Jessup 1997, 230.

<sup>471</sup> EFEO Rapports, December 1928: “*J’ai fait également rentrer un linteau et deux statues gisant près du Gopura II Est dont les têtes avaient été déjà ramenées par moi au dépôt le 16 mars 1924.*” It is worth noting that in a diary entry of 1929, Marchal questioned whether the statues standing on the terraces of the sanctuary towers were really *dvarapalas*. In 1929 he wrote, “*D’ailleurs sont-ce vraiment des dvarapalas? J’attire l’attention sur la moustache et la rosace près de l’oreille de la statue de gauche.*”

<sup>472</sup> Finot-Goloubew-Parmentier 1926, 57–58.

heads.<sup>473</sup> Bosch also considered it an extraordinarily interesting and unique phenomenon that the *Yaksha* Guardians of the Directions – as he terms them – are not only present at the entrances to the sanctuary towers, but also in the bas-relief compositions on the pediments (*fig. 84-85*).<sup>474</sup> In Bosch's view, the statues were so artistically similar to the figures in the bas-reliefs that he concluded they must have been sculpted by the same hand.<sup>475</sup> This hypothesis implicitly assumes that the buildings in the inner enclosure of the sanctuary were constructed contemporaneously with the accompanying statues, that is, the statues and the bas-reliefs were executed and put in place as components of the same iconographic programme. As mentioned above, the attributes of the statues found in Banteay Srei are missing, so their identities cannot be ascertained categorically. Based on my observations, their clothing is the same as that worn by the figures on the south library pediments: pleated sampots, folded back at the front, i.e. *type 1 male sampots*. From this perspective, Bosch's assumption would seem correct. At Pre Rup (tenth century), a statue with many parts missing has been found, which is nevertheless remarkably similar to the *yaksha* of Banteay Srei.<sup>476</sup> At the same time, however, countless other statues have been recovered during archaeological excavations at Pre Rup and East Mebon. Using stylistic analysis, these were relatively easy to date to later periods, based on a variety of features, so there is little point in comparing these works with the art of Banteay Srei.<sup>477</sup>

The standing statue of *Vishnu* discovered close to the sanctuary has already been mentioned in chapter 10 of this paper (*fig. 15 a-b*). The *kirita mukuta* on the god's head is extremely similar to those visible on the walls of Banteay Srei, but – as already indicated – his *sampot* is completely different, with the front end of the fully pleated material laid in folds across his thigh, the end at the back splayed out into a small fan above the belt, and an ornamental ribbon hanging down from the belt.<sup>478</sup> At the front, a piece of material twisted into the shape of a double anchor dangles beneath the belt, with the top part of the material arranged into another fan beneath the navel. The attire is further decorated with the two ends of material spectacularly tucking out beneath the belt at the front. This type of

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<sup>473</sup> Both in Angkor and on Sumatra, examples can be found of animal-headed *yakshas* serving as sanctuary guardians. See, for example, bas-reliefs in Pulo (Sumatra) and the gopuras of Prasat Thom (Angkor). The similarity can be explained equally well by the mutual cultural influence between the two areas or by both regions following Indian tradition, independently of one another.

<sup>474</sup> Bosch, F.D.K. 1959, 238.

<sup>475</sup> "Since the yaksa figures are rendered in exactly the same style as the free-standing images referred to above, we may presume they were executed by one hand and the same sculptor". Bosch, F.D.K. 1959, 237.

<sup>476</sup> Haendel 2005, 218.

<sup>477</sup> Haendel 2005, 218. For example, a Bayon-style statue of *Vishnu* and a female figure has been found.

<sup>478</sup> My description of the clothing on the rear of the statue is based on an illustration (Boisselier 1955, 43. Pl. VII/ 1), because it cannot be seen on the archive photograph (*fig. 15.b*).

attire is depicted on statues, but cannot be seen on a single bas-relief at Banteay Srei. The design is reminiscent of the Preah Ko style *sampots*, but with one significant difference: in Preah Ko the longer of the two anchors covers the shorter one, whereas on the *Vishnu* statue from Banteay Srei it is the longer part that is underneath, with the shorter one resting on top. The latter format earlier appeared in Koh Ker, and later became widespread, especially during the Angkor Wat period.

Parallels: I believe that the same *sampot* is worn by a standing statue of *Kalkin*, dated to the early tenth century (*fig. 17*),<sup>479</sup> which is now in the collection of the National Museum in Phnom Penh. A statue of *Brahma* dated to the end of the tenth century, recovered from Phnom Prasat Reach (*fig. 18*),<sup>480</sup> is also dressed in the same type of *sampot*, but without the two-pronged strap at the back, visible on the *Vishnu* statue. I believe this is a significant difference, not just aesthetically, but also from the perspective of how the garments were worn.

A fine example of the same male *sampot* is evident on the statue of *Hayagriva* that was discovered in the Sambor Prei Kuk region (now in the Musée Guimet) (*fig. 125.b*),<sup>481</sup> and on another statue of *Vishnu*, found in Sre Ampil (now in Phnom Penh) (*fig. 125.c*).<sup>482</sup>

Two further, almost exactly matching statues of *Vishnu*, dated to the tenth century but of unknown origin, are wearing the same type of *sampot* (*fig. 125.d-e*).<sup>483</sup> In my opinion, another depiction of *Vishnu* that is very much like the one from Banteay Srei is now in the collection of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, although as parts of the statue's lower body are missing, the *sampot* cannot be analysed in full.<sup>484</sup>

Similar *sampots* to the one in question can be observed on another statue recovered from Banteay Srei, believed to be a *dvarapala* (*fig. 126.a*),<sup>485</sup> and on a *Vishnu* of unknown

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<sup>479</sup> NMPP 1656; estimated date: first half of the tenth century; place of origin: Prasat Neang Khmau, Ta Keo; described in: Dalsheimer 2001, 113. *Kalkin* or *Kalki* is the future avatar of *Vishnu*, who will be manifested in the next epoch, according to Hindu belief.

<sup>480</sup> Boisselier 1955, 43. Pl. VII/3 NMPP Ka 1669, Boisselier B 20,2.

<sup>481</sup> MG 18099; place of origin: Sambor Prei Kuk, northern group; date: last third of the tenth century; described in: Baptiste 2008, 157–160.

<sup>482</sup> NMPP Ka 1882; estimated date: end of eleventh century; place of origin: Sre Ampil, Kandal; described in: Dalsheimer 2001, 156.

<sup>483</sup> Los Angeles County Museum of Art. M 76.19; Norton Simon Museum M1980.16.S; origin unknown; date: 10th century.

<sup>484</sup> Asian Art Museum, San Francisco B65S7; origin unknown; date: between 940 and 965, i.e. during the reign of Rajendravarman II. In the museum catalogue it is described as Koh Ker or Pre Rup style.

<http://asianart.emuseum.com/view/objects/asitem/search@/0?t:state:flow=4100d0a6-540f-4304-9d9d-dafc75505caa>

<sup>485</sup> NMPP 1799; Dalsheimer 2001, 150.



origin (*fig. 126.b*).<sup>486</sup> The front fold on these two resembles that on the Banteay Srei *Vishnu*, being more schematic than realistic. At the same time, however, both of these statues are wearing extraordinarily ornate belts, unlike any depiction from the tenth century. With its row of geometric patterns, this belt undoubtedly belongs to the Angkor Wat style, making it an item of twelfth-century attire, so these two statues cannot have been produced before then. In this case, the *dvarapala* recovered from Banteay Srei becomes a remarkably important find.

Having examined the possible parallels for the statue of *Vishnu* discovered at Banteay Srei, I consider it justified to date it to the tenth century, making it contemporaneous with the original construction of the temple complex. Seen in the light of the other examples of very similar clothing, we can state that, all in all, the statue of *Vishnu* is representative of the special style of art that began in Pre Rup and still existed when Banteay Srei was founded. Parallels for the male *sampot* he is wearing can be found on contemporary statues of *Vishnu* and his avatars, and less commonly on figures of *Shiva* and *Brahma*.<sup>487</sup> At the same time, however, there are no examples at all of this type of clothing on any of the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei, nor at any of the other approximately contemporaneous sanctuaries. One possible explanation for this, which I consider most likely, is that the statues were not made by members of the workshop who built and decorated the sanctuary complex, but were carved elsewhere, perhaps by somebody at the royal court, and brought to Banteay Srei as gifts, perhaps from the monarch himself.

Based on the fact that the ornamental belt was part of the attire seen on twelfth-century statues, I believe that the *dvarapala* statue was made around the same time as these, and was brought to Banteay Srei at a much later date than the original construction of the temple, perhaps during one of the hypothetically possible reconstructions or conversions.

Two sculpted heads and two torsos were discovered close to the second eastern gopura, which are now in the collection of the National Museum in Phnom Penh. When they were first found, the figures were identified as *dvarapalas* and dated, based on their style, to the tenth century.<sup>488</sup> One of the heads<sup>489</sup> is wearing a tall, cylindrical chignon (*jata*

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<sup>486</sup> NMPP1810, B232, B30.7; place of origin: Siem Reap; date: first half of 12th century. Dalsheimer 2001, 152.

<sup>487</sup> The statue of *Shiva* in the Norton Simon Museum is of this type: M1980.19.S; origin unknown; date: first half of 10th century; see also the four-armed *Brahma* in the National Museum of Phnom Penh (without NMPP inventory number) (Groslier B. 262, Boisselier B.20.2.).

<sup>488</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, 66.

<sup>489</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, Pl. 46-e

*mukuta*), similar to those found on the statue of *Shiva and Uma*, and there is a wide, patterned diadem across the forehead. The other head<sup>490</sup> has an unusual chignon, arranged into a polyhedral form, with the hair placed in tiny, knotted locks around the forehead. I have not come across a single parallel for the latter hairstyle on any of the known relics from Banteay Srei.

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<sup>490</sup> Finot-Parmentier-Goloubew 1926, Pl. 46-d

## 16. CLASSIFYING LINTELS AND PEDIMENTS BEARING NARRATIVE AND ICONIC RELIEFS IN TERMS OF FORM

### 16.1. Lintel Compositions

During my examination of the items of attire depicted in the bas-reliefs, I naturally treat them as part of the whole composition. Following the analysis of the content of the narrative and iconic reliefs, therefore, it is necessary to present comparisons of the compositions in their entirety.

The differences in the compositional elements and motifs of the bas-reliefs have also been investigated by Martin Polkinghorne, in the analysis of his that concentrated on the lintels. In his opinion, the thirty-four extant lintels at Banteay Srei bear signature traces of the sculptors who made them; based on the recurring motifs, he makes precise distinctions between six artists.<sup>491</sup>

The northern and southern lintels of the sanctuary towers and the mandapa were matched up by Polkinghorne, who also considered the lintels depicting *dikpalas* on the long buildings of the second enclosure to be the work of the same artist.<sup>492</sup> His pairings, however, seem to me to be, in several regards, somewhat inconsistent. Although these bas-reliefs can indeed be arranged into pairs on the basis of their composition and motifs, the northern and southern lintels of the sanctuary towers are thematically incompatible, in my view: one side of the central sanctuary tower shows *Arjunakirata* from the *Mahabharata*, while the other two sides show scenes from *Ramayana* (*Abduction of Sita* and *Duel of Vali and Sugriva*); similarly, Polkinghorne's conjectured pairing on the north sanctuary tower cannot be validated if we assume that the bas-relief on the northern side depicts the story of *Bhringi*. This results in only the eastern and western pairing working out thematically, for both sides depict *Vishnu*.

The pairing of the eastern lintels on the second western gopura and the south library, however, is based on clearly visible compositional correspondence. However, if they were really both made at the same time by the same master, then particular importance needs to be accorded to the fact that the male figures behind the *Makara* are dressed in different ways: the figures on the library lintel are dressed in *type 1 male sampots* and *karanda mukutas* (fig. 130.a), while those on the gopura lintel have their hair

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<sup>491</sup> Polkinghorne 2007b, 220.

<sup>492</sup> Polkinghorne 2007b, 221.

arranged in a chignon on top of the head, disk-shaped ear-rings and *type 2 male sampots* (fig. 130.b). This makes their appearance greatly similar to that of the figures of *Krishna* and *Balarama* depicted on the north library.

In my opinion, the lintel on the second western gopura can be paired up not only with the bas-relief in question, but with all of the lintels on both library buildings, and is also very similar to both of the lintels on the second eastern gopura. Taking Martin Polkinghorne's hypothesis as my starting point and developing it further, I have classified the lintels and pediments into the following categories, based on their form, that is, their main motifs and their overall compositional solutions:

1. The eastern outer and inner lintels of the sanctuary towers and the mandapa  
(fig. 127.a-b)

The lintels of the sanctuary towers that are facing opposite directions can be paired up, depending on whether the garland providing the framework of the composition is interrupted by the head of a mythological creature or by a male archer in small niche. There is an exception, however, for the eastern and western lintels of the north tower are different in this regard (although they match thematically, both portraying *Vishnu*). This group is characterised by the main figure(s) being visible inside a pointed frame composed of leaf motifs; the frame separates the action from the surrounding floral ornamentation. Beneath the garland are large, curling leaf patterns, two on each side. This group also includes the lintel depicting *Varuna*, discovered close to the third eastern gopura.

2. The lintels of the first western gopura (fig. 128)

These compositions are similar to the first group, except the garland is held together in the middle by the figure of *Kala*. Their style is not completely uniform, so they could be divided further into sub-groups, but for the purposes of the present study I did not consider this necessary.

3. The lintels of the first eastern gopura (fig. 129)

This type differs from the preceding group with respect to the different style of the frame around the main figure, and to the fact that there are fearsome mythological beasts at the ends of the garland, that is, at the extremities of the lintel.

#### 4. The lintels of the library buildings and the second western gopura (fig. 130.a-b)

In these compositions, the garland has a more ornate surface, and starts in the middle from a *Kala* head beneath the main deity or from the mouth of a *Makara* turning to both sides. Close to the two ends of the lintel can be seen *Makara* heads and other mythological creatures. Niche-like frames carved around the deity figures separate them from the surrounding floral ornamentation.

#### 5. The lintels of the long buildings in the second enclosure (fig. 131)

These lintels most resemble those in the previous group, in that the garland is held between the teeth of the *Kala* head in the middle. The *Kala* head distinguishes these lintels from those on the sanctuary towers (group 1 above). The “niches” above the heads house the Guardians of the Directions. There are no mythological animals at the ends of the garland, unlike on the lintels in group 4.

#### 6. The northern and southern lintels of the mandapa (fig. 132)

These lintels have the face of a *Kala* in the middle, with a row of garlands extending from either side, curling upwards and downwards. No human figures are depicted on them.

#### 7. The eastern lintel of the second eastern gopura (fig. 133)

The lintel above the inner gateway of the second eastern gopura is noticeably different from the other types found at Banteay Srei, so I have placed it in a separate category of its own. Whereas the patterning on the rest of the lintels stops at the edges, either with a sharp line or with a distinct edge pattern, in this instance the floral leaf motifs proceed upwards onto the surface of the pediment above, forming a single, continuous composition. The reason for this unique design is as yet unexplained.

### 16.2. Pediment Compositions

Owing to the shape of the pediments, a roughly triangular surface, narrowing towards the top, was available for covering with carved depictions (fig. 167). The surface is “filled in” in several different ways. Based on compositional criteria, I have divided the pediments into different types: three “narrative” bas-relief types, one “iconic”, and one with purely floral ornamentation (map 7).

### Group 1

The depictions on the library buildings follow the shape of the available surface, consisting of figures placed at different levels that become progressively narrower as they rise. In three cases, this is further accentuated by the architectural depictions.

### Group 2

On the eastern and western sides of the first eastern gopura are images of smaller figures arranged around a main, central figure (*Shiva* or *Durga*). The immediate background behind the main figure is neutral, but the composition is surrounded like a niche by a frame formed from floral tendrils within the field of the image.

### Group 3

Three surviving pediments on the third eastern and second western gopuras (*Abduction of Tilottama*, *Duel between Duryodhana and Bhima*, *Duel between Vali and Sugriva*) are compositionally completely different from those above. A few main figures are seen before a noticeably neutral background. Their figures stand out not only due to the depth of the carving, but also due to the absence of detail or ornamentation behind them. In the scenes of *Tilottama* and *Duryodhana*, the auxiliary characters are much smaller, portrayed in the corners of the pediment, “behind” the central figures. On the bas-relief showing the story of *Vali and Sugriva*, meanwhile, all the figures are the same size.

### Group 4

Certain pediments on the sanctuary towers, the buildings of the second and fourth enclosures, the second, third and fourth eastern gopuras – as well as the eastern end of the mandapa – depict a single central scene or figure of a deity completely surrounded by decorative floral leaves and tendrils. Due to their content, I refer to these as iconic reliefs.

### Group 5

At the top of the eastern end of the mandapa and on the second eastern gopura are pediments adorned with only floral motifs and other decorations. This group could

probably be categorised as a sub-group of group 4, and the only reason I have separated them is because they contain no human figures, and therefore no depictions of attire, as a result of which they do not contribute data to my catalogue.

The relations between the groups of lintels and pediments are summarised below:

Pediment type	1. Narrative	2. Narrative	3. Narrative	4. Iconic	5. Floral	No pediment
Lintel type						
1				Sanctuary towers, eastern side of mandapa		
2						1st western gopura, middle and northern side
3		1st eastern gopura				
4	Libraries		2nd western gopura			1st western gopura, southern side
5				Long buildings of 2nd enclosure		
6				Mandapa, northern and southern sides		
7				2nd eastern gopura		
No lintel			3rd eastern gopura			
No lintel					Mandapa, one of the eastern pediments	
No lintel				Buildings of the 4th enclosure, 4th eastern gopura		

From the table it can be seen that the groups of pediments and lintels do not “overlap” in a potentially confusing way. The majority of pediments fall into the fourth (iconic) category, but their lintels belong to different types. I would also like to point out that while the lintels beneath the narrative pediments are classified into three different groups, these groups only contain these bas-reliefs, and no others. The design of individual buildings and parts of buildings, therefore, follows a regular order, regardless of the pairings and independently of any assumptions about the sculptors who made them.

Later I shall present how this classification of lintels and pediments according to their form reinforces the hypotheses I formulated on the basis of my thematic analysis.

## 17. A THEMATIC COMPARISON BETWEEN THE BAS-RELIEFS OF BANTEAY SREI AND THE ICONOGRAPHIC PROGRAMME OF PASHUPATA SANCTUARIES

Despite the fact that the epigraphic sources presented earlier indicate that the teachings and texts of the *Pashupata* school of Shaivism were known in Angkor at the time Banteay Srei was built, no research has hitherto sought signs of this tradition in the architectural and iconographic appearance of the sanctuary complex. Before attempting to show that Banteay Srei was built in accordance with the principles of *Pashupata* Shaivism, it is important to examine the basic rules for the construction and arrangement of the movement's temples, and to compare Banteay Srei with potential Indian parallels. It is generally true that the statue in the central sanctuary of a *Pashupata* temple appears as *Shiva Linga* or in anthropomorphic form. The other deities, including *Vishnu* and *Brahma*, play only a secondary role in the sanctuary area, in two- or three-dimensional depictions. An important part of every *Pashupata* sanctuary is a series of images depicting the *Saptamatrika*, or "Seven Mother Goddesses", traditionally located in or near the southwestern corner of the sanctuary vestibule. Before the vestibule, or mandapa, there is always a statue of the bull *Nandi*, lying on the ground and facing the sanctuary. A depiction of *Durga* as *Mahishasura Mardini*, defeating the buffalo demon *Mahisha*, is always situated close to the mandapa, as is an image of *Ganesha*. A statue of the goddess *Sarasvati* is another constant component of the first enclosure of a *Pashupata* sanctuary.<sup>493</sup> *Kalamukha* and *Pashupata* temples often have three sanctuaries, with the central sanctuary flanked by one on the right (to the north, assuming an eastern orientation), dedicated to *Vishnu*, and one on the left (south) erected in honour of *Brahma* or *Surya*. Such a sanctuary is referred to as a *traipurushalaya*, or "temple of the three gods". After a while in the history of such temples, the statue of *Brahma* is replaced in the side sanctuary tower by *Brahmeshvara* lingas.<sup>494</sup>

Based on its floor plan, I believe there is justification in describing Banteay Srei as a *traipurushalaya*. The north sanctuary contained a statue of *Vishnu*, while in the south sanctuary there was a *linga*, notwithstanding the text on the inscription<sup>495</sup> stating that it was

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<sup>493</sup> Filliozat, Vasundhara 2001a: 33.

<sup>494</sup> Filliozat, Vasundhara 2001a: 34.

<sup>495</sup> K 574. Sanskrit inscription.



erected by Yajnavaraha's sister in honour of *Ishvara*.<sup>496</sup> In front of the central sanctuary is a statue of the bull *Nandi*, as befits *Pashupata* practice, and the depiction of *Durga* as *Mahishasura Mardini* on the first eastern gopura is "looking at" the mandapa.

In 1961 Bhattacharya first put forward his theory that the religious syncretism ("religious tolerance", in Bhattacharya's words) believed to be typical of tenth-century Angkor could be proven with the iconographic programme in evidence at Banteay Srei. His starting point was that while the temple was clearly a Shaiva foundation, the northern sanctuary tower was dedicated to *Vishnu*, in addition to which the subject matter of countless bas-reliefs on the walls of Banteay Srei was taken from Vaishnava legends.<sup>497</sup> In my view, Banteay Srei is not exceptional, for there were many religious buildings or complexes that incorporated figures of multiple deities. Similarly to sanctuaries in India that belong to the *Pashupata* movement of Shaivism, Banteay Srei and numerous other complexes in Angkor – such as the contemporaneous temples of Pre Rup and East Mebon – placed *Shiva* at the centre of their worship, and emphasised his figure in the architectural and decorative composition, but this was not to the exclusion of other deities, who were represented as self-standing statues (especially *Vishnu*), embedded in depictions on bas-reliefs, or even honoured with their own side sanctuaries (especially *Vishnu* and *Brahma*).

In order to corroborate the hypothesis that Banteay Srei was erected as a *Pashupata* temple, it is essential to compare its architectural and iconographic structures with typical Indian examples from the same period or earlier. It must be stressed, however, that the aim of such an analysis is to uncover analogies, not to demonstrate any direct influence of one or more particular Indian models.

The *Pashupata* movement, focusing on the worship of *Shiva*, is presumed to have originated in Northeast India, and its cultural influence can be proven in the southern parts of the Indian subcontinent from the first or second centuries CE; from around the seventh century, it became the main religion, primarily during the rule of the Pallava and Chalukya dynasties. *Pashupata* sanctuaries built in the seventh and eighth centuries can be found – among other places – on the Deccan Plateau, in the cities of Pattadakal<sup>498</sup> and

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<sup>496</sup> In Shaivism, *Ishvara* is one of the names of the "Supreme Lord", *Shiva*.

<sup>497</sup> Bhattacharya 1961, 32.

<sup>498</sup> Pattadakal is a small city in the state of Karnataka, in central western India, a UNESCO World Heritage site famous for its 7th- and 8th-century Hindu temples, including Papanath (dated to 680) and Virupaksha (built 740).

Kanchipuram,<sup>499</sup> and – much further to the north – in some of the cave temples of Ellora.<sup>500</sup> Outstanding among the temples erected by the *Pashupata* movement is the Virupaksha Temple of Pattadakal, which was recently analysed iconographically in great detail by Cathleen Cummings.<sup>501</sup> The Virupaksha Temple is one of the seven major complexes created in and around Pattadakal in the mid-eighth century, during the reign of the Chalukya dynasty.<sup>502</sup> The walls of the temple, raised in honour of *Shiva*, are covered in countless bas-reliefs, the majority of which represent themes related to *Shiva*, although there are also a number of depictions among them that are linked to *Vishnu*. Of the two side sanctuaries flanking the antarala of the central sanctuary, the south sanctuary is dedicated to *Ganesha*, and the north to *Mahishasura Mardini*. Apart from the mandapa attached to the sanctuary, there is another building, ornately decorated with bas-reliefs, known as the *Nandi Mandapa*.<sup>503</sup>

Cummings summarised the results of her research into how frequently individual iconographic themes appear in the rock sanctuaries of the Deccan Plateau and the temples of Pattadakal in the form of a table.<sup>504</sup> She analysed eight sanctuaries: the complexes of Jogeshvari, Elephanta and Ravana Phadi, cave temples 21, 29, 14 and 15 at Ellora, and the main subject of her research, the Virupaksha Temple of Pattadakal. Cummings's table reveals that the most common depictions, present in all the temples she examined, portray the following themes:

- *The Marriage of Shiva and Parvati*,
- *Shiva and Parvati Playing Dice*,
- *Ravana Shaking Mount Kailash*,
- *Shiva Natesha*,
- *Andhakasura*.

Another common scene is *Arjunakirata*, and the earliest known depiction of this theme in the history of Indian Hindu art appears in Pattadakal. Among the scenes from

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<sup>499</sup> Kanchipuram is a city in the state of Tamil Nadu, a pilgrimage centre known as the “City of a Thousand Temples”. From the 3rd to the 8th century it was the capital of the flourishing Pallava kingdom. Among the sanctuaries erected in the 7th and 8th centuries, the temple complex of Kailasanatha is particularly important.

<sup>500</sup> The Ellora cave temples are located in the state of Maharashtra, in western India. Among the 34 buildings carved out of the caves or cliffs, there are Hindu, Buddhist and Jainist temples. The *Kailasanatha* temple, built in honour of *Shiva* in the eighth century, is remarkably similar in form to the *Pashupata* sanctuaries erected on the Deccan Plateau.

<sup>501</sup> Cummings 2014, *Decoding a Hindu Temple: Royalty and Religion in the Iconographic Program of the Virupaksha Temple, Pattadakal*. SASA, Woodland Hills, California.

<sup>502</sup> The early Chalukya Dynasty ruled in South India between the 6th and 8th centuries, in an area covered by the present-day states of Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

<sup>503</sup> Cummings 2004, 325–400.

<sup>504</sup> Cummings 2004, 241.

*Ramayana* that can be found in the Virupaksha Temple, besides *Ravana Shaking Mount Kailash*, the *Duel between Vali and Sugriva* is depicted on two bas-reliefs, as is the *Abduction of Sita*.

During my research I attempted to match the scenes in the list with images at Banteay Srei. I believe that I have found depictions of all the themes listed above on the buildings in the inner sanctuary area, that is, within the first enclosure.

1. In one episode of the text dealing with the *Marriage of Shiva and Parvati*, *Kama* interferes in the life of the divine couple, becoming the cause of his own death. The dramatic scene of *Shiva Burning Kama to a Cinder* appears on the western pediment of the south library at Banteay Srei, and is therefore in line with the analogies from India.

2. At one point during the lengthy story of *Shiva and Parvati Playing Dice*, *Parvati* is manifested in the image of the goddess *Annapurna*, whose basic attributes are a bowl filled with rice and a ladle. She is generally depicted seated, with her legs interlinked. The female deity on the eastern lintel of the south library at Banteay Srei was hitherto unidentified (*fig. 135*). In my paper I argue that the bas-relief on this lintel is a portrayal of *Annapurna*. The carved figure at Banteay Srei is wearing a pleated female sampot, and is sitting with her legs crossed. The item in her right hand, so far assumed to be a stemmed lotus flower, is – I believe – a spoon-shaped object: the handle is considerably thick and is also rigid, utterly different from portrayals of flowers, whose stems are thinner and generally bent. Moreover, the figure is not holding it between two fingers, as one would do with a delicate flower, but gripping the handle firmly. The figure's left hand is unfortunately damaged, so the bowl of rice cannot be seen. The lintel is situated at one of the most prominent points of the building complex, in the south-eastern corner of the inner enclosure, implying that the main character in the bas-relief must have played a key role in the iconographic programme, as in *Pashupata* sanctuaries in general. If this identification is borne out, this can be regarded as a significant result.

3. Above the lintel depicting *Annapurna* is a pediment showing *Ravana Shaking Mount Kailash*, which – as far as I can see – is precisely equivalent to the Indian counterparts, in terms of both content and composition. Indian compositions are always structured in the same way: the image field is divided into levels, with the divine couple standing on the topmost level and the *Ganas*, *gandharvas* and other residents of the

mountain beneath them, while *Ravana* has his back to the viewer. Indian artworks tend to portray *Shiva* as the largest figure in the depiction, but in the Virupaksha Temple of Pattadakal, by contrast, the dominant figure is *Ravana*. The same compositional principles, including those relating to *Ravana*, are followed precisely on the pediment of the library in Banteay Srei.

4. *Shiva Natesha*, also known as *Shiva Nataraja* (“*Dancing Shiva*”), can be seen on the main pediment of the eastern gate pavilion of the first enclosure at Banteay Srei. Indian figures of *Shiva Natesha*, especially statues, show him with his right leg stretched out ahead of him, crossing in front of the other leg. In Khmer art, the figures of *Dancing Shiva* differ slightly in their depiction and iconography, resulting in what appears to be a local variation. Here, his raised leg does not cross the other, but both legs are bent and remain more or less parallel with his body. This method of depiction does not precisely match any Indian analogies, but I am of the opinion that the closest parallels for this pose in Indian art are the depictions of *Shiva Natesha*<sup>505</sup> at the Virupaksha Temple of Pattadakal<sup>506</sup> and the Rajasimeshvara Temple of Kanchipuram.<sup>507</sup> The deity visible at the latter sanctuaries is shown with his right leg bent backwards at the knee (*alidha* position), which is quite uncustomary in Indian art history. This pose is therefore not completely identical to the one seen in Banteay Srei and elsewhere in Angkor, in which the leg is bent and raised beside the body. In the Indian examples, *Shiva* holds his left arm in front of him in the *gaja-hasta* (elephant’s trunk) gesture, with his right arm, holding a drum, raised above his head. The arms on the *Shiva* from Banteay Srei are severely damaged, but it can be recognised that he was depicted with his right arm in the *gaja-hasta mudra*, and his left in the *abhaya-hasta* (protective, “no fear”) pose. In Indian depictions of *Shiva*, the *abhaya-hasta* is far more common than the raised arm seen in Pattadakal. His other arms are shown without attributes and making dancing gestures, also on the wall of the Virupaksha Temple. Despite the different arm and leg positions, I contend that the Khmer type of *Dancing Shiva* is a parallel of the Pattadakal type.

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<sup>505</sup> Cummings 2014, 213.

<sup>506</sup> Virupaksha Temple, Pattadakal, in the niche on the eastern inner wall of the south vestibule. Cummings 2014, 212.

<sup>507</sup> The Rajasimeshvara Temple was built in the 8th century in Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu), during the reign of the Pallava monarch, Narasimhavarman II.

5. The most difficult question to resolve in the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei was the equivalent of *Andhakasura*. On the northern lintel of the north sanctuary tower is a bas-relief that is usually interpreted as *Krishna Fighting a Demon*. As reasoned earlier, I agree with Vittorio Roveda that this is actually a depiction of the story of *Bhringi*.<sup>508</sup> This suggests that the figure of *Andhakasura* might also be present in the inner enclosure, which provides a further point of connection with the iconographic characteristics of *Pashupata* sanctuaries. At the same time, I am not aware of any other surviving portrayal of this mythological character at any other sanctuary in the Angkor Empire.

6. All the other subject matter that is typically found in *Pashupata* temples can be identified in the inner sanctuary area: the scene of *Arjunakirata* is on the southern lintel of the central sanctuary, the *Duel between Vali and Sugriva* is on its northern lintel, while the *Abduction of Sita* can be seen on its western pediment.

My experiment to use iconographic comparison in order to demonstrate the presence and influence of the *Pashupata* movement in Banteay Srei therefore resulted in more similarities than differences. In terms of their subject matter, the bas-reliefs decorating the inner sanctuary area of Banteay Srei are remarkably similar to those found in *Pashupata* temples in Central India, especially the Virupaksha Temple of Pattadakal, which in itself occupies a special, and in some respects unique, place in the history of Hindu art in India. It must be noted, however, that the figure of *Lakulisha*, the founder of the movement, cannot be recognised anywhere in Banteay Srei. A further problem is the absence of any sanctuaries in Banteay Srei dedicated to *Ganesha* or to *Mahishasura Mardini (Durga)*. They both appear in the bas-reliefs, of course, with *Durga* placed prominently on the first eastern gopura with a view towards the sanctuary, but *Ganesha* is confined to an auxiliary role in a scene focusing on *Shiva* carved on the south library.

Let us return to the supposition put forward by Claude Jacques, already mentioned in the introduction, suggesting that the south sanctuary tower was originally erected in honour of *Durga*. Jacques based his conjecture on the pair of lions guarding the stairs to the tower, animals traditionally associated with the goddess. The fact that the stairway leading to the north sanctuary tower is flanked by *Garuda* guardians, alluding to *Vishnu*, to whom the sanctuary was dedicated, clearly implies that the lion-figures before the south sanctuary were also deliberately chosen. I consider it highly possible that a statue of *Durga*

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<sup>508</sup> Roveda 2008, 171.

once stood in the south sanctuary tower, in accordance with *Pashupata* customs. Another requirement of *Pashupata* temples is to place a statue of *Sarasvati* in one of the sanctuaries within the first enclosure; although none survives at Banteay Srei, the inscription on the wall of the southwestern long building in the second enclosure records that a statue of the goddess was erected during the time of Yajnavaraha.

In summary, the hypothesis of a connection between Banteay Srei and *Pashupata* Shaivism, hitherto based on an epigraphic comparison between the terminology and phraseology of the inscriptions found in Banteay Srei and those used in the written sources related to the *Pashupata* movement, has now been emphatically corroborated by my own iconographic and iconological examinations.

## 18. PARALLELS AMONG OTHER ANGKORIAN TEMPLES FOR THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE NARRATIVE AND ICONIC RELIEFS IN BANTEAY SREI

Thanks to the traditional art historical categorisation of Banteay Srei, based on chronological and stylistic evidence, a list of sanctuaries can be drawn up that were certainly or probably erected around the same time (that is, the time when Banteay Srei was originally founded) and/or in the same style. In earlier chapters of this paper I have attempted to identify possible analogies among other Angkorian monuments for the style and design of attire depicted in the carved artworks of Banteay Srei. During my analysis of the narrative reliefs, I also emphasised the importance of where they are located within the sanctuary complex. Below I examine the extent to which the subject matter in the narrative and iconic reliefs of Banteay Srei conforms with or differs from that seen in other monuments constructed in the same period.

A thematic comparison of the depictions in the narrative and iconic reliefs resulted in countless parallels with other Angkorian sanctuaries from the tenth century or later, but this raised some complex questions concerning chronological order. I have summarised my findings in a table (below), with the locations of the depictions within Banteay Srei indicated precisely, while only the names of the other sites are given.

Themes depicted in the narrative and iconic reliefs of Banteay Srei that also appear in other sanctuaries.

Those written in purple indicate subject matter popular with the *Pashupata* movement.

Banteay Srei	Pediment subject	Lintel subject	10th century	11th century	12th century	13th century
Central sanctuary, South		Arjunakirata		Preah Vihear, Baphuon, Banteay Ampil	Angkor Wat, Thomannon	Preah Khan, Bayon
Central sanctuary, South	Yama		East Mebon			
Central sanctuary, West		Abduction of Sita			Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre, Phimai, Phnom Rung	
Central sanctuary, West	Varuna		East Mebon			
Central sanctuary, North		Duel between Vali and Sugriva		Baphuon	Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre, Chau Say Tevoda, Phnom Rung	Preah Khan, Preah Pitu
Central sanctuary, North	Kubera		East Mebon		Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre	
North		Narasimha kills	Koh Ker: Prasat			

sanctuary, East		Hiranyakashipu	Thom, Wat Enkosei, Pre Rup, East Mebon			
North sanctuary, East	Indra		Koh Ker: Prasat Thom, East Mebon, Lok Nan (Pre Rup), Prei Monti,	Wat Phu, Baphuon, Baksei Chamkrong, Muang Tam, Kamphaeng Yai, Bat Chum, Ban Phluang	Angkor Wat, Puey Noi	Bayon, Banteay Thom, Angkor Thom gates
North sanctuary, South		Duel between Bhringi and Shiva				
North sanctuary, South	Yama		East Mebon		Angkor Wat, Banteay Ampil	
North sanctuary, West		Garudavahana	Koh Ker: Prasat Thom, Prasat Kravan	Thomannon	Phimai, Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre	
North sanctuary, West	Varuna		East Mebon		Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre, Banteay Ampil	
North sanctuary, North		Bhima cuts Dushasana in Two		Baphuon, Wat Phu	Phnom Rung, Angkor Wat	
North sanctuary, North	Kubera		East Mebon			
South sanctuary, East	Umamaheshvara		As a statue, in the 1st western gopura, Banteay Srei	Phnom Chisor, Preah Vihear, Muang Tam, Wat Ek, Wat Phu, Kbal Spean	Chau Say Tevoda, Kampeang Noi	Bayon
South sanctuary, East	Indra		East Mebon, Lok Nan (Pre Rup), Prei Monti			
South sanctuary, South	Yama		East Mebon			
South sanctuary, South	Yama		East Mebon			
South sanctuary, West	Varuna		East Mebon			
South sanctuary, West	Varuna		East Mebon			
South sanctuary, North	Kubera		East Mebon			
South sanctuary, North	Kubera		East Mebon			
South library, East	Ravananugraha- murti			Chau Say Vibol	Angkor Wat, Thomannon	Bayon
South library, East		Annapurna(?) goddess figure	?	?		
South library, West	Shiva burns Kama to a cinder				Angkor Wat	Preah Khan, Bayon, Banteay Chmar
South library, West		Yama	East Mebon			
North library, East	Burning of the Khandava Forest		-	-	-	-
North library, East		Indra	East Mebon, Lok Nan (Pre Rup), Prei Monti			



North library, West	Krishna Kills Kansa				Angkor Wat, Phimai, Thomannon	
North library, West	Part of scene where Krishna kills Kansa: <i>Krishna slays the Elephant Kunalayapida</i>		? Koh Ker: Prasat Thom <sup>509</sup>	Baphuon	Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre	Banteay Kdei
1st eastern gopura, East	<i>Shiva Nataraja</i>			Phnom Chisor, Wat Baset, Preah Vihear, Narai Jaeng Waeng, Kamphaeng Yai	Angkor Wat, Phimai, Phnom Rung, Beng Mealea, Banteay Samre, Sikhoraphum	Bayon, Preah Khan, Preah Pithu "U"
1st eastern gopura, East		Krishna fighting a lion and an elephant			Phimai	
1st eastern gopura, West	<i>Mahishasura Mardani</i>				Banteay Samre, Sikhoraphum, Bakong sanctuary tower	Preah Khan
1st eastern gopura, West	Vishnu Hayagriva					
2nd eastern gopura, East	Indra		East Mebon, Lok Nan (Pre Rup), Prei Monti			
2nd eastern gopura, East, inner	<i>Gajalakshmi</i>		East Mebon	Kamphaeng Yai	Puey Noi	
2nd eastern gopura, West	Varuna?		East Mebon			
2nd western gopura, East	<i>Duel between Vali and Sugriva</i>			Baphuon	Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre, Chau Say Tevoda, Phnom Rung	Preah Khan, Preah Pithu "U"
3rd eastern gopura	Abduction of Tilottama			Baphuon, Tuol Don Srei?	Thomannon, Angkor Wat (3rd enclosure, on a pilaster)	
3rd eastern gopura	Bhima kills Duryodhana					
4th enclosure, southern building, North	Umamaheshvara		As a statue, in the 1st western gopura, Banteay Srei	Phnom Chisor, Preah Vihear, Muang Tam, Wat Ek, Wat Phu, Kbal Spean	Chau Say Tevoda, Kampeang Noi	Bayon
4th enclosure, northern building, South	Narasimha kills Hiranyakashipu		Wat Enkosei, Pre Rup, East Mebon			
4th eastern gopura	Indra		East Mebon, Lok Nan (Pre Rup), Prei Monti			
4th eastern gopura	Varuna		East Mebon			

The thematic comparison between the bas-reliefs of Banteay Srei and those found at contemporary or later sanctuaries shows that, apart from the *dikpalas* and one of the avatars of *Vishnu* (*Narasimha*), the figures and the mythological episodes depicted in

<sup>509</sup> On the western lintel of the third eastern gopura of Prasat Thom, in Koh Ker, between the two attacking male figures can be seen the shape of an elephant, although the central section of the bas-relief is severely damaged. I contend that, despite the fact that the elephant is under assault from two figures, not only from *Krishna*, this scene depicts the story of *Krishna Killing the Elephant Kunalayapida*. The figure on the left is waving his arm in the air holding an object that I believe to be the tusk torn from the elephant.

Banteay Srei only appear elsewhere in Angkorian art in the eleventh century or even later, and do not become typical until the thirteenth century. The stories visible on the lintels of the central sanctuary tower at Banteay Srei are characteristic of Angkor between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. This means that the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei were either exceptionally early depictions of this kind, or were made later than the tenth century.

The figures of the *dikpalas* on the south tower were common in the tenth century, whereas *Umamaheshvara* was not generally depicted until the eleventh century.

The subject matter seen in the bas-reliefs of the north sanctuary do not fit so neatly in the overall picture. The figure of *Narasimha* features only on tenth-century temples, whereas the *Duel between Bhima and Duryodhana* is found in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The story of *Bhringi and Shiva* is not, to the best of my knowledge, depicted on any other Angkorian building. In sum, however, it can be stated that – based solely on the thematic compositions – the north sanctuary tower, with its *Vishnu*-related narrative, more or less belongs among the other Angkorian sanctuaries erected in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, while the south sanctuary tower is distinctly tenth-century, due to its *dikpalas*. The central sanctuary tower, meanwhile, is decorated with imagery that was otherwise not typically found until the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The pediments of the two library buildings bear narratives whose earliest parallels are from the eleventh century, but which become more widespread in the twelfth century. The depiction of the *Burning of Khandava Forest*, meanwhile, is completely unique in Angkor.

The subject matter of the bas-reliefs on the gate structures also has parallels on buildings from a range of different centuries. Whereas the eastern gopuras of the second and fourth enclosures bear thematic features that are typical of the tenth century, the pediments of the first and third eastern gopuras, and the second western gopura, depict themes that are more commonly found in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The depiction of the *Duel between Bhima and Duryodhana* on one of the pediments of the third eastern gopura is not echoed on any other Angkorian sanctuary. The main (first eastern) gate pavilion is decorated with subjects usually associated with buildings from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, although the first western gopura is presumed to have been built in the tenth century. The subjects portrayed in the pediments of the two “perpendicular” long buildings facing each other in the fourth enclosure are also interesting, when considered together: the image of *Umamaheshvara* on the southern building is very rare in the tenth century, although it became popular between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries; visible

on the opposite side of the approach path, meanwhile, the scene of *Narasimha* is only seen on temples from the tenth century (including the north sanctuary tower at Banteay Srei), although it must be added that the style and composition of the portrayal of the scene on the northern long building is quite different from any other depiction of the same subject. All in all, an analysis of the subject matter at Banteay Srei adds extra weight to the possibility that the complex was later rebuilt or extended, perhaps even on multiple occasions. The bas-reliefs on the second western and third eastern gopuras are, moreover, compositionally different from all the other depictions, a fact which deserves particular attention, because the walls of the third eastern gopura contain the inscriptions that feature the contentious dates, which support the idea that the complex was built later than is presently assumed.

The thematic comparison of the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei with the carvings at other Angkorian sanctuaries was intended to reveal both the differences and the parallels. Even when the first excavations were carried out at Banteay Srei in the 1930s, it was clear that certain bas-reliefs, pediments and lintels had, as a result of centuries of neglect, been lost or destroyed, a phenomenon repeated at every other ruined monument in Angkor. This means that a full thematic reconstruction is almost impossible. Nevertheless, I believe that there is justification in examining the narrative episodes commonly portrayed in temples from the tenth century or later, which are *absent* from Banteay Srei.

In the table below I summarise the subjects which are not visible at Banteay Srei, but which are commonly depicted at other temples from the same period or later:

Subject	10th century	11th century	12th century	13th century
Krishna Defeats the Naga Kaliya (Bhagavata Purana X, 16)	Koh Ker	Muang Tam, Phnom Rung, Phnom Chisor, Preah Vihear, Baphuon, Wat Phu, Wat Ek, Chau Say Vibol	Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre, Phimai	Mangalartha, Preah Khan
Krishna Lifts Mount Govardhana	Wat Enkosei	Muang Tam, Phnom Rung, Preah Vihear, Phnom Chisor, Ban Phluang, Kamphaeng Yai	Banteay Ampil, Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre, Thomannon, Bakong sanctuary tower	Bayon, Mangalartha, Preah Khan, Krol Ko, Preah Pithu building "U"
Krishna Kills the Horse Demon Keshin	Bakong	Baphuon, Sdok Kok Thom	Phimai, Beng Mealea, Banteay Samre, Angkor Wat	Bayon
Churning of the Ocean of Milk	Wat Enkosei	Preah Vihear, Wat Phu, Phnom Chisor, Wat Ek, Prasat Steung, Chau Say Vibol	Beng Mealea, Phimai, Angkor Wat, Thomannon, Chau Say Tevoda, Banteay Samre	Bayon, Banteay Chmar, Ta Som, Preah Pithu buildings "T" and "U", Mangalartha, Tonle Bati
Birth of Brahma	Muang Khaek	K'bal Spean, Preah Vihear, Chau Say Vibol, Narai Yaeng Waeng, Sdok Kok Thom, Phnom Chisor, Prasat Steung	Angkor Wat, Puey Noi	Bayon
Death of Ravana	Pre Rup	Wat Phu	Angkor Wat, Banteay Samre	Preah Khan, Banteay Chmar

Meeting of Hanuman and Sita		Baphuon, Wat Ek, Kampaeng Yai, Phnom Rung		Preah Khan
Rama and Lakshmana Bound by the Arrows of the Naga Indrajit		Baphuon, Phnom Rung	Angkor Wat, Phimai, Bakong sanctuary tower	

The table clearly shows that themes dealing with *Krishna* as a young man appear in Angkor in the tenth century and become extremely common on the walls of Angkorian temples in the eleventh century, remaining so for the next two centuries. Certain scenes from *Ramayana*, such as the *Meeting of Hanuman and Sita* and the *Death of Ravana*, occur frequently between the tenth and thirteenth centuries. Banteay Srei also lacks two stories that were common by the tenth century: the *Churning of the Ocean of Milk* and the *Birth of Brahma*, that is, *Vishnu Lying on the Serpent Ananta*. Three stories – *Krishna Defeating the Naga Kaliya*, *Krishna Lifting Mount Govardhana* and the *Birth of Brahma* – seem to have been depicted on the majority of buildings erected in the eleventh century. There are three possible explanations why no traces of these common narratives can be found at Banteay Srei:

- 1) they were removed/replaced during a later reconstruction or a change in the iconographic programme;
- 2) they had fallen victim to neglect by the time the site was rediscovered in the twentieth century;
- 3) they were never depicted at the temple complex in the first place.

The “missing” depictions are all mythological stories connected with *Vishnu*. The themes depicted in the bas-reliefs presently visible on the lintels and pediments consist of twice as many Vaishnava as Shaiva stories. Interestingly, then, even without the “missing” narratives, the majority of the compositions depict Vaishnava episodes – although this does not make Banteay Srei different from other sanctuaries erected in honour of *Shiva* that our comparisons are based on. However, the non-Vaishnava scenes depict the exact episodes from the mythology of *Shiva* which typically occur in Indian sanctuaries erected by followers of the *Pashupata* movement. The *Shiva*-centred themes of the bas-reliefs on the pediments of the south library and the first eastern gopura, as discussed in chapter 17 of this paper, suggest the possibility of a close link with *Pashupata* Shaivism. In the preceding chapter I showed that virtually all of the narrative themes most commonly depicted in *Pashupata* temples are present in Banteay Srei. These are located on the south library, the first eastern gopura and the central sanctuary tower, together with one subject – the *Duel between Vali and Sugriva* – that is visible in two places: on the second western

gopura and on the north sanctuary tower. Furthermore, as also indicated earlier, the way in which the main and auxiliary characters are portrayed, and the attire they are dressed in, down to the tiniest details, can be recognised in several respects in the decorations of Indian *Pashupata* sanctuaries.

## 19. CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING THE CONSTRUCTION OF BANTEAY SREI

1. In order to gain an overview of where the bas-reliefs related to the *Pashupata* narrative programme are located within Banteay Srei, I included the data in a map (*map 5*). The thematic comparative analysis produced an interesting finding.

Based on the map, it appears as though the buildings can be separated into two distinct groups.

Judging from their bas-reliefs, whose subject matter is characteristic of the tenth century, the north and south sanctuary tower can be assumed to be contemporaneous with each other (although it is true that they also bear depictions that are typical of other periods) and with the mandapa, the second and fourth eastern gopuras, and the first western gopura. The latter housed the double statue of *Umamaheshvara*, whose “traditional” clothing reinforced the possibility of a close link with the capital in Pre Rup.<sup>510</sup> In terms of form, the lintels here mostly fall into the first and second groups.<sup>511</sup> All of the pediments, without exception, can be classified into group 4. An analysis of the bas-reliefs confirms the findings of earlier research, based on the Sanskrit inscriptions<sup>512</sup> found on the doorposts of the two sanctuary towers, dating them to the tenth century: although the inscriptions do not feature any years, the names of the founders lead to this conclusion. All the types of attire in my catalogue that are typically found in the bas-reliefs can be identified on the sanctuary towers and gopuras, including the “new” style of male and female sampot, the distinctive Banteay Srei chignon, and the “typical” ear-rings. Assuming that the buildings listed at the head of this paragraph were indeed constructed in the tenth century, the differences in the types of attire worn by the figures in the bas-reliefs should be interpreted not as features with which to determine the age of the depictions, but as a way of conveying a meaning of some kind (presumably, as detailed in earlier chapters, differences in role and/or rank).

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<sup>510</sup> According to the inscription in the sanctuary, the founding guru placed the group of statues there in the tenth century.

<sup>511</sup> Type 6 on the mandapa, type 7 on the eastern side of the second eastern gopura.

<sup>512</sup> K573 and K574.

The characteristics of the eleventh and twelfth centuries can be discerned in the subject matter of the bas-reliefs on the central sanctuary tower, the two libraries, the first eastern gopura, the third eastern gopura and the second western gopura. These bas-reliefs exhibit the greatest difference between the art of Banteay Srei and works found in the rest of Angkor, from the point of view of the method of depiction. Certain features found here – the compositional type of the narrative reliefs (in the scenes of *Vali and Sugriva*, *Tilottama*, and *Bhima*), the “new” type of female costume (*Tilottama*, *Mahishasura Mardani*), and the narrative device of portraying the same character multiple times in the same composition (*Vali and Sugriva*, *Krishna and Kansa*, *Arjunakirata*) – are all without precedent and almost without parallel. The presence of *Karaikkalammai* on the eastern side also points to a later date.

It can be clearly seen that the themes generally depicted in *Pashupata* sanctuaries were not typically found in Angkor in the tenth century, but rather appeared in temple complexes built in the eleventh and – even more so – the twelfth centuries. Two of the themes are, to the best of my knowledge, included only in Banteay Srei and nowhere else in Angkor. In this sense, my findings contradict the conclusion drawn from epigraphic analysis, namely that the influence of the *Pashupata* movement could be felt in modern-day Cambodia by the tenth century.<sup>513</sup>

2. Let us now turn to the locations of the lintels and pediments as grouped according to my classification:

Of the two buildings in the fourth enclosure that have bas-reliefs on their lintels, the southern building has subject matter from the eleventh century. The story of *Narasimha* on the pediment of the northern building, standing opposite, is typical of the tenth century, but its artistic form does not resemble any other bas-relief made in the same century. It is completely different from the other depiction of the same story at Banteay Srei, which decorates a lintel on the north sanctuary tower, and which is, in turn, almost identical to three counterparts at other tenth-century sanctuaries (Wat Enkosei, Pre Rup, East Mebon). The discrepancy could simply be due to the two versions of the same story at Banteay Srei being made by different sculptors, but I consider it far more likely that they were made at different times, with the one on the pediment in the fourth enclosure originating from a date later than the tenth century, when the others were produced. The structure of the

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<sup>513</sup> See Map 5.

composition on the pediment is the same as that of the bas-relief of *Umamaheshvara* on the southern building in the fourth enclosure. The pairs of open-mouthed monster heads at the extremities of both pediments are identical.<sup>514</sup> I therefore date these two buildings to the same time, and suggest that they – or at least their pediments – were created in the eleventh or twelfth century.

The western lintel and pediment of the third eastern gopura can be dated thematically to the tenth century, and in terms of style they are similar to those on the sanctuary towers. There is no surviving lintel on the eastern side, but the pediment depicting the *Abduction of Tilottama* is presumably a relic from a later period, and is grouped together with the depictions on the second western gopura of the duels between *Vali and Sugriva* and *Bhima and Duryodhana* (group 3). Of all the gopuras, this is the one whose date of construction is disputed, and my contention is that it was later reconstructed, while the decorated elements on the western end were retained.

The lintel and pediment of the second eastern gopura can be dated thematically to the tenth century, and on the basis of style they are accorded their own category (group 7).

The lintels on the long buildings in the second enclosure bear *dikpala* figures, which is in line with the conventions of the tenth century. At the same time, however, the carved compositions are not the same as those seen in the side sanctuaries, and in terms of their style and their motifs, they more closely resemble the lintels on the library buildings (group 4), although I have categorised them separately (group 5). The pediments have only floral ornamentation (group 5). The function of these buildings is not precisely known. The inscription on the doorpost of the south-eastern building does not contain a date, but the name of the tenth-century founder is clearly legible upon it.<sup>515</sup> The text attests that Yajnavaraha not only erected a statue of the goddess *Vagisvari*, but also two of *Vidyaguru*. The practice of erecting statues to the goddess and to one's teacher is regarded – by scientific consensus – as a strong indicator of the presence of “guru worship”, which also suggests the influence of *Pashupata* Shaivism.

The subjects depicted on the pediments of the first eastern gopura are typical of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, with one of them, *Shiva Nataraja*, a common theme in *Pashupata* sanctuaries. The pediments constitute a group of their own (group 2), as do the two lintels. Based on my thematic analysis, I hypothesise that this building was not part of the original complex but a later addition.

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<sup>514</sup> These two pediments are also treated as a pair by Martin Polkinghorne is. Polkinghorne 2007b, 221.

<sup>515</sup> K575.



The subject matter depicted on the library buildings consists of themes that are either exclusive to Banteay Srei or typical of sanctuaries built in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The same is true for the second western gopura. All three buildings have lintels of the same style. As already presented in this paper, the most distinctive narrative reliefs at Banteay Srei, of a kind found only here, can be seen on these buildings. The four pediments of the two libraries constitute group 1. The pediment type of the second western gopura is joined in a group by the pediment of the third eastern gopura featuring the *Abduction of Tilottama*; from both the stylistic and the thematic perspective, these can all be assumed to be creations from a later period than the tenth century.

The sanctuary towers present a picture that is varied from the perspective of subject matter. As already detailed, the themes depicted on the side sanctuaries are largely associated with the tenth century, but there are some that are more typical of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and what is more, these are the subjects that are characteristic of *Pashupata* temples. The subjects on all three sides of the central sanctuary fall into the latter category. It is conceivable, therefore, that the central sanctuary was built earlier than the two side sanctuaries. However, this is contradicted by the stylistic analysis: the pediments of all three sanctuaries belong to group 4, whereas the lintels are all in group 1, together with the inner lintels of the mandapa.

Finally here, we must mention the first western gopura, which was probably originally a gate building, later sealed in and converted to serve as a sanctuary. No pediment has survived, but the lintels can be dated thematically to the tenth century, while they constitute an independent stylistic category (group 2). This building is presumed to have been part of the original, tenth-century construction.

3. The problem of dating Banteay Srei has occupied scholars since research into the site began, not only because of the contradictions of the epigraphic data, but also due to the unusually “crowded” arrangement of the building complex. The sense of “overcrowding” can be observed in the first and second enclosures. There is uncommonly little space, on the one hand, between the libraries, the mandapa and the first eastern gopura, and on the other hand, between the long buildings on the eastern side and the second eastern gopura. When it comes to the first and second western gopuras, meanwhile, the distance between them is astonishingly, almost disproportionately small. Basing our information on the separation of the buildings into two groups constructed at different times, as conjectured above, and additionally relying on the proportions of the floor plan, it is possible to

“reconstruct” how the sanctuary complex might have been arranged when it was first built, resulting in a more “well-proportioned” situation than the one apparent today.

I propose that the two gate pavilions of the first, inner enclosure, as the complex was originally designed, are the present-day first western gopura and second eastern gopura; in this scenario, today’s first eastern gopura did not yet exist (map 8, red line), but was built later, changing the position of the first enclosure wall, making the inner enclosure narrower. The second western gopura was another later addition, perhaps – as suggested by the bas-reliefs – contemporaneously with the library buildings. This hypothesis is supported by an analysis of the subject matter and the motifs, although the assumption that construction took place in two stages is, of course, accompanied by countless contradictions, both with regard to the floor plan and in terms of the content of the bas-reliefs. If the inner sanctuary wall originally extended as far as today’s second eastern gopura, then the eastern long buildings would have been in the first enclosure, with the western long buildings in the second. All four long buildings were presumably similar in appearance when they were constructed, although when judged alongside the overall east-west axis of the entire sanctuary complex, they are not arranged in perfect symmetry, so it is also possible that they were built at different stages. The southwestern building contains the inscription that refers to the founding Guru erecting statues.<sup>516</sup>

The most problematic issue, however, concerns the connection with the *Pashupata* movement. Based on the written sources, it was assumed that in the mid-tenth century, when Yajnavaraha embarked on constructing this sanctuary, the influence of *Pashupata* Shaivism was a strong presence in the high priest’s circles. Apart from the written evidence, there are also visual traces of this influence at Banteay Srei, as detailed earlier in the paper. However, as we have already seen, the details that prove the hypothetical *Pashupata* influence, and the buildings on which they can be seen, were also elements added to the temple complex during the presumed second period of construction (eleventh and twelfth centuries). In chapter 18 of this paper, I also demonstrated that the subject matter of these bas-reliefs is more typical of later periods in Angkorian art history. The method of depiction is also different from those visible on other buildings within the compound, albeit only in certain details: one type of male clothing, the *type 2 sampot with hem*, seems to feature only in these bas-reliefs. On the other hand, the comparative analysis focusing on the localisation of the different elements of the depicted attire indicated that

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<sup>516</sup> K575.

there is no apparent chronological discrepancy (certainly not one of several centuries) between the costumes and adornments that can be seen in the sculptures at Banteay Srei.

The dated written sources embrace a period in the history of Banteay Srei lasting several centuries, from 967 to 1306 CE. During such a long period, it would be only natural for changes to take place in the buildings or in the floor plan, as well as in the statues housed at the complex. It is therefore possible that there was a second stage of construction, during which some new buildings were fitted inside the sanctuary area, whose decorations were designed in accordance with the iconographic regulations of the *Pashupata* movement.

Despite the existence of some spectacular differences in certain compositional solutions, it can be said that the carvings decorating the sanctuary in general, including the depictions of the attire, are relatively unified, with a style that is characteristically different from those found in the other monuments, from which we can quite safely assume the existence of a stone-carving workshop or school of art in Banteay Srei, which may have existed for a very long time. There is another possibility that cannot be excluded, namely that the sanctuary was built not in two separate stages, but so slowly, and over such a long period, that modifications were made, in the meantime, to some of the decorations or even to the arrangement of the floor plan.

The most precise survey ever undertaken of the urbanised regions, engineering works and settlements in the Angkor region is currently being carried out using the latest technologies as part of a project entitled the *Cambodian Archaeological Lidar Initiative*.<sup>517</sup> With the help of future research findings, we hope to be able to estimate the size of the workforce engaged in constructing the temple, and the circumstances in which they lived, from which we can calculate how much time and how many workers would have been required to built the given sanctuary. The results of the LIDAR survey are expected to shine substantial new light on our knowledge about the history of Angkor in general, and about the different temples in the region, including Banteay Srei.

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<sup>517</sup> Official homepage of the research initiative: <http://angkorlidar.org>

## 20. SUMMARY

The unique place that the complex of buildings at Banteay Srei occupies among the monuments of Angkor and within the region's chronological order, the incomparable wealth of detail in the ornamentations carved at the site, and the exceptional subject matter of their bas-reliefs have, for a century now, provided researchers of history, epigraphy, the history of religion and art history with ever more intriguing questions.

This paper presents the results of a comprehensive examination of the unique features of the predominantly figural bas-reliefs found at the monument, carried out using a research method concentrating on the themes of the carvings and on the attire depicted in them, much of which is to be regarded as without precedent. The backbone of the research was provided by a database systemising the attire visible in the figural bas-reliefs, derived mostly from on-site research and documentation. In addition to surveying the depictions still present at Banteay Srei, I also visited relevant collections and documentation centres in Cambodia and elsewhere, in order to study contemporaneous or analogous monuments and their related archive information. These sources together created an opportunity for me to present my findings not only in connection with my analysis of the attire depicted at Banteay Srei, but also with regard to more general questions concerning the site.

My paper was intended to address four main issues pertaining to certain questions that have arisen in recent times:

1. The variety of attire seen in the bas-reliefs, which is unprecedented in the early period of Angkorian art, and the reasons explaining this variety;
2. The place occupied by Banteay Srei in the chronological order of artistic styles, and its comparability with other sites dated to the same period;
3. The contradictions connected to the date when Banteay Srei is believed to have been constructed, and the uncertainties surrounding its ground plan;
4. The hypothetical influence on Banteay Srei of *Pashupata* Shaivism, hitherto based only on epigraphic observations.

1. In line with the first objective of my paper, I sought an explanation for the presence of such noticeably differing forms of attire in Banteay Srei. The database compiled in order to carry out an analytical examination contains – based on my on-site

observations and their documentation – all details related to the clothing and jewellery, attributes and poses of the figures depicted. Creating the catalogue enabled me to determine the frequency of the individual costumes, items of jewellery, hairstyles and head-dresses, and to examine where they are located within the sanctuary. My analysis not only resulted in statistical data, but also facilitated an assessment of the connections between the different items of attire and the “rank” of the characters wearing them within the mythological hierarchy, that is, the way in which the attire “designates rank”.

Adapting the system devised by Jean Boisselier, I sorted the male attire into five types, replacing the previous three categories. I contend that when several different types are visible within the same composition, the difference can be attributed to the need to designate different rank. The extremely special *type 3 male sampot*, which is typical only of Banteay Srei, shares parallels with certain pre-Angkorian sampots, but I could find no trace of anything similar on the walls of later buildings. The loincloth, categorised in this paper as *type 4*, is depicted on certain specific characters visible in the bas-reliefs, following the mythological text extremely consistently, in my opinion. A *sampot* that is completely different from all the others can be seen on a statue of *Vishnu* and a statue of a *dvarapala*, both recovered from Banteay Srei. I categorised this sampot as *type 5*; tenth-century parallels for this type can be found in public collections today.

I classified female attire into two types. I examined their differences in comparison with the rules set forth in the *Vastu Shastra*, and searched for parallels in both earlier and later monuments. From the results of the database, I found that the *type 2 female sampot*, which is typical only of Banteay Srei, is worn only by the goddess *Durga*, by the *apsara Tilottama*, and by *devatas*, of lower rank in the hierarchy. Apart from the role of this *sampot* as a designator of rank, it is perhaps reasonable also to argue that this female *sampot* reflects the actual fashion at the time the bas-reliefs were made, while following the Indian regulations pertaining to – among others – the goddess *Durga*. It is easy to imagine that, while the iconographic rules in force (and in the public consciousness) at the time dictated that goddesses be dressed in the – by then – “classical”, traditional pleated *sampot*, the *devatas* could be depicted with less adherence to the regulations, so either the sculptors were at liberty to shape their appearance as they wished, or perhaps the scholar priests who provided the spiritual background for the work instructed the artists to dress these characters in a more “secular” style.

There are a few types of head-dress, hairstyle and jewellery visible at Banteay Srei which differ from those seen on earlier monuments. Moreover, the existence of obvious

differences between such features is a new phenomenon, compared with previous periods in Khmer art history. The discrepancies between the types of jewellery and other adornments depicted within a sanctuary, or even within a single composition, are – as with the clothing – demonstrably used as a means of signifying rank or mythological role.

2. In my paper I have summarised the scientific research work undertaken at Banteay Srei since the first half of the twentieth century, as well as the findings that pertain to the artistic style of Banteay Srei. I have outlined why I consider it necessary to clarify the system of style categories previously established by French researchers on a linear, chronological basis, while recognising that stylistic categorisation is indispensable if one is to systemise large quantities of architectural and art historical relics, and to conduct a comparative analysis. Beginning in the 1920s, this system – referred to by Bernard-Philippe Groslier as a “*skeleton*”<sup>518</sup> – was devised by Stern, Parmentier, Coral-Rémusat and their colleagues, and ever since then, the scientific community has striven to place every relic in the right place. During my examination, I have also used the scientifically accepted stylistic and chronological system as the basis for comparing buildings with one another. My own investigations, comparing certain elements of artistic composition and the items of attire depicted, do indeed support the existence of a Banteay Srei style category, but they do not confirm its supposed place within the accepted chronological system based on stylistic evolution. Rather, they seem to corroborate the theory put forward by Martin Polkinghorne, which is that each style should be recognised as the outcome of a collaborative effort between the founder/commissioner, with his own programme and intent, the spiritual collaborators, and the artistic schools, all of whom can be associated with a particular sanctuary, temple complex or region.

The artistic traditions of these schools could be passed on from one to the other, but this did not necessarily take place continuously. At the same time, since the sanctuaries under analysis were built following the Hindu way of thinking, that is, in accordance with Indian iconographic rules, then they can all be compared with each other, and with parallels and analogies in India. Such analyses cannot, of course, ignore the chronological framework, which served as the starting point for my comparisons between the styles of attire depicted at the different sanctuaries.

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<sup>518</sup> Groslier 1958, 108.

During the comparative analysis of costumes, I determined similarities, and even complete matches, between certain items of attire depicted at Banteay Srei and artworks that are proven to be from the tenth century. In the case of other garments, such as the unprecedented form of the *type 2 male sampot*, I was able to identify parallels in the carvings of monuments erected later, in the eleventh century. Besides these, it also became clear during my analysis that certain types of attire visible on the walls of Banteay Srei are unique, found exclusively here. The figures of the door guardians and a few characters in the narrative reliefs are wearing items whose individual elements can, sometimes, be seen on carvings from other sanctuaries, but the ensembles of garments and other adornments found at Banteay Srei are – to the best of my knowledge – completely without parallel. During my comparison between the items of attire depicted at Banteay Srei and those visible at sanctuaries erected at the same time or regarded as precedents according to Boisselier's system, I came across several instances that contradict the linear or chronologically based theory of art historical evolution, which has hitherto been widely accepted. In my paper I prove that the stylistic tradition of attire depicted on buildings classified within the Pre Rup period, immediately preceding that of Banteay Srei, cannot have been inherited from the Koh Ker period that precedes it chronologically. Precedents for the costumes depicted in Pre Rup can be demonstrably identified among monuments from the Bakheng period, although this cannot be described as a unified style, because there are clear differences when comparing the female attire portrayed in the different sanctuaries. I therefore determine that the Pre Rup attire follows not the tradition of Koh Ker, but that of Bakheng, based in particular on the similarities observed in the sanctuary of Phnom Bok. The chronological order, therefore, cannot be demonstrated in the style of costumes.

In my opinion, a thorough examination of the types of attire shows that the theory of consecutive and continuously developing artistic styles in Angkor needs to be reassessed, and replaced with a system of styles that depends primarily on workshops or on artistic schools.

During my analysis of the bas-reliefs, I have postulated that the unique male and female clothing and hairstyle found only in Banteay Srei may be representative of the typical fashion at the time the sanctuary was built – at least typical in the region where the carvers came from (which could have been India or another region). Many of the elements, such as the female hairstyle (*keshabandha*) and the looped, bar-shaped and disk-shaped ear-rings, have clear precedents found in India.

3. The date when the temple complex of Banteay Srei was founded is known, for it is recorded in the written sources. We do not, however, have any information concerning how long construction work on the site continued. The year of foundation stated in the inscription almost certainly does not refer to the date when the entire complex of buildings was erected, but more likely indicates when the statue housed in the central sanctuary tower was inaugurated. Further inscriptions that survive on the walls feature dates that are up to several centuries apart from the year of foundation, and the most reasonable answer to the questions that arise during an analysis of the art historical style of the sanctuary is that the complex was later rebuilt or converted. The buildings can be examined in their present condition, but as an embodiment of an iconographic programme, there is justification in wondering if this programme was later amended, perhaps as additional buildings were constructed, or if the change came about as certain existing bas-reliefs and statues were replaced; reconstructing the process by which these changes took place would be extremely difficult using the presently available sources.

The possibility that Banteay Srei was constructed in two or more stages is raised by the epigraphic data, and this is supported by an examination of thematic analogies for the bas-reliefs, in particular the narrative reliefs. In this paper I have presented the results of my thematic analysis of the bas-reliefs, pointing out the similarities and differences between the choice of subject matter at Banteay Srei and that found at other temples erected in the Angkor Empire in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Certain themes that one might otherwise expect to be portrayed seem to be missing from the images at Banteay Srei, while others, in particular those centred on *Shiva*, are found only here, and at no other tenth-century temple. That is to say, the choice of subject matter is not at all typical of those generally found in Angkor in the mid-tenth century.

Assuming that the temple complex was reconstructed at some point – or that changes were made during a long and drawn-out period of construction – I have put forward the hypothesis that what is now known as the second enclosure was originally planned and built as the inner sanctuary area (together with the present-day second eastern and first western gopuras, the latter of which was later converted into a sanctuary), and only later divided by constructing a new enclosure wall and the present-day first eastern gopura, surrounding the innermost group of buildings. Further architectural and targeted archaeological investigations would be needed in order to confirm this hypothesis.



4. I extended by thematic comparison to include the subject matter most typically portrayed in the Indian temples of *Pashupata* Shaivism. I found that almost all of the depictions that typically feature in the narrative programme of *Pashupata* temples are present on the walls of Banteay Srei, even if the original Indian rules governing the appearance of the characters were not necessarily fully adhered to by the sculptors. This therefore confirms the hypothesis, hitherto resting solely on epigraphic analyses, of a link between the founder of the temple (or one of his successors) and the *Pashupata* movement of Shaivism. The decorations found in the inner enclosure at Banteay Srei share thematic parallels with *Pashupata* monuments built in Central India around the same time or earlier. My investigations, however, also revealed a contradiction: the written sources suggest that the influence of the movement was present in the tenth century, when Banteay Srei was founded, yet a thematic comparison with other Angkorian temples leads me to conclude that the *Pashupata* themes depicted at Banteay Srei only became widespread in Angkor in later centuries. It cannot be ruled out, therefore, that the founding priest, Yajnavaraha, and his circle, adjusted the design and construction of the sanctuary in line with the rules of *Pashupata* Shaivism, during a series of changes to the original plan. This is an area of research that I intend to investigate more deeply in future.

In addition to my general findings relating to the four main issues, I have also presented some other results concerning the interpretation of the bas-reliefs at Banteay Srei. During my work, I examined the bas-reliefs and statues also in terms of composition and content, as a result of which I have made the following clarifications in connection with the identity of certain figures and with the choice of subject matter in the narrative reliefs, which first appear in Angkorian art at Banteay Srei:

1. While comparing the narratives of *Pashupata* depictions with those in Banteay Srei, I identified a goddess who was hitherto unidentified. In my opinion, the figure visible on the eastern lintel of the south library is almost certainly *Annapurna*, an avatar of *Parvati* and an important character in the story of *Shiva and Parvati* playing dice.
2. Based on the *Pashupata* analogy, I could confirm the finding of Vittorio Roveda that the northern lintel of the north sanctuary tower depicts *Shiva and Bhringi* and not Krishna and a demon.

3. Basing my conclusion on the assumption that the different forms of attire signify different ranks, I have identified *Krishna's* charioteer in the scene of *Krishna Killing Kansa* on the north library pediment as *Akrura*. In the *Khandava Forest* scene on the other pediment of the same building, I have identified what I believe are two demons or *asuras*, which corroborates Claude Jacques's interpretation of the story depicted in the bas-relief.

4. I have suggested that one of the female figures on the south library pediment depicting *Shiva Burning Kama to a Cinder* is *Kama's* consort, *Rati*, basing my assumption on the details of the story.

5. An important new observation from the same pediment concerns the scene of healing visible in the lower section, which is not mentioned in any of the previous literature. Further research is necessary to explain the scene.

6. Prompted by the epigraphic and historical research being conducted by Claude Jacques into the nature of the library buildings, I argue that the ascetics or *rishis* depicted on the pediments of the south library are not only there because of their connection to the narratives in question, but also – and even more so – because they refer to the building's presumed function as the place for guarding the holy fire.

The database I created, which forms the basis of my research, is an unprecedented attempt to deal with the attire worn by all the figures depicted in an Angkorian sanctuary complex. With the help of this database, I was able to interpret the depictions not only in terms of their formal categorisation, but also with regard to iconography, their position within the architecture and their narrative context. Compiling and analysing the catalogue proved to be a methodologically extremely complex process of examination, which can be developed in several directions in the future, and applied for research into other sanctuaries in Angkor.

In the interests of setting my findings about Banteay Srei in the broader context, I deem it necessary to conduct analyses, following a similar methodology, of the figural bas-reliefs at monuments erected in the eleventh century.

My future objective is to commence this task at Baphuon, by carrying out the on-site survey and documentation of all the mythological figures (presumably numbering in their thousands) that are depicted on the walls of this enormous sanctuary complex, and by comparing the results with my findings so far.

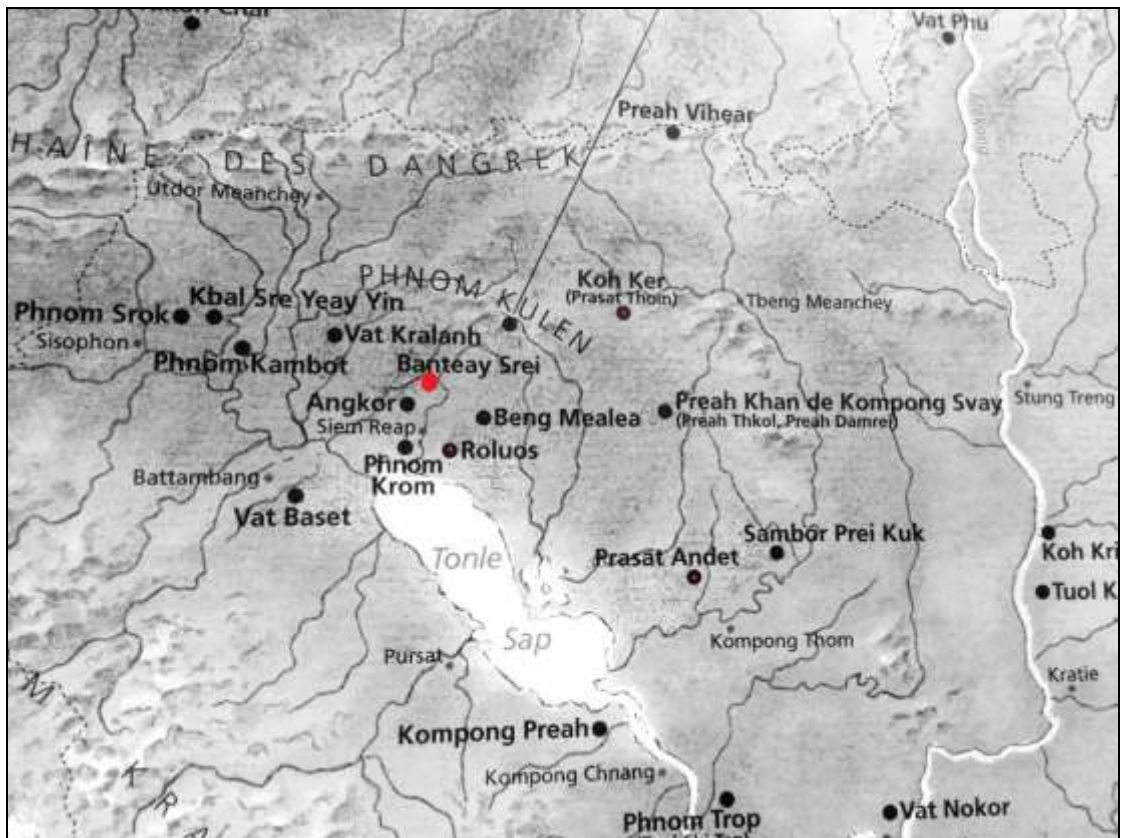
## 21. APPENDIX

### I. Rulers of Angkor and the building erected during their reigns, as determined by Claude Jacques

<b>Ruler</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Monuments that can be dated to the ruler's reign</b>
Jayavarman II	790–835	
Jayavarman III	835–877	Bakong, Prei Monti, Trapeang Phong
Indravarman I	877–c. 886	Preah Ko, Bakong
Yasovarman I	889–c.915	Lolei, Bakheng, Prasat Bei, Thma Bai Kaek, Phnom Krom, Phnom Bok
Harshavarman I	c. 915–923	Baksei Chamkrong, Prasat Kravan
Ishanavarman II	923–c. 928	
Jayavarman IV	c. 928 – c. 941	Koh Ker
Harshavarman II	c. 941–944	
Rajendravarman II	944–968	Pre Rup, East Mebon, Bat Chum, Kutishvara, predecessor of Banteay Kdei, Srah Srang, Baksei Chamkrong
Jayavarman V	968–c.1000	Ta Keo, Wat Enkosei, Banteay Srei
Udayadityavarman I	1001–1002	
Jayaviravarman	1002–1010	North Khleang, continuation of Ta Keo
Suryavarman I	1002–1049	South Khleang, Preah Vihear, Royal Palace, Phimeanakas, Wat Phu,
Udayadityavarman II	1050–1066	Baphuon, West Mebon
Harshavarman III	1066–1080	
Jayavarman VI	1080–c. 1107	Phimai
Dharanindravarman I	1107–1112	
Suryavarman II	1113–c.1150	Angkor Wat, Thomannon, Chao Say Tevoda, Banteay Samre, Phnom Rung, Beng Mealea
Yasovarman II	c. 1150–1165	Beng Mealea, Chao Say Tevoda, Banteay Samre, Bakong
Tribhuvanadityavarman	c.1165–1177	

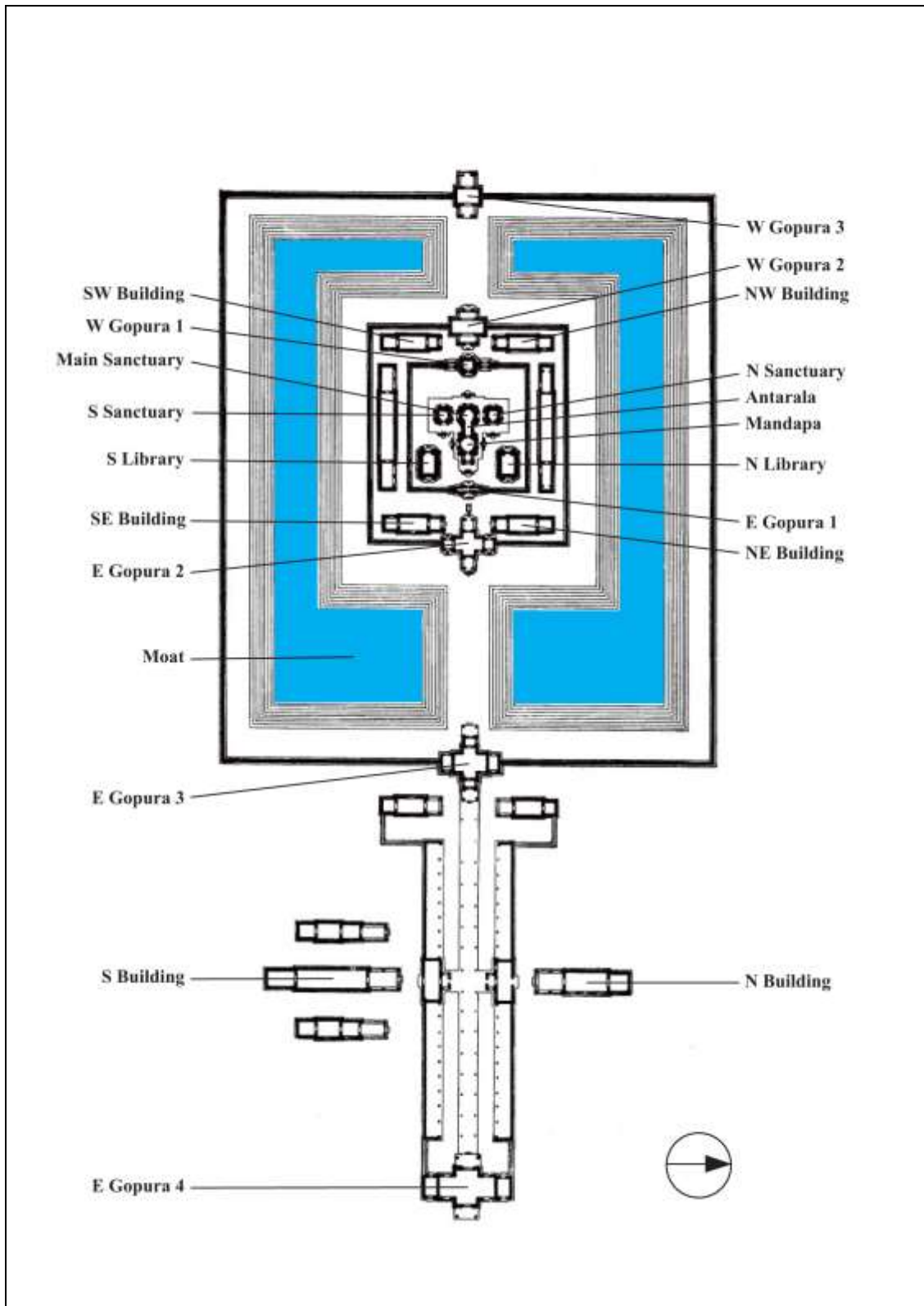
Jayavarman VII	1181–c.1220	Ta Prohm, Preah Khan, Neak Pean, Ta Som, Ta Nei, Banteay Chmar, Angkor Thom, Krol Ko, Ta Prohm Kel
Indravarman II	c.1220–1243	Prasat Suor Prat, Ta Prohm, Banteay Kdei, Ta Som, Ta Nei
Jayavarman VIII	c. 1243–1295	Mangalartha, Bayon, Ta Prohm, Preah Khan, Prasat Chrung-ok, Angkor Wat, Bapuon, Chao Say Tevoda, Banteay Samre, Beng Mealea, Preah Pithu, Royal Palace
Srindravarman	1295–1307	Ta Prohm, Preah Pithu, Preah Palilay
Srindrajayavarman	1307–1327	
Jayavarman Paramesvara	1327–	

## II. Maps of Cambodia and Siem Reap Province

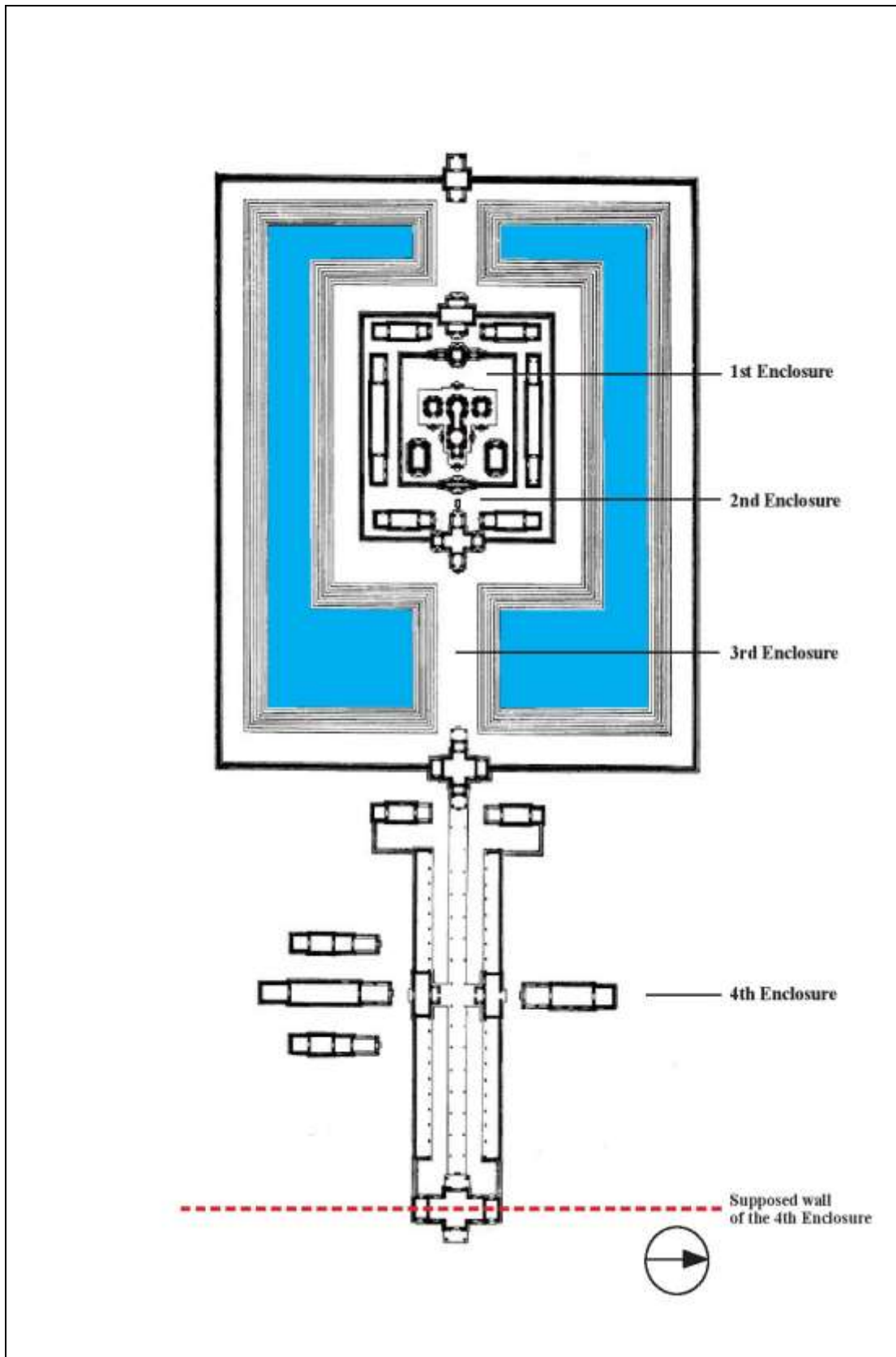


### III. Maps of Banteay Srei

#### 1. Plan of Banteay Srei

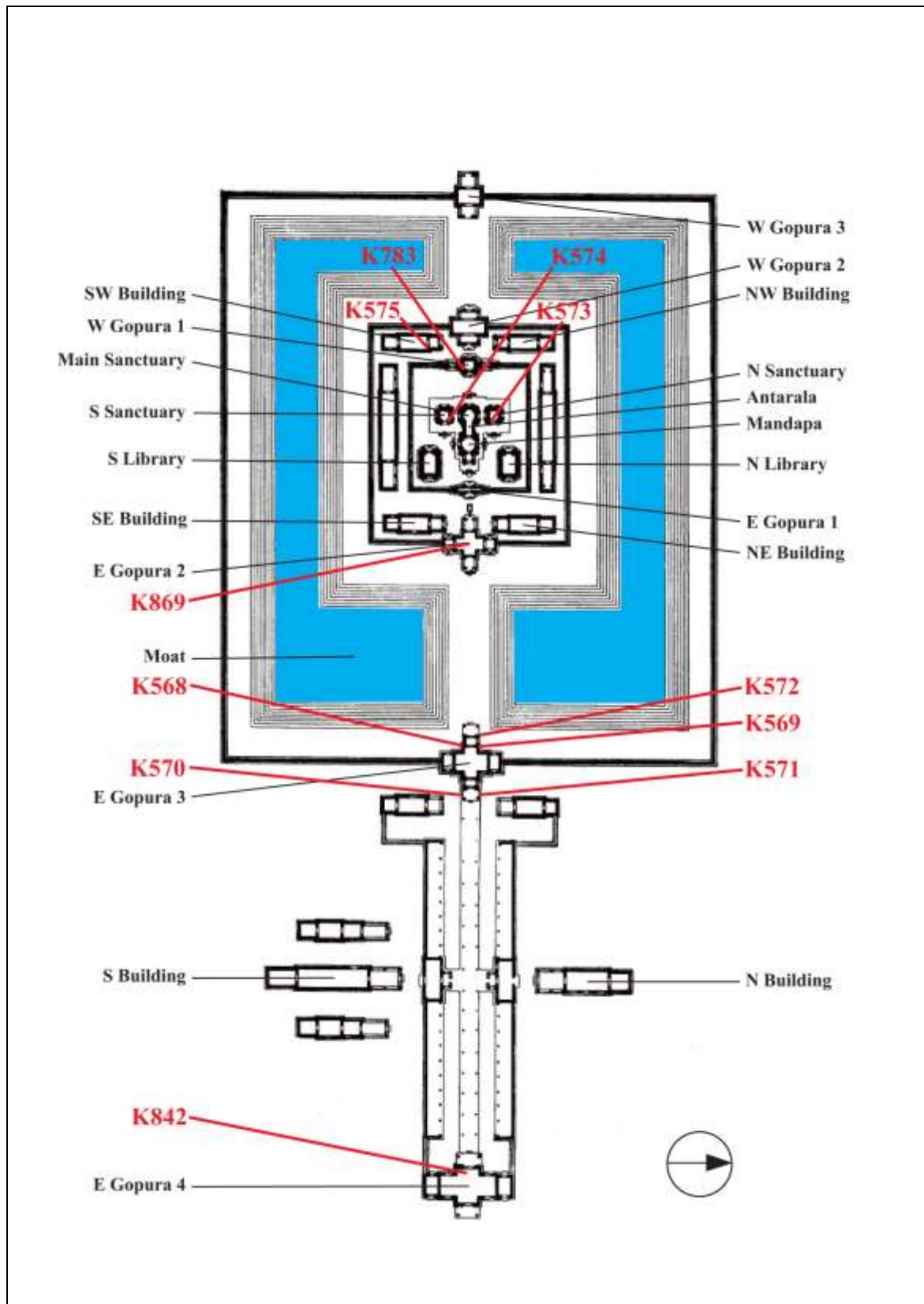


## 2. Enclosures at Banteay Srei



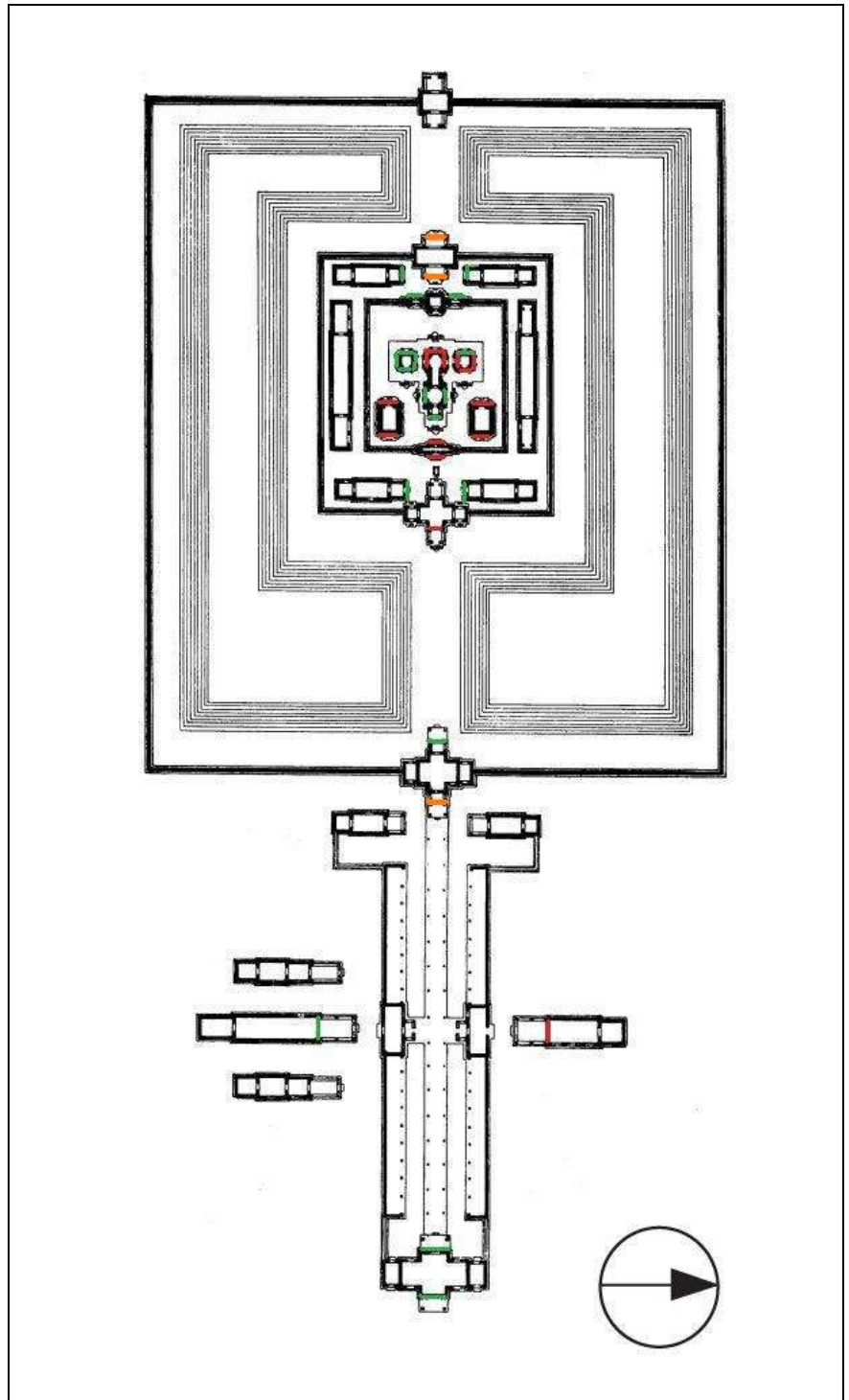


### 3. Inscriptions at Banteay Srei



#### 4. Types of Narrative Reliefs in Banteay Srei

- Iconic reliefs
- Narrative reliefs with "one scene"
- Narrative reliefs with "multiple scenes"



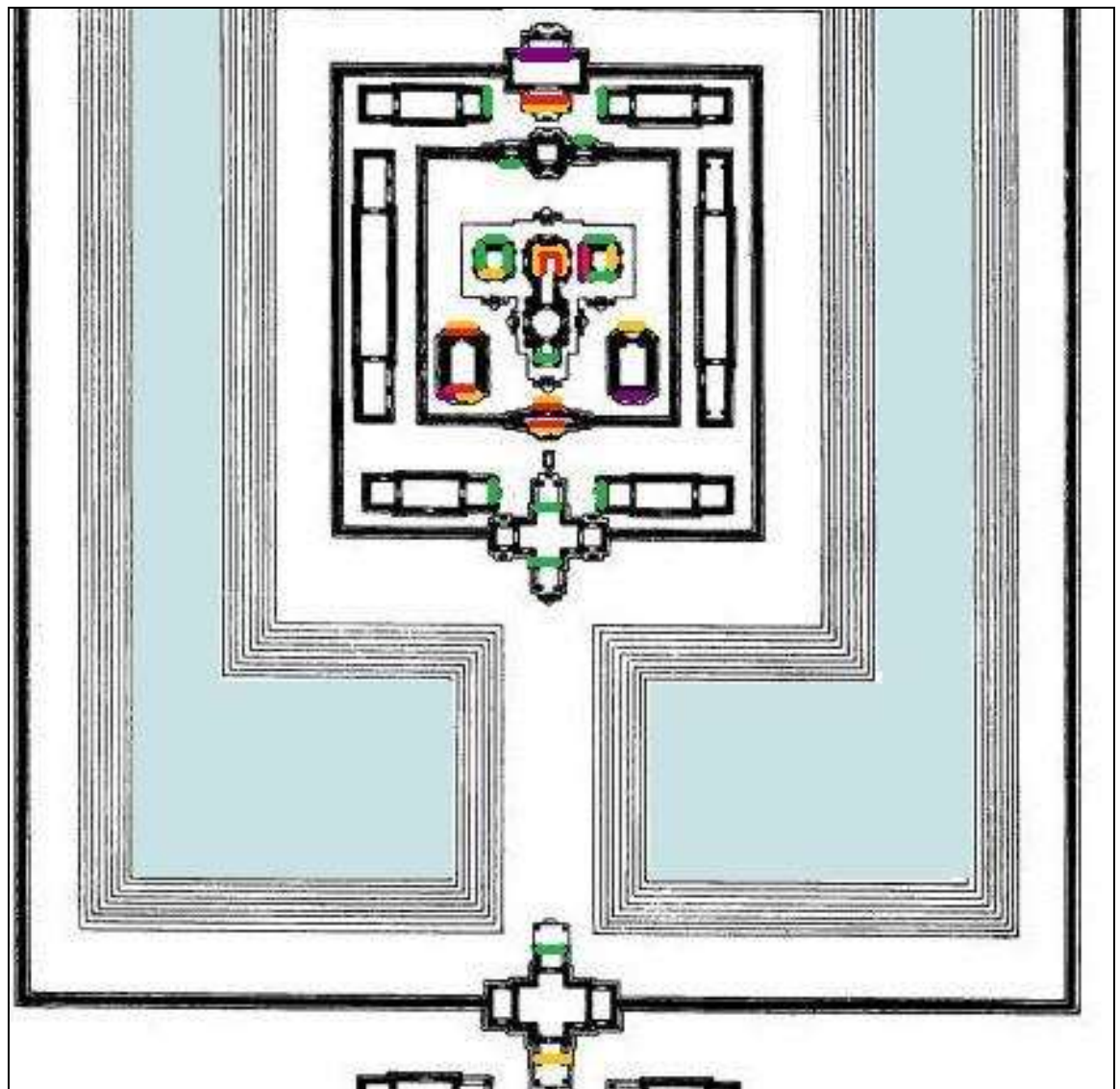
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Pashupata thematic groups

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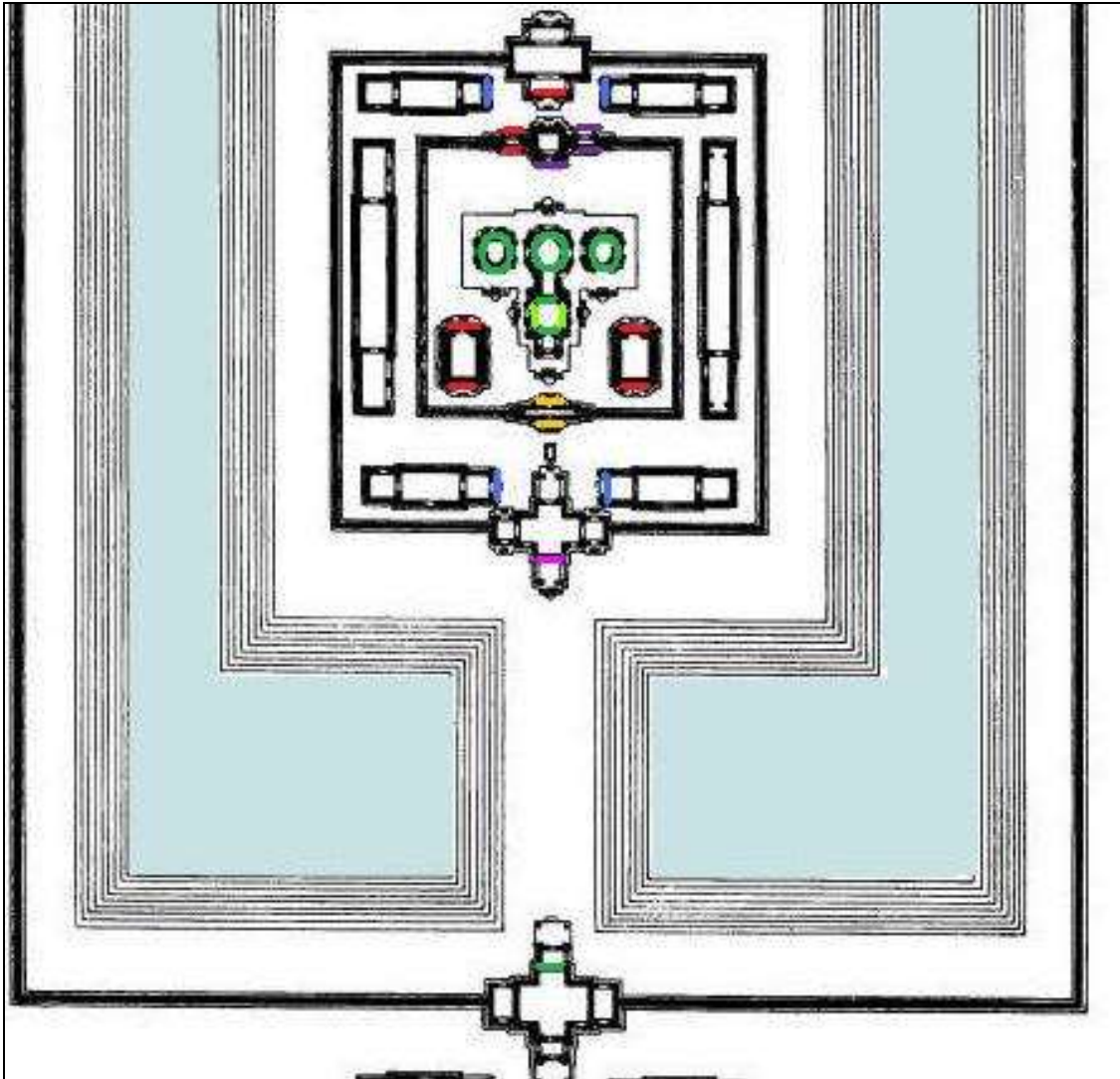
Eleventh- and twelfth-century thematic groups

Thematic groups limited to Banteay Srei



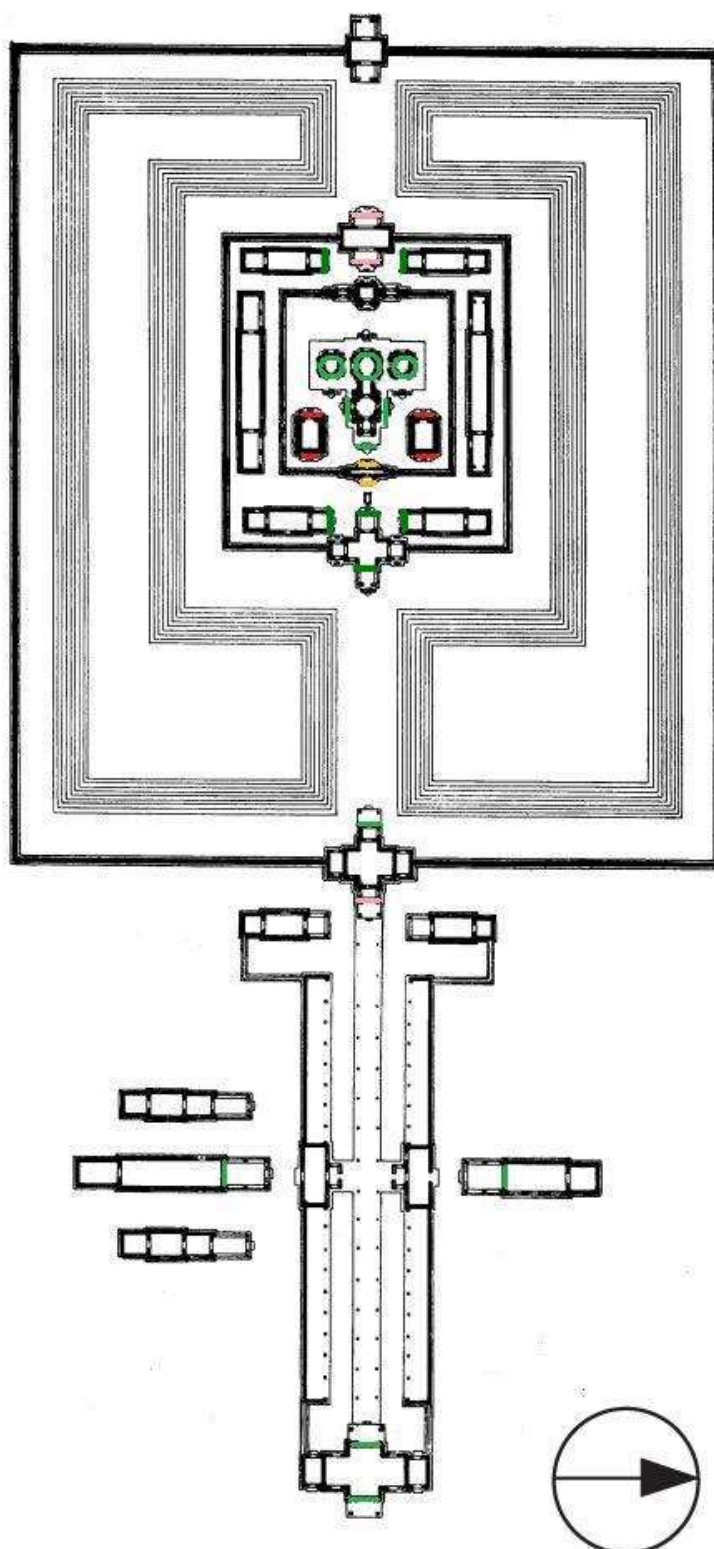
## 6. Groups of Lintel Types

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- Group 2
- Group 3
- Group 4
- Group 5
- Group 6
- Group 7

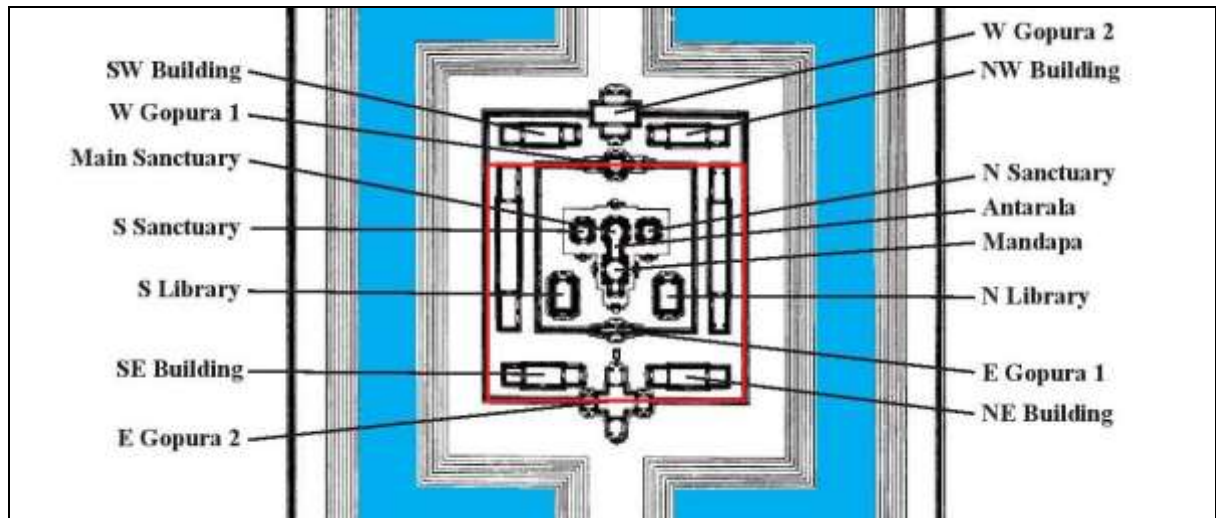


## 7. Groups of Pediment Types

- Group 1
- Group 2
- Group 3
- Group 4
- Group 5 (others)

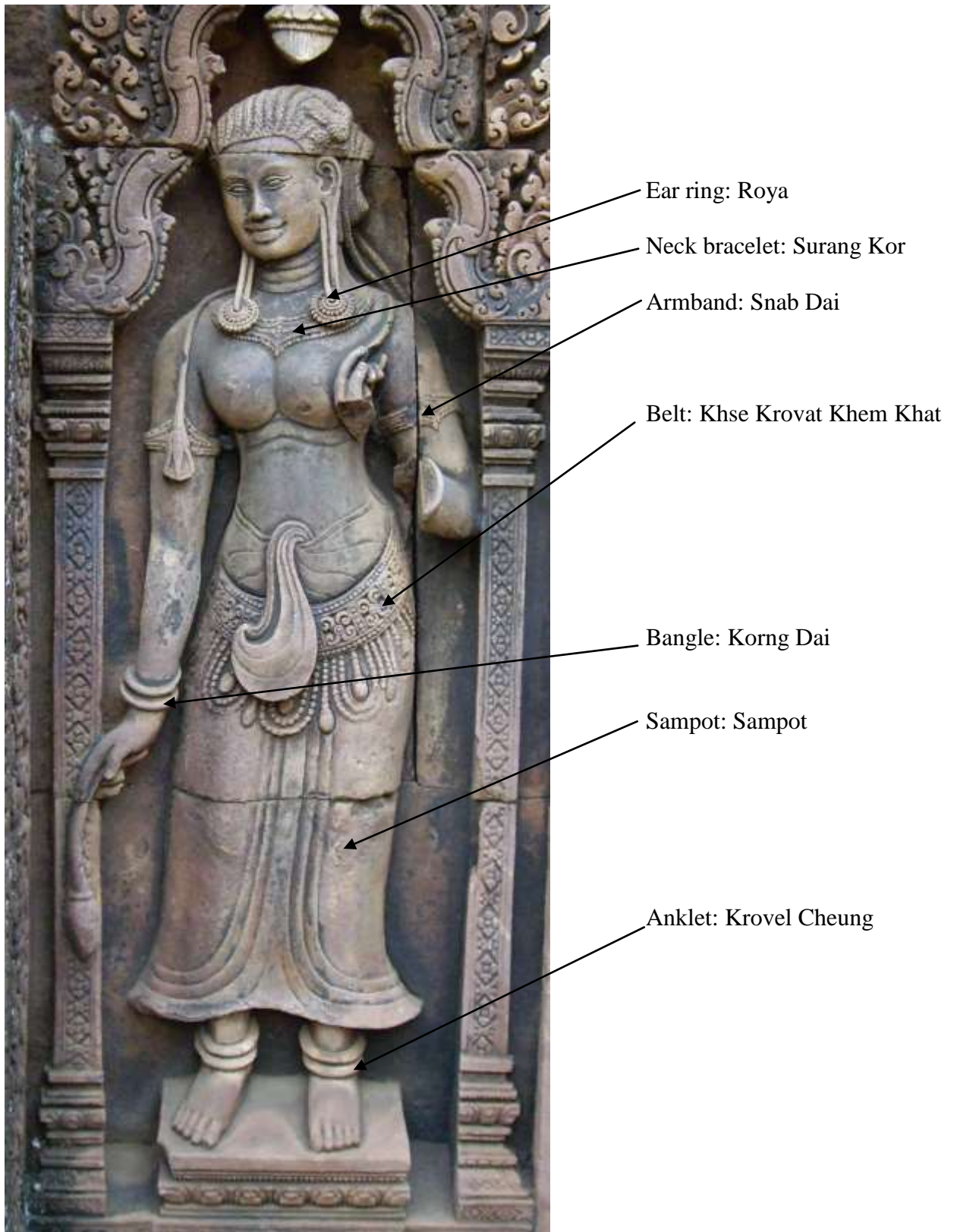


## 8. Presumed Reconstruction of the Original Enclosure

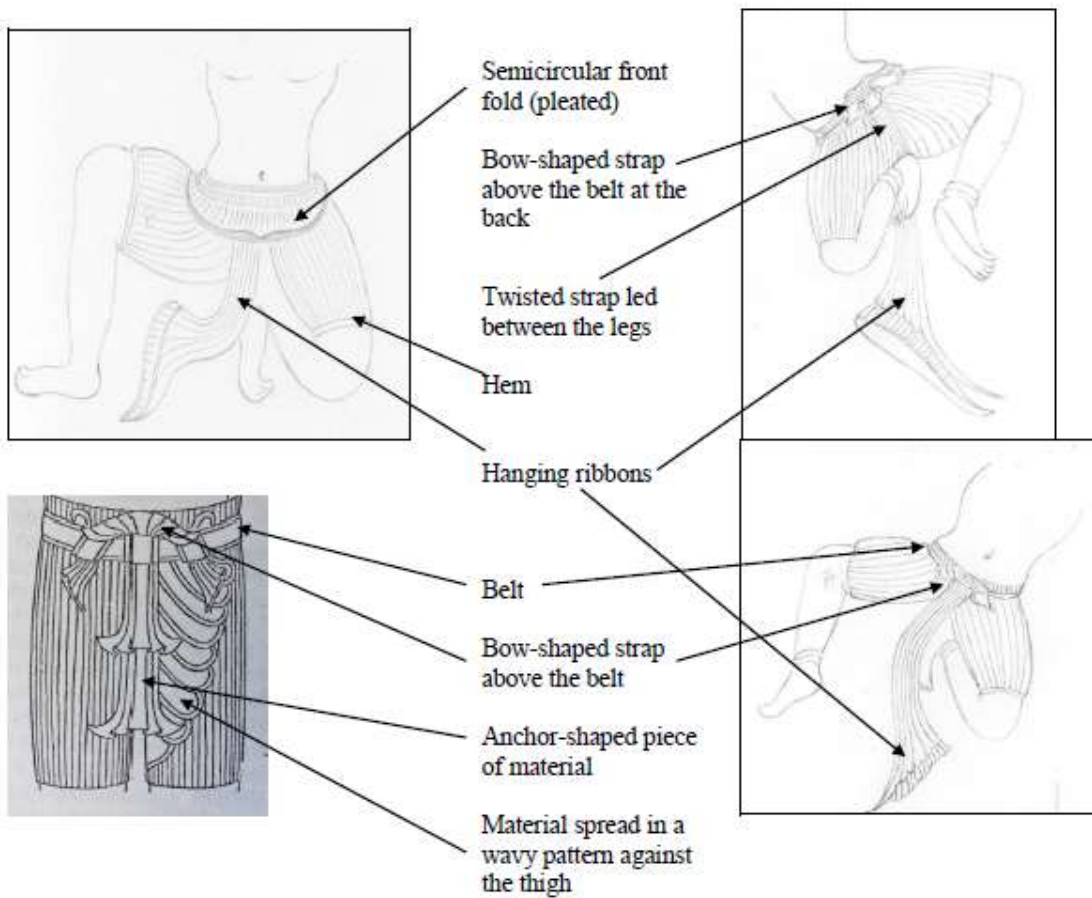
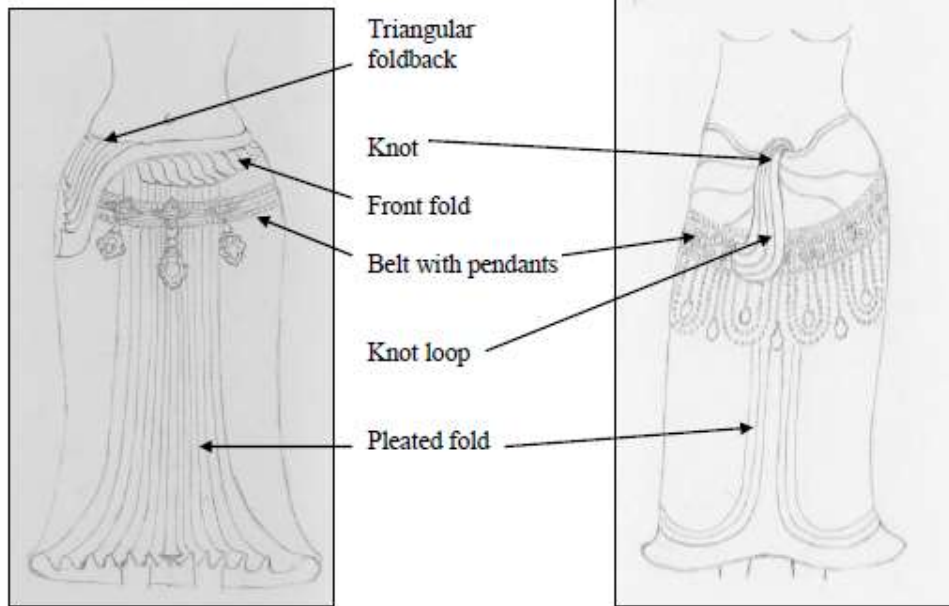


#### IV. Items of Attire

##### 1. Items of attire worn by a classical dancer, with names given in modern Khmer



## 2. Parts of Various Sampots





## V. Illustrations

### List of illustrations (photographs and drawings)

Unless otherwise credited, the photographs were taken by the author.

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2. Devata. Eastern side of south sanctuary, Banteay Srei.
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4. Type 1 male sampot with hem. Drawing by Anna Bakonyi.
5. Type 2 male sampot with hem. Drawing by Anna Bakonyi.
6. Type 2 male sampot, variant. Drawing by Anna Bakonyi.
7. Type 2 male sampot with ribbon. Drawing by Anna Bakonyi.
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85. Shiva burns Kama to a Cinder. Western pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
86. Shiva burns Kama to a Cinder. Western pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
87. Scene of healing. Shiva burns Kama to a Cinder. Western pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
88. Burning of Khandava Forest. Eastern pediment of north library, Banteay Srei.
89. Indra. Eastern pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
90. Asuras. Eastern pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
91. Arjuna. Eastern pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
92. Krishna. Eastern pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
93. Krishna kills Kansa. Western pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
94. Krishna kills Kansa. Western pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
95. Krishna and his charioteer. Western pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
96. Female figure. Western pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
97. Canura and Mustika. Western pediment of south library, Banteay Srei.
98. Shiva Nataraja. Eastern pediment of 1st eastern gopura, Banteay.
99. Karaikkalamaiyar. Eastern pediment of 1st eastern gopura, Banteay Srei.
100. Krishna. Eastern lintel of 1st eastern gopura, Banteay Srei.
101. Durga. Western pediment of 1st eastern gopura, Banteay Srei.
102. Gajalakshmi. Eastern pediment of 2nd eastern gopura, Banteay Srei.
103. Gajalakshmi. Pediment, East Mebon.
104. Vali and Sugriva. Eastern pediment of 2nd western gopura, Banteay Srei.
105. Sugriva. Eastern pediment of 2nd western gopura, Banteay Srei.
106. Male figure. Eastern lintel of 2nd western gopura, Banteay Srei.
107. Vali. Eastern pediment of 2nd western gopura, Banteay Srei.
108. Duel between Bhima and Duryodhana. Western pediment of 2nd western gopura, Banteay Srei.  
NMPP Ka 1660. Groslier C.317. Boisselier C. 32.10.
109. Abduction of Tilottama. Eastern pediment of 2nd eastern gopura, Banteay Srei. MG18913.

110. Abduction of Tilottama. Lintel, Touk Daunsrei. NMPP Ka 1673.
111. Abduction of Sita. Western pediment of 2nd eastern gopura, Banteay Srei. (on the ground)
112. Narasimha kills Hiranyakashipu. Southern pediment of northern building of 4th enclosure, Banteay Srei.
113. Umamaheshvara. Northern pediment of southern building of 4th enclosure, Banteay Srei.
114. Umamaheshvara. Eastern pediment of south sanctuary, Banteay Srei.
- 115.a. Umamaheshvara. Banteay Srei. NMPP Ka 1797. Dalsheimer 2001:122.
- 115.b. Umamaheshvara. Banteay Srei. NMPP Ka 1797. EFEO archive CAM7256.
116. Indra. Eastern pediment of mandapa, Banteay Srei.
117. Indra. Eastern pediment of 4th eastern gopura, Banteay Srei.
- 118.a. Varuna. Eastern pediment of south sanctuary, Banteay Srei.
- 118.b. Rahu. Southern pediment of mandapa, Banteay Srei.
119. Yama. Southern pediment of south sanctuary, Banteay Srei.
120. Dancing female figure. Central sanctuary, Banteay Srei. EFEO archive CAM7255.
121. Dancing female figure. Tower summit, Banteay Srei. EFEO archive CAM7303.
122. Dancing female figure. Tower summit, Banteay Srei. EFEO archive CAM7303.
123. Sitting female figure. Tower summit, southern side of south sanctuary, Banteay Srei.
- 124.a. Lion and monkey guardian figure. Sanctuary terrace, Banteay Srei.
- 124.b. Yaksha guardian figure. Sanctuary terrace, Banteay Srei.
- 125.a. Vishnu. NMPP B.302,2. Boisselier PLVII.
- 125.b. Hayagriva. Sambor Prei Kuk, northern group. MG 18099. Baptiste 2008, 157–160.
- 125.c. Vishnu. Sre Ampil, Kandal. NMPP Ka 1882 Dalsheimer 2001, 156.
- 125.d. Vishnu. Unknown origin. Norton Simon Museum M1980.16.S.
- 125.e. Vishnu. Unknown origin. Los Angeles County Museum of Art M 76.19.
- 126.a. Dvarapala. Banteay Srei. NMPP Ka 1799. Groslier B.349. Boisselier B61.5. Dalsheimer 2001, 150.
- 126.b. Vishnu. Siem Reap(?). NMPP Ka 1810, B232, B30.7 Dalsheimer 2001, 152 .
- 127.a. Type 1 lintel. Eastern side of north sanctuary, Banteay Srei.
- 127.b. Type 1 lintel. Southern side of south sanctuary, Banteay Srei.
128. Type 2 lintel. South-eastern side of 1st western gopura, Banteay Srei.
129. Type 3 lintel. Western side of 1st eastern gopura, Banteay Srei.
- 130.a. Type 4 lintel. Eastern side of south library, Banteay Srei.
- 130.b. Type 4 lintel. Eastern side of 2nd western gopura, Banteay Srei.
131. Type 5 lintel. Northern side of 1st south-eastern long building, Banteay Srei.
132. Type 6 lintel. Southern side of mandapa, Banteay Srei.
133. Type 7 lintel. Eastern side of 2nd eastern gopura, Banteay Srei.
134. Vidyadharas. Eastern pediment of 2nd western gopura, Banteay Srei.
135. Annapurna. Eastern lintel of south library, Banteay Srei.
136. Sarung as ordinary female attire. Peak Snaeng Commune. 2013.
137. Sampot samloy. Peak Snaeng Commune. 2013.
138. Sampot samloy. Koh Ker. 2017.

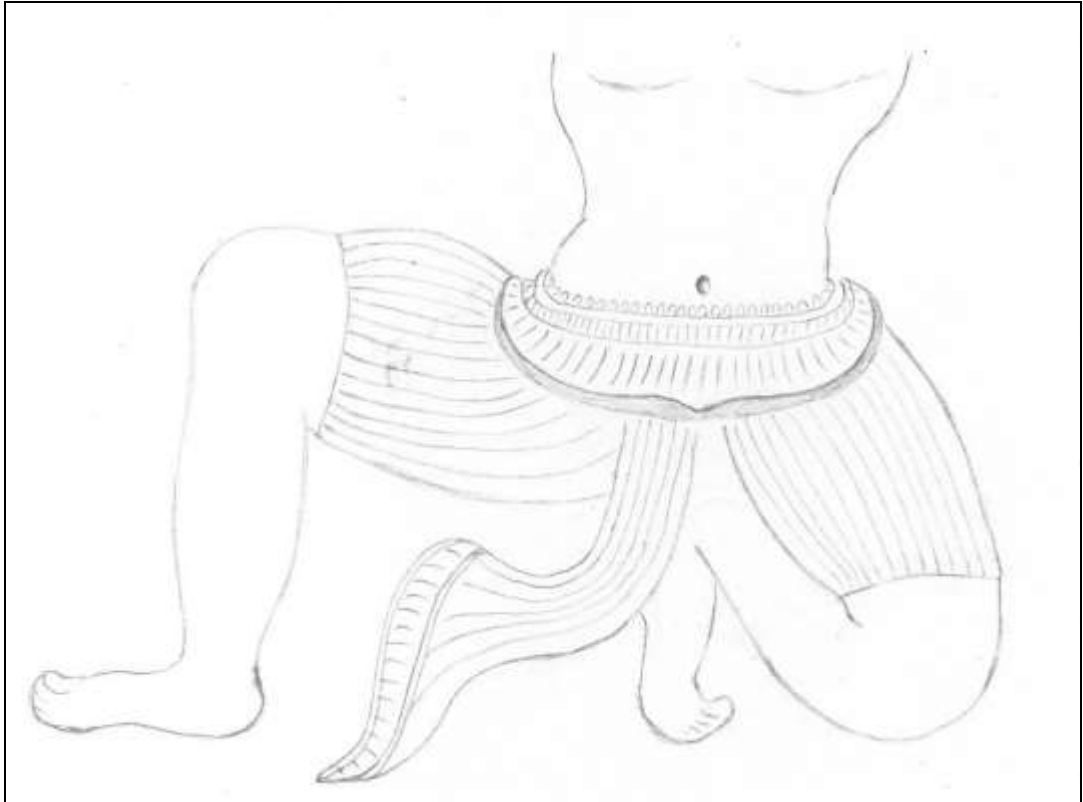
139. Sarung as ordinary male attire. Siem Reap. 2009.
140. Wedding attire: the bride is wearing sampot sarabap ka'at kbal neak, the groom is wearing sampot chwang kbun. Siem Reap. 2015.
141. Wedding attire: both bride and groom are wearing sampot chang kbun. Siem Reap. 2015.
142. Sampot chwang kbun. Peak Snaeng Commune. 2013.
143. Sampot sarabap ka'at kbal neak, dancer's costume. Siem Reap. 2013.
144. King Norodom Sihamoni. Phnom Penh. 2013. <http://www.norodomsihamoni.org>
- 145.a. Detail of a mural. Wat Bo, Siem Reap. Late 19th century.
- 145.b. Detail of a mural. Wat Phra Singh, Chiang Mai. 1820s. Conway 1992, 150.
146. Sampot chwang kbun. 1920s. Postcard.
147. Sampot chwang kbun. Early 20th century. Postcard.
148. Sampot chwang kbun worn by court dancers. c. 1910. Coloured postcard.
149. Head-dresses and jewels, parts of the costume of an "apsara dancer". Siem Reap. 2013.
150. Apsara dancer costume. Siem Reap. 2013.
151. Princess Norodom Buppha Devi in the costume of an "apsara dancer". 1965. Poster.
152. Silk yarn on a skeiner. Peak Snaeng Commune. 2014.
153. Skeining silk yarn onto a skeiner. Siem Reap. 2013.
154. Spinning silk yarn. Peak Snaeng Commune. 2014.
- 155.a. Tying knots in a hol pattern on the patterning frame before application of the first colour. Siem Reap. 2014.
- 155.b. Removing knots from a hol pattern after application of the third colour. Siem Reap. 2014.
156. Tie-dyed skeins hung out to dry. Bakong village. 2014.
157. Horizontal loom. Puok. 2013.
158. Spindles for hol weaving. Siem Reap. 2013.
159. Hol patterned silk fabrics. Siem Reap. 2009.
160. Hol patterned silk fabrics. Siem Reap. 2009.
161. Thai mat-mii patterned fabric. Sala Mai Tai Museum. Chonabot. Thailand.
162. 2nd inner enclosure, from the south-western outer corner of the moat, Banteay Srei.
163. 2nd western gopura, viewed from west, with sanctuary towers behind, Banteay Srei.
164. Inner enclosure, viewed from north-west, Banteay Srei.
165. Eastern facade of north library, Banteay Srei.
166. Western facade of north library, Banteay Srei.
167. Pediment of the Abduction of Tilottama, on permanent display at the Musée Guimet, Paris. MG18913.



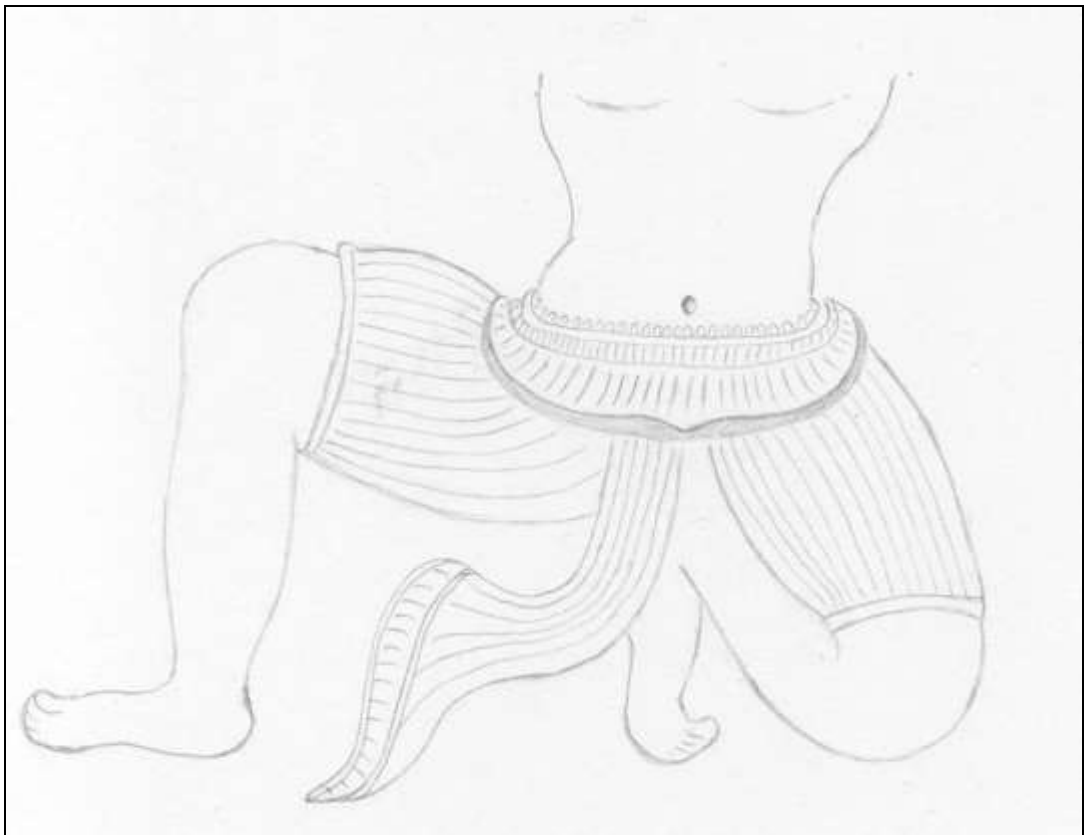
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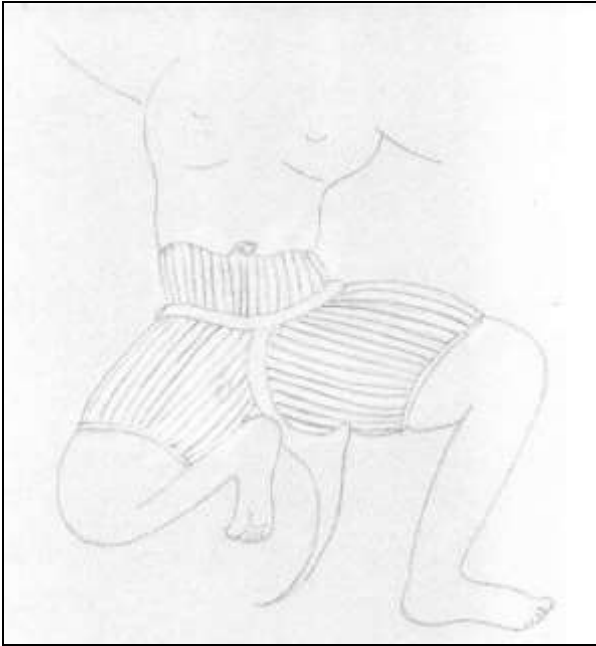
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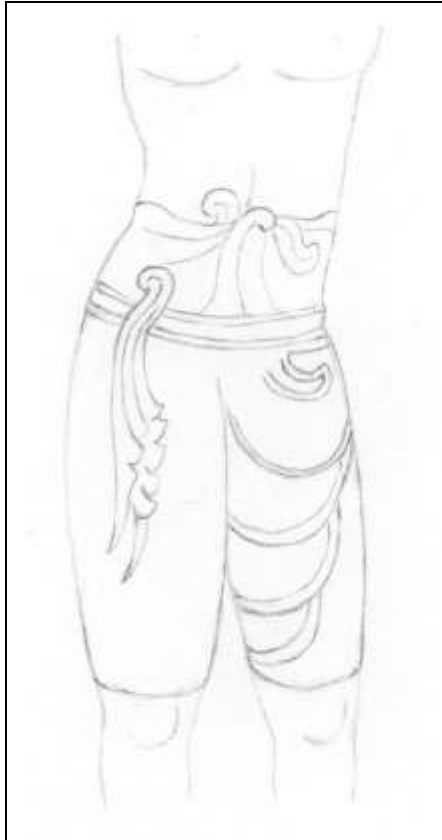


8.



8. detail





9.



10.



11.



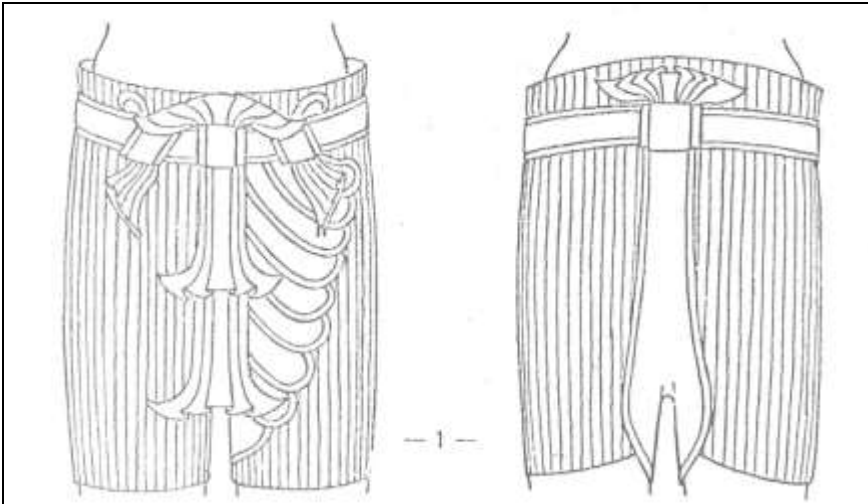
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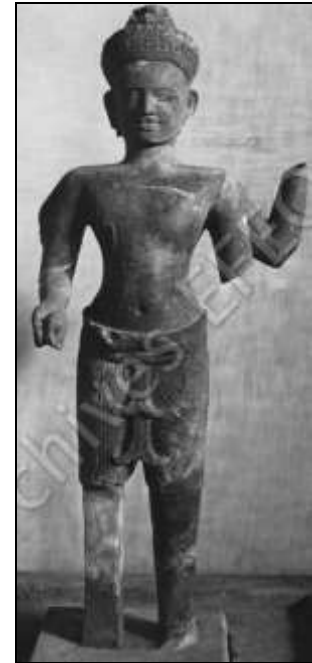
13.



14.



15.a.



15. b.



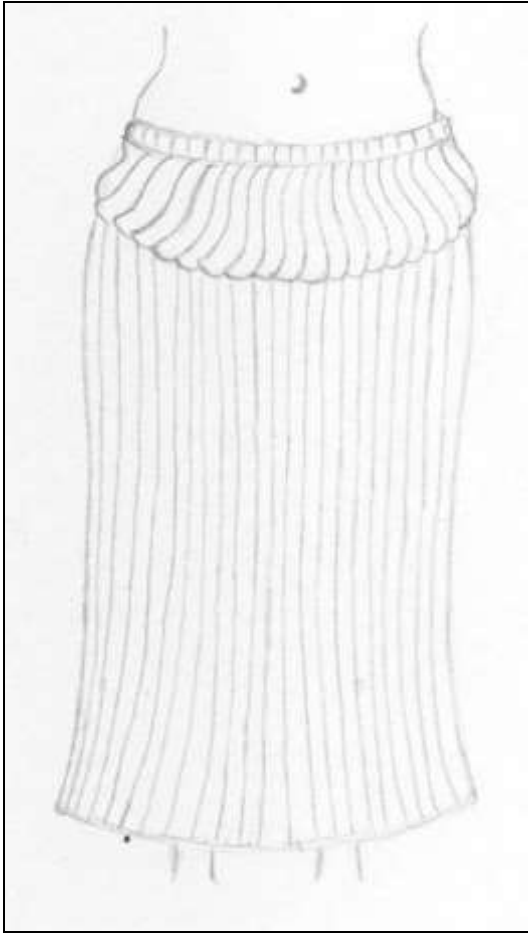
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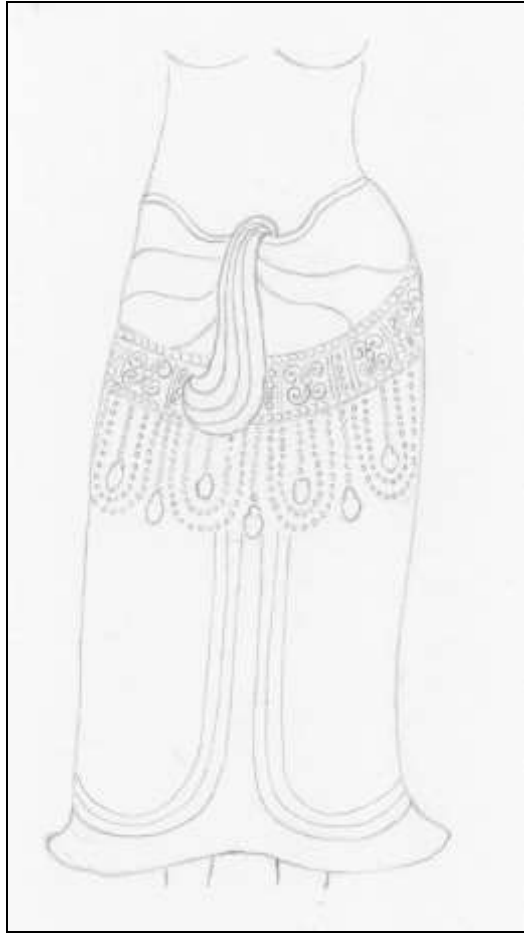
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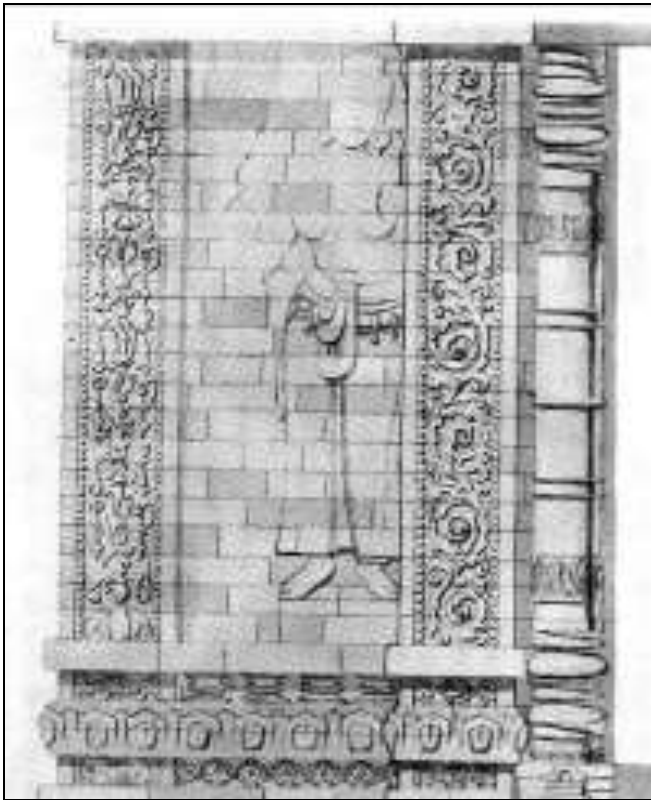
18.



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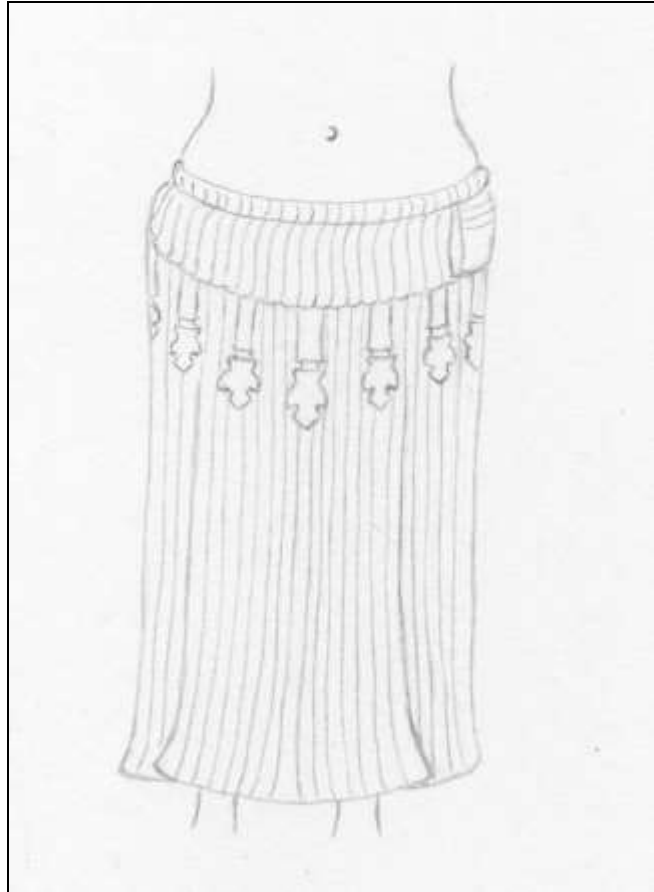
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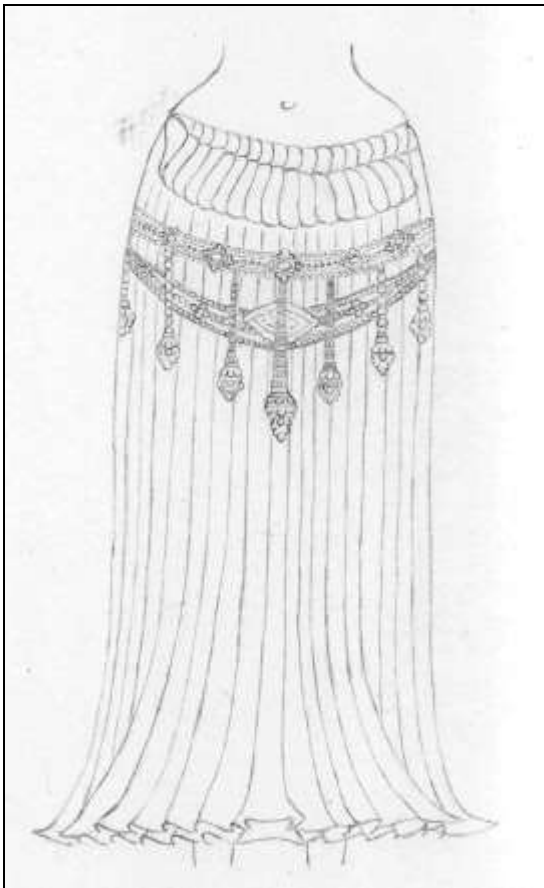
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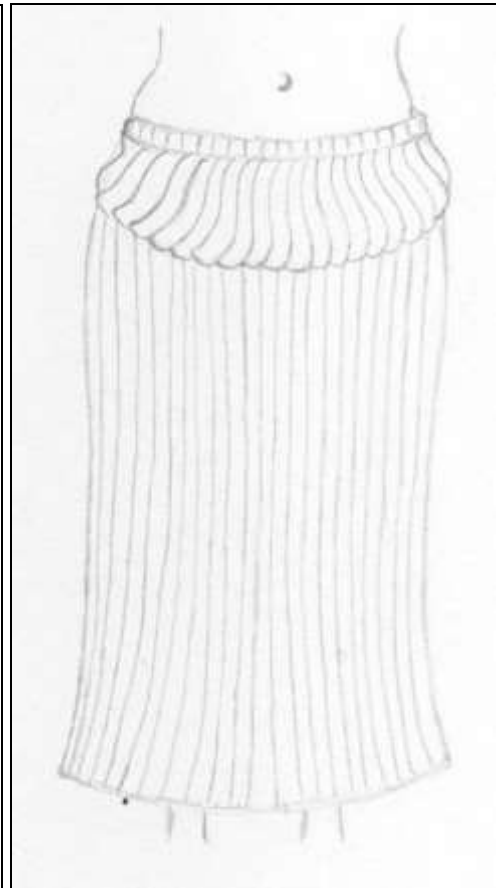
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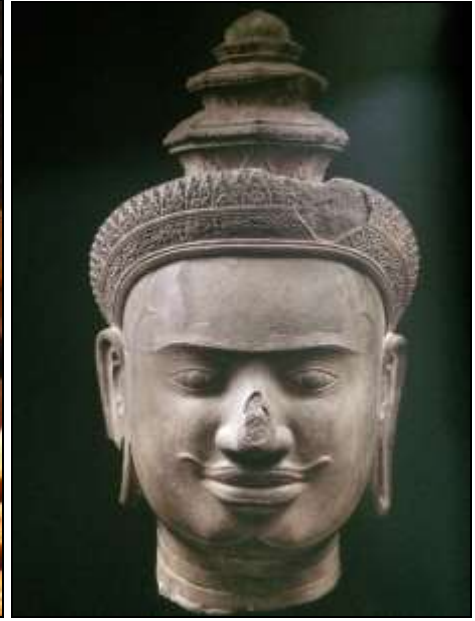
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38.



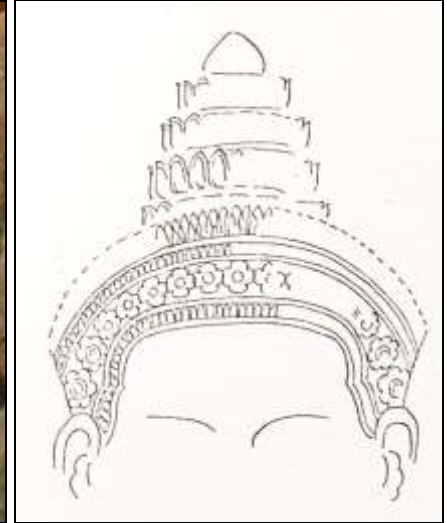
39.



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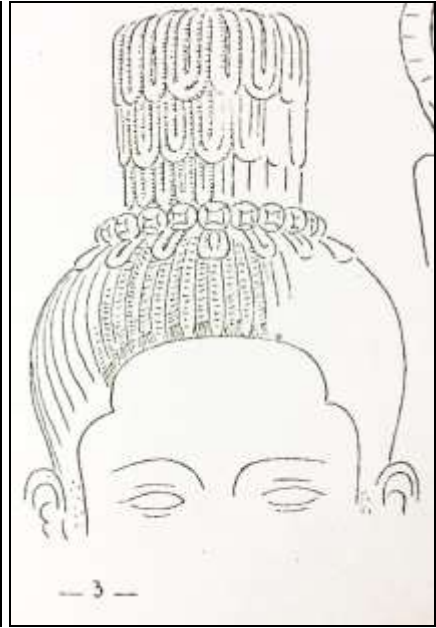


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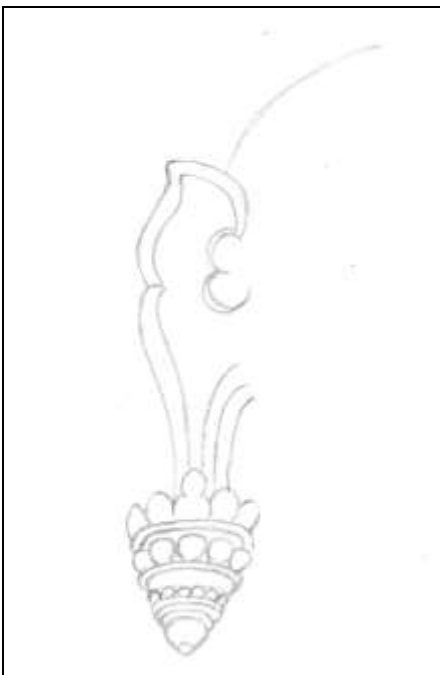
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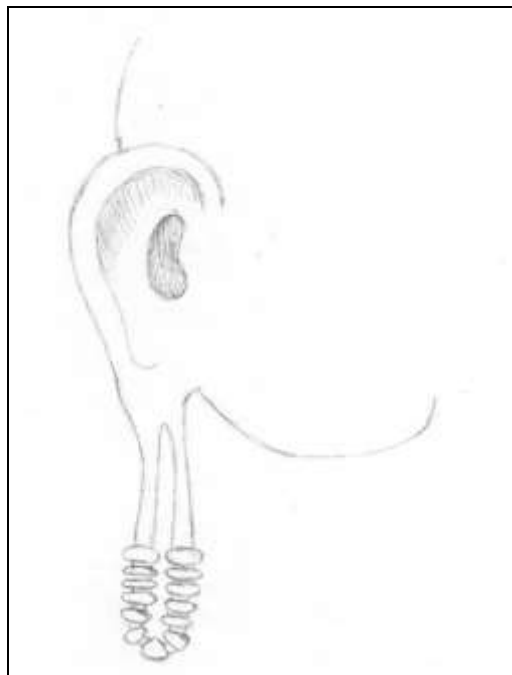
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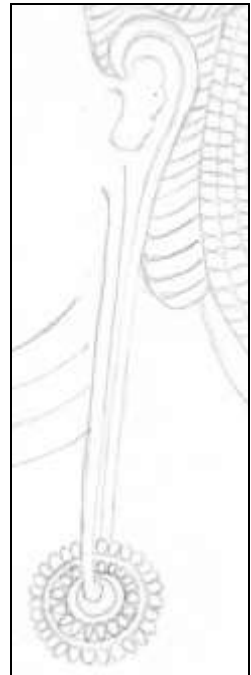
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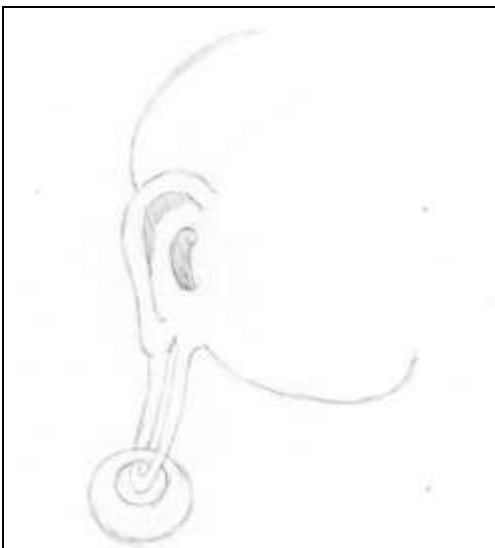
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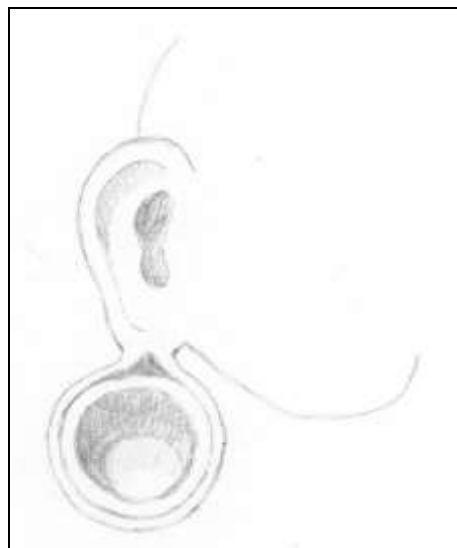
62.



63.



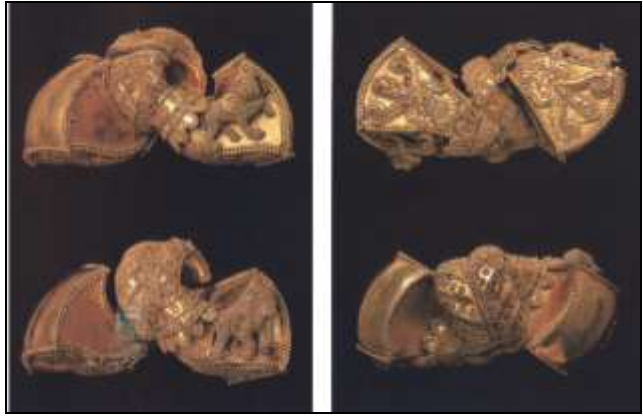
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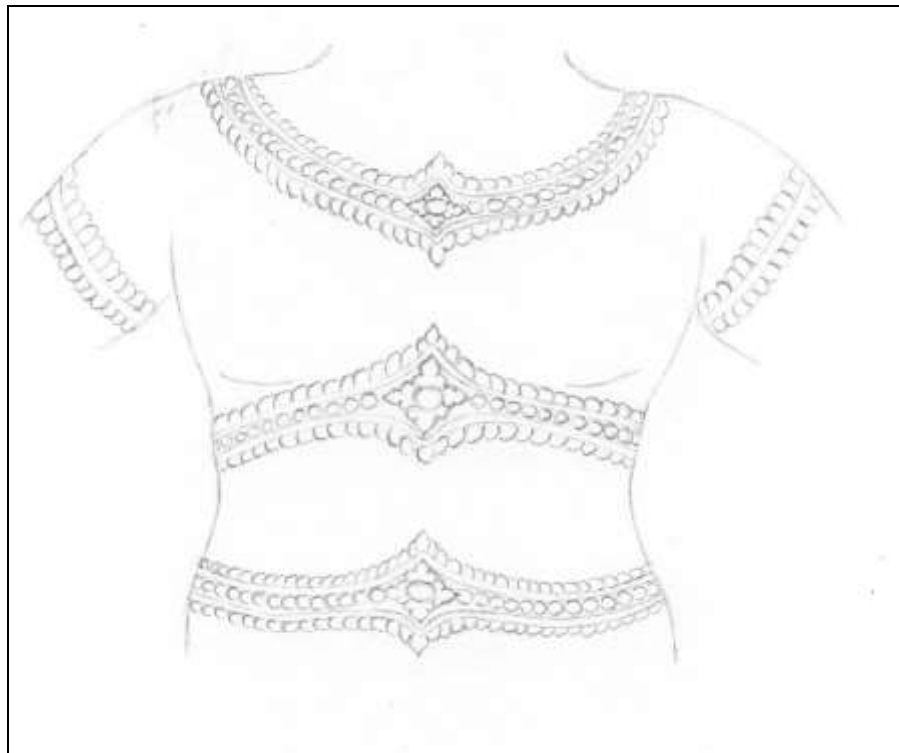
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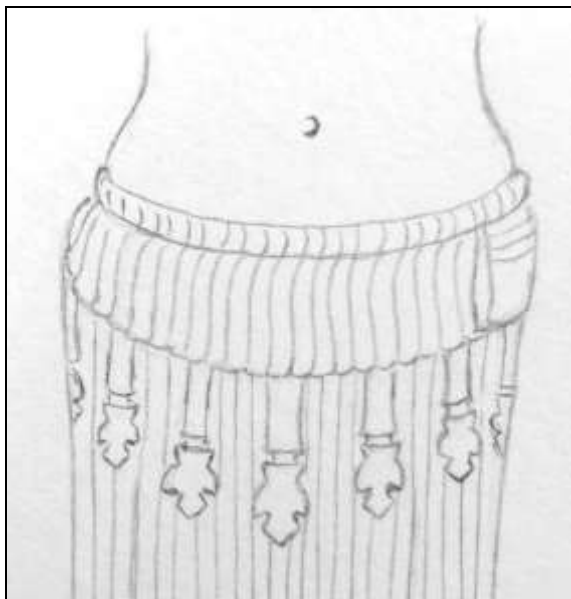
66.a



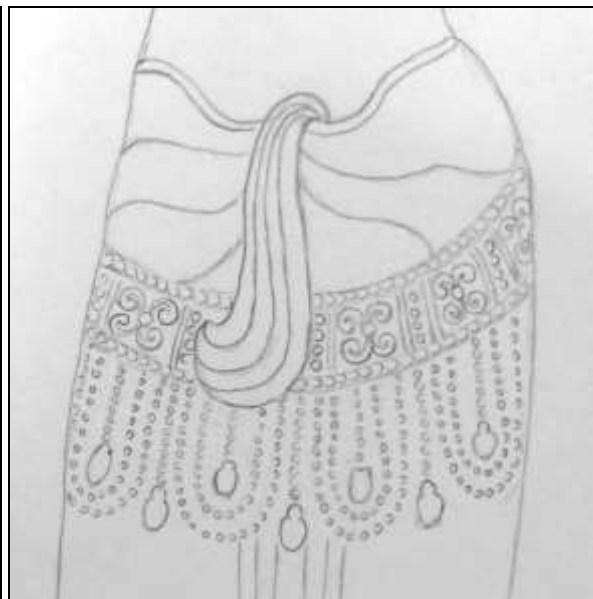
66.b



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68.



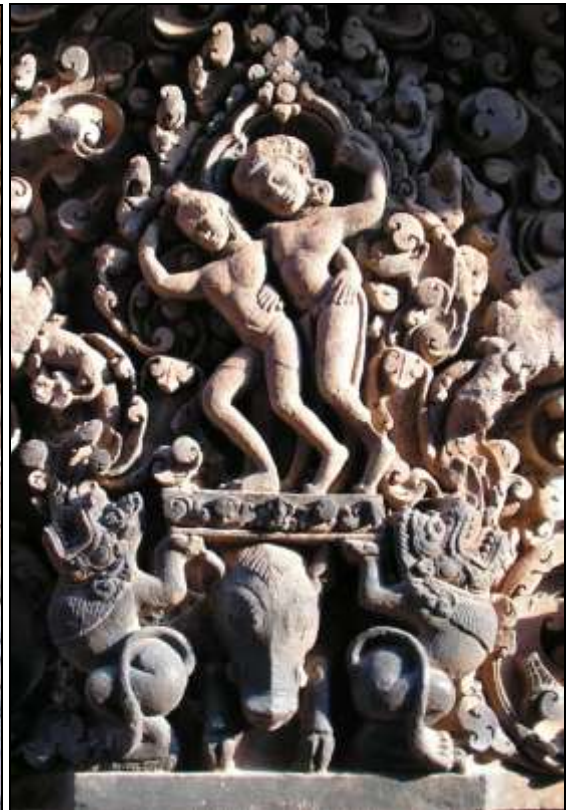
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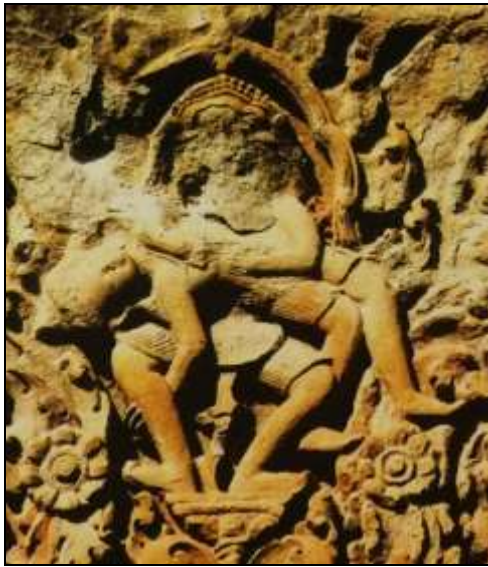




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84.a.



84.b.



84.c.



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87.a.



87.b



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104.a.



105.



106.



107.



108. a.



108. b.



109.



109.a



109.b



109.c.



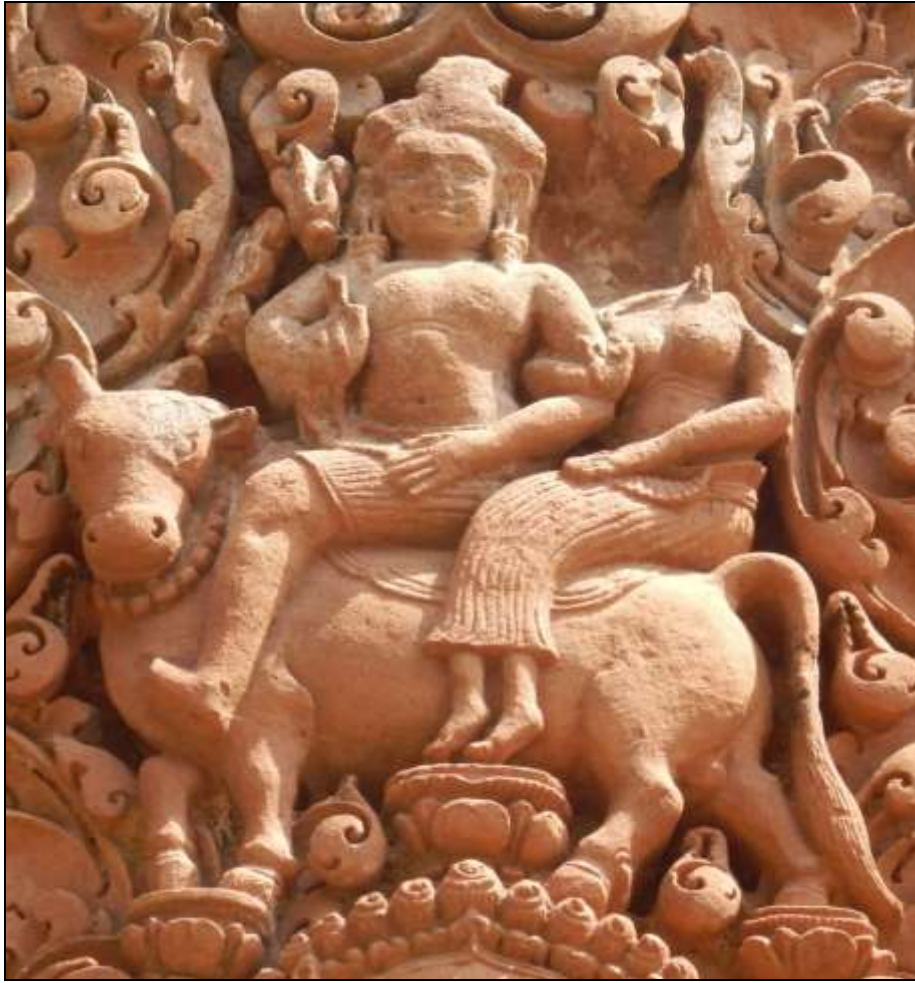
110.



111.



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114.



115.a.



115.b.



116.



117.





118. a



118. b



119.



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121.



122.



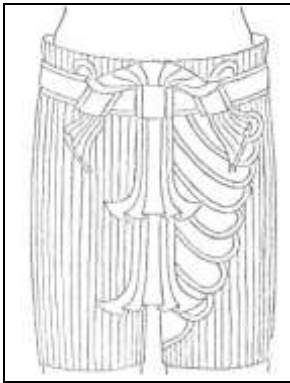
123.



124. a.



124. b.



125. a.



125. b.



125. c.



125. d.



125. e.



126. a.



126. b.



127.a.



127.b.



128.



129.



130.a.



130.b.



131.



132.



133.



134.



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143.





144.



145. a.



145. b.



146.



147.



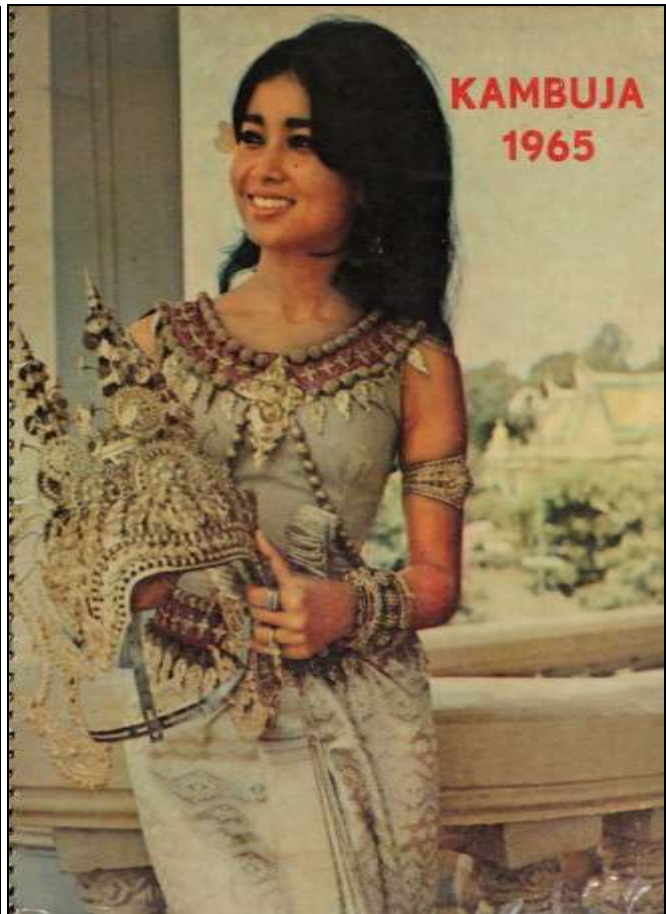
148.



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155. a.



155. b.



156.



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